

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Twelfth Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

[English]

Wednesday, April 9, 2003/Chaitra 19, 1925 (Saka)

Please sit down.

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, serious situation has arisen in the country on the issue of VAT, since it is a dangerous law. The underlying idea is that country would be open for foreign companies who will set up their business here. How can a cloth merchant do so much calculation? Sinha Saheb, you have been the Finance Minister of the country. Please convince the hon'ble Finance Minister. Will it be possible for a cloth merchant to keep record of daily transactions and to show receipt everywhere? It is a conspiracy to destroy our own trade. Therefore, VAT should be discussed by suspending Question Hour otherwise the business in the country would be ruined...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Question No. 381.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the launch of VAT system is being opposed all over the country...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : We gave nine notices from our side. Therefore, the Finance Minister should be here.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

(Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER : I have received several notices of Adjournment Motion.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : I would permit you in Zero Hour.

[Translation]

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : The Finance Minister should be present here. We have a lot of issues, on the VAT and the Excise Duty imposition on ready-made garments. So, the Finance Minister must be here.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully agree with what Shri Mulayam Singh said about VAT. But in addition the House should also discuss and arrive at a decision with regard to excise duties imposed on weavers and traders of ready-made garments. Please ask the hon'ble Finance Minister to be present in the House as only two days remain before recess. Please call the hon'ble Finance Minister to reply to our issues.

MR. SPEAKER : I will checkup and I will call the concerned Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : I have given notice for having discussion on VAT by suspending the normal business of the House...*(Interruptions)* You please give permission for discussion on this issue.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also given notices regarding imposition of excise duties on ready-made garments and VAT. It should be discussed by suspending all other business of the House...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Mulayam Singhji, I will permit you to speak in Zero Hour.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, you kindly advise the Parliamentary Affairs Minister...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : The Parliamentary Affairs Minister must make a note of this thing.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have received several notices on different issues. I have disallowed all those notices.

[Translation]

But you can raise the issue of VAT in Zero Hour. Before that Shri Kurup and other Members have also given notices.

[English]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL : Sir, it is not only VAT, but imposition of Excise Duty on readymade garments as well.

MR. SPEAKER : If all the Members cooperate, all the issues will be taken up. Shri Kurup and others have also given notices, which are very serious. I will allow you to speak during 'Zero Hour'.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Hajipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Here is my notice also on political murders. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow all those who have given notices. Paswanji, I will allow you in Zero Hour.

[English]

I have received your notice Zero Hour.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. I will permit you to speak during 'Zero Hour'.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also given notice for the suspension of Question Hour...
(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have disallowed all the notices. The notices regarding the suspension of Question Hour are also disallowed.

Now, we go to the Question Hour. Q. No. 381. Rajo Singhji, please ask your question.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am going to permit you during 'Zero Hour'.

[Translation]

C.N. Sinngnji, You have also given notice. I will allow you in Zero Hour.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, I have also given a notice.

MR. SPEAKER : I have said that your issue is important. I am going to permit you.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : I have also given a notice, Sir.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Badagara) : Sir, we have also given a notice.

MR. SPEAKER : I have read all the notices. I will permit you to speak during the 'Zero Hour'.

Now, Question No. 381 – Shri Rajo Singh.

11.06 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Revenue Sharing System in Radio Paging Industry

+
*381. SHRI RAJO SINGH :
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to scrap licence system and introduce revenue sharing in the Radio Paging Industries in order to enable the industry to sustain itself and provide the benefits of its services in the remote areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether owing to the said decision, the Government had to waive crores of rupees, outstanding against the said industries;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the total amount waived;

(e) the reasons for switching over to the system of revenue sharing; and

(f) the time by which the same is likely to be implemented?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) to (f) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (f) Licensing system for Radio Paging Industry under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885 has not been scrapped. After taking a considered view for the revival of the ailing radio paging industry, Government has recently decided to allow the Radio Paging Licensees to migrate from the Fixed Licence Fee regime to Revenue Sharing regime. 5% of the Adjusted Gross Revenue of the licensee company shall be payable as licence fee in the revenue sharing regime. This has financial implications of approximately Rs. 450 crores with interest upto 30.9.2002. The relief package will be offered shortly after finalising the modalities of implementation.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I had asked a question about Radio Paging Industry. My question was based on a statement given by Shrimati

Sushma Swaraj in a press conference on this subject. I have clipping of her statement. As per the statement an amount of Rs. 450 crores outstanding against the Radio Paging companies have been waived, but the reply of the Government does not make it clear. I would like to know whether Radio Paging Industry in the country is almost finished. As the hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs said that Government have taken some steps to revive the industry, one among those is waiving of an amount of Rs. 450 crores outstanding against radio paging companies as Licensee fee and have introduced Revenue sharing regime in place of Fixed License Fee regime. I would like to know from the Government the factors responsible for the present state of affairs of Radio Paging Industry and also what measures have been taken after the announcement of package in January, 2003 for the revival of the industry and also the reasons for delay in its implementation.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Member has rightly said that Radio Paging Industry in the country is in a very precarious state. In the year 1998 it had 7.4 lakhs subscribers which has, at present, declined to 2.5-3 lakhs. The principal reason is the major expansion of cellular industry and in the last 18 months the cellular rates have gone down by almost 60 percent. The chief component of radio paging, that is SMS, is also available on cellular phones. In view of this, the industry was given a relief package in 1999 which was availed neither by city operators nor by circle operators. It worsened their condition. It spiralled up their dues and interest to Rs. 450 crore. The relief package contained waiving of the said amount.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the hon'ble Member said that Government had taken the decision in January and one reason for non-revival is that dues, as of now, has not been actually waived. Law Ministry is required to vet it which it is doing now. As an example, I would like to tell you that out of Rs. 450 crore, Rs. 220 crore is due against the Punjab Government enterprise Punwire and Punwire Mobile. As the hon'ble Member would be aware that this company is now under the process of liquidation. The question may arise as to whether the waiver would be extended to it or not, but the issue is being examined by the Law Ministry. Whatever decision Government will take, it would be implemented.

SHRI RAJO SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of us have listened to the reply of the hon'ble Minister, but the reply is not in accordance with the spirit of the House. My second supplementary is whether Government propose to reform the law made in 1885 and if so, by when the reform would be introduced? The radio paging companies were initially given license for 20 years but in the growing period of the industry, suddenly cellular industry appeared as a formidable rival, The 'b' part of my question is which regions of the country is being considered by the Government for the future of this industry and whether Government really believes that the industry can be revived?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Sir, as far as I know, the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, has been amended several times. We will let the House know if need arose to amend any Act, including Postal Act for the relief of the industry. A new thing introduced was in Convergence Bill, 2001, which was returned to the Standing Committee. 94 amendments have been suggested, which are being examined. The Bill may be passed if and when it is brought in the House. All these issues would be solved through a convergence license. We are working in that direction.

Second thing that he said is that initially license was given for 20 years. Actually the license for city and circle operators were for 10 years only, the provision was that in the first three years, city operators would give fixed fees. The fees was fixed on the basis of option of auction. And they, in enthusiasm, bid so high in 1992-94 that they were not able to pay due amount in the second year itself. Provision for circle operators was that they would pay fixed amount for ten years but they could not pay their fees from the first year itself. Thus due to these factors, efforts were made twice to provide relief package. City operators had come to me and had assured me that if the relief package is given, then they would be able to make their industry viable even in the face of completion of cellular industry. Circle operators face more problems. Tariff Commission also said that huge investments are needed for circle operations. Initially there were three operators, now only one is left. Now we have to see whether circle operators would be viable or not? We can only provide relief packages.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in his reply, hon'ble Minister has stated that Government have

decided to allow License holders to migrate from fixed license fee regime to revenue share regime. I would like to know as to what were the reasons which compelled the Government to go for this system. As you said, situation is critical, but please tell us as to what reasons made the situation so critical?

Secondly, I would like to know that now when it has been decided to abrogate license fees system and go for revenue share, then whether this facility would be available to only those who already had licenses to work to radio paging industry. Is it not a manipulation? There should be healthy competition, new tenders be invited, new persons should be allowed to enter otherwise this industry would become a monopoly of the few. Therefore through you, I would like to know as to what factors were responsible for the failure of the system. Secondly in the new revenue sharing system, whether new entrants would also be allowed or only old licenseholders would get its benefit. The dues of the Government against the old licenseholders...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Do not ask so lone questions. Let the reply of your first question come. Ask your question quickly.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : I would only like to know as to what measures are being taken by the Government to recover the dues against old licenseholders.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : It is a very important question. There is no scope of monopoly in it. Hon'ble Member would be aware that 106 parties were given license in 27 cities. There is no question of monopoly in it.

[English]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Mr. Minister, will you involve new parties or not?

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Let him reply, please sit down.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, even today 67 operators are working in cities. Similarly as I said about the circles, in view of the fact that two big companies have sank in circle operations, new investment is welcome, but

the relief package is meant for those which are in bad condition due to old regime. There are three reason for that. Firstly, whenever a new sector is opened up, there is great enthusiasm for that. You have seen that in telecome, paging and FM radio stations. People bid very high and then they are not able to fulfill their obligations—difficulty is due to that. Second reason is excessive investment in the sector. Third, as I said in the reply to the question of Shri Rajo Singh, the main reason is huge decline in subscriber base. Investment remained where it was, subscriber base has shrunk due to increased cellular operations. These are the major reasons. But Government would definitely welcome the bold men ready to invest.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : But will he invite them or not? It is a different matter if they want to come. But whether Government would invite them to tender or not?

MR. SPEAKER : Its importance has gone down after the advent of cellular industry. Why they would come?

[English]

There is a very simple reason. I am convinced by your reply.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Thank you, Speaker, Sir. After the invention of radio by Marconi, the people of India have been taking benefit of hearing media. After the 20th century, and even in the 21st century, we have the benefit of hearing media though the visual media is predominantly serving the people of India. The people living in every nook and corner of the villages of India have the benefit of hearing the news through radio. We have the *Akashvani*, the All India Radio.

Sir, I want to know from the Minister whether the Government has given licences to private individuals to broadcast...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Pandian, your Supplementary does not pertain to the main Question.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : No, Sir, radio paging includes radio. I want to know whether the Government has given licences to private individuals to broadcast in place of *Akashvani*. I want to know whether the Government has given licences to individuals or called for applications for issuance of licences to broadcast it in place of *Akashvani*. If so, who are the beneficiaries who have got the licences?
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No. This is a different question. Sorry, I am not in a position to allow your Supplementary.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Radio plus pager is radio pager...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is a different question. I disallow this question.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : What is the harm in saying? When the matter is placed before the House, let the Minister reply...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow him to ask the same question on the next question.

SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the private parties, cellular phone operators, etc., have been allowed to serve the public in the whole country. Some private parties, in many State, for instance, Chhattisgarh had agreed by the private company to provide services in the villages also apart from the services in the cities. They also have opted to give village *panchayat* telephony. But it seems that they have not been able to fulfil the promises that were given by them.

Sir, in the North-East also, they have given tenders for the entire North-East region. Of course, because of security reasons, they had not been able to do it earlier. But Sir, in August, the security restrictions were removed. Before the security restrictions were removed in the North-East, the private parties had opted to give the service in Guwahati and Shillong, leaving all the villages out. So, in this case, whichever private companies had opted for this village telephony, have not been able to undertake this job. So, have any penalties been imposed on those companies which have failed to give these village

telephony till today? In the record, there is only one company which has taken out and tried to take action by the Government.

Sir, there are umpteen number of such private companies which have not fulfilled these requirements. So, would the Government take action against them?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Sir, I have high regard for the hon. Member and I will answer that question. Though this supplementary question is about rural telephony and not about paging, I will answer this question.

There was a condition in the original six licences that were given. Obligations were imposed on the six companies for village telephone also. The hon. Member is completely right that as against their obligation to cover about 97,000 villages—I am speaking from memory—by putting village telephones, actually only about 7,414 villages have been covered. For this reason, in the original licence, there were conditions for penalties and liquidated damages. All those have been recovered—an amount of Rs. 54 crore has been recovered....*(Interruptions)* I agree. Therefore, you should have seen the licences that were given in 1994, whoever gave it because these are 1994 licences.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : That is not the question. He should not try to distort the question. What has this Government done? After the regime was changed, actually it was the responsibility of this Government. What have they done? That is the question that he has asked...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Sir, the answer cannot be like that to pick and choose...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : It is not the question of apportioning blame. The Congress Government at that time introduced these things. But what have they done with that? It is like passing on the blame for what they have failed to do...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Sir, this is a peculiar way of reaction. Anyhow, I will mention the facts...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : But Mr. Minister, you can be very brief because this question does not arise out of the main Question. So, you can be very brief.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Yes, Sir. It does not arise out of the main Question.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : The paging industry, at one point of time, was a flourishing industry before mobile and SMS came into being. I would like to have the details of the package that the hon. Minister has just now spoken of, and about those companies, which he was saying, have gone into doldrums because of the mobile services and other things. I would like to have the details like the years in which these companies were defaulters or, according to him, have gone out of service, and also the year for which he is compensating in the form of package. This is what I would like to know.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : It is a long list. I can give the entire list to the hon. Member if he so likes or if he wants to read it, he could do so.

MR. SPEAKER : You can send it to him directly.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : It is long list.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : Sir, he could place it on the Table of the House; I will have it.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Whatever way he likes; there is no difficulty in that.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : We were told that the financial implication—which is a euphemism I must say—for the losses suffered by this Government is to the tune of Rs. 450 crore by this package. That was the point that Shri Sangtam also referred to. The loss was much more. The total loss—I would use that word—is much more than the sale price of many of the public sector undertakings which have also been presided over by the hon. Minister who now heads this Ministry.

The only anxiety of ours is this. The hon. Member has asked as to whether it was done to provide benefits of its services to the remote areas of the country; and that part of the question remains unanswered. That is precisely the reason why they preferred then to shift it from the licence regime to the revenue-sharing regime. That is the same step which is being followed now. Have you stipulated something like that—that is, people who are going to

provide services, would have to extend their services to the remote areas too?

I agree with him when he says that the cellular phones have outplacced the radio paging industry. There are many many parts of the country which are still sinaccessible, which have not got the benefit of digital strides, as you call them. What is he going to do with that? Is he going to make it mandatory for the companies to whom he had doled out the benefit to the extent of Rs. 450 crore? That is, if they which to stay, they must really cover some remote areas or the rural area. Is he going to do that?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Actually, there is some confusion in the cellular operation...(Interruptions)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : I am sorry. Let him not read my mind. Maybe, I am not as intelligent as the Minister is, but I certainly draw a distinction between the two. I draw the distinction very clearly. I have also had some occasion to study these matters and I can draw the distinction...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : But actually, there is no confusion...(Interruptions)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : I was only trying to draw a parallel between his actions. It comes to the thought process about dealing with the matters which are Governmental...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Bansal, you have made it amply clear. Now, let the Minister reply.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : The hon. Minister is confusing himself and also trying to put it on me...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He has not completed one sentence. Where is the question of putting something on you? Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He has nor completed his reply. Let him complete.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : I am trying to draw a parallel between the actions of this Government—what this Government did earlier and what is being done this time. But he is only trying to apportion blame on others... (Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Sir, the question is really about the survival of this industry, and not imposing new conditions on this industry because if this industry does not survive, immediately we will be told that that industry was dieing and that the pager was used by lower income people like draftsmen and plumbers, and therefore, we did nothing to protect them.

They say that we are not doing anything about rural telephony. There are different points. Here the entire package has been devised in reference to the Tariff Commission and they recommended that for an industry of this nature, given the fact that its condition is precarious and dismal—these are the words used by other authorities—please devise a package, and the package they suggested was this. Both TRAI and the Tariff Commission have said, 'go away from the fixed licence fee which has been a burden they cannot bear, and migrate to a package of revenue-sharing in which five per cent of the revenue should be shared'. Therefore, it will depend upon how well they do. Licences are there in 27 cities and in 19 circles outside the cities, which include villages and everything.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Have you earned profit or have they given you more than what you otherwise would have got?...(Interruptions)

[Translation

Small Family Norm

*382. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to bring in a legislation to restrict the size of family to one/ two children in view of increasing population;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) the other measures being taken by the Government for population control?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The National Population Policy adopted by Government of India in February, 2000 advocates for adoption of small family norm. It affirms the commitment of Government towards stabilizing population of the country by allowing its citizens to make voluntary and informed decisions about their family size. The FW program in the present form does not include any personal incentive or disincentive for motivating people to adopt the small family norm. Rather, an integrated approach for promotion of small family norm has been envisaged in National Population Policy, 2000. Any legislation for incentives and disincentives will require larger national consensus. It is for this reason that the Constitutional (79th Amendment) Bill which was introduced in 1992, has been pending before the Parliament. The Bill aims at restricting seeking or holding office as a member of either House of Parliament or State Legislature, on the grounds of having more than two children.

(c) Census 2001 has revealed that the average Annual Growth Rate of population has declined to 1.93%, which has been above 2% for the last 40 years. 10 States and UTs viz. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Nagaland, Delhi, Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh and Mizoram have already achieved the Total Fertility Rate of less than 2.1 i.e. Net Replacement Level of Population. Eleven States and UTs namely Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Damn & Diu and Sikkim, have achieved Total Fertility Rate of more than 2.1, but less than 3. They are, therefore, well poised to achieve the goals of NPP, 2000 by 2010. Although there are 12 States and UTs, which have TFR more than 3.0, the basic challenge for population stabilisation is limited to the four States of U.P., Bihar, M.P. and Rajasthan.

The Government has taken up several initiatives since the adoption of the National Population Policy 2000, to address the issue of growing population. While the National Population Commission has been established in the Planning Commission, the Jansankhya Sthirata Kosh has been established in the Department of Family Welfare with a corpus of Rs. 100 crores for mobilizing funds from the private sector. Both these bodies are under the Chairmanship of Hon. Prime Minister. An Empowered Action Group has been created to focus on the specific unmet needs of the eight socio-demographically lagging States viz. Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Orissa and Rajasthan. The Prime Minister took a meeting with the Chief Ministers of the 4 States of UP, MP, Bihar and Rajasthan, at his residence on 16th January 2003 urging them to review the performance of the FW programme on a monthly basis. The monitoring format and Action Points for such reviews have also been conveyed to the State Governments. In an attempt to improve the service deliver, a proposal for sanctioning 8669 Sub-centres throughout the country has been moved by the Department of Family Welfare. This includes 461 sub-centers for desert areas in Rajasthan. In addition, the Government of India has accepted funding for total number of all the sub-centres in the country, since April 2002. Additionally, the rates of compensation for sterilisation and IUD insertion has been revised from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 for tubectomy and from Rs. 160 to Rs. 200 for vasectomy. New contraceptives have been added to the programme, namely IUD 380A and the Emergency Contraceptive. Likewise, several initiatives have been undertaken under the Reproductive Child Health programme to address the issues of manpower shortage, contraceptives, and outreach of services related to mother and child care. A comprehensive strategy to involve the Local Government Institutions in the Family Welfare Programme is under formulation. To involve the NGOs in a more meaningful manner, the guidelines have been revised to ensure that NGOs shift from mere advocacy to service delivery. Finally, to expand access to contraceptives in rural areas, the social marketing guidelines are also being revised.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very important issue. The population of our country

is now more than 100 crores which is a matter of concern, as no planning can succeed in view of increase in population. On this account, Government also faces problems as the people can not be given full fledged relief for their health problems. The House has resolved to launch a National Family Welfare Scheme under the Chairmanship of hon'ble Prime Minister who is making so much efforts for that. But we also have a duty in this cause. In view of the burgeoning population of our country, what incentives are being given to limit the size of a family so that planning could succeed. To what extent family welfare centres are providing facilities, how many such centres are working, how it is being monitored, how people are being made aware about family planning? I would like to know as to what is being done in relation to all the above mentioned aspects.

MR. SPEAKER : Hon'ble Minister, the question is before you. Khaireji, please ask your remaining questions in the second supplementary. You can not ask so many questions together.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : I only have to say that no distinction should be made in it on the basis of religion...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : You have put such a long question that I am afraid that by the time it is answered population will have increased considerably. Please sit down. Along with population, question should also be small.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether, in view of the common Civil Code, similar rules would be there for all the religions? Otherwise it is seen that people of a certain religion adopt family planning whereas people of other community believe in five and our twenty five. It should not be so.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the original question of the hon'ble Member related to what are we doing in this direction and in my reply I have stated that. He wants to know about the number of centres being run and how they are monitored. Through you, I would like to inform him that at present 1,37,311 subcentres are being run, through which RCH programme is being conducted, but as per the census of 1991, we had to set up one such

centre for every five thousand population and there was a shortfall of 8200 sub-centres for it.

We have decided to add 8200 more sub-centres and thus the figure would be completed per 5000 population according to 1991 census. Apart from this, we propose to open 461 more sub-centres in the desert areas of Rajasthan where one sub-centre per 5000 population scheme has been dispensed with. At present there are 1,45,311 centres and after 461 new centres are added up, then Rajasthan would be fully covered.

The process of monitoring goes on regularly. Earlier we used to give 90 percent of the expenditure of the centres but now in New Population Policy, 2000, we have decided that Union Government would fully fund all the existing centres as well as the new sub-centres that will be opened in future.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, our health department needs to give more attention towards it. Just opening centres is not enough. Though people do become aware if centres are opened. My second question is very important. A number of states, including Maharashtra, have laid down rules that only those persons would be qualified to hold offices in Panchayati Raj institutions, local bodies, municipal corporations, Zilla Parishad who have no more than two children and if one has more than two children then he or she would no longer be eligible. Such is the rule. A Constitution Amendment Bill was brought before Lok Sabha in 1992, which is still pending for consideration in the Parliament. The objective of that amendment Bill was to bar a person having more than two children from being a Member or contesting in the election for becoming a Member of either Parliament or Legislative Assembly. I would like to know whether Government intends to revive the Bill and if so, when it propose to bring that Bill for the consideration of the house?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : In the deliberations before the formulation of National Population Policy, no consensus had emerged on providing separate incentives or disincentives for encouraging or discouraging people, that is why NPP talks about voluntary adoption. The Bill hon'ble Member is talking about was introduced in Rajya Sabha in 1992 and is still pending there. I would

be very happy if there is a national consensus on the Bill. That is why I have said in the reply that before such a legislation is brought, national consensus is needed. Hon'ble Member recalls the Bill which is pending in the Rajya Sabha. We can fix things by calling an All Party Meeting. Government will have no objection if there is a unanimity on the issue in the House. On the contrary, Government would be pleased to clear such a bill in both the Houses having provisions for incentives and disincentives.

[English]

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Mr. Speaker, Sir, population growth is a matter of great concern for all of us. Our hon. Prime Minister is here and the Leader of the Opposition is also here. The population growth cannot be controlled only by giving lip sympathy or by making statements. The Andhra Pradesh Assembly had passed a legislation according to which if any person is having more than two children, he will not be eligible for contesting local body elections. We are all elected representatives and all the political parties are aiming to reduce the population. Whosoever may be in the Government, they are adopting the National Population Policy. So, it should start from ourselves. It will not have a retrospective effect but it will have a prospective effect. If it is done, it will help reducing the population to some extent. I think there should not be any problem of consensus. In future, if any person is having more than two children, he should be debarred from contesting elections for MLA or MP. It will help in reduction the population to some extent.

So many States are doing well. That is why, we represented the hon. Prime Minister at the time of amendment of the People's Representation Act for freezing the constituencies. The States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra are doing well in this regard. All the southern States have reduced the population. At the time of passing the Bill for freezing the constituencies, the Government of India had agreed to encourage these States. Otherwise, the States will not follow the family planning programmes.

MR. SPEAKER : You have made your point. You should put a straight question. No speeches will be allowed during Question Hour.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Sir, disincentives and incentives are required for reducing the population in a particular State.

What are the incentives for the States that are doing well in this regard? Now we are penalising the States which are not making efforts to control population.

Sir, if everybody here is interested in it, then the hon. Prime Minister should convene an all-Party meeting to arrive at a consensus for giving a prospective effect to the legislation already enacted by a few States. It is then only that the people at the lower level will follow this example. I would like to know whether the Government is willing to do this or not.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Member has given a good information that Andhra Pradesh Government have laid down rules that only those persons would be able to contest election in Panchayats and Nagarpalikas who donot have more than two children. Not only Andhra Pradesh, but Maharashtra and Karnataka Government have also made such rules but people of those states are unhappy over this discrimination against them. A person having more than two children cannot contest Gram panchayat elections but he is eligible to contest elections of Legislative Assembly and also Parliament. The people there are asking why similar disincentives do not exist for Assembly and Parliament. As I have just said and he also said—the leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, both are present here—a day should be fixed for the all party meeting. And not only that, I assure you that if there is a consensus on the issue in the House, then we will introduce the Bill in this very session as the Bill is already pending. We do not have to introduce a new Bill. The 1992 Bill...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : The Bill can be introduced...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI : One Bill is already there, please ask them whether the second Bill would have national consensus...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let her reply first.

SHRIMAT SUSHMA SWARAJ : I was telling that the Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha in 1992. Fortunately the Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha. Had it been introduced in Lok Sabha it would have lapsed whenever Lok Sabha was dissolved. But the Bill is not yet dead, as it was moved in Rajya Sabha. I would be very happy if the enthusiasm being shown today in the House is translated into positive vote while passing the Bill. Since that Bill is a Constitution Amendment Bill which has not to be passed just by a simple majority, it will have to be passed by the special majority of more than 50 percent of the total membership and two thirds of those present and voting. If the enthusiasm is maintained, then the Bill can be brought and passed in Rajya Sabha on 21st when it is reconvened...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not asking a question...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : This is no way to ask a question. It will not do. Please cooperate with me. Whether you will listen to only Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav? Please listen to me also.

(Interruptions)

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Prime Minister had a meeting with the Chief Ministers of four States, namely, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan on 16th January, 2003. We have, today, a total fertility rate of more than three and we also have a definite goal of achieving total fertility of 1.5 by the year 2010.

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as well as from the hon. Prime Minister whether the Government is thinking in terms of bringing an act to make it mandatory to register all pregnant mothers like as it is done in the case of birth and death. This would not only help in bringing in small family norms but would also update the registration of eligible couples.

MR. SPEAKER : Please put your question.

DR. V. SAROJA : Sir, this is my question. I want to know whether the ante-natal mothers would get registered or not.

It would not only help bring in small family norms but would also help in bringing down infant mortality and maternal mortality rates along with better implementation of PNDT Act. Would the Minister come forward to bring such a legislation? With one such single legislation, we would be able to control population by 2007, that is within the Tenth Five Year Plan itself. This is our practical experience in the State of Tamil Nadu. Would the hon. Prime Minister come up with such a legislation right now?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : So far such proposal or Bill is under consideration of the Government. Since hon'ble Member has asked about it today, then I would like to inform you that I will be able to tell about it only after weighing its pros and cons. At present no such legislation is under consideration.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister has told us that she is ready to bring the Bill in this very session but it should not cover the two persons—the leader of the Opposition and the hon'ble Prime Minister—as both are within the limits set by it and both would agree to it.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA) : Shri Chaubeyji, you must know that both Sushmaji and I also come within that limit.

[English]

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : It is a very important question. The Prime Minister is here and the Leader of the Opposition, Smt. Sonia Gandhi is also here. First of all, let me congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, as you saw to it yesterday that India followed the Gandhian philosophy of unity and integrity. This peace-loving country has shown the whole world that it is a united country even in difficult times.

In the same spirit I would request the Speaker to take up this issue also to evolve consensus among all political parties to amend this fundamental right. Every family should be restricted to have only two children, like it is

prevalent in China. This is the reason why China is the strongest country in the world today. Likewise, irrespective of a person's caste, creed or religion, every citizen of this country should be made to adhere to this two-child family norm, if you want to save the country. For this purpose, may I ask the hon. Minister to evolve the consensus to amend the Constitution in order to see that India becomes the strongest country in the world in another ten years?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : This is a suggestion addressed to you, Sir. Therefore, I can only wait for your observation. I cannot reply to it.

MR. SPEAKER : I am totally in favour of this suggestion. Since the hon. Minister has made it clear that the Bill will be brought as early as possible, the Speaker will be most happy if it is done and if all Parties agree to it.

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY : I appreciate that the Government is formulating various schemes to control population. Tamil Nadu is one State which has faithfully implemented this scheme totally.

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA : We are the ones who are responsible for population control and for the success of small family norms. So, we should be given a chance to ask the question.

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY : Tamil Nadu has achieved a fertility rate of less than 2.1. The Government has recently announced selling of condoms even in PDS shops not only to control AIDS, but also to control the population growth.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Tamil Nadu has been adequately compensated by creating at least Primary Health Centres in each and every village. Secondly, I would also like to know from the hon. Minister, out of these 8,669 proposed sub-centres, how many have been given to Tamil Nadu.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : First of all, I would like to say that as it has been proposed by hon. Member that

Primary Health Centres should be given incentive, but Primary Health Centre is a State subject. Both Primary Health Care and Community Health Centres are run by State Government, Union Government do not contribute anything for it. It gives only sub-centres, whose number is 1,37,312

[English]

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY : At least adequate funds be given.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : He has demanded setting up of Primary Health Centre in each and every village. Primary Health Centre and Community Health Centre are set up by the State Government. Union Government provides only sub-centres, under which RCH programme is running. As I said earlier as per 1991 census, one sub-centre would be created against the population of five thousand, as per information available to me, no sub-centre has been given to Tamil Nadu from the proposed 8669 new centres, the State is already having requisite number of centres, even then once again I will look into it, and will give the exact information to the Member.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has divided all the States of the country in three categories on the basis of rise in population in first category the States having population growth rate of less than 2.1 per cent have been placed in second category, there are the States having growth rate of 2.1 per cent and in third category the States having growth rate of 3 per cent have been placed, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan lies in third category having growth rate of more than 3 per cent. These States are called sick. The hon. Prime Minister had called the meeting of Chief Ministers of these four States in the month of January. Population growth is the biggest problem of this country. I would like to know as to these four States are most backward in regard to population control, whether the Government have found reasons behind this? Population is not coming under control in these States due to poverty, illiteracy or any

other reason, whether the Government have tried to arrive at any conclusion? Whether the Government have tried to find solution to these problems? Government neither agrees to give incentives nor take penal action, so that these States may also come in national average. Whether the Government are taking any steps by including Panchayats also in the programme by formulating a scheme to increase awareness among people in this regard?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Let me first of all say here for the information of hon. Member that among the three categories the States having growth rate of less than 2.1 per cent have been placed in the first category. In the second category States having fertility rate of 2.1 per cent to 3.00 per cent have been placed and in third category States having more than 3 per cent fertility rate have been placed. There are not only four States having growth rate of more than 3 per cent which the hon. Member has mentioned but there are 12 such States but we are concerned about Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Though Meghalaya is also having growth rate of more than 3 per cent but it do not affect the national average. Since, 44 per cent population of the country reside in these States and if growth rate of these States exceeds 3 per cent, it affects the national average. Therefore, I have made a separate mention about these States. The hon. Member asked about the efforts made by the Government. The Government have set up Empowered Action Group (EAG) of eight States which include Orissa also besides these four States and the newly constituted three States of Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. Empowered Action Group of these eight States has been set up. The hon'ble Prime Minister convenes their meeting. As you just said that a special meeting of these four States was held. You have asked reason for average rise and fall in population. There are three reasons for this. The hon. Member has himself mentioned two reasons—poverty and illiteracy and third is weak administration. Due to these three reasons, due to weak administration the benefit programmes run on national level do not reach the poor. The education has not reached that area. The growth rate is less than 2.1 in first category States because level of women education is very high there. Therefore, the educated women themselves get to know about

Government schemes and they themselves adopt small family norms. But the benefit of schemes run by the Union Government is not reaching to the people due to poverty, illiteracy and absence of good administration. Due to this Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are backward.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very important question, we have to take concrete steps to solve this problem. Earlier Governments were also criticised, they were afraid of taking concrete steps, they did not speak much about it, therefore, this is an important question. This Bill is pending since 1992, the permission of other people is not required for it. You might have observed what hon. Members were speaking in this regard. If an initiative is taken keeping the comments in view, I think some way out would be evolved and it is the need of the hour. I would like to say that the problem could be solved by changing slogan "Hum do, hamare do" into "Hum do hamara ek". This has also been done in China. I would like to ask the Government whether it will try to solve this problem by creating unanimity.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell Shivrajji that there is a difference between taking firm steps and coercion. What has been criticised—coercion? Nobody is afraid of taking concrete steps. Secondly he asked as to why this Bill is pending since 1992, whether everybody's consent is not required, it is not so. Everybody's consent is required because it is a constitution amendment bill. Therefore, I said that till the House has two third Members present and voting, the bill cannot be passed. Therefore, I said this before the House, if the House is unanimous and zeal of the House continues as it is today, then there would be no problem in passing this bill. Since, this Bill is in Rajya Sabha and the Government is not having majority in that House, therefore, first it would be passed in Rajya Sabha, then it will be presented in Lok Sabha, Leaders of all parties are present in the House and the Members of same parties are also in Rajya Sabha. Today, if we decide that the leaders of all parties will direct Rajya Sabha Members that this Bill should be passed. I assure the House that I am ready to get the Bill passed, when House will again reassemble after the holidays on 21st.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL We do not want to give any substantial answer before the voting. If the Government do not understand what are we saying then we are helpless...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : The Government have given reply in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : There are many hon. Members who want to ask question on this. A number of Members are raising their hands. They want to ask questions on this. A suggestion has been made to me that only those Members who have either one or two children should be allowed to ask questions. I am not taking that suggestion into consideration. Shri Ramdas Athawale can ask the question. I do not know how many children he has. I have not applied that rule to Shri Ramdas Athawale.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this regard, the Bill was presented in Lok Sabha in 1992 but till now it has not been implemented. Shri Shivraj V. Patil and that our slogan should be "Hum do, hamara ek" China has strongly struggled to control population. We shall have to struggle in the same way and there is a need to control population to make India economically and socially strong. The legislation will also be enacted in this regard. That legislation may be having a slogan "Hum do, Hamare do" or "Hum do, hamara ek", but people having 3-4-5-6 or 10-12 children may go to court, because they will say, the legislation has come to force now but before that I was having more kids and that time this legislation was not in force. This is the problem before us. You will enforce this law on people contesting the election for Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly, but this is not going to reduce population. I would like to request the Government that this legislation should be forced on every citizen, whether he contests elections or not, but every family requires this legislation. The hon. Minister was saying that she will bring bill in this regard on 21st. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what was she doing till now. This Government is in power for last four years.

The Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajapayee is present here. You want to control the population and strengthen this country. I would like to know why this bill has not been introduced since 1992. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister assured that she would bring this bill in session beginning from 1992. If the House would be having two-third majority, then the people who will not support this Bill will loose the election. Therefore, everybody should support this bill, we have to control the population, it is our responsibility, I assure you. This Bill should be introduced in this session.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Athawaleji, I could not understand your question, please repeat your question.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a need to introduce the Bill in this session. If this Bill will not be introduced in this session, then...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know how many children Shri Ramdas Athawale has...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A.C. JOS : It seems he has more than two children...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all for your kind information, It would like to say that you have imposed a condition for asking a question. I have full right to answer that question, because I have made the slogan a reality "Hum dono ek, hamara ek", which is ahead of "Hum do, hamara ek". I am mother of one kid and that too a daughter. Therefore, I have got a full right. Secondly, hon. Athawaleji, said that we should bring this Bill. The people should not be so discouraged by this bill, as they are saying that these norms should not only be implied to the people who want to fight elections but on every family. I said if unanimity is formed, then this bill would be introduced and this type of amendment would be brought. Since this Bill is pending, its draft is ready and if this type of amendment would be introduced, the Government will take it into consideration, but as I said this is a very important issue as to national consensus is

formed on amendment brought by us and our opinion, then we will definitely introduce that bill. There are no 'if' and 'buts' in it. The question that if it is not brought does not arise. I would like to say on the floor of the House, that if you agree, then I will bring this Bill.

[English]

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM : Mr. Speaker. Sir, I thank you very much for the opportunity given to me. There is no doubt about the point that population stabilisation measures should be undertaken and they are very important as far as the development of the country is concerned.

Sir, as per the National Population Policy, 2002, the citizens are given the freedom to voluntarily inform the decisions about the family welfare programmes to limit the size of the family. But contrary to the National Population Policy. It has appeared in the Press that compulsory measures are taken in certain parts of the country through Medical Colleges as per the instructions given by the Government of India and even banned contraceptives are used for the purpose.

MR. SPEAKER : Prof. Premajam, please put a straight question. Otherwise reply may not come because time is very limited.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM : Sir, I am putting the question.

The history of family welfare programmes shows that it is putting women into disadvantage. So, I would like to know whether compulsory measures are undertaken even now in family welfare programmes for downsizing the family.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, no compulsory measures programme is going on. This type of consensus was not reached in National Population Policy, therefore, voluntary approach was adopted. Some State Governments passed some acts and have given disincentives. According to those acts, if

one wants to contest Panchayat Polls, one should not have more than two children. In this way some disincentives/ incentives are given. Some States enacted these kind of legislation, but compulsory measures have not been adopted.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Indians Languishing in Foreign Jails

*383. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN :
SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of Indians are languishing in foreign jails;

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) the number of Indians imprisoned and released/ brought back to India during each of the last three years till March 31, 2003, country-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for the release of rest of the prisoners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A statement prepared on the basis of information received from Indian Missions abroad is placed as statement.

(d) Indian Missions provide all possible assistance to Indian nationals in foreign jails. This assistance includes meetings with these Indian nationals, ensuring that there is no miscarriage of justice, facilitating speedy trials, and enabling proper living conditions and treatment in the prisons.

Statement

Sl. No.	Country	Number of Indians languishing in foreign jails and their details	Number of Indians imprisoned and released/ brought back to India during last three years			Remarks
			2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Algeria	Nil	Nil	Nil	1/1	
2.	Argentina	3 under house arrest	Nil	Nil	9/9	
3.	Armenia	1	1			
4.	Australia	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	
5.	Austria	Nil	18	11	4	
6.	Azerbaijan	Nil	2/2	Nil	Nil	
7.	Bahrian	119	400/312	212/148	20/87	
8.	Bangladesh	No data available	20	421	850	
9.	Belgium	14	Nil	Nil	Nil	
10.	Bolivia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
11.	Botswana	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
12.	Brunei	Nil	5/5	3/3	1/1	
13.	Bulgaria	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
14.	Burkina Faso	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
15.	Cambodia	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	
16.	Canada	Three	Nil	Nil	Nil	
17.	Central African Republic	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
18.	Chile	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
19.	China	Nil	Nil	2/2	1/1	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	Colombia	Nil	6/6	6/5	Nil	
21.	Comoros	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
22.	Cote D'Ivoire	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
23.	Croatia	Nil	0/6	0/1	0/2	
24.	Cyprus	In 2003, till March 31, 46 arrested— out of which 37 deported and 8 released. One still in prison which will end on 5.5.03.	91/61/30	73/37/36	102/53/48	
25.	Czeck Republic	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
26.	El Salvador	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
27.	Fiji	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
28.	Germany	Nil	363/155	894/244	237/41	Out of these, the total number of illegal Indians deported to India on the basis of Emergency certificates was: 2000 – 166; 2001–139; 2002 – 68; Jan-31 Mar'03 25
29.	Ghana	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
30.	Guinea	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
31.	Hong Kong	39	No data	No data	No data	
32.	Hungary	10	0/51	0/2	Nil	
33.	Iran	4	6	8	7	
34.	Ireland	Nil	Nil	1/0	Nil	
35.	Israel	9	98/0	77/0	56/9	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36.	Italy	Presently there are 39 Indians languishing in Italian jails who are serving long term imprisonments.	Nil	Nil	Nil	
37.	Jamaica	Nil	8/8	14/14	10/10	
38.	Japan	4	4/491	0/469	1	
39.	Jordan	4	0/9	0/11	0/2	
40.	Kuwait	Very few are in jails	203/93	162/195	162/150	
41.	Lebanon	180 Indians are in jail for illegal stay.	53/35	260/24	180/08	
42.	Liberia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
43.	Libya	1	2/1	Nil	Nil	
44.	Macedonia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
45.	Madagascar	2	2/0	2/2	Nil	
46.	Malaysia	311	0/1440	0/1563	0/458	
47.	Maldives	32	76/150	116/168	91/152	
48.	Mexico	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
49.	Mongolia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
50.	Mozambique	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
51.	Myanmar	4	6/13	10/5	11/5	
52.	Namibia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
53.	Nicaragua	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
54.	Niger	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
55.	Oman	22	0/89	0/221	0/210	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56.	Pakistan	1. Civilian Prisoners 883 2. Fishermen 245 3. Missing Defence personnel 054				
57.	Panama	3	Nil	Nil	Nil	
58.	Peru	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
59.	Poland	1	37/26	153/66	72/38	
60.	Portugal	2	2/0	Nil	Nil	
61.	Qatar	36	No data	No data	No data	
62.	Russia	6	0/4	0/1	0/5	
63.	Saudi Arabia	1677 in year 2000, 1096 in year 2001, 1091 in year 2002 and 69 in year 2003	No data	No data	No data	
64.	Sierra Leone	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
65.	Singapore	43	0/2975	0/3115	0/439	
66.	South Africa	6				
67.	Sudan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
68.	Sweden	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
69.	Switzerland	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	
70.	Tajikistan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
71.	Tanzania	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
72.	Togo	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
73.	Tunisia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
74.	Turkey	2 in police custody	22/3	2/0	4/120	
75.	UAE	As of Nov 2002 there were 2214 Indians in various UAE jails, out of which 923 were convicted prisoners and 1291 under- trial prisoners.				

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
76.	Uganda	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
77.	Ukraine	2		24	61	
78.	USA	42 in year 2000, 54 in year 2001, 53 in year 2002 and 23 in year 2003	32/47	54/36	29/22	
79.	Uzbekistan	Nil	1/0	0/1	2/2	
80.	Vietnam	Nil	1/1	Nil	Nil	
81.	Yemen	Nil	Nil	3/3	Nil	
82.	Yugoslavia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
83.	Zimbabwe	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	

[English]

Survey by TRAI

*384. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether a survey on the quality of service offered by telecom companies commissioned by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has revealed that big private cellular service providers have yet to match the standards set by the regulator for reliability, network performance and availability; and

(b) if so, the details of the findings of the survey and the action taken, if any, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) Yes, Sir. Information provided by TRAI indicates that some of the private cellular service providers have yet to match the bench marks laid down in the TRAI Regulation on Quality of Service.

(b) The salient findings of the survey done by TRAI are given in the statement. The results have been published for the information of general public and have also been put on internet on the TRAI web-site (www.traai.gov.in). This has been done primarily with a view to make the subscribers aware about the quality of service being provided by various service providers. This would help the subscribers in selecting the service provider for themselves and would also put pressure on the service providers to improve the quality of service provided by them.

Statement

Sl. No.	Parameters	No. of CMTS Licencees which met the QOS criteria	No of CMTS Licencees which did not meet the QOS criteria	Total no. of CMTS Licencees from which data was available
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Customer Reported fault complaints (from April to June, 2002)	36	1	37

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Percentage of calls with good Voice quality (from April to June, 2002)	32	1	33
3.	Customer reported Billing Complaints (from April to June, 2002)	15	24	39
4.	Customer satisfaction with network performance, reliability and availability (from October, 01 to June, 02)	Nil	39	39
5.	Customer Satisfaction with Overall Service (from October, 01 to June, 02)	14	25	39

QOS Criteria of TRAI in respect of above parameters :-

1. Customer reported fault Complaints—Fault incidence per 100 subscribers per month should be less than 2.
2. Percentage of calls with good Voice Quality—should be more than 92%.
3. Customer reported Billing Complaints—Billing complaints per 100 subscribers should be less than 0.15% per month.
4. Customer satisfaction with network performance, reliability and availability—should be more than 90%.
5. Customer satisfaction with Overall service—should be more than 85%.

Harassment of it Professionals

*385. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :

SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of Indians, including IT professionals were detained and harassed by the police in Malaysia and London recently;

(b) if so, the details of the facts regarding the said matter;

(c) whether the Government have taken up the issued with the authorities concerned;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA) : (a) to (e)
Malaysia

On March 9, 2003, 195 Indian IT professionals were detained by the Malaysian Police for questioning about their visa status. The matter was taken up strongly with Malaysian authorities that led to the release of 185 of them the same day, seven more subsequently and remaining three deported since on charges of overstay. Malaysian leaders, including Acting Prime Minister, have expressed regret and apologized over the incident.

Government of India has conveyed the seriousness with which it views such incidents.

London

On 26th March 2003, based on an extradition order from the Dutch authorities, Mr. Senthil Kumar, CEO of i-Flex was arrested in London by the UK Police. Though no formal communication to the company from the Dutch authorities on the charges against the i-Flex has been

received, suspicion of illegal employment and avoiding mandatory taxation has been mentioned as the reason for the detention by a Press Release issued by the Dutch Embassy in New Delhi.

Government has strongly taken up this matter with the Dutch and UK authorities, both in New Delhi and the Hague and London. Government of India has rejected these arguments. It sees this case as an example of economic protectionism. Mr. Senthil Kumar has been released on bail by a London Court on 2nd April 2003.

Government is in continuous contact with the Governments of UK and Netherlands to ensure that the Interpol Order seeking to extradite Mr. Kumar to Netherlands is withdrawn.

NAM Summit-2003

*386. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA :
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the 'Prime Minister had participated in the recently concluded NAM Summit held at Kuala Lumpur;
- (b) if so, the details of the various issues discussed and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether he had called upon the member countries for the formation of a Global Poverty Alleviation Fund;
- (d) if so, whether his suggestion was accepted and incorporated in the NAM declaration;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (l) whether Pakistan had raised the issue of Kashmir during the said Summit; and
- (g) if so, the reaction of the Government and other countries thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (g)
The Prime Minister participated in the NAM Summit held at Kuala Lumpur from February 23-25. The theme of the Summit was "the continuing revitalization of the NAM". Apart from this, other global themes of contemporary relevance such as commitment to multilateralism, reform of the UN system, global terrorism, the importance of North-South engagement, South-South cooperation, globalisation and sustainable development were extensively discussed. The situation with regard to Palestine and Iraq were also discussed. The Summit adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the continuing revitalization of the Non Aligned Movement. It also adopted statements on Iraq, Palestine and a final communique reflecting the consensus reached on different issues.

The Prime Minister did not call upon the NAM members for the formation of a Global Poverty Alleviation Fund during the Summit.

The President of Pakistan included in his statement some totally unwarranted remarks about Jammu and Kashmir, contrary to NAM's long-standing and healthy tradition of steering clear of bilateral issues. The Honorable Prime Minister responded to General Musharraf's unacceptable statement by highlighting the irony of his talking about an international humanitarian order, while his country encourages and incites the terrorists who perpetuate violence everyday against innocent civilians in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan received no support for its views from any other country at the Summit. It was isolated to the point of even being denied a right of reply.

Disinvestment of PFC

*387. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) whether his Ministry propose to privatize Power Finance Corporation Ltd.;
- (b) if so, whether the Corporation was asked to provide details of their borrowers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Ministry of Power had opposed any move to privatize the said corporation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the privatization of this Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) No, Sir. The Power Finance Corporation is one of several entities being examined by the Disinvestment Commission.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Eradication of Blindness and Leprosy

*388. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the Central grant-in-aid provided for the eradication of blindness and leprosy in various States during the last financial year;

(b) the funds released for the purpose during the year, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government have issued any guidelines regarding utilisation of the Central assistance or grant-in-aid; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) Statewise funds released to the States including commodity assistance for both the schemes during 2002-2003 are given in the statement.

Specific guidelines on utilization of grant-in-aid are issued by Government of India along with budget allocation for both the schemes. These guidelines include activities for which Grant-in-aid is to be utilized, furnishing of monthly/quarterly performance and expenditure reports and furnishing audited reports and utilization Certificates annually.

Statement

National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) and National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)

During the Year 2002-2003

Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	States	Releases under NPCB	Releases under NLEP
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	808.30	179.22
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	23.65	115.96
3.	Assam	35.70	97.48
4.	Bihar	126.74	855.85
5.	Chhattisgarh	169.37	354.41
6.	Goa	11.43	8.10
7.	Gujarat	210.31	99.65
8.	Haryana	49.77	43.89
9.	Himachal Pradesh	62.03	30.45
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	84.26	96.39
11.	Jharkhand	123.40	257.46
12.	Karnataka	343.59	122.66
13.	Kerala	182.15	69.36
14.	Madhya Pradesh	658.01	676.61
15.	Maharashtra	629.54	263.14
16.	Manipur	15.34	101.25
17.	Meghalaya	33.71	46.24
18.	Mizoram	31.94	76.50
19.	Nagaland	23.37	112.44

1	2	3	4
20.	Orissa	306.26	478.63
21.	Punjab	190.30	40.27
22.	Rajasthan ^u	509.37	52.32
23.	Sikkim	20.66	39.36
24.	Tamil Nadu	1,609.53	240.63
25.	Tripura	44.01	33.60
26.	Uttar Pradesh	1,070.95	1,508.04
27.	Uttaranchal	134.77	120.01
28.	West Bengal	318.87	599.55
29.	A & Nicobar	1.59	20.22
30.	Chandigarh	20.37	10.13
31.	D&N Haveli	6.44	6.00
32.	Daman & Diu	5.00	14.50
33.	Delhi	28.62	93.42
34.	Lakshadweep	1.59	7.26
35.	Pondicherry	7.39	6.00
Total		7,898.31	6,877.00

[English]

Health Care for Women

*389. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the focus of health care for women is still limited to child birth and initial period of post child birth;

(b) if so, the factors responsible for such a situation; and

(c) the efforts being made to provide comprehensive health services to women?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) Women in the reproductive age group of 15-49 years are more vulnerable to morbidity and mortality due to causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Based on the data on maternal mortality ratio (MMR) provided by the Sample Registration System (SRS - 1998), of the Registrar General of India, it is estimated that about 1.1 lakh women in India die every year due to causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. As a major supplement to the current strategies and programmes the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme has been addressed primarily to women in the reproductive age group to bring down the maternal mortality ratio. The interventions are essential obstetric care, emergency obstetric care, referral transport for pregnant women with complication of pregnancy through panchayat, provision of drugs and equipments at First Referral Units (FRUs), provision of contractual staff like additional Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANMs), staff nurses and hiring of anaesthetists. A number of national health and disease control programmes are being implemented by the Government. These national programmes lay equal stress on providing comprehensive health care to both men and women.

To attend to this major problem, State Governments have also taken several steps to provide comprehensive health care to women not only upto childbirth and in the initial post childbirth years by making adequate provision in the State Budget and through the facilities of their Departments of Health and Family Welfare.

A National Cancer Control Programme for early detection and treatment of cervical and breast cancers among women is also under implementation. The National AIDS Control Programme in collaboration with the Departments of Family Welfare of Government of India and the State Governments carries out a nation wide Family Health awareness Campaign of HIV/AIDS and Reproductive tract infections and sexually transmitted infections (RTI/STI) and also provides treatment for RTI/STI during the campaign period. Evidence is also becoming available that hormonal and metabolic disorders

and micronutrient deficiencies like Vitamin D contribute significantly to morbidity and mortality among women particularly those in the peri and post menopausal age group. Services for these ailments are being provided through the existing hospitals and other health care facilities.

Telephone Connectivity in Rural Areas

*390. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :
DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether a pilot project to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban areas has been launched in remote areas of Andhra Pradesh as reported in the *Times of India*, dated March 15, 2003;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the government propose to provide such types of phones and facilities to all the rural areas of the country;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Union Government propose to provide assistance and subsidies to the NGOs working in this field; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) and (b) A Non-Governmental Organisation namely the Rural Telecom Foundation (RTF) on its own initiative has launched a pilot project in Kalleda village in Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh on 13.09.2002 on experimental basis. The experiment is known as "Gram-Phone" scheme. It makes use of 65 Direct Exchange Lines (DELs) provided to individual subscribers in normal way from Parvathgiri Exchange. The aim of the pilot project is to cover more village houses by sharing one direct telephone line by another 3 nearby houses in the form of parallel lines. The

parallel lines do not have the facility of making outgoing calls and incoming calls cannot be received by some houses directly.

(c) to (f) Results of the experiment will be observed. Telephone connectivity of this type has some of the difficulties normally associated with a number of telephones being in parallel like no secrecy, dependence on the leader for outgoing calls, billing disputes, increase in fault liability, unsatisfactory quality of speech. As such, the telephone service made available under the above project is not in line with the standards followed by BSNL in regard to providing telephone services to its subscribers. However, Government shall review the results of the experiment after six months, and assess whether the experiment is worth replication.

Creation of Federal Investigative Bureau

*391. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to create Federal Investigative Bureau to ease pressure of work on the Central Bureau of Investigation;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the functions to be assigned to it;

(c) the time by which it is likely to start functioning;

(d) whether the present establishment of CBI is not able to cope up with the pressure of works; and

(e) if so, the steps taken/being taken to improve the functioning of CBI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) While the Central Bureau to Investigation is coping with its workload, various steps have been taken to improve the organisation's functioning as part

of an ongoing process to improve the organisation's performance.

**Role of National Institute of Sports and
Sports Authority of India**

*392. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ : Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) the main objectives and role of the National Institute of Sports and the Sports Authority of India;

(b) the number of Olympic finalists and coaches trained by these authorities since their inception alongwith their contributions in training international standard sportspersons;

(c) whether these authorities have failed in training good quality coaches;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the concrete steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA) : (a) The National Institute of Sports was set up in 1961 with the broad objective of developing sports in the country on scientific lines and to produce coaches of high caliber in different disciplines. The Institute now serves as an academic wing of Sports Authority of India (SAI) after its amalgamation with the latter in 1987.

The main objective of Sports Authority of India is to draw up and implement plans for promotion and development of sports in the country. The authority also liaises with State Governments, State Sports Councils, Indian Olympic Association, National Sports Federations and other similar national or international bodies in matters relating to sports and games and allied subjects.

(b) to (d) The Sports Authority of India by implementing various sports promotional programmes has produced 229 Olympics/international athletes since the inception of its schemes. A number of athletes who have excelled at international levels have been trained by Indian coaches trained at Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala.

Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala and the other academic wings of Sports Authority of India have produced 13603 coaches upto the academic session 2001-02 in 25 disciplines including 470 coaches from foreign countries. The SAI coaches have also been appointed as national coaches for different disciplines from time to time.

(e) To further improve the performance and caliber of the coaches and develop their skills, the National Institute of Sports and its academic wings are conducting various diploma and degree courses on coaching and sports medicines, A six-week advance course provides input to coaches about the latest techniques in sports training and the role of scientific support in each specific discipline. Action has also been initiated to train coaches, who have produced outstanding sportspersons, in the recognised institutes abroad.

Coaches are now employed on contract basis and their performance is reviewed continuously.

CRF Schemes

*393. CHOWDHARY TALIB HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of schemes under CRF which have been submitted to the Government for their approval during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the schemes cleared by the Government so far, State-wise;

(c) the time by which the rest of the schemes are likely to be cleared;

(d) whether Jammu and Kashmir has not been getting its due share under CRF and other Central schemes meant for construction of roads; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to link the far flung and inaccessible areas of the hill States of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) to (c) 2558 proposals for improvement for State Roads were received from various

States for approval under CRF during the last three years. 1796 proposals have been approved as per details given in statement. No fixed time frame can be given for approval of the schemes as the approval of the schemes depends on the utilization of funds by the States.

(d) For the State of Jammu & Kashmir an amount of Rs. 91.62 crore has accrued under CRF during the

period 2000-01 to 2002-03, An amount of Rs. 37.44 crore has been released to the State on the basis of the utilization certificate received. 7 proposals amounting to Rs. 15.98 crore have been approved under the Economic Importance Scheme.

(e) Selection of stretches to be taken up under CRF is made by the State Government.

Statement

State-wise List of Schemes received and approved under CRF during the last three years

(Amount in Rs. Cr.)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Schemes received during last three years		Schemes approved during last three years	
		No.	Amount	No.	Amount
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	58	252.94	58	252.94
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	21	55.54	16	47.13
3.	Assam	149*	228.57	39	67.81
4.	Bihar	78*	448.91	43	129.38
5.	Chhattisgarh	42*	205.28	16	75.39
6.	Goa	4	7.62	4	7.62
7.	Gujarat	369	241.03	342	215.96
8.	Haryana	43	115.54	41	102.96
9.	Himachal Pradesh	30*	75.65	11	27.84
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	43*	144.29	25	78.37
11.	Jharkhand	7*	48.98	5	26.75
12.	Karnataka	258	209.09	201	165.43
13.	Kerala	8**	58.71	5	38.08
14.	Madhya Pradesh	161	879.51	44	189.14
15.	Maharashtra	200*	443.50	106	295.82

1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	Manipur	10	20.14	7	13.98
17.	Meghalaya	28*	51.91	14	21.40
18.	Mizoram	26	24.02	23	20.01
19.	Nagaland	5	10.06	4	7.16
20.	Orissa	101	98.89	101	98.89
21.	Punjab	91*	208.93	76	160.72
22.	Rajasthan	244*	320.88	188	255.16
23.	Sikkim	10	8.56	9	5.57
24.	Tamil Nadu	332	225.93	332	225.93
25.	Tripura	5	9.24	4	7.10
26.	Uttar Pradesh	83*	741.14	31	197.08
27.	Uttanchal	110*	291.77	23	29.99
28.	West Bengal	8	96.65	8	96.65
UTs					
29.	Andaman & Nicobar	1	2.43	1	2.43
30.	Chandigarh	6	11.45	4	6.93
31.	Dadra Nagar Haveli	8	2.51	8	2.61
32.	Daman & Diu	1	1.85	—	—
33.	Delhi	16	32.00	5	19.36
34.	Lakshadweep				
35.	Pondicherry	2	4.50	2	4.50
Total		2558	5578.01	1796	2895.26

*The proposals beyond the permissible limit of approval have been received. The proposals upto the permissible limit are under scrutiny.

**The proposals received recently.

Foreign Investment in Communication Sector

*394. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of the investments made by the foreign companies in the communication sector;
- (b) the impact thereof in this sector;
- (c) the details of the proposals approved by the Government during the last three years alongwith the sectors where such investments are likely to be made by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the telecommunications sector during the period 1991 to 2002 has been about Rs. 9,560 crores.

(b) FDI has helped in rapid growth of telecom sector both in telecom services and telecom equipment manufacturing.

(c) The entire telecom sector has been opened up for private sector participation. The Government has approved about 211 proposals for about Rs. 17,500 crores for FDI in telecom sector during the period 2000 to 2002. Further, FDI is likely to be made mainly by the private sector in cellular mobile telephone service, basic telephone, national and international long distance services and telecom equipment manufacturing sub-sectors.

Disinvestment of PSUs

*395. SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO : Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the names of PSUs disinvested during each of the last three years ending March 31, 2003;

(b) the percentage of shares disinvested in each case with the value of land, value of assets and amount of liabilities in each of the disinvested undertakings and the amount received in each case so far;

(c) the details of expenditure from the amount received from disinvestments during each of the last three years;

(d) the details of the disinvested PSUs in which Government control has been dispensed with and the reasons therefor;

(e) whether any evaluation has been made of the disinvested industries; and

(f) if so, the details thereof alongwith profit and loss, production and productivity and the condition of employees and employment in each case?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) and (b) The Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs)/ units disinvested through strategic sale during the last three years ending 31st March, 2003 indicating the percentage of shares disinvested and the amount received against the equity disinvested is given at statement-I. A statement indicating the value of land, the value of assets and liabilities as per the last audited financial accounts of these PSUs preceding the year of disinvestment is given at statement-II.

(c) The amount realised from disinvestment in PSUs has been deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India which is used to finance social and economic development programs, rural development poverty alleviation, PSU restructuring and infrastructure development.

(d) The Government has disinvested its equity in the PSUs as indicated in statement-I in accordance with the policy of the disinvestment under which all non-strategic PSUs can be disinvested upto a level of 26%, or lower on a case by case basis.

(e) and (f) Disinvestment of PSUs through strategic sale was initiated only about three years back and most of the transactions have been concluded in the last two years. Sufficient time has not elapsed so far for a rigorous analysis of its impact. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that it has facilitated the productive use of assets

which will contribute to growth and employment. Data on the sales and profit of the disinvested PSUs, as given by the concerned companies is given in statement-III. Information provided by the companies suggests that reduction in employment is minimal. Often it is a continuation of restructuring initiated earlier, necessitated by the internal requirements of the disinvested company. In one case employment has increased after disinvestment. There have been no cases of retrenchment. Pending wage agreements have been finalised in several cases resulting in an increase in wages and allowances for employees.

companies have seen a substantial growth in sales and loss levels have been significantly reduced. Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd. (IPCL) was a profitable company, which was disinvested in June, 2002. During the first nine months of 2002-2003 as reported by the company, there has been an 11% increase in gross turnover and a 104% increase in net profit as compared to the same period in the previous year. In BALCO, various operational and input costs have been reduced, the production of hot metal has increased and the new management is considering a substantial increase in the capacity.

Modern Food Industries (India) Ltd. (MFIL) and Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. (PPL) were loss-making companies prior to disinvestment. Post disinvestment, the

These examples show that efficiency enhancement has been achieved by disinvested PSUs, which is beneficial for the economy and for employment.

Statement-I

PSUs disinvested through strategic sale

Sl. No.	Name of PSUs	% of equity disinvested	Amount realised (Rs. in crore)
1	2	3	4
2000-01			
1.	Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd. (BALCO)	51.00	551.50
2001-02			
1.	HTL Ltd.	74.00	55.00
2.	CMC Ltd.	51.00	152.00
3.	India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. (ITDC)		
(i)	Ashok Bangalore	Long term lease cum management contract	39.41@
(ii)	Bodhgaya Ashok	100	1.81
(iii)	Hassan Ashok	100	2.27
(iv)	Maduri Ashok	100	4.97
(v)	TBABR, Mamallapuram	100	6.13
(vi)	Agra Ashok	100	3.61

1	2	3	4
	(vii) Laxmi Vias Place, Udaipur	100	6.77
	(viii) Qutub Hotel, New Delhi	100	34.46
	(ix) Lodhi Hotel, New Delhi	100	71.93
	Sub-total		171.36
4.	Hotel Corporation of India Ltd. (HCI)		
	(i) Centaur Hotel Juhu Beach, Mumbai	100	153.00
	(ii) Indo Hokke Hotels Ltd. Rajgir	100	6.51
	Sub-total		159.51*
5.	IBP Ltd.	33.58	1,153.68
6.	Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd.	25.00	3,689.00**
7.	Paradeep Phosphates Ltd.	74	151.70
2002-2003			
1.	Hindustan Zinc Ltd.	26.00	445.00
2.	Maruti Udyog Nigam Ltd.		1000.00^^
3.	Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd. (IPCL)	26.00	1491.00
4.	HCI Centaur Hotel Airport, Mumbai	100	83.00*
5.	ITDC		
	(i) KABR, Kovalam	100	40.39
	(ii) Manali Ashok	100	3.65
	(iii) Khajuraho Ashok	100	2.19
	(iv) Varanasi Ashok	100	8.38
	(v) Aurangabad Ashok	100	16.50
	(vi) Kanishka Ashok	100	92.37
	(vii) Indraprastha	100	43.39
	(viii) Chandigarh Project (incomplete)	100	17.27

1	2	3	4
(ix)	Ranjit	100	29.28
(x)	Airport Ashok Kolkata	100	19.39

*Proceeds gone to Air India.

**Includes dividend of Rs. 755 crore and special interim dividend and dividend tax of Rs. 1,495 crore.

^Control Premium received against renunciation of rights issues in MUL by Government resulting in Government equity in Maruti Udyog reduced from 49.75% to 45.54%.

@ Inclusive of Minimum Guaranteed Annual Payment (MGAP), Security Deposit and Business Transfer Consideration etc.

Statement-II

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of PSUs	Value of land	Value of Assets (including value of land)	Value of liabilities (net of shareholders' fund)
1.	Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd. (BALCO)	6.71	1210.05	505.90
2.	HTL Ltd.	0.11	333.96	276.34
3.	CMC Ltd.		353.16	278.49
4.	India Tourism Development Corporation**	3.97	314.59	110.77
5.	Hotel Corporation of India**	0.79	117.16	76.56
6.	IBP Ltd.	51.16	1490.07	1121.00
7.	Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd.	75.10	10069.26	3480.52
8.	Paradeep Phosphates Ltd.	3.71	1364.59	1016.95
9.	Hindustan Zinc Ltd.	10.91	1501.50	434.23
10.	Maruti Udyog Nigam Ltd.	8.50	4828.50	2121.20
11.	Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd. (IPCL)	84.95	8253.07	5425.78

**Data in respect of ITDC and HCI are for the respective companies as a whole and pertain to the audited accounts of the financial year prior to the conclusion of the transactions.

Statement-III*Sales/Profit Figures of Disinvested PSUs*

Sl. No.	Company Name	Period	Sale (Rs. in crore)	Net Profit (Rs. in crore)
1.	MFIL*	Jan. to Dec. 01	232	-12
2.	BALCO	2001-02	714.65	18.76
3.	CMC	2001-02	565.33	25.09
4.	HTL	2001-02	233	-107.61
5.	VSNL	Nine Months ending Dec. 02	3780	589
6.	IBP	Nine Months ending Dec. 02	6754	49
7.	PPL	Nine Months ending Dec. 02	499	-50.42
8.	HZL	Nine Months ending Dec. 02	1080	95
9.	IPCL	Nine Months ending Dec. 02	3656	114

Visit of Afghanistan President

*396. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY :
COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the President of Afghanistan had visited India recently;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held and the agreements signed;

(c) whether Indian businessmen have been invited to set up joint ventures in Afghanistan as a step to boost trade relations; and

(d) if so, the response of the Indian businessmen in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan had paid an official visit to India on 5-8 March 2003.

During the visit, discussions were held on a range of issues, including bilateral cooperation, status of implementation of various Indian assistance projects in Afghanistan, implementation of the Bonn Agreement including work on the new Afghan Constitution and elections in Afghanistan in 2004, as well as the continuing threat to regional peace and stability from terrorist activities. A Bilateral Preferential Trading Agreement, aimed at expanding India-Afghanistan trade relations, was signed on 6 March 2003 by Commerce Ministers of the two countries; Prime Minister announced a financial commitment of US\$ 70 million, over and above the US\$ 100 million already available as grant, for the construction of Zaranj-Delaram road segment in Afghanistan; and the third of three airbus aircraft, from Air India to Ariana Afghan Airlines, was formally handed over to the President Karzai himself on March 7, 2003.

In their interactions, Afghan government officials have generally explained the laws relating to foreign investments and setting up of joint ventures in Afghanistan. Business organizations in India, including Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Confederation of Indian Industries have been actively exploring opportunities to set up joint ventures in Afghanistan.

**Non-use of Life Saving Machines
In AIIMS**

*397. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 380 dated November 20, 2002 and state :

(a) whether the requisite information has since been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken by the Government thereon; and

(c) if not, by when it is likely to be collected?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) In the news-item that appeared in "Dainik Jagran" on November 01, 2002, the following machines were mentioned as lying unused at AIIMS :

Sl.No.	Name	Quantity Nos.	Price (Rs.)
1.	Latest Ventilator	3	24 lakhs
2.	Argon Beam Coagulator	1	15 lakhs
3.	Video Endoscopy System	1	10 lakhs
4.	Cardiac Monitors	6	20 lakhs
5.	Pulse Oximeter	6	6 lakhs
6.	Patient Warming System	4	5 lakhs
Total		21	80 lakhs

Of the above items, nos. 1, 4, 5 and 6, namely, Latest Ventilator, Cardiac Monitors, Pulse Oximeter, Patient Warming System, were procured in February/March, 2001 for use in the High Dependency Unit at AIIMS. This unit was to be made functional after renovation of D-7 ward of the institute. The renovation work was got completed in October, 2002. The above equipments have become functional from November, 2002.

As far as the other two items, namely, Video Endoscopy System and Argon Beam Coagulator are concerned, these were also procured in February/March, 2001 and were installed in the Surgery Ward and Main Operation Theatre in May, 2002 and September, 2002 respectively.

The equipments mentioned in the news-item are, therefore, not lying unused.

**Expansion and Modernisation of
BSNL Network**

*398. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :
SHRI C.N. SINGH :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has drawn up a plan worth rupees several hundred crores during 2003-04 for the expansion and modernisation of its business network; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) Yes, Sir. BSNL has drawn up a plan worth Rs. 12285 crores for expansion and modernisation of its business network during 2003-04.

(b) The scheme-wise details on which the said amount is likely to be spent are as under :-

Sl. No.	Name of the Schemes	Financial Outlay (Rs. Crore)
1.	Local Telephone Systems*	7543.69
2.	Long Distance Switching	400.00
3.	Long Distance Transmission	1633.80
4.	Insat & Intelsat	123.10
5.	Telex & Telegraph	10.65
6.	Other Land & Building	827.58
7.	Ancillary Systems	135.00
8.	New Services/Modernisation	1445.94
9.	Office Expenditure, Furniture & Fitting	2.24
10.	Deferred Payment (For Underground Cable)	163.00
Total Financial Outlay		12285.00

*There is a provision for replacement of 80,000 VPTs working on MARR.

Side Effects from Cough Syrups

*399. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any analysis of the various brands of cough syrups has been conducted by the Government in order to assess their side-effects on patients;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether cough syrups available freely in the market have dextromethorphan (DXM), suppressants and expectorants; and

(d) if so, the effects of these ingredients on the nervous system of the patients?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The rationality of cough preparations which contain different categories of therapeutic ingredients had been examined by an expert committee in the year 1988 and guidelines were made available to State Drugs Control Organisations. These include inter-alia, the usage and doses of various ingredients in different categories of cough preparation, as well as, labelling requirements to indicate precautions and warnings based on the known side-effects of the ingredients used.

Dextro-methorphan (DXM) is a commonly used cough suppressant for the relief of unproductive cough. According to the medical literature, adverse effects of Dextro-methorphan appear to be rare and include dizziness and gastro-intestinal disturbances. Excitation, confusion and respiratory depression may occur after over doses.

WHO Strategy to Curb Diseases

*400. SHRI V. VETRISELVAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-communicable Cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, cancer and respiratory diseases account for 59% of the 56.5 million deaths annually;

(b) whether the WHO has suggested a new strategy to curb these diseases;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the manner in which the Government propose to implement the WHO strategy?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) According to World Health Report 2001, the non-communicable diseases account for almost 60% of deaths globally. There is dearth of reliable data regarding the deaths due to non-communicable diseases in India. However, as per the "comprehensive assessment of mortality and disability from diseases, injuries and risk factors" done by WHO & World Bank, the deaths by non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are 51.2% of the total deaths in India.

In the 53rd World Health Assembly in May 2000, WHO's "Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of NCDs" was outlined. This strategy emphasizes surveillance to quantify and track NCDs and their determinants, prevention through creation of awareness to bring about life style changes for avoidance of risk factors (Tobacco Use, Unhealthy Diet, Physical Inactivity, etc.) and management of NCDs by provision of cost effective interventions.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is implementing the National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) which provides data pertaining to cancer patients, risk factors/determinants of cancer and other related factors. The ICMR is also implementing Sentinel Health Monitoring Centres in Haryana, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Kerala for collecting data regarding risk factors of Tobacco & Alcohol use, Diet & Nutrition and Physical Activities. These interventions are being augmented through an integrated disease surveillance programme as part of the 10th Plan activities in which surveillance of NCDs is an important component.

For creating awareness, the Government is making use of Electronic and Print Media to spread Health Messages to increase public health awareness about NCDs.

The facilities for treatment of various diseases including NCDs are available at Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs), District Hospitals, Medical Colleges and various specialized

institutions. For Cancer Control, the National Cancer Control Programme is being implemented since 1975.

Poor Sanitation in Government Hospitals

*401. COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL :
PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government hospitals in Delhi are becoming breeding ground for infection owing to poor sanitation as reported in the Times of India dated March 3, 2003;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the preventive measures being taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether there is shortage of essential medicines and equipment in these hospitals; and

(e) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (e) It is not correct to say that Government Hospitals in Delhi are becoming breeding ground for infection owing to poor sanitation. Infection Control Committee/Mechanism is in existence in all these Hospitals to monitor and ensure strict implementation of prevention of hospital-acquired infections which are mainly due to emerging drug resistance and over crowding. Through regular monitoring, hospital infection in Government hospitals at Delhi is being contained.

There is no shortage of essential medicines and equipment in Central Government Hospitals in Delhi. Medicines, as per the hospital formulary, are distributed to the patients free of cost. Essential and life saving medicines are also procured and supplied to the poor patients free of cost.

Government of NCT of Delhi has informed that adequate measures for sanitation are being taken in their

hospitals and work of sanitation is being privatized for improving sanitary conditions. They have further informed that the purchase of medicines in their hospitals is done by centralized committee on the basis of requirement and there is no shortage of essential medicine in these hospitals. In case of non-availability of a particular medicine, the hospital authorities are empowered to procure these medicines at their own level.

Opening of CGHS Dispensary in Vasant Vihar

3889. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the building of a CGHS dispensary in Vasant Vihar is under construction;

(b) if so, the latest progress thereof;

(c) the time by which the dispensary is likely to become functional in this building; and

(d) the area likely to be covered under this dispensary?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

Specialists' Facilities

3890. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the guidelines in respect of Indian system of medicine and Homoeopathy of CGHS;

(b) whether these guidelines are not being implemented;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government propose to provide specialists' facilities, extension of specialist services in new

Homoeopathy dispensaries/units with a view to provide better health care to CGHS beneficiaries;

- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
 (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) There are no fixed norms for opening of an ISM&H dispensary under the CGHS. These units are opened as per the requirements/demands of the CGHS beneficiaries based on justification and subject to availability of manpower and resources.

The Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Ministry of Finance has conducted a study of the norms and functioning of the CGHS dispensaries/units under the Indian System of Medicines and Homoeopathy and the report is pending finalisation.

(d) to (f) The matter relating to providing specialists' facilities, extension of specialist services in the new Homoeopathy dispensaries/Units can be considered only after the receipt of SIU's report stated above.

Comprehensive Plan for Infrastructure Development in Maharashtra

3891. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the State Government of Maharashtra has prepared a comprehensive plan for the infrastructure development in the State;
 (b) if so, the projects to be taken up for execution and the amount to be spent on each such projects; and
 (c) the financial assistance proposed to be provided by the Union Government for the implementation of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) : No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Honouring of Kalpana Chawla

3892. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government propose to name any satellite in the memory of the First Indian Woman Astronaut, Kalpana Chawla; and
 (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Prime Minister announced on February 5, 2003 that the exclusive meteorological series of satellites, (METSATs) would be named as KALPANA. Accordingly, the first satellite in the series, METSAT-1, which was launched on September 12, 2002, has been named as KALPANA-1.

[English]

SSI Units in Tribal/Backward Areas of Assam

3893. SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISW-MUTHIARY : Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government propose to set up small scale industries in Tribal dominated backward areas of Assam with a view to generate employment opportunities to Tribal Youths;
 (b) if so, the details thereof; and
 (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (c) The

development of Small Scale Industrial (SSI) units is primarily the responsibility of the State/UT Governments. The Central Government does not set up any SSI units. SSI units are set up by individual entrepreneurs in the country including Assam. The Central Government supplements the efforts of State/UT Governments through various schemes/programmes relating to enhanced fiscal and credit support, better infrastructure, marketing facilities and incentives for technology upgradation. These schemes/programmes are being implemented across the country.

[Translation]

Non-functioning of Telephone Network in Jharkhand

3894. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT :

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the telephone network in Jharkhand especially capital city of Ranchi is not functioning properly resulting in telephones lying out of order for long period;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to ensure speedy rectification of the dead telephones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Following measure are being taken to ensure speedy rectification of faulty telephones :-

(i) Monitoring of fault repairs by Senior Offices.

(ii) Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) based centralized fault booking at Short Distance Charging Centre (SDCC).

- (iii) Rehabilitation/up-gradation of external plant.
- (iv) Replacement of long spans of overhead alignment by under ground cables in phased manner.
- (v) Daily testing of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) from telephone exchanges.
- (vi) Formation of core groups in each SSA (Secondary Switching Area) for prompt restoration of VPTs.
- (vii) Replacement of telephone instruments having completed expiry period in phased manner.
- (viii) Provision of generator sets to take care of long duration power break down.

[English]

E-Post Scheme

3895. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether "e-post" has been introduced in many post offices in some States including Kerala;

(b) if so, the details of post offices where this facility is available in Kerala;

(c) whether the facility is being extended to some more post offices in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A total of 44 post offices in Kerala have the e-post facility. The names of the post offices where e-post facility is available in Kerala is indicated in the statement.

(c) and (d) Keeping in view the resources available, every effort is being made to extend the facility in a phased manner, in other post offices including those in Kerala.

Statement		
Sl. No.	Name of Post Office	Pin
1	2	3
1.	Adur	691523
2.	Alappuzha	688001
3.	Aluva	683101
4.	Attingal	695101
5.	Changanacherry	686101
6.	Chengannur	689121
7.	Cherthala	688524
8.	Ernakulam	682011
9.	Irinjalakuda	680121
10.	Kalpita	673121
11.	Kanhangad	671315
12.	Kanjirappally	686507
13.	Kannur	670001
14.	Kasargod	671121
15.	Kattappana	685508
16.	Kayamkulam	690502
17.	Kollam	691001
18.	Kottarakara	691506
19.	Kottayam	686001
20.	Kozhikode	673001
21.	Kunnamukulam	680503
22.	Malappuram	676505
23.	Manjeri	676121

1	2	3
24.	Mavelikara	690101
25.	Muvattupuzha	686661
26.	Neyyattinkara	695121
27.	Olavakkot	678002
28.	Ottapalam	679101
29.	Palai	686575
30.	Palakkad	678001
31.	Pathanamthitta	689645
32.	Perumbavoor	683542
33.	Ponani	679577
34.	Punallur	691305
35.	Quilandi	673305
36.	Thalassery	670101
37.	Thaliparamba	670141
38.	Thiruvananthapuram	695001
39.	Thodupuzha	686585
40.	Thrissur	680001
41.	Tirur Kerala	676101
42.	Tiruvalla	689101
43.	Vadakara	673101
44.	Vaikom	686141

[Translation]

**Stadium Physical Training
Centre in Bihar**

3896. SHRI SUBODH ROY : Will the Minister of YOUTH
AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering the scheme for construction of a stadium and physical training center in Bhagalpur (Bihar) for development of sports and youth activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of schemes being implemented by the Government in various States for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA) : (a) to (c) "Sports" is a State subject. It is primarily the responsibility of the State Government to create various sports facilities including Stadium etc. to promote sports at all levels. However, in order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments in this direction, Central assistance is provided to State Governments/Municipal Corporations etc. on matching share basis for creation of various sports facilities under the Scheme of Grants for Creation of Sports Infrastructure, subject to the receipt of viable proposals from the States. There is however, no provision in the above scheme to provide assistance towards establishment of a Physical Training Centre.

The Ministry has not received any proposal from the Government of Bihar during the last three years for construction of a Stadium at Bhagalpur.

[English]

Telecom Service in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

3897. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Telecom Service in Havelock, Neil Islands in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is far from satisfactory;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the action contemplated by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No, Sir. Separate

Exchanges are working in Havelock and Neil island in Andaman and Nicobar islands and they are connected through satellite systems with the main network.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Assistance for the Development of Medical College

3898. SHRI M.K. SUBBA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal for the grant-in-aid from Assam Government for the development of the Assam Medical College at Dibrugarh under the project 'HOPE';

(b) if so, the details of the project, the cost thereof and the amount of aid sought; and

(c) the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The Department of Development of North Eastern Region has informed that the proposal submitted by Government of Assam for Development of Assam Medical College & Hospital (HOPE), Dibrugarh has been approved for funding under NLCPR at a cost of Rs. 20 crores.

The details are as follows :-

Civil Works (Capital Component)	Cost (Rs. in Crores)
1. Surgical complex	10.50
2. Medical complex	4.66
3. Morgue and Laundry	0.22
Revenue Component	
4. Medical equipment	1.62
5. Surgical equipment	0.80
6. CSSD, Morgue & Laundry	0.80
Total	20.00

Recognition of Ovary Transplantation

3899. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3404 regarding Ovary Transplantation on 11.12.2002 and state :

(a) whether the follow up work to recognize the research/operation of Ovary Transplantation by doctors of Mumbai has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay; and

(d) the present status of the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. While information sought by the Directorate General of Health Services was provided by the doctor, the said information was found to be inadequate, and hence additional information has been sought and is awaited.

Telephone Connections of Post Offices

3900. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether telephone connections are provided in post offices for smooth functioning and reducing communication gap between Head Post Office and Branch post offices;

(b) if so, the number of post offices in Andhra Pradesh where telephones have been provided, district-wise;

(c) the number of post offices where this facility is not available, district-wise; and

(d) by when this facility is likely to be provided in all the post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) No, Sir. Telephone connections are provided to departmental post offices only and not to the branch post offices which are extra departmental post offices.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Foreign Companies in Telecom Sector

3901. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have allowed some foreign Telecommunication companies for setting up their wholly owned operations in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith their performance in the Telecom sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has approved 59 proposals for foreign investment by wholly owned subsidiaries in the country for an amount of about Rs. 5,800 crores during the period August, 1991 to December, 2002. the performance of these companies is not centrally monitored.

[Translation]

Mobile Phone Service in Rajasthan

3902. SHRI RAGHUVIR SINGH KAUSHAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of district centres and towns in Rajasthan where the Mobile Phone Service of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has been introduced alongwith the capacity and consumer-wise number of such Mobile Phone Service as on date; and

(b) the names of town where the said Mobile Phone Service is to be launched during the year 2003-2004?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has introduced Mobile services in 32 towns including 25 districts centers in Rajasthan. The details of the capacity and number of existing customers are given in the statement.

(b) It is proposed to extend services in the remaining district headquarters apart from expanding the services in the other/existing towns depending on market demand and its commercial viability.

Statement

List of towns to be covered in 2002-03 and 2003-04

2002-03

Sl. No.	Name of Station	Total planned capacity	Total subscribes
1	2	3	4
1.	Ajmer*	5000	3438
2.	Alwar*	5000	3117
3.	Beawar	1300	785
4.	Bharatpur*	2600	1230
5.	Bhilwara*	4000	1918
6.	Bhiwadi	2600	928
7.	Churu*	2600	1474
8.	Dholpur*	1300	648
9.	Hanumangarh*	1300	1174
10.	Jaipur*	29000	22028
11.	Jhunjhunu*	2600	1584
12.	Madanganj	1300	996
13.	Sikar*	2600	1369

1	2	3	4
14.	Sriganganagar*	5000	3817
15.	Sawai Madhopur*	2600	1656
16.	Tonk*	1300	789
17.	Barmer*	1300	796
18.	Bikaner*	9100	4987
19.	Jaisalmer*	1300	915
20.	Jodhpur*	7750	5773
21.	Makrana	1300	798
22.	Mt. Abu	1300	816
23.	Nagaur*	1300	827
24.	Pali*	5000	2663
25.	Sirohi*	1300	784
26.	Kota*	10400	6914
27.	Ramganj Mandi	1300	714
28.	Banswara*	2600	1627
29.	Chittorgarh*	1300	984
30.	Kankroli*	2600	1597
31.	Nathwara	1300	784
32.	Udaipur*	10400	7187
Total		129650	85117

2003-04

1.	Dausa*	1000	0
2.	Karauli*	1000	0
3.	Jalore*	1000	0
4.	Balotra	1000	0

1	2	3	4
5.	Baran*	1000	0
6.	Bundi*	1000	0
7.	Jhalawar*	1000	0
8.	Dungerpur*	1000	0

*District Head Quarters.

[English]

Setting up of Ayurvedic/Homeopathic Dispensaries

3904. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of the Government to open CHGS Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic dispensaries in Guwahati, Jabalpur and Thiruvananthapuram;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the latest status thereof; and

(c) the time by which these dispensaries are likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) A proposal for opening of one Ayurvedic and one Homoeopathic dispensary each in Guwahati, Jabalpur and Thiruvananthapuram during 2003-2004 has been included in the Tenth Five Year Plan. The Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Ministry of Finance has conducted a study of the norms and functioning of the CGHS dispensaries/units under the Indian System of Medicines and Homoeopathy and the report is pending finalisation. Therefore, opening of new ISM&H dispensaries under CGHS, which involves creation of new posts, can be considered only after the receipt of SIU's report stated above, it will also be subject to availability of funds.

Rates of Mobile Services

3904. SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA : Will the Minister of

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the cellular companies in the country have slashed their rates;

(b) if so, the rates/schemes at present being offered by these cell phone operators in the country;

(c) whether the rates of MTNL and BSNL are very expensive as compared to these cell phone operators; and

(d) if so, the comparative rates of cell phone operators vis-a-vis landline operators, namely, MTNL/BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) to (d) Sir, the Telecom. Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is responsible for fixation of tariffs for telecom services including Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) in the country. Tariff for CMTS is currently under forbearance which means that the cellular operators are at liberty to offer various tariff options. Tariffs for CMTS have shown a continuously downward trend in the recent past; this is mainly due to the increased competition in the Cellular Sector. Cellular operators have various tariff plans with varying rates of monthly rental and airtime charges, which they go on revising from time to time. Information provided by TRAI indicates that currently there are more than 600 different tariff plans available for the cellular subscribers across the country. As such it is not possible to make a meaningful comparison between the tariffs charged for CMTS by the cellular operators and tariff charged by BSNL and MTNL for land line phones (under Basic Telephone Services).

[Translation]

Office Expenses

3905. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the amount incurred on publicity, advertisements, hospitality, catering, inaugural functions, seminars,

conferences, tours (including foreign tours) S.T.D. and I.S.T.D. telephone bills, electricity bills (particularly bills of Air Conditioners and Coolers) and other office expenses by various departments and under takings under the Ministry, year-wise during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government proposes to launch any drive to curtail the expenses on the above said items;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) The information is furnished as below:-

Item	1999- 2000 (Rs. in lakhs)	2000- 2001 (Rs. in lakhs)	2001- 2002 (Rs. in lakhs)
Publicity/Advertisements	171.43	208.34	330.14
Hospitality/Catering	261.87	323.43	468.38
Inaugural functions Seminars/Conferences	263.50	556.72	865.54
Domestic tours (including foreign tours)	2227.33	2765.32	3391.17
S.T.D. and I.S.T.D. Telephone bills	469.11	500.46	985.44
Electricity bills			
(a) Air conditioners	6942.32	7367.46	7078.35
(b) Coolers			
Other office expenses	3157.07	5136.82	5827.35

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. This Department has taken various steps to curtail the expenditure. Only few Senior Officers

are provided with Telephones. In most of the cases ceiling fixed on expenditure. STDs/ISTDs are discouraged and communication through email is resorted to. Tours have also been curtailed to bare minimum. The canteen subsidy has been reduced drastically. ACs are provided only to very Senior Officers and to work stations where absolutely necessary. The office expenses have also been brought down considerably.

(d) Not applicable.

[English]

Development of Inland Waterways in Maharashtra

3906. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal for development of inland waterways from States after the modification of the Centrally sponsored scheme last year;

(b) if so, the details thereof, especially the proposals received from Maharashtra Government; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Proposals have been received from various States namely Assam, Bihar, Orissa, U.P. and West Bengal and Maharashtra. The proposals are mainly for preparation of feasibility report, dredging of waterways and setting up of terminals. As regards Maharashtra State, the proposals are for development of inland waterways (including dredging, setting up of terminals/jetties, etc.) at various places. The proposals from Maharashtra have been examined and the State Government have been advised to modify/revise the proposals.

Computer Information Centres

3907. DR. M.P. JAISWAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

be pleased to state the details of the number of Computer Information Centres set up till date by the National Informatics Centre in each State particularly Bihar, location-wise alongwith the funds allocated to each centre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : The Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology has implemented a scheme for setting up 487 Community Information Centres (CICs) at Block Headquarters in the seven North-East States and Sikkim. The scheme has been implemented in the States of Arunachal Pradesh (56 CICs), Assam (215 CICs out of 219), Manipur (33 CICs), Meghalaya (32 CICs), Mizoram (26 CICs), Nagaland (52 CICs), Tripura (29 CICs) and Sikkim (40 CICs). 483 CICs have been set up till date. Rs. 101.33 crores have been released so far for CIC project. Funds are released in composite manner for implementation of the project in North East States. It is not envisaged to set up CICs in the other parts of the Country.

Opening of Post Offices in Jammu and Kashmir

3908. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of post offices in the villages of Baramulla region in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(b) the number of post offices proposed to be opened in all villages in the State during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) The number of post offices in the villages of Baramulla region in Jammu and Kashmir upto March, 2002, is given in statement.

(b) Targets are allocated to each Circle at the beginning of each financial year and this exercise is currently underway.

Statement

Number of post offices in villages in
Baramulla as on 31.3.2002

Sub Offices (SOs)	Extra Departmental Sub Offices (EDSOs)	Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs)
13	01	237

Four Laning of National Highway No. 1A

3909. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received proposals from the State Government of Punjab in regard to the four laning of certain sections of the National Highway No. 1A passing through the State and particularly in regard to the Amritsar-Batala-Gurdaspur-Pathankot section;

(b) if so, the details thereof, section-wise, particularly in respect of Batala section;

(c) whether only the aforesaid section alongwith few others have been left out until now from the four laning process;

(d) if so, the facts in this regard and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the time by which the proposals in this regard are likely to be cleared and the work on these sections likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) Amritsar-Batala-Gurdaspur-Pathankot section is part of National Highway 15 and not part of National Highway 1A which will be four laned by National Highway Authority of India under National Highway Development Project. Four laning of National Highway 15 in Punjab is not contemplated.

**Modernisation/Upgradation of Post Offices
in West Bengal**

3910. SHRI AKBOR ALI KHANDOKER : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of post offices which was to be modernised in West Bengal during the Ninth Plan and the budgetary allocation made therefor;

(b) the number of post offices actually modernised during the aforesaid period in the State and the amount spent there upon, district-wise; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to modernise/upgrade the remaining post offices in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) 39 Post office were proposed to be modernised with a budgetary allocation of Rs. 2.39 crores during 9th Plan in the State of West Bengal.

(b) Thirty one offices were actually modernised and the amount spent in the State are given in the statement.

(c) Keeping in view the resources available, every effort is being made to modernise more post offices in a phased manner including those located in West Bengal State.

Statement

*Post Offices Modernised in the State of West Bengal,
during the 9th Five Year Plan*

Sl. No.	A Name of District	B Number of Offices Modernised	C Amount Spent in Lakh Rupees
1	2	3	4
1.	Kolkata	8	55.2
2.	Bankura	1	6.5

1	2	3	4
3.	West Dinajpur	1	6.25
4.	Midnapur	4	30.72
5.	Hoogly	3	16.29
6.	Howrah	1	9.7
7.	Birbhum	2	12.7
8.	Darjeeling	1	6.7
9.	Cooch Behar	1	8.9
10.	24 Pargana South	2	15.65
11.	Purulia	1	4.4
12.	24 Pargana North	2	28.62
13.	Murshidabad	2	18.01
14.	Burdwan	1	3.74
15.	Nadia	1	11.5
Total		31	234.88

**Control of Multinational Companies on
Inland Water Projects**

3911. SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is an increasing trend of control of multinational companies on inland water projects in the country as compared to the National companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any analysis study has been made in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the measures proposed to be taken to curtail this trend with a view to protect the interest of the national companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

**Funds Allocation for E-Governance
Projects**

3912. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have set a target of Rs. 12,000 crores to be spend over the next four years for e-governance projects and

(b) if so, the extent to which it has been achieved so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

By-pass on National Highway No. 7

3913. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI :
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI :

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any request for the construction of by-pass on National Highway No. 7 in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the present status of the proposal; and

(d) the reasons, if any for the delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Construction of Rewa

Bypass on NH-7 in Madhya Pradesh is to be on Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) system. Its likely cost is Rs. 40.55 crore. An amount of Rs. 3.63 crore was sanctioned in 2000 for land acquisition for this bypass. Necessary land acquisition has been completed in March, 2002 and shifting of utilities such as shifting of High Tension (HT)/ Low Tension (LT) lines by the State Government is pending. The delay has been due to the modification in the alignment.

Vacant posts

3914. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of posts of nurses are lying vacant in the Central Government Hospitals located in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) by when these vacancies are likely to be filled up; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) Filling up of vacant posts is governed by the Central Government instructions contained in DOPT OM No. 2/8/2001-PIC dated 16.5.2001. As far as vacant posts of Nurses in Central Government Hospitals in Delhi are concerned, the Screening Committee has already approved filling up thereof.

[English]

Life Saving Drugs

3915. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the imported life saving drugs used in the Government Hospitals during the last three years; and

(b) the amount allocated for the purpose in the last financial year?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the house.

[Translation]

Paediatric Hospitals

3916. SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up hospitals exclusively for paediatrics in the country particularly in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) A proposal to upgrade the Kalawati Saran Children Hospital attached to Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi as a National Institute of Paediatric has been included in the 10th Plan proposal of the hospital.

The Government of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi has also informed that a 200 bedded super specialist paediatrics hospital is proposed to be set up at Geeta Colony in Delhi. The construction of the hospital is under progress and the OPD block is expected to be completed by September 2003.

Sale of Generic Medicines

3917. COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL :
SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that chemists are earning huge profits from the retail sale of medicines due to big gap between the wholesale price and the maximum retail price of generic medicines as reported in the *Navbharat Times* dated March 6, 2003;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether various medical associations have been drawing the attention of the Government towards this from time to time; and

(d) if so, the details of the action taken/directions issued by the Government in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) In the recent past, the manufacturers of drug formulations, including big pharmaceutical companies, have started marketing their medicines directly through retailers without promoting them through medical profession as per normal practice. Such practice is mostly prevalent in case of non-scheduled formulations which are not under price control. The prices of such formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves, keeping in view, various factors like cost of production, freight and market competition etc. The prices of such medicines are generally on par with the prices of equivalent branded medicines marketed through medical profession.

Out of seven products mentioned in the new items, two products (diclofenac + Paracetamol Tabs. and Nimesulide + Serratiopetidase Tabs) fall under non-scheduled formulation category. Another 2 products (Ciproloxaein Inj. And Ciproloxaein Caps.) fall under scheduled formulation category. However, the matter regarding their inclusion under price control is subjudice in the Supreme Court of India. No information relating to the remaining three products (Tectosept ointment, Cefgen Syrup and Cefler Injection) is available.

(c) and (d) No representation has been received from any Medical Association. However, representations and references have been received from some State Drugs Controllers/Trade Associations/NGOs/VIPs etc.

Para 19 of DPCO 1995 stipulates the trade margin in respect to scheduled formulations sold by manufacturers to the retailers. There is no such stipulation relating to non-scheduled formulations. The matter was also discussed with the Industry Associations and they agreed to exercise discipline in the matter of trade margins and bonuses as per good marketing practices.

[English]

Aid from Global Fund

3918. SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL :
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received funds from the Global Fund, and International Funding Agency, to combat AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Executive Director of the Global Fund visited India recently for detailed discussions in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to involve more public and private bodies in combating these diseases; and

(f) the manner in which the Government propose to utilize the funds and monitor its proper utilization?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. No funds have been received from the Global Fund so far. However, the Global Fund has in the first round of funding (April 2002) approved a grant of US \$ 8.783 million for expansion of the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) in the States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Uttaranchal. During the second round of funding (January 2003) the Global Fund approved a grant of US \$ 100.81 million for strengthening the intervention Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission (PPTCT) of HIV/AIDS and towards public-private sector partnerships for provision of anti-retroviral treatment. Additionally, US \$ 29.11 million has been approved for the expansion of the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme for the State of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Prof. Richard G.A. Feachem, Executive Director of the Global Fund, visited India from 28th February, 2003 to 9th March, 2003. During his visit,

he met with the Health and Family Welfare Minister, and officers of the Government of India. He also visited the States of Maharashtra and Uttaranchal. He addressed a meeting in New Delhi of the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), the nodal agency for approving the country's application to the Global Fund.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) These grants are for extensions of existing programmes and will be utilised and monitored in like manner.

Funds for Development of National Highways

3919. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether allotment of more funds have been proposed for the development of National Highways in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for the proper utilisation of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) the State-wise details of funds allocated during last 3 years for development of National Highways are enclosed as statement.

(c) Introduction of Direct Payment Procedure, close monitoring of works have been resorted to ensure proper utilization of funds.

Statement

Funds for Development of National Highways

(Rs. in Lakh)

Sl. No.	Name of States/UTs	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11188.26	10379.70	11846.37

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Arunachal Pradesh			45.00
3.	Assam	5253.64	7605.19	7374.65
4.	Bihar	6927.56	6532.00	7652.90
5.	Chandigarh	144.00	150.00	270.00
6.	Chhattisgarh	1227.80	3228.00	6120.40
7.	Delhi	483.00	600.00	600.00
8.	Goa	2300.00	2000.00	800.00
9.	Gujarat	9099.97	7042.71	9000.19
10.	Haryana	10100.00	10388.47	5900.00
11.	Himachal Pradesh	4415.00	5500.00	3000.00
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	250.00	230.00	400.00
13.	Jharkhand	2200.00	3500.00	3200.00
14.	Karnataka	8104.00	10947.56	8965.97
15.	Kerala	8978.03	9261.56	7594.63
16.	Madhya Pradesh	13472.11	9099.00	9610.25
17.	Maharashtra	21236.20	19371.95	12478.07
18.	Manipur	851.31	1452.59	1401.84
19.	Meghalaya	1708.34	2270.00	2219.98
20.	Mizoram	1000.00	2600.00	2200.00
21.	Nagaland	1500.00	1500.00	1200.00
22.	Orissa	10046.89	7912.70	5632.04
23.	Pondicherry	200.00	212.00	200.00
24.	Punjab	5365.00	6413.00	5176.01
25.	Rajasthan	8720.00	8746.00	9389.14
26.	Tamil Nadu	10342.21	9739.00	10248.18

1	2	3	4	5
27.	Uttar Pradesh	14949.76	14662.88	13730.57
28.	Uttaranchal	199.35	2500.00	2068.81
29.	West Bengal	12800.00	8422.04	11450.00
30.	Ministry	854.00	1418.00	695.00
31.	BRDB	13592.00	16350.00	20000.00
32.	NHAI	227280.00	315970.00	350300.00
Total		414788.43	506004.35	530770.00

[Translation]

**Disinvestment of PSUs in
Madhya Pradesh**

3920. SHRI RAMANAND SINGH : Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the names of Public Sector Undertakings situated in Madhya Pradesh which have been sold so far to Private Companies under disinvestment process alongwith the price received by the Government as a result thereof, PSU-wise;

(b) the number of employees from each of these Public Sector Undertakings who has been rendered jobless due to disinvestment; and

(c) the concrete steps taken/proposed to be taken to protect the interests of employees?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) The only case of disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in Madhya Pradesh was that of Hotel Khajuraho Ashok, a unit of India Tourism Development Corporation Limited (ITDC). The entire 89.97 percent shareholding of the Government of India (GOI) alongwith the 10 percent shareholding of Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) was sold in favour of M/s. Bharat Hotels Limited on 7.8.2002 for a consideration of Rs. 2,21,00,000.

Of this, the accrual to GOI and ITDC inclusive of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) compensation (including gratuity) was Rs. 2,18,79,594/-.

(b) Out of the 40 employees in the hotel unit, 39 employees accepted VRS. The only remaining employee was not eligible for VRS and is reported to have resigned before the transaction was concluded on 7.8.2002.

(c) Provisions for protection of interest of employees made in the Share Purchase Agreement executed with the Purchaser are at statement.

Statement

Provisions relating to employees in Share Purchase Agreement

A. One of the Recitals of the Agreement reads as under:

The Purchaser specifically recognizes that the Government in relation to its employment policies follows certain principles for the benefit of the members of scheduled caste/scheduled tribes, physically handicapped persons and other socially disadvantaged sections of the society and the Purchaser has agreed that upon consummation of the transaction contemplated herein it shall use its best efforts to cause the Company to provide adequate job opportunities for such persons and shall also ensure that in the event of any reduction in the strength of the Company, the Purchaser shall use its best effort to ensure that the physically handicapped persons are retrenched at the end.

B. The following post-closing obligations of the purchaser have been provided in the Agreements:

The Purchaser will cause the Company to continue to employ all the regular employees of the Unit who have been transferred to the Company on the terms and conditions that shall not be inferior to the terms and conditions as applicable to the regular employees on the date of transfer of the Unit including with respect to the voluntary retirement scheme applicable to the Company as per the guidelines of the Department of Public Enterprises, if any, and terms set out in agreements entered into by ITDC in relation to

such regular employees with staff/workers unions/associations. The Purchaser further covenants that it shall cause the Company to ensure that :

- (i) The services of the regular employees will not be interrupted.
- (ii) The terms and conditions of service applicable to the regular employees will not in any way be less favourable than those applicable to them immediately on the date hereof.
- (iii) It shall not retrench any of its regular employees for a period of one year from the Closing Date other than any dismissal or termination of regular employees from their employment in accordance with the applicable staff regulations and standing order of the Company or applicable law.
- (iv) In the event of retrenchment of regular employees, the Company shall pay the regular employees such compensation as is required under applicable labour laws on the basis that the service of the regular employees have been continuous and uninterrupted. Provided further, that no retrenchment of a regular Employee would be undertaken unless the affected Employee is given benefits which are higher of (a) the voluntary retirement scheme applicable to the Company as per the guidelines of the Department of Public Enterprises as of the date hereof and (b) the benefits/compensation required to be statutorily given to an employee under applicable law.
- (v) The Company will only undertake dismissal or termination of the services of the employees on account of disciplinary action in accordance with the applicable staff regulations.
- (vi) In respect of contract employees the terms and conditions of the relevant contracts shall be fully observed by the Company and the Purchaser shall keep Government and ITDC indemnified against damages, losses or claims resulting on account of the Company failing to observe any of the terms and conditions of such contracts.

[English]

Excess Spending by Indian Missions Abroad

3921. SHRI KAMAL NATH :
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that Indian Missions abroad are incurring huge expenditure every month;

(b) if so, the details of expenditure incurred during each of the last three years, country-wise;

(c) whether various austerity measures announced from time to time are not being followed by the Indian Missions abroad;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether any concrete plans have been formulated to check the excess expenditure by the Indian Missions; and

(f) if so, the time by which these plans are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No. The expenditure by Missions/Posts abroad is incurred in accordance with budgetary allocation made for them by the Ministry.

(b) Does not arise

(c) The Missions! Posts are advised from time to time to strictly observe economy in their expenditure in accordance with the guidelines on the subject. For example, economy guidelines regarding 25% curtailment of Daily Allowance, ban on purchase of new vehicles, ban on replacement of vehicles without specific approval of the Ministry etc. are being followed by Missions/Posts.

(d) to (f) Do not arise.

Subsidy for Construction of Cargo Terminals

3922. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Inland Waterways Authority of India offers subsidy for construction of Cargo Terminals along rivers and canals;

(b) if so, the rate of subsidy being offered therefor;

(c) the details of subsidy provided by the IWAI during 2001-2002 and 2002-2003; and

(d) the details of projects underway or completed during the last two years which were eligible for subsidy from IWAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Linking of NH-8 with NH-6

3923. SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Vadodara-Por-Sinor-Netrang-Vyara-Ahwa-Saputara-Nasik Road linking NH-8 with NH-6 is under consideration; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No proposal for declaration of the Vadodara-Por-Sinor-Netrang-Vyara-Ahwa-Saputara-Nasik Road linking NH-8 with NH-6 as a National Highway is under consideration.

(h) Does not arise.

Laying of Coastal Highway

3924. DR. RAJESWARAMMA VUKKALA : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested the Union Government to take up the laying of a parallel coastal highway to NH-214 connecting major towns;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Andhra Pradesh Government had requested the Union Government to upgrade a State road to National Highway from Digamarru to Ongole via Narsapur, Machilipatnam, Challapalli, Puligedda, Penumudi, Repalle, Bhattiprolu, Bapatla and Chirala.

(c) All proposals for conversion of State Highways into National Highways have been returned to the respective State Governments including Andhra Pradesh for review based on the revised criteria for declaration of new National Highways. Presently, there is a ban on declaration of new National Highways due to fund constraints. The Government may, however, consider conversion of very limited lengths of a few State Highways into National Highways, out of the modified proposals received during the course of 10th Five Year Plan, keeping in view the traffic needs, inter-se priority and availability of funds, after ban is lifted.

Laboratories for Testing of New Drugs

3925. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the laboratories which have been authorized to conduct test on new drugs, State-wise; and

(b) the names of the appellate laboratories under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) The samples of new drugs are tested at the following Central Drug Labs.

1. Central Drugs Laboratory, Kolkata.
2. Central Drugs Testing Lab. Thane, Maharashtra.
3. Central Indian Pharmacopoeia Laboratory, Ghaziabad.

(b) The Central Drugs Laboratory, Kolkata is the appellate laboratory under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940.

Assistance to Maharashtra for Combating Various Diseases

3926. Shri RAMSHETH THAKUR : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the assistance given to Maharashtra to combat major communicable and non-communicable diseases during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the details of programmes and schemes implemented in Maharashtra with the help of Union Government; and

(c) the mechanism available to monitor the proper utilization of these funds by the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Government is implementing various National Health Programmes for control of major diseases like malaria, leprosy, tuberculosis, AIDS, blindness in different States/UTs in the country including the State of Maharashtra. Financial assistance provided to Maharashtra to combat major communicable and non-communicable diseases during the last three is as follows :

(Rs. in lakhs)

Programme	Amount released		
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03*
1	2	3	4
Malaria**	288.41	468.50	221.58

1	2	3	4
Leprosy	398.60	435.99	263.14
Tuberculosis	1257.08	1683.61	1025.81
AIDS	1283.65	1281.65	2293.21
Blindness	766.38	1298.99	629.54

*Provisional.

**Excluding EMCP.

(c) To ensure proper utilisation of funds, guidelines have been circulated to all States/district Disease Control Societies. Utilization of funds is also monitored through regular reports, review meetings, both at the Centre and States, audit reports and utilization certificates.

[Translation]

**Three Year Medical Diploma
Course**

3927. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE :
DR. CHARAN DAS MAHANT :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from Chhattisgarh Government requesting recognition from the Medical Council of India for its three year medical diploma course;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the Union Government would grant recognition to aforesaid course?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. The Government has not received any such proposal.

(b) and (c) The questions do not arise.

[English]

Number of Indians in Gulf Countries

3928. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN :
SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians living in Gulf Countries as on date, country-wise; and

(b) the arrangements made for the evacuation of these people in the case of exigency due to the ongoing Iraq war?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA) : (a) The approximate number of Indians living in Gulf countries as on date is as follows:-

Saudi Arabia	1.4 million
United Arab Emirates	1.2 million
Kuwait	350,000
Oman	330,000
Qatar	170,000
Bahrain	140,000
Yemen	5,000
Iraq	19

(b) Contingency plans have been drawn upto evacuate Indians living in Kuwait through Saudi Arabia. However, the airports at Kuwait and other Gulf countries have remained open to scheduled commercial flights from the beginning of the start of the hostilities in Iraq and there has been no request for evacuation of Indian nationals so far.

[Translation]

Late Supply of Indented Medicines

3929. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the time-period laid down for supply of indented medicines to the CGHS beneficiaries;

(b) whether the Government are aware that CGHS dispensaries particularly in Delhi are supplying indented medicines to the CGHS beneficiaries very late i.e. after 10-12 days;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to streamline the procedure and to ensure immediate supply of medicines to patients?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) As per terms and conditions of the contract entered into by the CGHS with the authorised local chemists, the authorised local chemist is to supply the indented medicines to the CGHS dispensary within 24 to 48 hours. In the case of emergency, an authority slip is issued to the beneficiary for collecting the medicine up to a period of 7 days directly from the Authorised Local Chemist without making any payment.

(b) to (d) By and large, the medicines indented with the authorised local chemists are supplied to the CGHS beneficiaries within the stipulated time. However, complaints are occasionally received regarding late supply of indented medicines.

Instructions have been issued to the Additional Directors/Joint Directors of the CGHS to ensure supply of indented medicines to the CGHS beneficiaries within 48 hours.

Speed Post Services in Uttar Pradesh

3930. SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY :
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of district in Uttar Pradesh where

speed post facilities have not been provided in the post offices;

(b) whether the Government propose to extend speed post facilities to some more districts and sub-divisions of State; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) Nil.

(b) Yes, Sir (for Sub-Division remaining without).

(c) It will depend upon fulfilment of prescribed norms which are based on business potential and connectivity necessary for maintaining the service standards.

[English]

Introduction of Hospital Ship

3931. SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4573 dated December 18, 2002 regarding Introduction of Hospital Ship and state :

(a) whether the proposal has since been implemented;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) As already indicated in reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4573 dated 18.12.2002, the proposal is only at a preliminary stage and therefore likely to take time for implementation.

**Indians Facing Capital Punishment
in Gulf Countries**

3932. SHRI P. RAJENDRAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether there are a number of Indians facing capital punishment in Gulf countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to secure amnesty for these prisoners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA) : (a) Yes.

(b) A Statement is placed on the table of the House.

(c) Mercy petitions requesting amnesty or commutation of sentences, including those received from relatives of persons facing capital punishment, are forwarded forwarded and taken up with the Governments concerned.

Statement

Details of Indians facing capital punishment in Gulf countries

Name of the country	(b) Number of Indians facing Capital punishment and details thereof	(c) Steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to secure amnesty for these prisoners
Bahrain	Nil	Not applicable
Kuwait	Nil	Not applicable
Oman	There is one person said to be Indian who is facing capital punishment for drug trafficking.	No mercy petition for commutation of sentence has been received in this case.
Qatar	Nil	Not applicable
Saudi Arabia	Two Indian nationals are facing death sentence at present: one on charges of drug smuggling, and the other, for murdering another Indian.	Mercy petitions have been submitted to the Saudi authorities for the commutation of the death sentence and early release of these persons.
United Arab Emirates	There are 10 Indian nationals facing capital punishment on charges of murder and possession of drugs etc.	Mercy petitions received from the next of kin of the convicted prisoners were forwarded to the UAE authorities. However, since January 2002, UAE authorities have decided not to accept mercy petitions being submitted on behalf of such cases.

Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme

3933. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY : Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have launched a "Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme" for the Small Scale Industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of SSI Units, State-wise provided collateral guarantee under the scheme as on December 31, 2002;

(d) whether the Government propose to augment the corpus of the fund; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (c) The Government have launched the Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Small Industries which is being implemented through the Credit Guarantee Fund trust for Small Industries (CGTSI) with a corpus fund shared by the Government of India and the Small Industries Development Bank of India in the ratio of 4:1. The objective is to extend guarantee cover for mitigating credit risk upto 75% of the collateral free credits subject to maximum credit of Rs. 25 lakh per unit. As on 31st December, 2002, 6424 SSI units were covered for aggregate loans of Rs. 7151 lakhs under the Scheme. The details of State/UT-wise guarantees approved is given in statement.

(d) and (e) The corpus fund of CGTSI was enhanced to Rs. 427.01875 crores by the end of the financial year 2002-03, which would be suitably further augmented. The outlay for the scheme for the financial year 2003-04 is Rs. 192 crores.

Statement

*State/UT-wise guarantees approved as on
31st December 2002*

(Amount Rs. in lakhs)

State/UT	No. of SSI Units	Loans Amount
1	2	3
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	6	2
Andhra Pradesh	414	582

	1	2	3
Assam		37	102
Bihar		705	368
Chandigarh		4	20
Chhattisgarh		102	92
Daman & Diu		1	25
Delhi		23	128
Goa		16	17
Gujarat		76	107
Haryana		112	185
Himachal Pradesh		233	94
Jammu & Kashmir		102	67
Jharkhand		232	218
Karnataka		534	1274
Kerala		967	520
Madhya Pradesh		436	404
Maharashtra		219	683
Meghalaya		2	1
Nagaland		1	1
Orissa		132	71
Pondicherry		1	25
Punjab		233	190
Rajasthan		85	115
Sikkim		1	1
Tamil Nadu		307	856

1	2	3
Tripura	1	22
Uttar Pradesh	1300	797
Uttaranchal	12	10
West Bengal	130	174
Total	6424	7151

Shortage of Medicines in Ayurvedic and Unani Dispensaries

3934. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether CGHS Ayurvedic and Unani Dispensaries are not being supplied with all types of Ayurvedic/Unani medicines;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. Most of the medicines required for treating common ailments are available in the Ayurvedic/Unani CGHS dispensaries. However, the beneficiaries are allowed to purchase from the open market the Ayurvedic and Unani medicines prescribed by the Govt. specialists and not available in the dispensaries and the Govt. re-imbursed this amount.

PCOS in North-Eastern Region

3935. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of PCOs allotted in N.E. States particularly in Sikkim during each of the last three years, district-wise;

(b) whether the Government have formulated any new guidelines for the allotment of PCOs; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) The telecom district-wise information including that of Sikkim is given in the statement.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the Telecom District	Number of STD/ISD/Local PCOs allotted telecom District		
		2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
1.	Meghalaya	178	233	358
2.	Mizoram	71	56	94
3.	Tripura	350	347	589
4.	Arunachal Pradesh	719	879	921
5.	Manipur	985	1203	1313
6.	Nagaland	1381	1412	1515
7.	Sikkim	70	71	19
8.	Bongaigaon	456	235	600
9.	Dibrugarh	269	170	278
10.	Guwahati (Kamrup)	578	819	717
11.	Jorhat	97	136	341
12.	Nagaon	122	170	374
13.	Silchar	451	275	516
14.	Tezpur	439	352	545

Research on Indian Herbs

3936. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the herbal industry is awaiting a decision from the World Health Organisation regarding the manufacture of certain drugs;

(b) if so, whether such a permission is mandatory;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Western countries have been conducting extensive research on Indian herbs; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued general guidelines for methodologies on research and evaluation of traditional medicines & Traditional Medicines Strategy for the member countries. WHO permission is not required for conducting any research.

(d) and (e) It is known that Western countries are conducting research on Indian Herbs including, Bhumi Amalaki (*Phyllanthus amarus*), Nimba (*Azadirachta indica*) and Haridra (*Curcuma longa*) etc.

Industrial Clusters in Bihar

3937. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN : Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any plan to set up Industrial Clusters in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof, location-wise;

(c) the funds allocated for the purpose; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-

EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Central Silk Board in association with Government of Bihar is developing a Sericulture Cluster around the Village Panisal in Kishanganj District and another Cluster in the Districts of Saharsa, Supaul and Madhepura is proposed to be developed. The total amount released for the above Clusters is Rs. 10,757 lakh. In addition, under the National Programme for Rural Industrialisation, the Clusters of Leather Industries at Biharsharif in Nalanda District and Mithila/Madhubani Paintings in Madhubani Districts have been taken up for development by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development at the cost of Rs. 55,270/- and Rs. 505,596/-, respectively.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts

3938. SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of staff belonging to other backward classes under group 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' in various departments under his Ministry;

(b) the reservation quota for OBCs in Central Government services;

(c) whether the quota of OBCs has been filled in the Ministry;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the quota is likely to be filled;

(f) whether OBCs are provided reservation in proportion also; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) The number of staff belonging to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the Ministry of External Affairs, except Central Passport Organisation (CPO) and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), is as follows :

Group	Number of staff belonging to Other Backward Classes (OBC) category (*)
'A'	33
'B'	61
'C'	42
'D'	27

The information in respect of Central Passport Organisation (CPO) and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), is being collected and will be placed on the table of the House.

(b) Reservation quota for Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the Central Government is 27 per cent of the posts under direct recruitment.

(c) to (e) **Yes; Reservation for Other Backward Classes in direct recruitment commenced only in 1995. Since then the vacancies in the Ministry are being filled earmarking 27% quota for Other Backward Classes.**

(f) and (g) **No. The present reservation policy of the Government of India has no provision for reservation in promotion for the Other Backward Classes category.**

[English]

Financial Assistance to Maharashtra

3939. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Maharashtra Government had submitted three proposals regarding Computerisation of Food and Drugs Administration, strengthening of Drugs Control Laboratory, Mumbai and strengthening of Drugs Control Laboratory, Aurangabad to the Union Government in November, 2001 for grant of financial assistance from World Bank; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The project had already been appraised and is in the process of approval.

VPTs in Orissa

3940. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of village public telephones installed in the Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput districts of Orissa;

(b) whether the majority of villages in those districts do not have public telephone facilities; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to provide village public telephone facility in each village in those districts particularly the inaccessible villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) A total of 8987 Village Public Telephones (VPTs) have been installed in Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput districts of Orissa as on 31.3.2003. District-wise details are as under :-

District	Total Villages	Villages with Telecom Facilities
Kalahandi	2700	2371
Bolangir	2569	2396
Koraput	6118	4220

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Out of the remaining 2400 uncovered village in these districts, 2077 inaccessible villages are planned to be provided by Satellite based telephones subject to availability of funds from the government. 228 villages are uninhabited, 55 small villages are with no custodian and 40 villages fall under naxalite affected areas. These shall be provided with telecom facilities as and when the situation improves.

*[Translation]***WLL in Gram Panchayats/Gram Sabhas**

3941. SHRI SURESH PASI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Gram Panchayats and Gram Sabhas in all rural areas of India have been provided with telephone facility through Multi Access Relay Radio (MARR);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a majority of Gram Sabhas and Panchayats have not received instruments;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the instruments already received by some of them are not being maintained properly;

(f) if so, whether the Government propose to convert them into WLL keeping in view the failure of the system;

(g) if so, the time by which this scheme is likely to be started; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Different technologies like MARR, Wireless in Local Loop (WLL), Landlines and Satellite Terminals have been utilised to provide telecom facilities in Gram Panchayats and Gram Sabha of the rural areas of India.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. Instruments are provided with all VPT connections provided to Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha villages including MARR based VPTs. However at some places MARR based VPTs were not giving satisfactory services.

(f) to (h) It is planned to convert all MARR based VPTs in all rural areas of India in a phased manner by 2004-2005.

*[English]***Lack of Trained Clinical Nutritionists**

3942. SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH :
SHRI DINESH CHANDRA VADAV :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is lack of well-trained Clinical Nutritionists in the Government hospitals of Delhi;

(b) if so, whether any study has been conducted by the Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) A dietetic department is in existence in each of Central Government Hospitals in Delhi, i.e. Dr. RML Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital and Lady Hardinge Medical College & Associated Hospitals are manned by qualified dietician for advising the patients on nutrition.

Reduction in STD Rates by BSNL

3943. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK :
SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has made major reduction in STD rates;

(b) if so, the extent thereof and the date from which it became effective;

(c) whether the BSNL also proposes to reduce the ISD rate; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A major reduction of STD rates was effected by BSNL by reducing long distance call charges beyond 500 kms. from Rs. 9 per minute to Rs. 4.80 per minute from 7th March, 2003.

(c) At present there is no proposal under consideration in BSNL for reduction in the ISD rates.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Road Condition of NH-34

3944. SHRI ABUL HASNAT KHAN : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether road condition of NH-34 from Kolkata Airport to Siliguri of Darjeeling district has deteriorated since long;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the said road would be undertaken for major repair; and

(d) by when the expansion of the road is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) NH-34 starts from Kolkata airport and ends at Dalkhola. Improvement of this road from Kolkata airport to km. 31 and km. 398 to Dalkhola has already been completed. Capacity augmentation and strengthening of the stretch from km. 31 to 398 under loan assistance of the Asian Development Bank has been sanctioned recently in March, 2003. This work is scheduled to be completed by 2006-2007. Four laning of the stretch from Dalkhola to Siliguri (NH-31) is in progress. This is scheduled for completion by 2007.

Report of Toxicology Panel of ICMR

3945. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the toxicology review panel of ICMR has not cleared the toxicity Styrene Malic Anhydride (SMA) and Dimethyl Sulphoxide (DMSO);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether in-take of SMA and DMSO cause excessive damage to human organs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reasons behind the use of the above mentioned drugs on human subjects?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Toxicology Panel of Council has not been able to give further clearance for extending the study on Styrene Maleic Anhydride (SMA) and Dimethyl Sulphoxide (DMSO) due to lack of complete toxicology dossier and the observed clinical findings.

(c) to (e) No conclusive evidence could be derived on the intake of SMS and DMSO in the absence of published literature and at the current level of research.

[Translation]

Modern Communication Facilities to Jaipur

3946. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the programmes implemented to enhance the capacity of telephone exchanges and to provide modern communication facilities to Jaipur, Rajasthan during the last one year;

(b) the details of such facilities to be provided to Jaipur in the year 2003-04; and

(c) the number of officers found involved in corrupt practices in communications and postal services in the country particularly Rajasthan during the year 2001-2002 alongwith the action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has enhanced the exchange capacity in Jaipur SSAs (Jaipur & Dausa Revenue Districts) during the year 2002-03 as given below :

- (1) Switching capacity added — 29018 lines.
- (2) 7 New Exchanges opened in Jaipur SSA.
- (3) Trunk Automatic Exchange Capacity expanded by 8000 lines.
- (4) Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) of 29000 lines capacity has been commissioned.

Modern Telephone facilities such as IN (Intelligent Network) Services [ITC (India Telephone Card)], Free Phone Services, Televoting service, PRM (Premium Rate Service), VPN (Virtual Private Network) service, IN PCO (Public Call Office), ISDN (Integrated Service Digital Network) services, Video Conferencing, Dial up/leased line/ISDN Internet services, Internet Dhabas and Internet Telephony Services have been provided.

(b) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has planned following facilities during 2003-04 for Jaipur City :

- (1) Enhancement of exchange capacity in Jaipur 9000 lines EWSD (Digital Electronic Switching System) and 1000 lines OCB (Organ Central Binaire) local exchange equipment has already been ordered.
- (2) Expansion of Cellular Mobile Service.
- (3) 9000 lines TAX (Trunk Automatic Exchange) capacity augmentation.
- (4) 10000 lines WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) mobile services to be commissioned.

Modern telecom facilities to be provided during 2003-04 in Jaipur are as under :

- (1) 96 lines Direct Internet Access System (DIAS).
- (2) On line registration for Internet Dial up connection.
- (3) CLI (Calling Line Identification) based Internet Service.
- (4) Value Added Service on IVRS system.
- (5) Managed Leased line Network.
- (6) Opening of Call Center.
- (7) Computerisation activities involving Integration of Billing and commercial services.

(c) The number of officers involved in corrupt practices in Communication Department in Rajasthan during the year 2001-02 is 95 and action has been taken against all officers. In the Department of Posts no officer has involved in corrupt practices in Rajasthan during the year 2001-02. Information is being collected regarding the officers involved in corrupt practices in the country in the Department of Posts and Communication and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Declaration of Cellular Phone
as IT instruments**

3947. SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government propose to declare cellular phones as IT instruments;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, Cellular

Phones are already covered under the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) of World Trade Organisation to which India is a Signatory. As such, Cellular Phones are IT instruments.

- (c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

[English]

Disinvestment of NTPC

3948. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal for the disinvestment of equity in the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC);

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to protect the interests of its employees?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) No, Sir.

- (b) and (c) Do not arise.

Payment of Charges

3949. SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the rural subscribers living in the vicinity of a urban exchange have to pay charges as per the urban norms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to change the definition of urban and rural exchanges;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Subscribers living in areas classified as rural in the Census Report are to pay as per tariff for rural areas and is independent of the location of the exchange which serves them.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) There is no such proposal.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) Classification of exchanges as urban and rural has no linkage with the application of tariff to rural and urban subscribers.

Study of Occupational Hazards

3950. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Institute for Occupational Health has been given the responsibility for studying various occupational hazards of different sections of workers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of various types of works on which the NIOH has completed studies during the last three years alongwith the on-going projects at hand; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to review the functioning of NIOH?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. During 9th Five Year Plan, a Central Programme entitled "Control and Treatment of Occupational Diseases" was assigned to the National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), Ahmedabad, an Institute under Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Under this programme, nine major projects were undertaken. The details of the projects are given in the enclosed statement.

Over the last three years NIOH has developed modules for prevention of occupational hazards in agate

industry, quartz grinders, tobacco harvesters, salt workers and stone workers.

(d) Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) of which NIOH, Ahmedabad is one of the constituents, has got a system of evaluation of scientific activities of various permanent Institutes/Centres. Scientific Advisory Board which is chaired by the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) evaluates the working of these institutions/Centres regularly.

Statement

1. Prevention, control and treatment of silicosis and silico-tuberculosis in Agate industry.
2. Occupational health problems of tobacco harvesters and their prevention.
3. Child Labour—Occupational health problems, evaluation and control.
4. Capacity Building to promote research, education and training at NIOH.
5. Prevention and control of occupational health hazards among salt workers working in remote desert areas of Gujarat and Western Rajasthan.
6. Health risk assessment and development of intervention programme in cottage industries with high risk of silicosis.
7. Health risk assessment of rural and urban population due to indoor/ambient air pollution.
8. Hazards processes and chemicals. Database generation documentation and information.
9. Evaluation of occupational health problems of cycle pullers and redesign cycle rickshaw on ergonomic principal.

Master Control Facility Centres

3951. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has a proposal to enhance satellite monitoring capability;

(b) if so, the number of Master Control Facility centres propose to be set up by the ISRO; and

(c) the details of the places identified for the establishment of such centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) One more Master Control Facility is being established by ISRO at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Assistance for Filaria Control Programme

3952. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Filaria cases in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the State Governments particularly Orissa for the financial assistance for the expansion of Filaria Control Programme;

(c) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, State-wise; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) A Statement showing number of Filaria cases in the country, State-wise is enclosed.

(b) to (d) No such proposal has been received from any State during the last three years.

Statement***State-wise provisional data on the prevalence of Microfilaria (Mf.) and Disease Cases (from Jan. to 31 Dec. 2002)***

Sl. No.	State	Blood Smear Examined	No. of Micro Filaria carriers (MF + ve)	Mf. Rate %	No. of Disease cases	Desease Rate %
1.	Andhra Pradesh	213877	2438	1.14	10299	4.82
2.	Assam	0	0	0.00	0	0.00
3.	Bihar	278038	1133	0.41	5315	1.91
4.	Goa	11790	17	0.14	0	0.00
5.	Gujarat	26473	35	0.13	10	0.04
6.	Karnataka	86150	536	0.62	5882	6.60
7.	Kerala	88597	393	0.44	599	0.68
8.	Madhya Pradesh	103984	214	0.21	656	0.63
9.	Maharashtra	589147	7581	1.29	2596	0.44
10.	Orissa	16112	210	1.30	1569	9.74
11.	Tamil Nadu	2011010	1385	0.07	1166	0.06
12.	Uttar Pradesh	67245	504	0.75	4815	7.16
13.	West Bengal	5463	180	3.29	487	8.91
14.	Pondicherry	106040	523	0.49	126	0.12
15.	A&N Island	11823	78	0.66	0	0.00
16.	Daman & Diu	12051	14	0.12	92	0.76
17.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0.00	0	0.00
18.	Jharkhand	27507	70	0.25	356	1.29
Total		3655307	15311	0.42	33768	0.92

Road Connectivity to Mangalore Port

3953. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any road project has been started in Karnataka to provide connectivity to Mangalore Port;

(h) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the allocation made therefor during the financial years 2002-03 and 2003-04?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to provide connectivity to New Mangalore Port by improving the sections from Suratkal to Nantur junction on National Highway-17 and from Padil junction to Bantwal on National Highway-48. Total length of the project is about 38 km.

(c) The project will be taken up by establishing a Special Purpose Vehicle in which National Highways Authority of India and New Mangalore Port Trust may participate.

Setting up of Post Offices

3954. SHRI A. NARENDRA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the amount allocated for the construction of new building and maintenance of post offices in Andhra Pradesh and Uttaranchal during each of the last three years and till date;

(b) the number of new post offices set up in these States during the above mentioned period; and

(c) the number of new post offices proposed to be set up in these States during the current financial year and the amount allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) Sir, the details about amount allocated for construction of new building and maintenance of post offices in Andhra Pradesh and Uttaranchal during each of the last three years and till date are given below:-

		Amount allocated (Rupees in lakhs)			
		2002-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
For construction of new buildings	Andhra Pradesh	92.54	108.28	Nil	Nil
	Uttaranchal	Nil	90	87.10	Nil
For Maintenance of building	Andhra Pradesh	193	188.20	227	Nil
	Uttaranchal	Nil	121	131	Nil

(b) The number of new post offices set up in Andhra Pradesh and Uttaranchal during each of the last three years are as follows :-

	Number of new post offices opened		
	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Andhra Pradesh	8	3	3
Uttaranchal	7	16	4

(c) Circle-wise break up of targets and allocation of funds is done at the beginning of each financial year and this exercise is currently underway.

[Translation]

Funds to Voluntary Organisations for T.B. Control Programme

3955. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have provided funds to voluntary organizations to combat tuberculosis keeping in view the havoc caused by the disease during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details of amount provided to various voluntary organizations alongwith the names of such organizations, State-wise during the aforesaid period; and

(c) the details of action plan initiated by the Government to encourage such organizations?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Involvement of NGOs in the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) has been decentralized to the district level and funds for this purpose are released from the Centre to the State TB Societies for onwards transmission to the District TB Societies. No funds are directly released from the Centre to the NGOs. A statement indicating State-wise expenditure of funds under NGOs head till date and number of NGOs participating is given at statement. Many NGOs participate in RNTCP on a voluntary basis.

(c) In order to increase the access of masses to TB care facilities, special emphasis is laid under the Programme for involvement of NGOs. For this purpose detailed guidelines have been evolved and widely disseminated. There are five schemes for NGOs involvement under the Programme and NGOs as per their capacity can take up any of these.

Statement

*Expenditure of funds under NGO Head,
till date in different States*

S. No.	State Name	Expenditure	No. of NGOs participating
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	8.02	23
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.30	2
3.	Bihar	2.76	13
4.	Chandigarh	0.25	5
5.	Delhi	1.66	48
6.	Gujarat	4.94	24
7.	Himachal Pradesh	0.09	2
8.	Jharkhand	0.97	8

1	2	3	4
9.	Karnataka	3.80	21
10.	Kerala	4.08	27
11.	Madhya Pradesh	1.15	2
12.	Maharashtra	23.05	108
13.	Manipur	2.43	40
14.	Nagaland	0.21	4
15.	Rajasthan	3:60	53
16.	Sikkim	0.55	28
17.	Tamil Nadu	4.89	75
18.	Uttar Pradesh	1.76	6
19.	West Bengal	20.37	32

Many NGOs participate in RNTCP on a voluntary basis.

WLL bases PCOs in Jharkhand

3956. SHRI NAGMANI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to install WLL based PCOs in rural areas of Jharkhand; and

(b) if so, the time by which this facility is likely to be made available in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, under Gram Sanchar Sevak Scheme WLL based mobile PCOs are already made available in the rural areas of Jharkhand.

Introduction of Maternal Benefit Scheme

3957. YOGI ADITYA NATH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are contemplating to introduce any new Maternal Benefit Scheme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the main objective of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir. There is a proposal to introduce a new scheme in the name of Janani Suraksha Yojana. This scheme shall not only integrate the existing National Maternity Benefit Scheme with the ongoing Maternal Health schemes but will also introduce several new initiatives.

(b) and (c) The main features of this scheme would be as follows :

- (i) The scheme will be 100% centrally sponsored.
- (ii) The benefit will be available to all women living in both rural and urban areas.
- (iii) All women aged 19 years and above, belonging to households below poverty line will be eligible for taking benefit of this scheme.
- (iv) The implementation in the urban areas will be through Municipal Health authorities and in rural areas, through the Chief Medical Officers of the districts.
- (v) Up to two live births, assistance of Rs. 500/- for birth of male child and Rs. 1000/- for birth of a female child. For pregnant women who opt for sterilization, she would be given the benefit of the scheme, even after the birth of two children.
- (vi) At least three antenatal check-up and delivery in a health centre/hospital will be necessary for availing the benefits.
- (vii) Assistance up to Rs. 150/- for transporting the pregnant women to a health centre/hospital will be provided.
- (viii) Self-declaration will be accepted for Below

Poverty Line (BPL) status in case the pregnant does not possess a BPL card.

- (ix) The assistance under the scheme is proposed to be disbursed by the ANMs immediately after the delivery.
- (x) In case, the pregnant women is brought to a health center/hospital by a Dai, the Dai would be paid an incentive of Rs. 25/-.

Unregistered Medical Practitioners

3958. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are aware that there are lakhs of unregistered medical practitioners in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Government propose to register them on the basis of experience after imparting them training;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) The Government are aware that there are a number of unregistered practitioners in the country.

- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) and (d) Question do not arise.

Establishment of National Vehicle Licensing Authority

3959. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI :

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are contemplating to set up a National Vehicle Licensing Authority;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said Authority is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[English]

Plan Outlay for Port Sector

3960. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) the approved plan outlay for the Port Sector during the Ninth Plan, Port-wise;

(b) whether the allotted plan outlay has not been fully utilised; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :

(a) Port/organization-wise break-up of the approved Plan outlay for the Port Sector during the Ninth Plan is given below :-

Sl. No.	Port/Organisation	Outlay (Rs. in crores)
1	2	3
(i)	Kolkata Port	545.00
(ii)	Mumbai Port	1208.00
(iii)	Jawaharlal Nehru Port	700.00
(iv)	Chennai Port	1500.00
(v)	Cochin Port	380.00
(vi)	Visakhapatnam Port	900.00
(vii)	Kandla Port	560.00

1	2	3
(viii)	Mormugao Port	360.00
(ix)	Paradip Port	1200.00
(x)	New Mangalore Port	640.00
(xi)	Tuticorin Port	550.00
(xii)	Dredging Corporation of India Ltd.	695.00
(xiii)	Andaman Lakshadweep Harbour Works	125.00
(xiv)	Minor Ports Survey Organisation	15.00
(xv)	Tariff Authority for Major Ports	12.00
(xvi)	Minor Ports	30.00
(xvii)	Others	8.00
Total		9428.00

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The main reasons for non-utilisation of the plan outlay by the Ports include delay in commencement/ slowing due to monsoon/bad weather; contractual disputes/ litigation; delay in finalisation of tenders and award of contracts; dropping/deferment of schemes; delay in environmental clearance etc.

Handing Over of Building for CGHS Dispensary

3961. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the building for CGHS dispensary in sector XII, R.K. Puram, New Delhi has been completed;

(b) if so, whether the building has not been handed over by the CPWD to the CGHS so far;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the dispensary is likely to be shifted in this building?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The building has not been handed over to CGHS as certain clearances are required from the local bodies.

(d) The dispensary can be shifted to the new building only after receipt of the clearances mentioned above.

Vacant Posts of Pharmacists

3962. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of posts of Homoeopathic/Ayurvedic Pharmacists are lying vacant in CGHS dispensaries, particularly in Delhi;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof and its impact on the smooth functioning of these dispensaries; and

(c) the time by which these vacancies are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) The vacancy position as on 1.4.2003 is as follows :-

	No. of posts of CGHS Pharmacists vacant as on 1.4.2003	
	Ayurvedic	Homeo
In Delhi	3	3
Outside Delhi	4	1

(b) The posts of Pharmacist in the CGHS come under direct recruitment quota and hence cannot be filled up until these are cleared by the Screening Committee constituted for the purpose which is headed by Secretary (Health). The Screening Committee in its meeting held on 29.1.2003 has recommended filling up of three posts of Pharmacist (Homeo.) and two posts of Pharmacist (Ayurvedic under CGHS Delhi). Meanwhile, efforts have

been made to ensure smooth functioning of the CGHS dispensaries within the constraints of available strength of staff.

(c) In respect of the posts of Pharmacists which have been cleared by the Screening Committee, the concerned appointing authority has been requested to take urgent action to fill them up.

Programme e-Gurucools

3963. SHRI M.K. SUBBA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to set up e-Gurucools in the country especially in the inaccessible areas of Assam and other States in the Northeast;

(b) if so, the main objectives and modus operandi of the e-Gurucools; and

(c) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Foreign Assistance to Hospitals in Maharashtra

3964. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA :
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received a proposal from the State Government of Maharashtra for financial assistance from Japan for the upgradation of some Hospitals in the State;

(b) if so, the latest position thereof;

(c) whether the State Government has urged the Union Government to expedite the proposal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Two proposals viz. (i) Project for improvement of Medical Services for Sir J.J. Hospital and Cama & Albles Hospital, Mumbai and (ii) Upgradation of Civil Hospitals and Government Medical Colleges in Kolhapur, Lathur, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli and Amravati of Maharashtra Government have been posed to the Government of Japan in April, 1997 and February, 2002 respectively.

The proposal of Sir J.J. Hospital and Cama & Albles Hospital, Mumbai has been shortlisted by the Government of Japan for implementation and the proposal for Upgradation of Civil Hospitals and Government Medical Colleges is under consideration of Government of Japan.

Income Accrual Approach in Measuring Per-Capita Income

3965. SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether income accrual approach has not been adopted in measuring per-capita income of a State/Union Territory;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether remittances and bank transfer from abroad and other States are also not taken into account while measuring per-capita average income in a State;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(e) whether any research has been conducted to find out correct per-capita average income of States and Union Territories;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, whether the Government propose to engage researchers for calculating correct per capita average income of a State/Union Territory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) The income accrual approach has not been adopted in measuring per capita income of a State/ Union Territory.

(b) It has not been possible to adopt the income accrual approach for want of information on net inflow of factor incomes from other States as well as from abroad.

(c) Remittances and bank transfers from abroad and other States are not taken into account in this computation.

(d) These flows have no relevance in the income originating approach.

(e) The methodology adopted by the states for compiling the estimates of State Domestic Product, which forms the basis of computation of per capita average income of a State/UT, is based on the recommendations of the Regional Accounts Committee constituted for the purpose.

(f) As explained in (e) above.

(g) No, Sir. The methodology currently followed gives a fair assessment of the per capita average income of a State/Union Territory.

Cellular Service by MTNL and BSNL

3966. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the MTNL and the BSNL have been providing cellular service in the country;

(b) if so, the revenue earned by the MTNL and the BSNL therefrom as on date;

(c) whether people are showing less interest on Government owned MTNL and BSNL cellular telephones as compared to cellular telephones being provided by private players;

- (d) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to make its cellular service more people friendly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) MTNL is providing the Cellular Mobile Telephone Services in the Metro Cities of Delhi including National Capital Region towns of NOIDA, Ghaziabad, Faridabad and Gurgaon and Mumbai and its adjoining areas of Navi Mumbai and Kalyan only. At other places, Cellular service is provided by BSNL.

(b) The total revenue earned upto February, 2003. by the MTNL and BSNL is Rs. 236.389 crores and Rs. 127 crores respectively.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. There is good response to cellular services provided by MTNL and BSNL.

(e) Steps taken or being taken to make cellular service more people friendly are :

- (i) Cellular Mobile service has become within the reach of common man due to affordable tariff plan.
- (ii) Customer service centres are easily accessible and Call centres have been opened to take care of customer problems.
- (iii) Additional Base units have been provided to improve coverage.

[Translation]

Height of Transmission Tower

3967. SHRI RAGHUVIR SINGH KAUSHAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the height of transmission tower installed at Kota district headquarters, of Rajasthan for mobile telephone service is less than the prescribed standard;

- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the problems being faced by the subscribers as a result thereof; and
- (d) the corrective steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) All the towers are provided as per design except at one of the sites where clearance of design height has not been given by the Airport Authority due to proximity to Airport.

(c) and (d) The loss of coverage as a result of this being addressed by additional tower as part of expansion plan.

[English]

International Conferences on Homeopathy

3968. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of the International Conferences on Homoeopathy held during the last three years including the details of officials from the Government of India who attended each conferences;
- (b) whether there is a separate budget for international conferences in the ministry;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of the budget provision (BE) during the year 2002-03 including the amount spent during the year 2002-03?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) As per information available, two Conferences of Asia Pacific Conference on Acupuncture, Homoeopathy, Oriental and Complementary Medicine were held at Kota Bharu in Malaysia during the last three years. Dr. R.N. Shaw, Director, Central Council for Research

in Homoeopathy attended one Conference during 2000-2001.

(b) and (c) The Department has a scheme of 'International Exchange Programmes/Seminars, Workshops on ISM&H' under which grant in aid is given for arranging International Exchange Programmes/seminars, Workshops etc. on ISM&H.

(d) Against an allocation of Rs. 100.00 lakhs an expenditure of Rs. 63.00 lakhs has been incurred during the year 2002-2003.

Deadline for Polio Eradication

3969. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has fixed any deadline for the eradication of polio in the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which India is likely to achieve the objective by the said deadline;

(d) whether the Government have requested the WHO to extend the deadline; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) The WHO has fixed the goal of international polio eradication and polio-free certification by 2005.

(c) The objective of the Government is eradicating polio from the country and obtaining polio-free certification by 2005. Since the initiative to eradicate polio from India was started in 1995, there has been considerable progress towards achieving this goal till 2001. The number of polio cases declined from 1934 in 1998 to 1126 in 1999, 265 in 2000 and 268 in 2001. However, the polio eradication effort in India suffered a major setback during 2002 due to resurgence of polio cases in UP and spill over of the transmission into other neighbouring States. The number

of cases during 2002 increased from 268 during 2001 to 1599. Keeping in view this scenario and with the objective of controlling the transmission of virus, the India Expert Advisory Group of WHO has suggested the strategy of four sub-national immunization rounds in high-risk States/areas and two national immunization rounds during 2003-04. As a part of this strategy, one sub-national immunization round in high-risk States/areas, including Uttar Pradesh and Bihar has been scheduled to be held on 6th April, 03.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Agreement with MTNL, BSNL and DoT Officers

3970. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have entered into an agreement with the officers of MTNL, BSNL and DoT regarding their service conditions and pay scales;

(b) if so, the date on which the agreement was reached and signed by all parties; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Applications of Biotech Units

3971. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI :
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the leading bio-tech units of Andhra Pradesh have submitted a number of applications to the Drugs Controller General of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the time since when these are pending; and

(c) the action taken by DCGI for the clearance of these applications?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c): Unlike pharmaceuticals, r-DNA based therapeutics are required to be initially evaluated for by the Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation Clearance

under Deptt. of Bio-technology. The safety and efficacy data generated with the proposed r-DNA base products are thereafter evaluated before the expert panel constituted for r-DNA based therapeutics in the office of Drugs Controller General of India, and Genetic Engineering Approval Committee under Ministry of Environment etc., before the final clearance is accorded.

Details of the proposals filed by Bio-tech units of Hyderabad in the office of DCG(I) alongwith the status of each application is given in statement.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the Firm	Date of application	Proposal For	Status
1	2	3	4	5
1.	M/s. Bharat Bio-tech Int. Ltd., Hyderabad	17.05.99	Manufacture and marketing of indigenously developed r-Human Streptokinase	–Under clinical evaluation by the company.
2.	M/s. Shantha Bio-tech Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad	28.11.01 11.2.2003	Manufacture and marketing of indigenously developed r-Human streptokinase Manufacture and marketing of indigenously developed r-Human erythropoietin Inj.	Under clinical evaluation by the company. RCGM Clearance obtained on 10.03.03. Permission given for conducting the Clinical trial on 04.04.03.
3.	M/s. Dr. Reddy's Labs, Hyderabad	28.05.01	–Manufacturer and marketing indigenously developed r-human interferon alpha 2b	Under clinical evaluation by the company.
4.	M/s. Biological E Ltd., Hyderabad	26.08.02	–Manufacture and marketing of indigenously developed r-Hepatitis B vaccine	Under clinical evaluation by the company.
5.	M/s. Virchow Bio-tech Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad	19.12.02 19.12.02 17.12.02	Manufacture and marketing of indigenously developed –r-Human Interferon alpha 2b inj. –Interleukin inj. –Platelets derived growth factor,	RCGM clearance not yet obtained by the firm. In all the proposals, the Firm has been advised in Feb/March, 03 to get the facility inspected in conformity with GMP norms before the trial batches are produced.

1	2	3	4	5
6.	M/s. Medgene Bio-tech, Hyderabad	28.11.02	—Manufacture and marketing of indigenously developed r-Human growth Hormone	Firm had not submitted application as per prescribed norm. Firm was advised on 04.01.03 to make the application in the prescribed form 40 along with requisite fees as per the rules.

*[Translation]***Scam in Central Stores of BSNL**

3972. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI :
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a scam in the Central Stores of BSNL, Moradabad, has been unravelled;
- (b) if so, the full facts thereof;
- (c) the persons found guilty in this regard; and
- (d) the action taken against the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Sir, irregularities have been noticed in disposal of stores.

(b) Unserviceable stores of 496.55 quintals of wooden and iron materials were disposed off for Rs. 98,350 through regular bidding process and the amount credited to the Government account.

(c) Preliminary investigation reveals certain lapses on the part of Sub-Divisional Engineer (Material Management), O/o the General Manager Telecom District, Moradabad.

(d) Detailed inquiry by vigilance to ascertain the lapses of official(s) involved is in progress and action will be taken accordingly. In the mean time SDE (MM), has been transferred from Moradabad to Amroha on 28-01-2003.

*[English]***Illegal Nursing Homes**

3973. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
SHRI BHASKAR RAO PATIL :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are aware that a large number of nursing homes are functioning in Delhi and other States illegally;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether these nursing homes do not employ qualified doctors and their medical care is sub-standard;
- (d) if so, whether the Union Government have issued any directions to the State Governments in this regard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (f) Health being a State subject under the Constitution of India, regulation of private hospitals as well as nursing homes comes within the purview of the State Governments and, therefore, such information is not maintained by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Export of Software

3974. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA :
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recent congress on Information Technology held at Bangalore had observed that India's progress in software was largely service based and not product based;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Congress had also observed that China was taking the lead in the field of IT sector;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken and being taken by the Government to boost India's software export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) to (c) The Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology had not organised the Science Congress held in Bangalore. However, the 90th session of the Indian Science Congress held in Bangalore during January 3-7, 2003, was organised by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Bangalore University (BU). The focal theme of the 90th session was on "Frontier Science and cutting-edge Technologies".

In the 90th session of the Indian Science Congress, there were two sessions related to IT :

- (1) A Plenary on Information Science and Technologies for a Knowledge.
- (2) A Sectional Session on Information and Communications Science and Technology.

As per the inputs available from the organisers of the Science Congress, there was neither any agreement nor consensus :-

(i) that India's progress in software has been service-based but not product-based; and •

(ii) that China was taking the lead in IT sector. Further in the presentations made, there was all-round appreciation and recognition that India has made great strides in IT and that the challenge ahead of India is to emerge as an IT super-power, in software and manufacturing, and enable a knowledge-society by integrating information technology to the core of science, technological and economic activities.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Steps taken by Government to boost up India's software exports are given at statement enclosed.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government to promote the Information Technology Sector

1. Export Promotion Capital Goods scheme (EPCG) has been rationalized and extended uniformly to all sectors without any threshold limit on payment of 5% duty.
2. Approvals for all foreign direct investment proposals relating to the Information Technology sector, with the exception of Business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce are under the automatic route.
3. Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) and Software Technology Park (STP) Schemes are Implemented under the aegis of the Department of information Technology, Ministry of Communications and information Technology, through a single window mechanism of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC).
4. Supplies at Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) Items in the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) by EHTP/ EOU/EPZ units shall be counted towards fulfillment of minimum Net Foreign Exchange earning as a Percentage of exports (NFEP) and the minimum Export Performance (EP), provided that the Items are manufactured in the unit and attract zero rate of basic

- customs duty. Positive NFEP is required to be
- achieved in 5 years instead of every year.
5. DTA access upto 50% of the FOB value of export is permitted for electronics hardware units under EOU/EPZ/EHTP schemes and the software units under EOU/EPZ/STP schemes.
 6. Accelerated depreciation norms extended to computers and computer peripherals to all units and capital goods of IT hardware units under Export Oriented schemes (EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP). These shall stand depreciated to overall limit of 90% over a period of 3 years.
 7. Special Economic Zones are being set up to enable hassle free manufacturing and trading for export purposes.
 8. The Depreciation on Computers is allowed @ 60%.
 9. In the Budget 2002-03, the peak rate of customs duty has been reduced from 35% to 30%. Customs duty has been reduced on stepper motors for computers/printers from 5% to 0%, floppy diskette and unrecorded magnetic tape from 15% to 10%, ink cartridges/ribbon assembly/ribbon gear assembly/ribbon gear carriage for use in printers for computers from 25% to 5%, 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors from 5% to 0% 24 items of capital goods for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 15%, tools/moulds/dies for electronics industry from 25% to 15% and on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 5%.
 - Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals continues to be @15% and all storage devices, Integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors continue at 0%. The concessional rate of customs duty @5% for specified raw materials for the electronics industry (121 items) continues. Customs duty on information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items of WTO (IT and Telecom products) continues @15%, parts of Telecom continue @5%, parts,
- components and accessories of mobile handsets including cellular telephones continue at 0%.
10. The Central Excise duty structure was rationalised from multiple rates to single rate of 16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%, In the Budget 2001-02, and continues.
 11. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.
 12. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years are freely Importable.
 13. EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units are eligible for income Tax benefit on export profits. upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the income Tax Act.
 14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest on External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) is available to the IT sector.
 15. Definition of Computer Software, as in Section 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act covers transmission of data.
 16. Benefit of Section 80 HHE is available to supporting software developers.
 17. IT Enabled Services are eligible for Income Tax benefit under Sections 10A, 10B and 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act.
 18. DEPB rate will be same for a product whether exported as CBU or in CKD/SKD condition.
 19. Threshold limit for obtaining "Export House" status reduced to Rs. 5 crores from Rs.15 crores for Small Scale Industry, tiny sector, cottage sector, units located in North East States/Sikkim/J&K; exporters exporting to countries in Latin America/CIS/Sub Sahara Africa and units having ISO 9000 (Series) status. The status holders are eligible for the following new/special facilities :
 - 100% retention of foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) account;

Enhancement in normal repatriation period from 180 days to 380 days.

20. The donation of computers, imported duty free by EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units to recognised non-commercial educational institutions, registered charitable hospitals, public libraries, public funded research and development establishments, etc., two years after their use by the said units is permitted.
21. The second-hand computers and computer peripherals donated by an outside donor to Government schools and recognised schools run on a non-commercial basis by any organisation are exempted from customs duties.
22. Income by way of dividends or long-term capital gains of a Venture Capital Fund or Venture Capital company from investment made by way of equity shares in a Venture Capital Undertaking, which has been expanded to include the Software and IT sectors, will henceforth not be included in computing the total income.
23. To give thrust to Venture Capital finance, SEBI has been made the single point nodal agency for registration and regulation of both domestic and overseas venture capital funds.
24. There will be no tax on distributed or undistributed income of Venture Capital Funds. The income distributed by the VCFs will only be taxed in the hands of the investors at the rates applicable to the nature of the income. VCFs will continue to be eligible for exemption even if the shares of the VC undertaking in which the VCFs have made the initial investment are subsequently listed in a recognised stock exchange in India.
25. Under policy on portfolio investment, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are permitted to invest in a company upto an aggregate of 24% of equity shares, extendable upto 40% subject to approvals. This limit was raised from 40% to 49% in the Budget 2001-02.
26. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-1A (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.
27. Two-way fungibility has been permitted for ADRs/GDRs. Local shares can be reconverted into ADRs/GDRs, subject to sectoral caps.
28. With a view to give a boost to the manufacturing sector, it is proposed in the Budget announcements 2002-03, to allow a deduction of a further sum of 15% of the actual cost of such machinery or plant acquired and installed after 31.3.2002 in case of new industrial undertaking or substantial expansion by an existing industrial undertaking. The proposed amendment will take effect from 1.4.2003 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2003-04 and subsequent years.
29. To encourage re-location of Industries to India, plant and machineries would be permitted to be imported without a licence, where the depreciated value of such relocating plants exceeds Rs. 50 crores.
30. Indian Companies wishing to invest abroad may now invest upto US\$ 100 Million on an annual basis through automatic route without being subject to the three year profitability condition, up from existing limit of US\$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).
31. Indian Companies making overseas investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).
32. To induce more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, college or an institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.
33. For reduction of transaction time for export/import clearances, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalised the scheme of 'Known-Shippers' for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.

34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.
35. Information Technology Act 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through Internet.

Assessment of Impact of Iraq War

3975. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Planning Commission is assessing the impact of Iraq war on oil imports, exports and foreign remittances;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the suitable measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Planning Commission in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Planning Commission has set up an internal Standing Group on Economic Fallout of Iraq War comprising of Planning Commission officials for assessing the impact of the Iraq War on the Indian economy, particularly on exports, inward remittances, oil prices and tourism.

(c) No recommendations have been made by this Group so far.

Selection of Haj Assistants

3976. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the norms laid down for the selection of Government employees as Haj Assistants on deputation basis;

(b) the number of Government employees thus selected during the last three years and to be selected in the coming year;

(c) whether the Government are contemplating to increase the number of Haj Assistants in view of the increasing Haj yatrics;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there was any deviation from the prescribed criteria for deputation during the Haj 2003;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether the deputationists are forced to work for more than eight hours without weekly holidays and compensation; and

(h) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA) : (a) The eligibility criteria and terms and conditions for temporary deputation of the Haj Assistants are quite explicit and a copy of the same is enclosed as statement.

(b) The actual number of Haj Assistants who were sent in last three years are as follows:

2001	—	116
2002	—	131
2003	—	128

In addition to Haj Assistants other Government employees were also deputed as per the following details :

Category of deputationist	2001	2002	2003
Assistant Haj Officer	34	37	34
Doctors	96	107	94
Paramedical Staff	118	125	92

Number of deputationists in the coming year depends on the actual request of CGI, Jeddah, which is based on their assessment after the completion of Haj period.

(c) and (d) No.

(e) and (f) No.

(g) and (h) Haj arrangements require 24-hour services to be provided to the pilgrims during their stay in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. All officials deputed from India for Haj duties are deemed to be on duty during their entire period of deputation in Saudi Arabia. Their services are utilised on occasions for 8 hours per day and on other occasions for longer periods depending on exigencies.

Statement

Eligibility Criteria and Terms and Conditions for Temporary Deputation to Consulate General of India, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia for Haj - 2003.

A. Eligibility Conditions :

- For Assistant Haj Officer, the applicant should be Gazetted Officer serving in the grade of Section Officer of Central Government or equivalent.
- For Haj Assistant, the applicant should be holding a non-Gazetted post not below the grade of an Upper Division Clerk of Central Government or equivalent.
- The applicant should not be more than 45 years of age as on 1.1.2003.
- The applicant should be medically fit and produce a Certificate to this effect from a Government Hospital.
- The applicant should be holding permanent post in his grade.
- The applicant who have already performed Haj duty twice or more are not eligible. However, the Ministry of External Affairs reserves the right to consider any application in relaxation of these requirement in case of applicants, who have rendered exemplary services during previous deputations.

- Applications of officers in the higher grade than prescribed shall not be entertained.

B. Desirable Qualifications :

- Due weightage will be given to applicants having knowledge of regional languages.
- Weightage will be given to the applicants having experience in public relations and accounts. Preference will be given to applicants having knowledge of Data Entry and Computer Programming.

C. Pay and Allowances :

- Basic Pay, HRA & CCA and Foreign Allowance as admissible to India-based staff in CGI, Jeddah of equivalent rank.
- No Dally Allowance would be admissible.
- Lump sum transfer grant would be admissible as per MEA Rules.
- Economy class air ticket to and from Jeddah would be provided to the deputationists.
- The selected candidates will be entitled to normal baggage allowance of 20 kgs.
- Accommodation would be provided on sharing basis to the deputationists.

The officials selected will be entitled for eight days' preparation/joining time before departure. No joining/preparation time is admissible on return from deputation.

- No conveyance allowance would be paid for completing various formalities in Delhi.
- Expenditure on account of salary, air travel to and fro Jeddah and accommodation in Saudi Arabia will be borne by the Ministry of External Affairs for the period of deputation in Saudi Arabia, including preparation time.

D. Deployment and Duties of the Deputationists :

- The deputationists will be deployed by Consulate General of India, Jeddah, at various

branch offices in Makkah and Madinah, Haj Terminal at Jeddah, Camps at Mina & Arafat, etc.

The duties of the deputationists will include :

- (i) To assist pilgrims at their Maktabas and camps during the pilgrimage.
- (ii) To assist pilgrims in their daily activities and to attend to their grievances.
- (iii) To assist the pilgrims to perform their Haj rituals.
- (iv) Any other assistance needed by pilgrims.

E. General Conditions of the deputation:

- The selected officials will not be allowed to take any of their family members, including spouse, even at their own cost.
- The deputationists are not allowed to interact with the media. Violation of this condition will result in immediate recall and disciplinary action.
- Persons deputed for the second time are not allowed to perform Haj pilgrimage.
- The deputationists should always be in civilian clothes.
- The services of the deputationists will be at the disposal of the Consulate General of India, Jeddah, during their deputation.
- Failure to perform duties assigned to the deputationists satisfactorily could lead to immediate repatriation to India and disciplinary action, including partial or full recovery of the Government money spent on his/her deputation.

[Translation]

Telephone Facility to Panchayats

3977. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the

Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the district-wise number of village Panchayats in Jharkhand and Bihar where telephone facility has not been provided so far; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to provide better telephone facility to each village Panchayat of Jharkhand State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) In Bihar all village Panchayats have already been provided with telephone facilities and in Jharkhand 204 village Panchayats are yet to be provided with telephone facility. District wise details of 204 village Panchayats in Jharkhand is given in the statement.

(b) Following steps are being taken to provide better telephone facility in the village Panchayats of Jharkhand:-

- (i) Faulty MARR based Village Public Telephone are being replaced by Wireless in Local Loop (WLL)/land lines progressively.
- (ii) Reliable transmission media to exchanges is being provided through Optical Fibre Cables.
- (iii) Efforts are being made by liaising with State Government Authorities for providing stable power supply.

Statement

District-wise Panchayats without Telecom facilities in Jharkhand

Circle	District	Number of Gram Panchayats without Telecom facility
1	2	3
Jharkhand	Ranchi	20
	Gumla	25
	Lohardagga	23

1	2	3
	Simdega	23
	Hazaribagh	6
	Kodarma	8
	Chatra	25
	Daltonganj	5
	Garwa	7
	Latehar	3
	Dumka	16
	Deoghar	9
	Godda	10
	Pakur	2
	Jamtara	10
	Sahebganj	12
	Total	204

National Highways in Madhya Pradesh

3978. SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL :
SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE :

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Madhya Pradesh Government has submitted twenty two new proposals regarding National Highways to the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether revised proposals for new National Highways have been sent for consideration during the Tenth Plan period; and

(d) if so, the time by when these new projects are likely to start?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 22 proposals for declaration of new National Highways received from the State Government were returned in June, 2002 for review based on the revised guidelines.

(c) No modified proposal has been received from the State Government.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Mughal Road in J & K

3979. CHOWDHARY TALIB HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has sent any proposal to the Union Government for the Construction of Mughal Road in the State;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the present status of the proposal; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No estimate for construction of Mughal Road has been submitted to us by the State Government.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Mughal Road is a project of State Government. Central Government has agreed in principle to provide fund to the extent of 50% of the project cost for construction of Mughal Road. An estimate for feasibility study of Mughal Road amounting to Rs.27.9 lakhs, with 50% of this cost to be shared by Central Government has been sanctioned.

(d) Time frame will be known after the estimate for construction of Mughal Road is submitted by State Government.

**Release of Commemorative
Postage Stamp**

3980. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to release commemorative postage stamp in the memory of "Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj" of Kolhapur;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) The Department of Posts have not received any proposal for release of commemorative postage stamp in the memory of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Visit of German President

3981. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY :
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI :
SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the President of Federal Republic of Germany visited India recently and held wide ranging discussions of various subjects;

(b) if so, the details of the deliberations held and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether stress was laid on the steps to promote economic exchanges with India and cooperation in the field of Science and Technology; and

(d) if so, the details of the suggestions made by the two Governments in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and

(b) Dr. Johannes Rau, President of the Federal Republic of Germany paid a State visit to India from 2-7 March, 2003 and held substantive discussions with Rashtrapatiji and Prime Minister on bilateral relations and on regional and global issues mutual concern.

(c) and (d) Both countries agreed to continue their efforts at building a strategic partnership focusing on improved trade and investment, enhanced cooperation in science and technology and greater educational exchanges including joint research activities. A Memorandum of Understanding on an Indo-German Institute for Advanced Technology, to be set up in Visakhapatnam, was signed. Sectors such as space and IT were identified for greater focus in the future.

Fault Rate in Delhi

3982. SHRI RAMJI MANJHI :
SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the fault rate per hundred telephone in Delhi is high as compared with other Metropolitan Cities of the country;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to bring down the fault rate in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, Fault rate in Delhi unit of MTNL is slightly on the higher side as compared to other units. The average fault rate per hundred per month in four metros for the year 2002-2003 (upto 3 1.01.03) is as follows :

Delhi	Mumbai	Kolkatta	Chennai
19.99	10.31	12.0	11.2

Not only the Telecom network of Delhi is one of the oldest where paper core underground cables still exists, but due to very fast development of basic infrastructure like construction of flyovers, widening of road, digging by other

utility services to maintain and meet growing demand of fast expanding population, there are more damages to underground cables. However, the fault rate for the month of February 2003 has been brought down to 17.27 faults per 100 subscribers per month.

(c) The steps taken to bring down the fault rate in Delhi are given in statement.

Statement

MTNL, Delhi has initiated several measures to reduce the fault rate as listed below

1. All the electro mechanical exchanges and analog electronic exchanges in MTNL, Delhi have been replaced by digital electronics exchanges.
 2. Paper core underground cables are being replaced by Jelly filled cables/Optical fibre cables with Digital Loop Carriers (D.L.Cs.)
 3. For higher capacity primary cables and junction cables, duct systems has been introduced.
 4. Rehabilitation work in respect of leading in cables and rewiring of multi storeyed building is being done.
 5. Overhead wires are minimized by introducing 5 pair cables and wall Distribution Points (DPs)
 6. The junction network has been completely transferred to optical fibre cable links.
 7. Further improvement is being done by providing Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH) systems connected on the ring architecture.
 8. Subscriber loop length being reduced by planning more Remote Subscriber Units (RSUs)/Remote Line Units (RLUs)/Digital Loop Carriers (DLCs).
 9. Wireless technologies like Cordect, Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) have been introduced. Faults are monitored on daily basis by senior officers.
 10. Computerised fault reporting system is introduced, which helps in booking, testing and sending the faults to the concerned line staff.
11. In addition to this, line staff is provided with pagers for easy communication and follow up with the testing staff for speedy clearance of faults.
 12. Managed leased Data Network system has been introduced to improve the performance of the leased circuits.
 13. MTNL has liberalized the policy to replace all telephone instruments older than 5 years or repaired more than 2 times. This is being implemented in phases. In the first phase, instruments more than eight years old are being replaced.

Telephone Exchanges in Rented Premises

3983. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a large number of Rural Telephone Exchanges in the country are operating from rented premises;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government propose to construct departmental buildings for the purpose;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

- (b) The details are given in statement.
- (c) Yes, Sir.
- (d) The details are given in statement.

(e) Wherever land is available, construction has been taken up/will be taken-up and wherever land is not available, the department is taking steps to acquire/procure land for constructing departmental buildings subject to availability of resources.

Statement

Rural Telephone Exchanges operating in rented premises and Departmental buildings in progress or proposed to be constructed

Sl. No.	Name of State	Telephone Exchanges in rented premises	No. of departmental buildings in progress or proposed to be constructed
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2293	—
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	46	—
3.	Assam	360	22
4.	Bihar	850	15
5.	Chhattisgarh	552	—
6.	Delhi	—	—
7.	Gujarat	1018	83
8.	Goa	64	5
9.	Haryana	757	—
10.	Himachal Pradesh	856	7
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	226	2
12.	Jharkhand	222	6
13.	Karnataka	1964	—
14.	Kerala	638	23
15.	Madhya Pradesh	2096	23
16.	Maharashtra	3675	147
17.	Manipur	28	3
18.	Meghalaya	36	2
19.	Mizoram	13	5

1	2	3	4
20.	Nagaland	11	4
21.	Orissa	813	31
22.	Punjab	1093	21
23.	Rajasthan	1985	73
24.	Sikkim	33	—
25.	Tamil Nadu	1045	19
26.	Tripura	17	11
27.	Uttar Pradesh	1952	—
28.	Uttaranchal	358	—
29.	West Bengal	1224	22
Total		24225	524

Unutilised MPLAD Funds

3984. SHRI CHANDRA VIJAY SINGH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a huge amount of MPLAD's fund remains unspent with Districts Collectors;

(b) if so, the details in this regard during each of the last three years;

(c) the breakup of unutilised funds vis-a-vis Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha members;

(d) the steps taken/being taken to utilise these unspent funds;

(e) whether a proposal is pending for withdrawal of MPLAD allocation to Rajya Sabha Members; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF

ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) According to the information available on 31.03.2003, the unspent balance of MPLADS funds with Districts Heads was Rs. 2225.10 crore. This amounts to 21.2% of the funds released since the inception of the scheme.

(b) The unspent balance of MPLADS funds at the end of each of the last three years was as under :

As on	Unspent Balance
31.3.2001	Rs. 2448.31 crore
31.3.2002	Rs.2287.62 crore
31.3.2003	Rs.2225.10 crore

(c) The desired break up is given below :

As on	Lok Sabha MPs Rs. crore	Rajya Sabha MPs Rs. crore
31.3.2001	1646.35	801.96
31.3.2002	1510.22	777.40
31.3.2003	1409.22	815.88

(d) State Governments and UT Administrations have been requested to issue instructions to their District Heads to give top priority to the works under the MPLAD Scheme. They have also been advised to ensure that the funds allotted to the implementing agencies are kept in separate savings accounts with nationalized banks for easy availability. The District heads have been advised to hold review meetings at frequent intervals to sort out implementational problems and ensure better utilization. There has been a progressive improvement in the cumulative expenditure as a percentage of the cumulative release of funds under the Scheme from 54.6% on 31.3.1998 to 78.8% on 31.3.2002.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Treatment of Cancer

3985. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a seminar on "Bearing the burden: perspectives on the cost of cancer treatment" organised by the National Cancer Care Foundation was held in Delhi recently;

(b) if so, whether the doctors have requested the Government to bear the cost of treatment of cancer in view of the higher cost of cancer medicines; and

(c) if so, the stand of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) This Ministry has neither organized nor funded any such conference in Delhi.

[Translation]

Construction of Roads in Border Areas

3986. COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made a provision of Rs. 1000 crore for the construction of roads of strategic importance in the border areas of the country;

(b) if so, the amount proposed to be spent during 2003-2004 on development and maintenance of national highways adjoining the border of Himachal Pradesh;

(c) the names of the national highways selected for this purpose in the first phase; and

(d) the time by which the development works are likely to commence alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Development of Projects by IWAI

3987. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Inland Waterways Authority of India has developed 10 projects based on the model agreement for private investment; and

(b) if so, the details of these projects, State-wise alongwith the investment envisaged in these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Submarine Cable Landing Station

3988. SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have declared Gujarat coast as security Sensitive Area in clause-13 of the guidelines for setting up of Submarine Cable Landing Station for International Gateway of Internet;

(b) whether the Government of Gujarat has proposed to the Union Government for review of the said guidelines; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Guidelines were announced by the Government in the year 2000 regarding International Gateways for Internet using Submarine cable Medium. As per Clause 13 of the guidelines for setting up of Submarine Cable Landing Stations for International Gateways for Internet, setting up of landing stations was not permitted in security sensitive areas including coastal areas of Gujarat.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government of Gujarat had urged that in the interest of economic development of Gujarat, the restriction of setting up of Submarine Cable Landing Stations in coastal areas of Gujarat be removed. Government had subsequently considered the issue and decided to

permit setting up of International gateways in security sensitive areas including submarine cable landing stations in security sensitive areas which includes coastal areas of Gujarat also, subject to setting up of appropriate monitoring equipments by the Security Agencies and appropriate charges to be paid by the licensee towards monitoring equipments or setting up of monitoring equipment.

[Translation]

Recognition to Automobile/Motor Sports Authority Institution

3989. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE :

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE :

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria fixed to grant recognition to the Automobile/Motor Sports Authority Institution by the Government; and

(b) the names of the Motor Sports Association/ Institution in the country recognised by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA) : (a) As per prevailing guidelines, for being eligible for grant of recognition, a National Sport Federation is primarily required to meet the following criteria:- (i) a legal status as a voluntary registered body for more than three years; (ii) affiliated units in atleast 2/ 3 of total States/UTs of India; (iii) written constitution; (iv) where the international federation for the sports exists, the National Federation must be affiliated to the respective international federation; (v) holding of regular national championships for the last three years in different categories; (vi) there will be only one recognized federation for each discipline of sports. Detailed guidelines for recognition of National Sports Federations is indicated in the guidelines for Assistance to National Sports Federations.

(b) For promotion of motors sports in India; 'The Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India' having its office at Chennai has been recognized by the Government.

[English]

Illness Assistance Fund

3990. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL :
SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have requested the State Governments to set up Illness Assistance Fund for the benefit of poor and needy persons;

(b) if so, the response of the State Governments thereto;

(c) the names of the State Governments which have set up Illness Assistance Fund so far;

(d) the details of the grant-in-aid made available by the Union Government to each of the State for the said fund during the last three years; and

(e) the number of beneficiaries who received assistance from the said fund and the amount received by each of them during the above mentioned period?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (c) The States of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Kerala, Mizoram, Rajasthan, Goa, Gujarat, Sikkim, Bihar and Jharkhand have set up State Illness Assistance Fund. The remaining States have been reminded to set up such Funds, from time to time.

(d) The details of grant-in-aid released to States during the last three years are furnished in the Statement enclosed.

(e) Data with regard to the number of beneficiaries who received assistance from the said fund, and the quantum received by each of them is not maintained in

this Ministry. However, the State Governments are required to publish the list of beneficiaries under Illness Assistance Fund in leading newspapers of the State.

Statement

The grant-in-aid released to States during last three years

Year	States (to which grant was released)	Amount (Rs. In crores)
2000-2001	Sikkim	0.25
	J & K	0.125
	Bihar	1.25
	Goa	0.15
2001-2002	Chhattisgarh	0.50
	Andhra Pradesh	2.50
	Rajasthan	1.00

Mobilisation of Funds for Roads

3991. SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH :
DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH :

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have decided to keep the roads well maintained by mobilising funds for the purpose;

(b) if so, the details of the schemes proposed to be undertaken for mobilising the funds; and

(c) the funds allocated for the said maintenance during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) The Government has revamped Central Road Fund (CRF) by levying additional

cess on petrol and diesel. The CRF Act, 2000 provides for utilisation of funds for :

- (i) Development and maintenance of National Highways;
- (ii) Development of rural roads;
- (iii) Development and maintenance of other State roads, including roads of economic importance and inter-state connectivity; and
- (iv) Construction of road over/under bridges over railways and erection of safety works at unmanned rail-road crossings.

(c) The funds allocated for National Highways are utilised for National Highway Development Programme (NHDP). State-wise details of funds allocated for improvement of State roads during the last 3 years is given in the statement.

Statement

The accrual of funds under CRF during the last three years

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UT	Accruals for the year 2000-2001	Accruals for the year 2001-2002	Accruals for the year 2002-2003
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	8161.00	8088.00	8145.08
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1113.00	1080.00	1086.08
3.	Assam	1508.00	1473.00	1540.08
4.	Bihar	2569.00	2612.00	3390.08
5.	Chhattisgarh	2303.00	2256.00	1728.08
6.	Goa	393.00	380.00	409.08
7.	Gujarat	7008.00	6784.00	6813.08
8.	Haryana	3140.00	3205.00	3575.08

1	2	3	4	5
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1045.00	1025.00	1075.08
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	3084.00	2973.00	3105.08
11.	Jharkhand	1822.00	1785.00	1125.08
12.	Karnataka	5750.00	5550.00	5813.08
13.	Kerala	2768.00	2615.00	2771.08
14.	Madhya Pradesh	6251.00	6191.00	6659.08
15.	Maharashtra	10880.00	10318.00	10141.08
16.	Manipur	332.00	318.00	324.08
17.	Meghalaya	447.00	434.00	429.08
18.	Mizoram	302.00	290.00	296.08
19.	Nagaland	256.00	241.00	247.00
20.	Orissa	2910.00	2861.00	2982.08
21.	Punjab	4299.00	4116.00	4043.08
22.	Rajasthan	7582.00	7584.00	7671.08
23.	Sikkim	112.00	107.00	110.00
24.	Tamil Nadu	6703.00	6643.00	6722.08
25.	Tripura	193.00	187.00	193.00
26.	Uttaranchal	1102.00	1076.00	759.08
27.	Uttar Pradesh	8795.00	8851.00	9643.08
28.	West Bengal	3573.00	3627.00	3688.088
UT's				
29.	A&N Island	174.00	178.00	183.00
30.	Chandigarh	301.00	238.00	221.00
31.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	121.00	130.00	107.00

1	2	3	4	5
32. Daman & Diu		89.00	87.0	76.00
33. Delhi		3189.00	2673.00	2705.00
34. Lakshadweep		7.00	8.00	5.00
35. Pondicherry		218.00	219.00	219.00

**Kohli Committee Report on Rehabilitation
of SSI Units**

3992. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Kohli Committee Report on rehabilitation of sick Small Scale Industries has been published in different Indian languages for circulation amongst the Small Scale Industrial Units; and

(b) if not, the time by which this is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) As informed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), any Committee Report/Circular is not published in different Indian languages except in Hindi and English. Based on the Kohli Committee Report, the revised guidelines on rehabilitation of sick Small Scale Industrial (SSI) units were forwarded by the RBI to all Scheduled Commercial Banks (including Regional Rural Banks), All India Associations of SSIs and concerned Central/ State Government Departments on 16th January, 2002. For wider dissemination, the guidelines are made available on RBI Website www.rbi.org.in which can be accessed by anyone from any corner of the world. The report of the Working Group on Rehabilitation of sick SSI units is available on the Ministry of Small Scale Industries' Website www.laghu-udyog.com.

VPT in All Gram Panchayats

3993. COL. (RETD) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will

the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether all Gram Panchayats in the country were to be provided telephone connections under VPT by December, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts thereof,

(c) the number of Gram Panchayats yet to be provided telephone connections under the aforesaid scheme;

(d) the time by which the Government propose to connect all the remaining Gram Panchayats in the country especially those in far flung areas; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure that all the remaining Gram Panchayats are provided VPT by this year end?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All the uncovered villages including Gram Panchayats were planned to be covered by Dec., 2002 but these could not be provided with telecom facility due to following reasons :

(i) Permission to commission Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) systems in North Eastern Region and Jammu & Kashmir was not earlier given clearance due to security reasons but now it has been granted and these regions will also be covered.

(ii) Remote and far flung isolated areas are planned to be covered through satellite media which shall be done in a time bound manner subject to availability of funds.

(c) 7,538 Gram Panchayats are yet to be covered by telecom facility under VPT scheme by BSNL.

(d) and (e) Gram Panchayats to be covered by terrestrial media are planned to be covered by December, 2003 and those in remote and far flung isolated areas by satellite media shall be covered within one year from the date of availability of funds from the government.

E-Commerce and E-Governance Programme

3394. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government have not been able to speed up e-commerce and e-governance programme in its departments;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the details of licences issued by Controller of Certifying Authority for certifying Digital Signatures;
- (d) the reasons for slow progress in the use of digital signatures in the country; and
- (e) the measures to be adopted to increase e-commerce and e-governance programme in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise. However, the position in these sectors is as follows :

E-Commerce : As per the NASSCOM Market Survey, the E-Commerce transactions in the country were estimated at Rs. 20,000 Crores in 2002-03 and expected to rise to Rs. 40,000 Crores during 2003-04. As per the CII survey the E-Commerce transactions during 2003-04 are estimated to be Rs. 50,000 Crores. Thus there is an increasing growth trend in E-Commerce.

E-Governance : The Department of Information Technology (DIT) through National Informatics Centre (NIC) has been providing network backbone and E-Governance support to Central Government Departments, State Governments and District Administration in the country.

Planning Commission guidelines permit usage of 2 to 3% of budget provision in Central Ministries / Departments for Programmes/Schemes relating to Information Technology. A minimum agenda for E-

Governance has also been drawn up for implementation by the Central Ministries / Departments.

While approving the Tenth Five Year Plan, the National Development Council (NDC) has set up four Empowered Sub-Committees, including an Empowered Sub-Committee on Governance Reforms with special reference to E-Governance.

(c) Controller of Certifying Authority (CCA) has issued three licenses to Certifying Authorities (CA) for issuing Digital Signature Certificates. The licensed CAs are Safescrypt Ltd., Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) and Tata Consultancy Services.

(d) and (e) Culturally the Indian business community is more inclined towards actual physical commerce and trade instead of using E-facility. Thus the E-Commerce culture in India is in its infancy. Conventional methodologies for governance, commerce and trade related transactions do not depend on E-Governance and E-Commerce. Applications of E-Governance and E-Commerce continue to be viewed as alternatives instead of substitutes for the conventional methodologies.

Consequently the progress in the usage of digital signature in the country is slow. Further, forced measures like legislation, technological advancements (imported or indigenous), Government subsidies etc. have not resulted into increase in acceptance of new technology (E-Governance and E-Commerce) by masses.

[Translation]

Selling of Telecom Licences

3995. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN :
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government have taken decision recently to authorize the licence holders to sell telecom licences;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the changes effected in licensing system during the last three years and the dates on which the said changes have been effected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, the Government have taken a decision on 25.03.2003 to permit transfer of licences in respect to Telecom Service, which may take place by way of merger or de-merger of companies, subject to certain conditions. The salient conditions are given in the statement.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Salient condition of permitting transfer of licence of Telecom Services as decided by the Government on 25.03.2002

- (i) The new entity to which the licence gets transferred should be eligible for grant of a fresh licence of that particular service.
- (ii) All the terms and conditions of the licence including the complete rollout obligation will apply to the transferee company irrespective of the time at which such transfer takes place and there will be no dilution with regard to the same.
- (iii) All the past dues till the date of transfer will have to be cleared before transfer of licence is allowed.
- (iv) Provisions of Section 391 to 394 of the Companies Act, 1956 will be complied with for de-merger of a company.

SSI in Backward Tribal Areas in Maharashtra

3996. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE : Will be the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken steps to set up small scale industries in backward and tribal areas of Maharashtra, especially in Vidarbha:

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are aware of the problems being faced by the cottage industries; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken/proposed to be taken to promote cottage industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) The development of Small Scale Industries (SSI) units is primarily the responsibility of the State/UT Governments. Government does not set up any SSI units. The units are set up by individual entrepreneurs in the country including Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State/UT Governments through various schemes/programmes relating to enhanced fiscal and credit support, better infrastructure, marketing facilities and incentives for technology upgradation. These schemes programmes are implemented across the country.

(c) and (d) Government is aware of the main problems being faced by the cottage industries sector. With a view to promote a sustainable development and growth in this sector, various schemes/programmes have been launched to facilitate raw materials availability, credit, design and technical inputs, skill upgradation, packaging and marketing. Some of these steps are enumerated below :

1. "Khasi package" announced on 14.05.2001 consisting of creation of packaging and design facilities, brand building, cluster development, marketing, additional working capital etc.
2. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana launched to develop selected artisans clusters through effective member participation and mutual cooperation.
3. 52 Handicrafts Marketing and Service Extension Centres set up all over the country to assist the artisans.
4. Five Regional Design and Technical Development Centres are functioning at

Guwahati, Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata.

5. Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana introduced in 2002-01, to cover activities from basic input and working capital to provisions of design, marketing, publicity etc.
6. The National Handloom Development Corporation supplies yarn to the weavers under "Mill Gate Price Scheme".
7. Yarn producers are required to supply pack yarn for civil consumption at least 40% in hank form free of excise duty.
8. A National Centre for textile design has been set up.
9. 11 categories of textile articles are reserved exclusively for production by handlooms.

Upgradation of Post Offices

3997. SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV :
SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal for upgradation of the post offices in various States including Bihar and Jharkhand is under the consideration of the Union Government; and

(b) if so, the location-wise and category-wise details thereof, especially in respect of Bihar and Jharkhand States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Location and Category-wise details of proposals which are under the consideration for upgradation in various States/ U.Ts. of the country are given in statement. However, upgradation of post office is subject to fulfillment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

Statement

Details of Proposals which are under consideration for upgradation of Post Offices in various states of the country

Name of State/U.T.	Name of Division/District	Upgradation from Branch Post Office to Sub Post Office	Upgradation from Sub Post Office to Head Post Office	
1	2	3	4	
Bihar	Aurangabad	(i) Salaiya	Nil	
	Bhagalpur	Bijayghat Gurudwar	Nil	
	Munger		Patan	Nil
			Mananpur	
	Nalanda	(i) Prakhand Ben	Nil	
	Nawada		Seotar	Nil
Roh Prakhand				
Patna		Maranchi	Nil	
		Nadwan		

1	2	3	4
		Beur	
		Pabhera	
	Rohtas	(i) Dhanav English	Nil
	Vaishali	Pohiyar	Nil
		Raghunathpur Imadpur	
	Madhubani	(i) Bheja	Nil
	Sitamarhi	Nil	(i) Janakpur Road
Gujarat	Bardoli	(i) Kadodara	Nil
	Valsad	(i) Dadra	Nil
	Rajkot	(i) Veraval	Nil
	Surendranagar	(i) Vihalgad	Nil
Haryana	Karnal	Nigdhu	Nil
		Jalmana	
	Mahindergarh	(i) Sehlong	Nil
Jharkhand	Giridih	(i) Noadih	Nil
	Palamau	(i) Meral	Nil
	Ranch	Baghima	Nil
		Tongo	
		Argora	
		Nibaranpur (EDSO)	
		Kadru	
	West Singhbhum	Bharbharua	Nil
		Icha	
		Keraikela	
	East Singhbhum	(i) Khanda Munda	Nil

1	2	3	4
	Hazaribagh	Chandwara (EDSO)	(i) Koderma (ii) JHumritalaiya SI
	Santhal Paragna	Nil	(i) Sahibganj (ii) Goda
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Puthukulangara	Nil
	Thrissur	(i) Thazekkad	Nil
Maharashtra	Pune	Hinjawadi Chikhali	Nil
	Satara	(i) Gondavale BK	Nil
Orissa	Sonepur		(i) Sonepur (Mukhya Dak Ghar)
Punjab	Faridkot	Fatehgarh Panjtoor	Nil
	Bhatinda	Mehraj Bhucho Kalan	Nil
	Sangrur	(i) Bardwal	Nil
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Harmada Bindayaka Saipura	Nil
	Jaisalmer	(i) Fatehgarh	Nil
	Baran	Nil	(i) Baran
	Karauli	Nil	(i) Karauli
Tamil Nadu	Tirupur	Arasur (EDSO)	Nil
	Kanyakumari	(i) Thalavattai	Nil
Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	Nil	(i) Robertganj
	Allahabad	Nahwai (EDSO)	Nil
	Saharanpur	Todarpur	Nil
	Sitapur	Purehare Ramkot	Nil

1	2	3	4
	Lakhimpur	Jang Bahadurganj	Nil
	Raibareli	Didaura	Nil
Uttaranchal	Almora	Nil	(i) Bageshwar (Mukhya Dak Ghar)
	Chamoli	Nil	(i) Rudraprayag (Mukhya Dak Ghar)
	Tehri	Nil	(i) Uttarkash (Mukhya Dak Ghar)
	Dehradun	Nil	(i) Hardwar (Mukhya Dak Ghar)
West Bengal	Purulia	(i) Baglata	Nil
Sikkim	North Sikkim	Chungthung (EDSO)	Nil
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Andaman (Port Blair)	Garacharma (EDSO)	Nil

**District-wise Mobile Service
in MP**

3998. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of districts in Madhya Pradesh where mobile service is available as on date;

(b) the number of districts in the State where this service has not yet been launched; and

(c) the time by which this service is likely to be provided in the remaining districts of the State during 2003-2004?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) The following companies are licensed to provide Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) in Madhya Pradesh Telecom Circle Service Area (which includes Chhattisgarh) :

Sl.No.	Name of Licensee
1.	BTA Cellcom Ltd.
2.	Reliance Telecom (P) Ltd.
3.	Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.
4.	Bharti Cellular Ltd.

As per the information provided by these companies, 38 districts (one or more places in the district) have been covered with CMTS by at least one of the above companies and the remaining 7 districts are yet to be covered with CMTS in Madhya Pradesh State.

(c) As per the terms and conditions of the License Agreement for Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS) in Telecom Circles, an Operator is required to cover at least 10% of the District Headquarters (DHQs) in the service area, in the first year and 50% of the District Headquarters within three years of effective date of Licence. The licensee is also permitted to cover any other town in a District in lieu of the District Headquarter. The choice of District

Headquarters/towns to be covered and further expansion beyond 50% District Headquarters/towns shall lie with the Licensee depending on their business decision. There is no mandatory requirement for coverage of 100 per cent of the service area. However, the Government Operator, namely Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has plans to provide CMTS in all the districts of Madhya Pradesh by October, 2003.

[English]

**Issuance of Fresh Licences to
Private Operators**

3999. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications have proposed to issue fresh licences to private parties for starting mobile telephone services;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the matter regarding issue of fresh licences for operating mobile services has been referred to TRAI;

(d) if so, whether the TRAI has given its recommendations on this issue; and

(e) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken on the recommendations of TRAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) to (c) Sir, fresh tenders for grant of 14 Licences for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) to fill up vacant slots in 8 Telecom Circles (Andaman-Nicobar & West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, J&K, North East, Orissa, UP East, UP West) were invited on 10.02.2003 Although, 7 companies had purchased the tender document but none of the companies submitted their bid. In addition, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was requested to give their recommendations for grant of additional licences for CMTS

in terms of New Telecom Policy-1999, which, interalia, stipulates that the entry of more operators in a Service Area shall be based on the recommendations of TRAI who will review this as required and no later than every two years.

(d) TRAI have in their response dated 20.02.2003, interalia, expressed its opinion that induction of Mobile Service Providers in various Service Areas can be considered if there is adequate availability of spectrum for the existing Service Providers as well as for the new players, if permitted. TRAI have also stated that it is of utmost importance to ensure adequate quality of service in this fast growing segment of the market.

(e) A decision in the matter will be taken in due course.

**Prevention of Food Adulteration
Act, 1954**

4000. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that certain imported food items such as juices, frozen dessert etc. do not come within the purview of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the fresh steps initiated by the Government to improve the standard of testing of food quality and for having better food security mechanism and bring imported food items under the purview of this Act?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Imported food items are required to meet the standards prescribed in the Rules made under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 for all the products listed therein.

(c) Food control infrastructure at Central and State level including Food Testing Laboratories are proposed to be strengthened under Capacity Building Project which is to be negotiated with World Bank.

[Translation]

Complaints of Late Delivery of Money Orders

4001. DR. M.P. JAISWAL :

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have ordered any inquiry into the complaints of delayed delivery of money orders;

(b) if so, the State-wise details thereof during the last three years;

(c) the number of employees found guilty in this regard;

(d) the number of guilty officials against whom disciplinary action has been completed; and

(e) the details of the punishment meted out to those found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) the State-wise details of the money order complaints received during the last three years is given in the statement.

(c) The number of officials who were found guilty, in this regard, is given below:-

Year	Number of officials found guilty
1999-2000	238
2000-2001	427
2001-2002	272

(d) The number of guilty officials against whom disciplinary action has been completed during the last three years is given below: -

Year	Major Penalty	Minor Penalty
1999-2000	10	228
2000-2001	42	385
2001-2002	26	246

(e) The details of punishment meted out to those found guilty are censure, withholding of increments, recovery of loss from pay, put off duty, debarred from appearing in departmental examinations, removal, dismissal and reduction in grade etc.

Statement

State-wise details of money order complaints received during last three years

Sl. No.	Name of Circle	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Assam	2327	1086	3417
2.	Andhra Pradesh	3308	3539	5987
3.	Bihar	5403	4565	2372
4.	Chhattisgarh	-	2891	5274
5.	Delhi	41963	39376	59814
6.	Gujarat	2590	2791	2404
7.	Haryana	9969	14427	19282
8.	Himachal Pradesh	3438	3129	3215
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	457	1541	3087
10.	Jharkhand	-	112	1657
11.	Karnataka	3520	3635	8986
12.	Kerala	3282	2380	2541
13.	Madhya Pradesh	8022	10077	7852
14.	Maharashtra	9760	10558	7223

1	2	3	4	5
15. North East		2082	2121	1531
16. Orissa		4188	2806	2252
17. Punjab		8684	16859	29919
18. Rajasthan		3728	3781	3274
19. Tamil Nadu		3968	5714	4852
20. Uttar Pradesh		19819	22022	21778
21. Uttaranchal		—	56	1224
22. West Bengal		6118	6251	12537
23. APS		4904	7367	7766
Total		147530	167084	218244

Reservation of Other Backward Classes

4002. SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of employees of Other Backward Classes of A, B, C and D category working in the Departments and Undertakings under his Ministry, Category-wise;

(b) the percentage of reservation of OBCs in the Union Government;

(c) whether all the reserved vacancies of OBCs have been filled in the Departments and Undertakings under his Ministry;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by which these vacancies are likely to be filled;

(f) whether OBCs enjoy reservation in promotion also; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (g) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Telephone Exchanges in U.P.

4003. SHRI C.N. SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges installed in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh, especially in Machhlishahar and Pratap Garh districts during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether a large number of telephones under these exchanges are not functioning properly;

(c) if so, the reasons for the same; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to make them function properly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) 1401 numbers of telephone exchanges have been installed in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh including 5 exchanges in Machhlishahar and 39 exchanges in Pratap Garh districts during 9th five year plan.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

[Translation]

Maintenance and Improvement of National Highways

4004. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the National Highways in the country especially in rural areas as on date;

(b) the State-wise and Year-wise details of the amount allocated by the Union Government to the State Governments for the maintenance and improvement of National Highways during the last three years;

(c) whether the Union Government have received proposals/requests from the various State Governments during the last three years till date regarding the development and improvement of National Highways; and

(d) if so, the State-wise details thereof and the action taken so far by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) The total length of National Highways in the country is 58112 km. State-wise details are at statement-I. National Highways are not declared based on the demographic features of the States. The details of National Highways in tribal areas are not maintained.

(b) The details are at statement-II.

(c) and (d) The State-wise details of projects approved for development of National Highways during the last 3 years are at statement-III.

Statement-I

State-wise List of National Highways

Sl. No.	Name of State	National Highway No.	Total Length (in km.)
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4, 5, 7, 9, 16, 18, 43, 63, 202, 205, 214 & 219	4002
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	52, 52A & 153	392
3.	Assam	31, 31B, 31C, 36, 37, 37A, 38, 39, 44, 51, 52, 52A, 52B, 53, 54, 61, 62, 151, 152, 153 & 154	2836
4.	Bihar	2, 19, 28, 28A, 30, 30A, 31, 57, 77, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 106 & 107	3312
5.	Chandigarh	21	24
6.	Chhattisgarh	6, 12A, 16, 43, 78, 200, 202, 216 & 217	1810
7.	Delhi	1, 2, 8, 10 & 24	72
8.	Goa	4A, 17, 17A & 17B	269
9.	Gujarat	NE-1, 6, 8, 8A, 8B, 8C, 8D, 8E, 14, 15 & 59	2461
10.	Haryana	1, 2, 8, 10, 21A, 22, 64, 65, 71, 71A, 72 & 73	1357
11.	Himachal Pradesh	1A, 20, 21, 21A, 22, 70, 72 & 88	1188
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	1A, 1B & 1C	823
13.	Jharkhand	2, 6, 23, 31, 32, 33, 75, 78, 80, 98, 99 & 100	1603

1	2	3	4
14.	Karnataka	4, 4A, 7, 9, 13, 17, 48, 63, 206, 207, 209, 212 & 218	3570
15.	Kerala	17, 47, 47A, 49, 208, 212, 213 & 220	1440
16.	Madhya Pradesh	3, 7, 12, 12A, 25, 26, 27, 59, 59A, 69, 75, 76, 78, 79, 86 & 92	4664
17.	Maharashtra	3, 4, 4B, 4C, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 16, 17, 50, 69, 204 & 211	3626
18.	Manipur	39, 53 & 150	954
19.	Meghalaya	40, 44, 51 & 62	717
20.	Mizoram	44A, 54, 54A, 54B, 150 & 154	927
21.	Nagaland	36, 39, 61 & 150	369
22.	Orissa	5, 5A, 6, 23, 42, 43, 60, 200, 201, 203, 215 & 217	3301
23.	Pondicherry	45A & 66	53
24.	Punjab	1, 1A, 10, 15, 20, 21, 22, 64, 70, 71, 72 & 95	1557
25.	Rajasthan	3, 8, 11, 11A, 12, 14, 15, 65, 76, 79, 79A, 89 & 90	4597
26.	Sikkim	31A	62
27.	Tamil Nadu	4, 5, 7, 7A, 45, 45A, 45B, 46, 47, 49, 66, 67, 68, 205, 207, 208, 209, 210, 219 & 220	3758
28.	Tripura	44 & 44A	400
29.	Uttaranchal	58, 72, 72A, 73, 74, 87, 94, 108 & 109	1075
30.	Uttar Pradesh	2, 2A, 3, 7, 11, 19, 24, 24A, 25, 25A, 26, 27, 28, 29, 56, 56A, 56B, 58, 72A, 73, 74, 75, 76, 86, 87, 91, 92, 93, 96 & 97	4942
31.	West Bengal	2, 6, 31, 31A, 31C, 32, 34, 35, 41, 55, 60, 80 & 81	951
Total			58112

Statement-II

*Allocation of funds for development and maintenance of
National Highways during the last three years*

(Rs. in crores)

Sl. No.	Name of States/ UTs	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
		Development	Maintenance	Development	Maintenance	Development	Maintenance
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	111.88	54.14	103.80	42.20	118.46	35.44

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.45	0.09
3.	Assam	52.54	47.79	76.05	41.49	73.75	26.92
4.	Bihar	69.28	64.49	65.32	45.16	76.53	30.46
5.	Chandigarh	1.44	0.45	1.50	0.46	2.70	0.74
6.	Chhattisgarh	12.28	11.80	32.28	24.20	61.20	25.60
7.	Delhi	4.83	0.82	6.00	1.02	6.00	0.12
8.	Goa	23.00	6.06	20.00	4.00	8.00	4.15
9.	Gujarat	91.00	24.58	70.43	25.82	90.00	10.51
10.	Haryana	101.00	19.53	103.88	19.43	59.00	10.30
11.	Himachal Pradesh	44.15	33.51	55.00	19.92	30.00	12.51
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	2.50	2.84	2.30	0.86	4.00	0.88
13.	Jharkhand	22.00	9.61	35.00	20.00	32.00	16.97
14.	Karnataka	81.04	46.84	109.48	39.43	89.66	45.82
15.	Kerala	89.78	33.40	92.62	23.36	75.95	23.74
16.	Madhya Pradesh	134.72	86.34	90.99	60.82	96.10	48.03
17.	Maharashtra	212.36	42.95	193.72	52.91	124.78	47.39
18.	Manipur	8.51	8.24	14.53	9.36	14.02	6.01
19.	Meghalaya	17.08	10.17	22.70	11.35	22.20	8.70
20.	Mizoram	10.00	9.81	26.00	5.00	22.00	6.20
21.	Nagaland	15.00	3.61	15.00	2.03	12.00	1.86
22.	Orissa	100.47	47.77	79.13	48.88	56.32	42.37
23.	Pondicherry	2.00	1.82	2.12	0.85	2.00	0.76
24.	Punjab	53.65	20.86	64.13	25.26	51.76	17.59
25.	Rajasthan	87.20	41.04	87.46	44.69	93.89	33.86

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
26.	Tamil Nadu	103.42	53.81	97.39	45.45	102.48	41.62
27.	Uttar Pradesh	149.50	60.77	146.63	66.19	137.31	39.85
28.	Uttaranchal	1.99	4.59	25.00	10.68	20.69	5.84
29.	West Bengal	128.00	53.75	84.22	42.03	114.50	20.69

Statement-III

*State-wise details of projects approved for
Development of National Highways
during the last three years*

(Amount in Rs. Cr.)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	No.	Amount
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	147	346.43
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	4	7.62
3.	Assam	89	238.12
4.	Bihar	102	256.30
5.	Chandigarh	2	5.39
6.	Chhattisgarh	96	155.56
7.	Delhi	5	15.82
8.	Goa	13	39.75
8.	Gujarat	99	300.95
10.	Haryana	47	158.60
11.	Himachal Pradesh	50	98.85
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	9	12.36
13.	Jharkhand	51	99.61
14.	Karnataka	157	288.89
15.	Kerala	85	225.33

1	2	3	4
16.	Madhya Pradesh	200	317.45
17.	Maharashtra	205	402.66
18.	Manipur	8	23.86
19.	Meghalaya	28	73.24
20.	Mizoram	35	79.37
21.	Nagaland	33	35.56
22.	Orissa	77	188.35
23.	Pondicherry	5	5.03
24.	Punjab	59	112.94
25.	Rajasthan	174	320.11
26.	Tamil Nadu	176	293.75
27.	Uttar Pradesh	136	431.68
28.	Uttaranchal	34	1173.62
29.	West Bengal	38	241.20

**Inclusion of Diabetic Drugs under
Life Saving Drugs**

4005. DR. ASHOK PATEL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to include diabetic drugs under the category of life saving drugs in view of the increasing number of diabetic patients in the country;

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
 (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) Diabetic Drugs viz. Monocomponent insulin, Porcine Insulin Zinc Suspension; and Porcine and Bovine Insulin stand notified as Life Saving Drug under List 4 of Custom Notification No. 21/2002-Cus. Dated 1.3.2002 at Sl. Nos. 71, 83 and 85 respectively and are exempted from custom duty.

[English]

**Use of Tap Water for Dialysis
 in S.J. Hospital**

4006. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that in the absence of a water purification plant the tap water is being used in conducting hemodialysis in the Safdarjung Hospital;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter in this regard alongwith its impact on the patients; and

(c) the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) Tap water is used in Safdarjung Hospital for haemodialysis after the same is treated by using deionizing machines. No adverse effects are noticed on the patients after dialysis. The reverse osmosis and deionizing machines are used for dialysis purposes and in both the process tap water is used. The procurement of reverse osmosis machine is also in process.

**By-pass Road to Bhubaneswar
 and Cuttack**

4007. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Government of Orissa has sought any financial assistance from the Union Government for the construction of a By-pass Road. to Bhubaneswar and Cuttack cities; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken by the Union Government to sanction fund to the Government of Orissa for the above purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

**Shortage of Medicines in
 Government Hospitals**

4008. SHRI SUBODH ROY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is acute shortage of medicines in Central Government hospitals in Delhi;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to meet the shortage of medicines in these hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) There is no shortage of medicines in Central Government Hospitals in Delhi. Medicines, as per the hospital formulary, are distributed to the patients free of cost as per the existing policy. In case of non-availability of essential and life saving medicines, the same are also procured and supplied to the poor patients.

Bio-tech Regulatory Policy

4009. SHRI RAJO SINGH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the problems being faced by the Government in the regulation of Medical biotech products;

(b) the problems projected before the Government by the Pharmaceutical Industries in this regard;

(c) whether the Government propose to evolve any 'Regulatory System' for effective regulation of Bio-tech and Genomic Research;

(d) if so, the time by which the said system is likely to be evolved; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the reasons for delay in formulating a clear bio-tech regulatory policy in the interest of our country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (e) The Ministry of Environment and Forest, vide Gazette Notification No.G.S.R. 1039 dated 5th December 1989, has prescribed norms for permitting import, manufacture and marketing of DNA based bio-tech products including drugs. Under these norms, there is a multi-disciplinary procedure for evaluation of applications for medical bio-tech products.

The local manufacturers of Bio-tech drugs are initially required to seek clearance from Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) under Deptt. of Biotechnology, for carrying out pre-clinical animal experimentation with their products, based on examination of molecular characterization, gene manipulation techniques, impurity profile, and immuno chemical properties etc.

After RCGM clearance, and based on the pre-clinical data generated with the drug, permission to conduct human clinical trial is granted by the office of Drugs Controller General of India.

The clinical data generated by the applicant and molecular characterization etc. are then examined by an expert panel which is coordinated by DCG(I) for granting market authorisation of the drugs under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules.

Clearance of Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) under Ministry of Environment and Forest, is further required for manufacturing and marketing of such bio-tech products.

Keeping in view the complexity of medical bio-tech products and environmental issues, an expert panel has been set up, to advise DCG(I) for clearance of locally manufactured bio-tech drugs.

[English]

Golden Quadrilateral Road Project

4010. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :
DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH :

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the progress of the Golden Quadrilateral Project as on date;

(b) the amount allocated for the on-going Golden Quadrilateral Road Project during 2002-03 and 2003-04;

(c) the estimated amount likely to be expended for the completion of the said project; and

(d) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) The progress of Golden Quadrilateral Project (GQ) as on 31.3.2003 is as under :

Total Length	5846 km
Already 4-laned	1327 km
Under Implementation	4383 km
Contracts to be awarded	136 km

(b) Amount spent for GQ during the year 2002-2003 is Rs. 5206.78 crores, and the amount allocated for GQ for the year 2003-2004 is Rs. 10,423.26 crores.

(c) and (d) The estimated cost of GQ Project, connecting four metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai Kolkata and Chennai, under which 5846 km of highways are being four/six-laned, is Rs. 25055 crores (on 1999 prices).

Lifting of Ban on Non-iodised Salt

4011. SHRI A. NARENDRA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to lift the ban on the manufacture and sale of non-iodised salt in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has expressed its serious concern on the decision of the Union Government; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) Through Central notification under the PFA Act, restriction had been placed on sale of salt for direct human consumption w.e.f. 27.5.1998, which has since been lifted w.e.f. 30.9.2000. Similar restriction, however, continues to be valid in most States/UTs through notifications issued by them under the powers given to States in this regard.

The restriction on sale of non-iodised salt for direct human consumption was imposed to promote the use of iodised salt for combating Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD). However, the Central notification was opposed by many segments of the population for a variety of reasons. The restriction was finally removed to provide for a system that allows adequate flexibility to accommodate those who believe that there should be no compulsion in matters relating to public health, and that the use of iodised salt to combat IDD should ideally be promoted through creation of greater awareness, by monitoring the accessibility, availability and affordability of this product.

The need for a statutory compulsion for sale of iodised salt is contingent upon the local social conditions, dietary habits and state of the economy. This aspect is best judged by the State Governments who are better aware of local conditions, and who can enforce the ban in such areas where the need is perceived. It was felt by the Central

Government that the decision—whether or not to place a ban on sale of non-iodised salt, and if yes, in which areas—should be left to the State Governments. Consequent upon that, the Central Government withdrew its notification in this regard.

Compulsory iodisation is not the sole strategy available for promoting the use of iodised salt for combating IDD. Creation of greater awareness through IEC and increasing availability, affordability and accessibility are key factors in this regard, and Government proposes to focus on these aspects to achieve the same objective.

[Translation]

Spending on IT

4012. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Planning Commission have decided that each Ministry need to spend three percent of its budget on information technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) The Planning Commission on the recommendation of the "Expert Group for Computerisation of the Information on Personnel and Citizen Services" set up by the Ministry of Personnel Public Grievances & Pensions, had requested the various Ministries/Departments in April, 1998, to make a provision of 2-3% of their plan/budget for programmes/schemes relating to Information Technology.

(c) Various Ministries/Departments are spending on Information Technology as per their requirement.

Organisational Changes In ICCR

4013. SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to bring in changes in the organisational set up of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) No. The Government is not contemplating any changes in the organizational set up of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

(c) Founded in 1950, the ICCR—a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860—has been functioning since then in accordance with its Constitution. Its Statutory Bodies have not so far felt the need to make any changes in the organizational set up to enable the ICCR to fulfill its aims and objectives.

[English]

Cost of Nuclear Power Generation

4014. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to improve the existing technology to reduce the cost of nuclear power generation;

(b) if so, the innovative project management practices proposed to be adopted to achieve it; and

(c) the details of the programmes of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There are fourteen nuclear power reactors in operation and eight nuclear power reactors under

construction in the country. The improvements in regard to reactors in operation are on efficient capacity utilisation, upgrades, as necessary, for enhancing safety and performance and plant life extension by renovation and modernisation. As regards the reactors under construction the measures include, cost reduction by design simplification, use of indigenous tools and technology, reduction of the gestation periods by use of modern construction technologies, completion of essential infrastructure in advance of the project financial sanction, project execution on the basis of large supply-cum-erection packages and strengthening planning and monitoring mechanisms and increasing the unit size of reactors.

ACP Scheme

4015. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the assured career progression scheme as recommended by the Fifth Central Pay Commission has been fully implemented in respect of allopathic pharmacists working in CGHS dispensaries in Delhi and outside Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the criteria laid down by the Government for the same; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) In terms of the provisions of the Assured Career Progression (ACP) Scheme, those Pharmacists (Allopathic) of the CGHS who have completed 12 or 24 years of regular service from the date of their appointment are eligible for 1st financial up-gradation in the scale of pay of Rs.5,000-150-8000/- and 2nd financial up-gradation in the scale of pay of Rs.6,500-200-10,500/- respectively provided they are otherwise found fit for up-gradation by the respective Departmental Promotion Committees.

Grant of financial up-gradation through ACP is a continuous process which is considered as and

when the Pharmacists (Allopathic) under CGHS become eligible.

(c) In view of (a) and (b) above, the question does not arise.

Human Development Index

4016. SHRI M.K. SUBBA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Assam has registered any marked increase on Human Development Index since the adoption of the special drive under the Prime Minister's package for accelerated development of the North East;

(b) if so, the increase on the Human Development Index in Assam and other States of the region since the implementation of the package; and

(c) the steps taken to register development in respect of the various dimensions taken into account for measuring development in respect of this index and the estimated expenditure incurred thereto indicating the Central and State's contribution thereto, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) It is too early to evaluate the impact of PM's Package introduced in 1996-97 and implemented in the subsequent year on Human Development Index (HDI) in Assam. However, the HDI for Assam increased from 0.272 in 1981 to 0.348 in 1991 and has been estimated at 0.386 for 2001. The HDI for 2001 shows an increase of 41.9 per cent over the index for 1981 and 10.9 per cent over 1991. The HDI for other States of the region is given at statement-I.

(c) The HDI is a composite of variables capturing attainments in three dimensions of Human Development viz. economic, educational and health. These have been captured by per capita monthly expenditure adjusted for inequality, a combination of literacy rate and intensity of formal education; and a combination of life expectancy

at age one and Infant Mortality Rate. The Per Capita Net State Domestic Product (NSDP), Per Capita Consumption Expenditure, growth in employment, literacy and Infant Mortality Rate is given in statement-II. The Planning Commission sanctions funds to the State Government based on their priorities. The State could spend only Rs. 7091.03 crores out of an allocation of Rs. 8140.28 crores during Five Annual Plans of the Ninth Five Year Plan. The State-wise figures for North Eastern States are at statement-III. Projects amounting to Rs. 574.70 crores have also been sanctioned under the Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources. Besides this, funds are also provided under various Central and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, North Eastern Council and project specific one time Additional Central Assistance (ACA). The State has not been able to make rapid progress due to slow pace of project implementation.

Statement-I

Human Development Index

Sl. No.	State	Value	
		1981	1991
1.	Assam	0.272	0.348
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.242	0.328
3.	Manipur	0.461	0.536
4.	Meghalaya	0.317	0.365
5.	Mizoram	0.411	0.548
6.	Nagaland	0.328	0.486
7.	Sikkim	0.342	0.425
8.	Tripura	0.287	0.389

Note : The HDI 2001 has been estimated only for a few selected states for which some data, including the Census, 2001 was available, in case of North-Eastern States it has been estimated for Assam only.

Statement-II

Sl. No.	State	Per Capita NSDP (Rs.)		Per capita consumption expenditure (Rs./month)		Growth in Employment (Percent per annum)		Literacy (percent)	Infant Mortality Rate (per thousand)		
		1993-94	1997-98	1993-94	1999-2000	1983 to 1993-94	1993-94 to 1999-2000				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	Assam	1592	1675	280.42	473.42	1.6	2.5	52.89	64.28	-	92
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	3267	3571	343.75	672.31	-	-	41.59	54.74	126	91
3.	Manipur	1824	1948	305.69	596.36	3.3	2	59.89	68.87	32	28
4.	Meghalaya	1650	1804	390.00	639.13	3.5	2.6	49.10	63.31	79	80
5.	Mizoram	-	-	472.59	935.53	6.3	4	82.27	88.49	83	53
6.	Nagaland	2164	-	454.48	1005.99	22.4	8.6	61.65	67.11	68	51
7.	Sikkim	3461	-	321.12	559.97	2.3	3.4	56.94	69.68	127	60
8.	Tripura	1751	2117	367.43	589.50	4.3	1.4	60.44	73.66	130	82

Statement-III

Plan performance of North-Eastern States (incl. Sikkim)

DURING NINTH PLAN

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Ninth Plan (1997-2002)	Annual Plan-1997-98			Annual Plan-1998-99			Annual Plan-1999-2000			(Rs. Crore)
			Agreed Outlay (At 1996-97 Prices)	Originally Approved Outlay	Revised Outlay	Actual Expenditure	Originally Approved Outlay	Revised Outlay	Actual Expenditure	Originally Approved Outlay	Revised Outlay	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	3569.89	600.00	517.36	489.38	625.00	471.58	463.02	665.00	503.00	468.4	
2.	Assam	8983.93	1510.28	1324.08	1283.18	1650.00	1389.37	1293.67	1750.00	1500.00	1404.59	
3.	Manipur	2426.69	410.00	382.02	345.28	425.00	406.08	388.55	475.00	475.00*	452.61	
4.	Meghalaya	2500.62	382.00	260.00	248.83	400.00	302.50	299.38	465.00	350.00	343.28	
5.	Mizoram	1618.51	290.00	304.94	295.25	333.00	284.55	272.06	360.00	380.51	378.02	
6.	Nagaland	2006.43	291.00	256.00	232.33	300.00	300.00	245.97	315.00	320.50	306.17	
7.	Sikkim	1600.00	220.00	222.00	190.12	237.00	218.00	224.3	250.00	250.00*	193.25	
8.	Tripura	2577.39	439.91	407.18	412.59	440.00	379.00	392.25	475.00	437.00	452.51	
	Total (States)	25283.46	4143.19	3675.58	3496.96	4410.00	3751.08	3579.20	4755.00	4216.01	3998.83	

*Revision not sought, approved outlay repeated.

*Plan performance of North-Eastern States (incl. Sikkim)
During NINT (At current prices)*

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Annual Plan-2000-01				Annual Plan-2001-02				Total	
		Originally Approved Outlay	Revised Outlay	Actual Expenditure	Originally Approved Outlay	Revised Outlay	Actual Expenditure	Originally Approved Outlay	Actual Expenditure	Originally Approved Outlay	Anti-Expenditure
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		(Rs. Crore)
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	640.00	599.41	510.92	661	660.91	555.41	3191.00	2487.13		
2.	Assam	1520.00	1520.00*	1481.38	1710	1710*	1628.21	8140.28	7091.03		
3.	Manipur	451.00	429.57	247.92	520	352.65	352.65**	2281.00	1787.01		
4.	Meghalaya	480.00	467.00	462.84	487	472.82	470.22	2214.00	1824.55		
5.	Mizoram	401.26	396.71	371.93	410	441.51	402.42	1794.26	1719.68		
6.	Nagaland	326.00	326.16	317.70	405	411.47	411.87**	1637.00	1513.64		
7.	Sikkim	250.00	250.22*	218.39	300.22	300.22	281.58	1257.22	1107.64		
8.	Tripura	485.00	422.60	474.12	560	560*	522.67	2399.91	2254.14		
	Total (States)	4553.26	4411.67	4085.20	5053.22	4909.58	4624.63	22914.67	19784.82		

*Revision not sought, approved outlay repeated.

**Actual Expenditure not available, revised outlay repeated.

Spread of Pneumonia

4017. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
 SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI :
 SHRI V. VETRISELVAN :
 SHRI KAMAL NATH :
 SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL :
 DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI :
 SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH :
 SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :
 SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :
 SHRI C.N. SINGH :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Organisation has recently issued a Global warning about the spread of mysterious form of Pneumonia in Asian countries;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government on the warning of WHO have taken any steps in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes Sir. WHO issued a Global alert about the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

(b) and (c) keeping in view the implications of an epidemic, Government of India, has been taken necessary steps which include the following:

- The immigration authorities have been sensitized about symptoms of SARS. A proforma to be filled in by all passengers disembarking in India has been devised and made available to Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Shipping to ensure proper check at Airport and Ports and also to sensitize the passengers.
- State/Union Territory governments have been given the standard case definition, patient management and discharge protocols. They

have been requested to be in readiness in conformity to the internationally accepted guidelines for managing any suspected case of SARS.

- The health care facilities at International Airports and Ports have been strengthened in addition to the existing facilities. The health staffs have been alerted to monitor passengers of flights and ships arriving in India in consultation with immigration authorities and to report on any suspected case to the concerned Health authorities.
- National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi and National Institute of Virology, Pune have been identified as the nodal agencies for laboratory investigation of any suspected/probable case.
- Facilities for treatment of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in isolation have been arranged in the Central Govt. Hospitals.

Telecom Tariff

4018. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA :
 SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the telecom tariff rentals, local call, WLL, STD and ISD call charges of the land line telephones after the scheduled hike in tariffs as compared to the mobile telephone tariff levied by different private operators;

(b) whether due to the scheduled hike in telecom tariffs with respect to land line telephone system, the common people are likely to be hit hard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government propose to lay down certain rules and regulations to prevent predatory pricing competition amongst service providers; and

(e) if so, the steps taken/being taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) A comparison of the recent tariffs prescribed by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in respect of basic services, WLL (Mobile) and Cellular Mobile is given in the statement. These tariffs, which were to come into effect from 1.4.2003 have now been deferred to 1.5.2003.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The tariffs announced by TRAI do not propose any increase in the rental for subscribers in the rural areas for exchange capacities up to 29999 lines. No increase in rental has been made for senior citizens in rural and urban areas either. Moreover, the tariff announced by TRAI is only a Standard Tariff Package and the service providers can offer Alternative Tariff Packages

to subscribers, depending upon the consumer population they service.

(d) and (e) As per the TRAI Act 1997, the power to fix telecom tariffs has been mandated to TRAI only, and Government has no further role in the matter. However, as a regulator, TRAI has made it mandatory for all Service Providers to obtain its approval before implementing their tariff plans except those, which are classified under forbearance. In the latter case, the tariffs are submitted to the TRAI after their introduction. All the tariffs offered by Service Providers are examined by TRAI to ensure their adherence to existing regulation and consonance with the principles of customer protection. While approving tariff plans, TRAI ensures that tariff plans are cost-based, non-discriminatory and non-predatory.

Statement

Items of Tariffs	Basic	WLL(M)	Mobile
1	2	3	4
Rental (in Rs.)	Rural—70 to 280 Urban—120 to 280	200	Forbearance
Free Calls	Rural—50 Urban—30	No free calls	Forbearance
Pulse rate (in seconds)	Basic to Basic—120 Basic to WLL(M)—120 Basic to Mobile Metros—9, Circle—60	WLL(M) to WLL(M)—120 WLL(M) to Basic—120 WLL(M) to Mobile- forbearance	Forbearance
Tariff per metered call (in Rs.)	RURAL 51 to 300 ● 0.80 > 300 ● 1.20 URBAN 31 to 300 ● 1.00 > 300 ● 1.20	Forbearance	Forbearance
STD Call charges	Upto 50 kms—same as local calls.	Upto 50 kms—same as local calls.	Upto 500 kms—same as local

1	2	3	4
	Beyond 50 kms— Forbearance subject to a ceiling of Rs. 8.40 per minute	Beyond 50 kms— Forbearance subject to a ceiling of Rs. 8.40 per minute.	calls. Beyond 50 kms— Forbearance subject to a ceiling of Rs. 8.40 minute
ISD Charges	Forbearance	Forbearance	Forbearance

Disinvestment Policy

4019. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA :
SHRI SUNIL KHAN :

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the modernisation and upgradation of public sector enterprises is the primary objective of the Disinvestment of Policy; and

(b) if so, the details of amount earned from the disinvestment spent on modernising and upgrading public sectors enterprises, Unit-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) Modernisation and upgradation of Public Sector Enterprises is one of the objectives of the policy of disinvestment.

(b) The amount realised from disinvestment in PSUs has been deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India, from which the Government meets the expenditure for upgradation of PSUs among other requirements.

[Translation]

Foreign Tours

4020. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the officers of his Ministry or the various departments/undertakings/other organisations under his Ministry who visited foreign countries during the last three years, the names of the foreign countries visited by them and the respective periods of their stay over there;

(b) the amount of foreign exchange given to them by the Government in cash or in the form of 'travellers cheque';

(c) the details of the travellers cheques which have not been produced for encashment;

(d) the reasons, if any, for the misuse of Government funds by these officers alongwith the reasons for failure in recovering the funds from them; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to recover the misappropriated funds and the time by which this is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) The Department of Atomic Energy has significant scientific collaboration with several countries and multilateral organizations. As part of the regular collaboration, exchange of visits and participation in scientific/technical meetings take place. In addition, officials from DAE Secretariat also visit foreign countries on departmental expenditure for participation in relevant meetings, a list of such visits for the last 3 years is enclosed herewith as statement.

(b) The amount of foreign exchange paid in each case is indicated in the list enclosed.

(c) The Department has not come across any such instance.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Statement*Information Relating to Foreign visit undertaken for the year 2000*

Sl. No.	Name of the Officer	Country visited	Period of visit	Amount of foreign exchange paid towards Cash allowance/ Accommodation
1.	Dr. R. Chidambaram, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Switzerland, Austria and France	January 23 to 28, 2000	US \$ 600 (Cash allow.)
2.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	April 13 to 19, 2000	US \$ 911 (C.A./Accommod.)
3.	Dr. R. Chidambaram, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Austria, France and UK	June 4 to 10, 2000	US \$ 670 (Cash allow.)
4.	Shri R.M. Premkumar, Additional Secretary, DAE	Republic of Korea	June 27 to July 1, 2000	US \$ 500 (Cash allow.)
5.	Shri R.M. Premkumar, Additional Secretary, DAE	Moscow, Russia	August 23 to 25, 2000	US \$ 225 (Cash allow.)
6.	Dr. R. Chidambaram, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Russia, Austria and Switzerland.	September 12 to 26, 2000	US \$ 1295 (Cash allow.)
7.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland.	September 24 to 28, 2000	US \$ 624 (C.A./Accommod.)
8.	Ms. Suchitra Durai, Deputy Secretary (ER), DAE	Austria and Switzerland	September 16 to 26, 2000	US \$ 800 (Cash allow.)
9.	Shri R.M. Premkumar, Additional Secretary, DAE	Moscow, Russia.	November 2 to 4, 2000	US \$ 168.75 (Cash allow.)

Information Relating to Foreign visit undertaken for the year 2001

Sl. No.	Name of the Officer	Country visited	Period of visit	Amount of foreign exchange paid towards Cash allowance/ Accommodation
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Vietnam	January 6 to 10, 2001	US \$ 225 (Cash allow.)

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Shri R.M. Premkumar, Additional Secretary, DAE	Moscow, Russia	January 16 to 21, 2001	US \$ 337.50 (Cash allow.)
3.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	April 19 to 25, 2001	US \$ 525 (Cash allow.)
4.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Russia, Austria and France	June 25 to 30, 2001	US \$ 412.50 (Cash allow.)
5.	Ms. Suchitra Durai, Deputy Secretary (ER), DAE	Austria	June 10 to 17, 2001	US \$ 600 (Cash allow.)
6.	Ms. Suchitra Durai, Deputy Secretary (ER), DAE	Vienna, Austria	September 9 to 21, 2001	US \$ 975 (Cash allow.)
7.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Vienna, Austria and Geneva, Switzerland	September 15-23, 2001	US \$ 652.50 (Cash allow.)
8.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	September 25-27, 2001	US \$ 321 (C.A./Accommod.)
9.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	October 20 to 25, 2001	US \$ 587.50 (C.A./Accommod.)
10.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Moscow, Russia	October 22 to 23, 2001	US \$ 112.50 (Cash allow.)
11.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Moscow, Russia and Vienna, Austria	November 5 to 9, 2001	US \$ 337.50 (Cash allow.)

Information Relating to Foreign visit undertaken for the year 2002

Sl. No.	Name of the Officer	Country visited	Period of visit	Amount of foreign exchange paid towards Cash allowance/ Accommodation
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Dr. K. Raghuraman, Head, ISD, DAE	Dalat, Vietnam	January 10, 2002	US \$ 90 (Cash allow.)
2.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	USA	February 13 to 16, 2002	US \$ 300 (Cash allow.)
3.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Vienna, Austria	March 5 to 8, 2002	US \$ 352.50 (Cash allow.)

1	2	3	4	5
4.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	April 21 to 26, 2002	US \$ 636 (C.A./Accommod.)
5.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Vienna, Austria	June 17 to 19, 2002	US \$ 262.50 (Cash allow.)
6.	Shri R.M. Premkumar, Additional Secretary, DAE	Kazakhstan	June 23 to 27, 2002	US \$ 281.25 (Cash allow.)
7.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Vienna, Austria	June 26 to 28, 2002	US \$ 300 (Cash allow.)
8.	Shri A.B. Awti, SO/F, DAE	Washington, USA	August 24 to 30, 2002	US \$ 450 (Cash allow.)
9.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Germany and UK	September 3-6, 2002	US \$ 300 (Cash allow.)
10.	Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, AEC and Secretary, DAE	Vienna, Austria	September 14-21, 2002	US \$ 525 (Cash allow.)
11.	Dr. K. Raghuraman, Head, ISD, DAE	Vienna, Austria	September 14-22, 2002	US \$ 487.50 (Cash allow.)
12.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	September 23-26, 2002	US \$ 315.35 (C.A./Accommod.)
13.	Smt. Sudha Bhave, Joint Secretary (R&D), DAE	Geneva, Switzerland	October 19 to 26, 2002	US \$ 700 (C.A./Accommod.)

[English]

Hockey Team to Malaysia

4021. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :
SHRI C.N. SINGH :

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have refused to send hockey team for the Sultan Azlan Shah hockey tournament in Malaysia; and

(b) if so, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
(SHRI VIKRAM VERMA) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) After careful consideration of the proposal, the Government had decided not to allow participation of the Indian Hockey team in 12th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup Hockey Tournament held at Ipoh (Malaysia) from March 22-30, 2003 due to the recent developments concerning harassment of Indian I.T. professionals in Malaysia.

Treatment of Cancer Through Vedic and Yogic Interventions

4022. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that doctors/scientists of AM Charitable Trust and Lakshmi

Memorial Cancer Research, Hyderabad, National Institute of Medical Health & Neurological Sciences, Bangalore & AIIMS, New Delhi have made a research that many cases of cancers can be effectively managed through Vedic & Yogic interventions and are also equally effective in Terminal Cancer cases; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to verify their claims?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Bangalore has undertaken a research project titled "Integrated Approach of Yoga Therapy in the Management of Cancer" in collaboration with two other institutions. This study has showed that cancer patients receiving Yoga therapy have better quality of life, reduced anxiety or depression, reduced side effects of treatment and also better immune parameters. All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi has undertaken another research project titled "Effect of breathing techniques & meditation on normal individuals and those with cancer in remission". The preliminary results of this ongoing study are quite encouraging.

(b) Whereas the report has been recently submitted in the former case, the study in the latter case is continuing.

Review of National Highway Development Project

4023. PROF. A. K. PREMAJAM :
SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have reviewed the National Highway Development Project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the National Highways Authority of

India has planned to raise funds for the National Highway Development Projects;

(d) if so, whether the National Highways Authority has entered into agreement with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the details of projects taken up during the last three years by NHDP including the funds earmarked for the year 2003-04?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of progress of National Highway Development Project are as under:

(I)	Golden Quadrilateral Project (GQ)	
(i)	Total Length	5846 km
(ii)	Already 4-laned	1327 km
(iii)	Yet to be 4-laned	
	(a) Under Implementation :	4383 km
	(b) To be awarded	136 km
(II)	North-South & East-West Corridor Project	
(i)	Total Length	7300 km
(ii)	Already 4-laned	616 km
(iii)	Yet to be 4-laned :	
	(a) Under Implementation :	430 km
	(b) To be awarded	5812 km

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Details are at given in the statement.

(f) Details of projects undertaken during the last three years under NHDP are as under :

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	No. of Project	Length (in km)	Status	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Golden Quadrilateral	15	480	Completed	2.	North-South Corridor	12	140	Completed
		89	4293	Under implementation	3.	East-West Corridor	2	20	Completed
							20	355	Under implementation

Statement

Details of Externally Aided Projects being undertaken by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Length (in km.)	Amount of Loans (US \$)	Financial Institution
1.	Grand Trunk Road Improvement Project	420	589 Million	World Bank
2.	Third National Highway Project	477	516 Million	World Bank
3.	Allahabad Bypass	84	Loan agreement not yet signed	World Bank
4.	Western Transport Corridor, Tumkur-Haveri, NH-4 Project	259	240 Million (50 Million Surrendered during 2002-2003)	Asian Development Bank
5.	Surat-Manor Tollway Project (Direct Loan by NHAI)	175	180 Million	Asian Development Bank

Establishment of Cargo Terminals

4024. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Inland Waterways Authority of India propose to establish Cargo Terminals and run vessel services in inland waterways,

(b) if so, the details thereof, location-wise;

(c) whether any of these Cargo Terminals are under the construction;

(d) if so, the proposed date for their completion; and

(e) the investment made by the IWAI for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) : (a) and (b) TWAI propose to set up cargo terminals, but they do not propose to run vessel services in inland waterways. The places identified for setting up cargo terminals are as under :

National Waterway No. 1 the Ganga

Haldia, Kolkata, Pakur, Farakka, Karagola, Bhagalpur, Munger, Patna, Ballia, Ghazipur, Varanasi, Chunar, Mirzapur and Allahabad.

National Waterway No. 2, the Brahmaputra

Dhubri, Jogighopa, Pandu, Tejpur, Neamati, Dibrugarh, Sadiya and Saikhowa.

National Waterway No. 3, the West Coast Canal

Kollam, Chavara, Kayamkulam, Thrikkunnappuzha, Alappuzha, Chertala, Vaikom, Ernakulam, Cochin Special Economic Zone (CSEZ), Aluva, Kottapuram.

Out of the above, on National waterway No-1, floating terminals already exist at Haldia, Kolkata, Karagola, Bhagalpur, Munger, Patna, Varanasi, Chunar and Allahabad and permanent jetties at Kolkata, Pakur and Farakka. On National Waterway No.2, floating terminals exist at Dhubri, Jogighopa and Pandu.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Information regarding cargo terminals under construction, including their completion schedule and investment is given below :

Cargo terminals under construction	Completion schedule	Estimated cost (Rs. in crore)
Construction of permanent RCC jetty at Gaighat, Patna on National Waterway No. 1	March 2004	25.50
Constructin of permanent RCC jetty at Pandu on National Waterway No. 2	April 2005	30.00
Construction of permanent jetties at 11 locations on National Waterway No. 3	March 2005	14.84

Execution of Works in Telecommunications and Postal Sector

4025. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the development works proposed to be executed in the areas of telecommunications and Postal sector in Maharashtra during the Tenth Five Year Plan particularly during the current year;

(b) whether some of the works started in the Ninth Five Year Plan are still incompletd;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which these works are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : **Reply in respect of Telecom sector :**

(a) The details of the development works proposed to be executed in respect of Maharashtra telecom circle by BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) and in Mumbai by MTNL (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited) during 10th Five Year Plan and for the current year 2003-2004 are given in the statement I and II respectively.

(b) No, Sir, All the targets have been achieved during 9th Five Year Plan.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Reply in respect of Postal sector :

(a) Details of the development works to be executed in the Postal sector in Maharashtra during 10th Five Year Plan particularly during the current year to the extent available are given at statement III. In some plans/schemes targets are fixed only on an annual basis.

Hence, the details in respect of such schemes have nor been firmed at this juncture.

- (b) One Project for construction of a Post Office building at Neral started in 9th Plan is on going.
- (c) The work relating to construction of building for Post Office and Sub Post Master quarters at Neral was started at the end of 9th Plan i.e. on 14-2-2002.
- (d) This project is likely to be completed during 2003-2004, subject to the availability of funds.

Statement-I

Proposed Works in BSNL

Sl. No.	Item	2003-2004	Tenth Five Year Plan
1.	Exchange Capacity (Lines)	682000*	**
2.	Direct Exchange Lines	611000	
3.	Trunk Automatic Exchange (Kilo Circuits)	86	
4.	Optical Fibre Cable (Route Kilo Meters)	4500	
5.	Micro wave (Route Kilo Meters)	100	

Note : *The targets are tentative.

**Circle-wise targets are prepared on yearly basis, hence targets for the 10th Plan period cannot be given.

Statement-II

Proposed Works in MTNL

Sl. No.	Item	2003-2004	Total (for the 10th Five Year Plan)
1	2	3	4
1.	Direct Exchange Lines	247300	1416548

1	2	3	4
2.	Switching Capacity	275000	1565000
3.	Trunk Automatic Exchange	—	20000
4.	ACCESS NETWORK		
	(a) DLCs (Digital Loop Carrier)	400	1700
	(b) Cable Replacement (Lakh Conductor Kilo Meter)	16	38
5.	Optical Fibre Cable (Route Kilo Meters)	420	2080

Statement-III

Details of the developmental activities in Maharashtra circle during the Tenth Plan

I. Mails :

- (1) Six Head Record Offices of Maharashtra are proposed to be computerized during 10th Five Year Plan of which two are likely to be completed in the current financial year.
- (2) It is proposed to computerize Track and Trace system for accountable articles in Mumbai and set up computerized Registration Sorting Centres in Maharashtra during the 10th Five Year Plan subject to availability of funds.
- (3) During 10th Five Year Plan the department has undertaken a project for computerization of international mail processing at the four metropolitan cities Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai. The computerization of Air Mail Centre at Mumbai will be taken up as part of the project alongwith computerization of foreign post offices at Mumbai. In the current year, an amount of Rs. 21.63 lakh has been allotted for the Air Mail Centre at Mumbai and Rs. 25 lakh has been allotted for the foreign post offices. The project is to be completed by December 2003.

- (4) A project for development of international Parcel Hubs is envisaged under the 10th Five Year Plan. An expenditure of Rs. 70 lakh is outlayed for the project in Mumbai, over the Five Year Plan period of the plan.

II. Computerization & Net working :

- (a) Computerization and Networking of post offices and administrative offices.
- (b) Modernization of operative/working systems.
- (c) Expansion of e-Bill post are to be taken up during the Tenth Plan.

III. Buildings :

The proposal for construction of building is awaiting approval of Expenditure Finance Commission and CCEA. This proposal includes certain projections for Maharashtra circle also.

IV. Circle Stamp Depot :

As a part of the schemes under the Tenth Five Year Plan, the two Circle Stamp Depots for Maharashtra at Mumbai and Nasik have been computerized in the annual plan 2002-2003.

V. Expansion of Postal Network :

It is proposed to open 1000 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices, 100 Departmental Sub Post offices and 5000 Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras in the country, during the Tenth Five Year Plan including Maharashtra. However, circle-wise targets are fixed only at the beginning of the financial year, and hence this process is currently under way. For the year 2002-2003, Maharashtra circle was allocated targets for opening 30 Extra Departmental Branch Post offices, 8 Departmental Sub Post offices, and 150 Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras and the circle has fully achieved these targets.

VI. Business Development :

Rs. 4 lakh have been allocated for the computerization of booking/delivery offices for Speed Post.

Indo-Namibia Ties

4026. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the

Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and Namibia have signed an accord for enhanced technological cooperation in small scale industry and other fields;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which India has agreed to help Namibia in these fields?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India and Government of Namibia had entered into an agreement for setting up the Plastic Technology Demonstration and Common Facility Centre at Ondangwa, Namibia under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of the Government of India in August 1998. The Agreement envisaged the setting up of a Plastic Technology Demonstration and common Facility Centre at Ondangwa, Namibia, called the India Namibia Plastic Technology Centre (INPTC). INPTC was set up on a turnkey basis by the National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC), New Delhi on behalf of the Government of India at a cost of Rs. 339.51 lakhs. The funds for the project were provided by the Ministry of External Affairs under the ITEC programme and was completed in June, 2001. Various technologies like blow moulding, injection moulding, thermoforming, plastic recycling etc. have been supplied under plastic technology. Besides, common facility services like grinding machines, milling machines, precision lathe, heat treatment plant, drilling machine etc. have also been supplied to the Centre. The basic aim of setting up the centre was to provide facilities for demonstration of various projects so as to develop an entrepreneurial culture. The Common Facility Centre is equipped to provide facilities for performing job work and also has a mini tool room to manufacture dies and moulds for the plastic projects.

Village Public Telephone

4027. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the status of roll out obligation of the basic Telephone operators (old licensees) towards village public telephones;

(b) whether the Government propose to waive of such obligations to the basic operators who migrated from NTP 1994 to NTP 1999, and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) According to the available information, the number of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) provided by six private basic service operators as on 31.03.2003 are as follows :

Sl. No.	Name of the Licensee	Service Area	No. of VPTs provided
1.	M/s. Tata Teleservices Ltd.	Andhra Pradesh	1314
2.	M/s. Reliance Telecom Ltd.	Gujarat	3939
3.	M/s. HFCL Infotel Ltd.	Punjab	831
4.	M/s. Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd.	Maharashtra	1894
5.	M/s. Bharti Telenet Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh	348
6.	M/s. Shyam Telelink Ltd.	Rajasthan	1016
Total			9342

The figure in respect of Punjab is for replacement of faulty MARR as all villages were covered with VPTs before commencement of service by private operators.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Encouragement to Cellular Telephones

4028. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAIISI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Cellular telephones are cost effective as compared to land line telephones;

(b) if so, the comparative figure of each cell phone and land line telephone in terms of manpower, infrastructure as well as response of public;

(c) whether the Government propose to encourage cellular telephones as compared to land line telephones; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is responsible for fixation of tariffs for telecom services including Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS) and Basic Telephone Service in the country. Generally, the tariffs for Landline Telephones (under Basic Telephone Service) are still lower when compared to Cellular Telephones. However, tariff for CMTS is currently under forbearance which means that the cellular operators are at liberty to offer various tariff options for Cellular Telephones and the same have shown a continuously downward trend in the recent past; this is mainly due to the increased competition in the Cellular Sector. In the recent past, the rate of growth per annum of Cellular Telephones has been 80%-90% in comparison to about 22% growth of Landline Telephones. Cellular operators have various tariff plans with varying rates of monthly rental and airtime charges, which they go on revising from time to time. Information provided by TRAI indicates that currently there are more than 600 different tariff plans available for the cellular subscribers across the country. As such it is not possible to make a meaningful comparison between the tariffs of Cellular Telephones and Landline Telephones. Comparative figures for manpower and infrastructure in respect of Government Operators namely Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House; as regards private operators, the Government does not keep a record for the same.

(c) and (d) The Government have opened all telecom services for unrestricted competition except services such as CMTS in which the number of Licensees is restricted to 4 per Service Area at present due to radio spectrum constraint. The Government have also created level playing field conditions for all types of service providers so that all the telecom services grow as per their potential.

[Translation]

PCOs in Bihar

4029. SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the district-wise number of PCOs functioning in Bihar at present;

(b) whether most of the PCOs out of them remain out of order, and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) The telecom district-wise information regarding STD/ISD/Local PCOs functioning in Bihar, as on 31.3.2003, is given in the statement.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the Telecom District	Number of STD/ISD/Local PCOs functioning
1	2	3
1.	Arrah	948
2.	Begusarai	1026
3.	Bettiah	733
4.	Bhagalpur	1553
5.	Chhapra	5118
6.	Darbhanga	1675
7.	Gaya	5820
8.	Hajipur	2672
9.	Katihar	2261
10.	Kishanganj	512

1	2	3
11.	Khagaria	172
12.	Motihari	2910
13.	Munger	1200
14.	Muzzaffarpur	3851
15.	Patna	8072
16.	Sahrsa	1046
17.	Samastipur	791
18.	Sasaram	2002

Vacant Posts of OBCs

4030. SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of employees belonging to Other Backward Classes in Departments and Public Undertakings under his Ministry, category-wise (category A.B.C. & D);

(b) the percentage of reservation for OBCs in the Central Government jobs;

(c) whether the quota reserved for OBCs in the Departments and Public Undertakings under his Ministry has been filled up;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by which these posts are likely to be filled up;

(f) whether the employees belonging to OBCs are provided reservation in promotion also;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether in case of non-availability of candidates belonging to OBCs general candidates are recruited against the posts reserved for them; and

(i) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) There are no Departments or Public Sector Undertakings under the

Ministry of Disinvestment. The Ministry of Disinvestment was set up in December 1999. Most of the posts and personnel were transferred to it from other Ministries/ Departments. The posts of officer are filled up through the process of central Staffing Scheme. The posts in clerical cadres are filled up through the Staff Selection Commission and these are borne in the cadre of Department of Expenditure, The details of fresh recruitment made by Ministry of Disinvestment including Disinvestment Commission for the last three years and the current year till date are as under. This recruitment is as per the prescribed model roster.

Year	Post	Recruited	OBC
2000	Peon	2	1
2001	Peon	6	1
2002	—	—	—
2003	Staff Car Driver	1	—

(b) 27% of the vacancies to be filled through direct recruitment in civil posts and services under the Government of India shall be reserved for OBCS.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) No promotion has so far been made in Ministry of Disinvestment including the offices under it.

(g) Does not arise.

(h) No, Sir.

(i) Does not arise.

[English]

Communications System in U.P.

4031. SHRI C.N. SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the communications system in Uttar Pradesh is poor as compared to the other States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the communications system in the State; and

(d) the amount spent on the development of communications system in the State during 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The steps taken to further improve the communication system in Uttar Pradesh are :

- All exchanges have been converted into electronic.
- Reliable media has been provided.
- Introduction of Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) based centralised fault booking at Short Distance Charging Centre (SDCC).
- 5 pair cables are being laid.
- Replacement of telephone instruments having completed expiry period in phased manner.
- Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) technology is being used for providing telephone connections.

(d) The amount spent on the development of communication system in the state during the last three years is given below :

Sl. No.	Year	Expenditure (in Crores)
1.	2000-01	1202.13
2.	2001-02	958.37
3.	2002-03 (up to Feb., 2003)	911.78

Setting up of a National Institute of Plastics and Maxillo-Facial Surgery

4032. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the pathetic condition of burn ward of Safdarjung Hospital;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is also no proper treatment facilities of burn patients in the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the measures taken to improve the situation;

(e) whether the Government propose to set up a National Institute of Plastics and Maxillo-Facial Surgery for such patients; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the institute is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) Burns Ward of Safdarjung Hospital has all the modern equipments and instruments for the management of burns patients. The facilities for treating the burns patients are also available in Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

(e) and (f) At present, there is no proposal to set up a National Institute of Plastics and Maxillo-Facial Surgery.

By-passes in Karnataka

4033. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Project Reports of Shakalespur, Koppal, Moodabidri and Tumkur by-passes of Karnataka are ready;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total estimated expenditure for the completion of these four by-passes;

(d) the total funds allocated by the Union Government for these by-passes during the present financial year 2003-2004; and

(e) the time by which these by-passes would be ready?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. No such project reports are under preparation.

(c) to (e) Does not arise.

Special Category State Status to Orissa

4034. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO :
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Orissa has forwarded a proposal to declare Orissa as a Special Category State;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Orissa in his Address at the 50th Meeting of the NDC, with a written copy circulated, inter-alia stated "I have been repeatedly requesting the Government of India for declaring Orissa as a Special Category State".

(c) Special Category Status has been accorded to some states on the basis of a set of criteria which include—strategic location on the border with neighbouring countries, hilly terrain, inadequate economic and social infrastructure predominantly large tribal population and limited and weak resource base compared to the development needs. Since Orissa does not have all these features, it has not been feasible to include it under Special Category States. Further, while states have been suggesting modification(s) in the criteria for allocating Central Assistance, there is no consensus among the states on the issue, in the absence of a consensus, it is the considered view of the Government that Financial Assistance/Additional Central Assistance (ACA) on a case-to-case basis may be provided keeping in view state's specific problems.

Package to Improve Health Care System

4035. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to make "India the global health care destination";

(b) if so, the steps taken to achieve the above objective;

(c) whether any package is proposed to be introduced to improve country's health care system; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The steps taken consist of encouraging private participation in healthcare services in general and making available fiscal and other incentives for the overall improvement of the healthcare system in the country.

(c) and (d) The package of benefits include, inter-alia, concessions in income tax to such financial institutions as provide long term capital to private hospitals with 100 beds or more; increase in rate of depreciation in respect of life saving medical equipment facilitate up-gradation and replacement; reduction in customs and excise duty on life saving equipment and a large number of life saving drugs; encouraging foreign direct investment and liberalizing it further by putting almost all items/activities on the automatic route and allowing certain percentage of imports of specified items against foreign exchange earnings obtained from provision of health services.

Very Small Aperture Terminal Telephony Services

4036. SHRI A. NARENDRA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether an Israeli equipment manufacturing company has offered to provide Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) telephony services for the rural areas in the country,

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said company has also proposed to set up manufacturing base in India for the South Asia Region;

(d) if so, the details thereof,

(e) the benefits of VSAT over the other telephony services provided in the rural areas;

(f) whether the Government have considered the proposals of the said company; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. Only an Indian registered company, having a license from Department of Telecommunications, to provide telephony services, can operate such services. Use of Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) technology is one of the possible way of providing telephony services in rural areas. No proposal has been received from any Israeli company for manufacture of VSAT equipment. However, manufacturing of telecom equipment is a delicensed activity and a company is free to set up such unit.

(e) Satellite is the only viable proposition for providing connectivity to remote areas of the country which cannot be accessed by any other terrestrial based technology.

(f) and (g) Do not arise in view of (a) to (d) above.

Dereservation of Items from SSI Sector

4037. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY :
DR. V. SAROJA :

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have recently dereserved more items from the small scale sector as reported in the Statesman dated March 1, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof with reasons therefor;

(c) whether the dereservation of items from the small scale sector would adversely affect the overall growth of the small scale industries in the country;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to reconsider and re-examine their decision in this regard;

(e) if so, by when; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b)

In the Union Budget, 2003-04 presented in Parliament on 28th February, 2003, Government have proposed the dereservation of 75 items of laboratory chemicals and reagents, leather and leather products, plastic products, chemicals and chemicals products and paper products. The reasons for dereservation of these items is to allow greater opportunities for technological upgradation, promotion of export and achieving economies of scale.

(c) to (f) As the issue of reservation/dereservation of items for exclusive manufacture in the Small Scale Industries (SSI) sector is a continuous process, its likely impact is periodically assessed through consultation with various stakeholders and by the Advisory Committee constituted under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951. These reviews consider various relevant aspects including inter-alia domestic and global competitiveness, potential for employment and export, technical feasibility and economic viability of manufacture, effect on growth and development of the small scale sector, etc.

BSNL and MTNL Links with Cell Operators

4038. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the BSNL and MTNL have decided to revise/review or snap their links with cell operators;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the existing links including the terms and conditions of the operation of these linkages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The interconnection between Mobile Switching Centres of Cell Operators and BSNL and MTNL is provided at Level I Trunk Automatic Exchange (TAX)/Level II TAX within the framework of Regulations/determinations issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India from time to time. At few locations, the interconnection has been provided at still lower level i.e. Short Distance Charging Centre Tandem Exchanges.

[Translation]

Foreign Tours by Officers

4039. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the countries toured by the officers of various departments, undertakings and other institutions under her Ministry during the last three years and the number of days for which they stayed there;

(b) the amount of foreign exchange given to them in the form of cash and travelers cheque by the Government,

(c) the details of the travelers cheques not submitted for encashment;

(d) the reasons, if any, for the misutilisation of the Government funds by these officers alongwith the reasons for failure in recovering funds from them; and

(e) the steps taken for recovering the funds misappropriated by the officers and by when the recovery is likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Road Accidents

4040. COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether surveys have revealed that there is constant increase in road accidents due to hoardings and bill boards put up along the national highways;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government have issued orders for the removal of the same;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government against the companies violating the orders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) No survey has been carried out to

assess the number of accidents occurred exclusively due to hoardings and bill boards.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Since hoardings are a source of distraction for the drivers, Ministry has laid down that no advertisement hoardings be allowed on National Highway land except for informatory signs of public interest.

(d) The Ministry through several D.O. letters including three at the highest level from the Minister of State (Road Transport and Highways) addressed to Chief Ministers has urged the State Governments for strict compliance of these policy guidelines. In case of any violation, State Governments have been authorized to take necessary action.

[English]

IWAI Projects in Andhra Pradesh

4041. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) the number and details of Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) projects undertaken by the Inland Waterways Authority of India in Andhra Pradesh during each of the last three years;

(b) whether such projects can be operated for a period of 30 years;

(c) if so, details of the criteria for selecting or identifying a project and then finalising it as BOT project;

(d) whether such BOT projects have been implemented in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :
(a) No such project has been undertaken by IWAI in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) As per MWT Policy, such projects can be operated up to period of 30 years.

(c) The details of criteria as under:

Firstly, The projects that can be implemented by the private sector on BOT basis would be identified and

short-listed. Thereafter the bid documents for such short listed projects would be prepared and bids invited from prospective investors. Based on the bids received from prospective investors, decision would be taken to select investor for a particular project.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise

Lower Freight Rates to Europe

4042. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian exporters and importers may get the benefit of lower freight rates to Europe following a notice of a split issued by three members of EPIC (European, Pakistan, India consortium);

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the split if materialised would result in excess supply for container services on the route; and

(d) if so, the extent to which India-Europe cargo trade is likely to improve from the present level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :
(a) and (b) Although the split in the EPIC Consortium will put freight rates under pressure, no appreciable drop in the freight rates to Europe is expected.

(c) The split will not result in excess capacity for container service on the route.

(d) Does not arise.

Top Level Conference on Doping

4043. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAIISI : Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a top level conference was held in regard to doping in sports at Copenhagen;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India also participated in the said conference;

(d) if so, the main points discussed in the conference and the outcome thereof; and

(e) the agencies from the world over who have accepted the resolutions adopted at the conference?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA) : (a) to (c) A World Conference on Anti-Doping in sports organised by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA), was held from 3rd to 5th March, 2003 in Copenhagen. The Indian delegation, comprising the Director General of Sports Authority of India (SAI) and ED, Finance (SAI), participated in the conference.

(d) (i) The world Anti-Doping Code Version 3.0 was discussed, approved and adopted.

(ii) The Draft Copenhagen Declaration on Anti Doping in Sports was discussed and adopted by a number of Governments.

(iii) The technical standards for testing, laboratory accreditation, prohibited list and therapeutic use exemption were discussed which is being developed by World Anti Doping Agency (WADA).

(iv) The Draft Resolution of World Conference on Doping in Sports was discussed and final version was adopted incorporating the suggestions made by the participants.

(e) The international Olympics Committee, International Sports Federations, International Paralympic Committee, National Olympic Committees and a number of Governments participating in the Conference adopted the final resolution.

[Translation]

Reserved Vacancies

4044. SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of employees in Group A, B, C & D categories belonging to O.B.C.s in various Departments under his Ministry alongwith category-wise number thereof;

(b) the percentage of reservation provided to O.B.C.s by the Union Government;

(c) whether the quota provided to O.B.C.s in

various departments/undertakings under his Ministry has been filled up;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by which it is likely to be filled up;

(f) whether the employees belonging to O.B.C.s have been provided reservation in promotion also;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) if not, whether a person belonging to the general category is recruited in case the person belonging to O.B.C. category is not found suitable for the post; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR) : (a) The total number of employees in Group A, B, C & D categories belonging to O.B.C.s in the main Department of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and its organizations / Public Sector Undertakings is as under :

	Main Department	NEC/ NEHFDC**/ INERAMAC***
Group A	– Nil	1
Group B	– Nil	2
Group C	– 1	8
Group D	– 1	13

*NEC – North Eastern Council

**NEHHDC – North Eastern Handicrafts & Handloom Development Corporation

***NERAMAC – North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation

(b) 27 per cent of the vacancies in civil posts and services under the Government of India to be filled through direct recruitment are to be reserved for the O.B.C.s.

(c) Posts in the main Department in Category 'A' and 'B' have been filled up by transfer on deputation basis and not by direct recruitment. Group 'C' posts (Except

Drivers) have been filled by the Ministry of Home Affairs as the Cadre Controlling Authority.

The Department of Development of North Eastern Region has recruited 3 drivers (Group 'C') out of which one belongs to O.B.C. Out of 5 posts of peons filled up by the main Department one peon belongs to O.B.C. category.

O.B.C. quota in North Eastern Council (NEC), North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC) and North Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation (NEHHDC) is not filled up.

(d) There has been no vacancy during the last 5 years in North Eastern Region Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC) and North Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation (NEHHDC), the Government of India undertakings under this Department. Likewise, no vacancy has arisen in North Eastern Council (NEC) on account of reduction in staff strength. Therefore, no fresh recruitment has been made. Moreover, Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) is also in operation in NERAMAC and NEHHDC.

(e) Already existing strength has been reduced. As and when vacancies arise against reduced strength appointments which are through direct recruitment will be made taking into account the O.B.C. reservation.

(f) No reservation is provided to O.B.C.s for promotion as per rules.

(g) Question does not arise.

(h) The relevant Rules provide that General candidate shall be appointed to a reserved vacancy only if reserved candidates are either not available within the normal/extended/zone or are found unsuitable and if dereservation is approved. However, there is no case in Department of Development of North Eastern Region where a general category candidate was appointed by direct recruitment due to non-availability of an O.B.C. candidate.

(i) Question does not arise.

[English]

New Specifications for Vehicles

4045. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister

of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have asked the automobile manufacturers to implement the new specifications for steering wheels, seats and anchorages, seat covers and brakes; and

(b) if so, the details in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) and (b) These specifications have been notified vide G.S.R. 400 (E) dated 31.5.2002 and G.S.R. 845 (E) dated 27.12.2002. The details are as under :-

- (i) Steering effort—IS:11948-1999
- (ii) Seats, their anchorages and head restraints—AIS:016-2000
- (iii) High speed braking requirements—IS:11852-2001-Part 3

Research Undertaken by C-DoT

4046. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether C-DoT has been working on SDH optical systems, dense wave division multiplexing (DWDM) equipment and third generation mobile telephones;

(b) if so, whether such research is already being done in many other laboratories in the private sector;

(c) if so, the objective of C-DoT in engaging in research sectors and matters where other large institutions are also working towards solutions;

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by C-DoT to carefully select research subjects and avoid duplication and wasteful expenditure;

(e) whether C-DoT will also focus on upgrading the existing telecom systems; and

(f) if so, the details of any long term plan devised by C-DoT for product development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is understood that such research to certain extent is also being done in some other laboratories.

(c) The objective in this case is to provide cost effective state-of-the-art solutions and also the most suitable ones for the indigenous markets with ability to provide progressive upgradation in terms of new features and services as it has control over the technology and the software of the designed systems. Earlier also, when C-DoT developed the digital switching technology, many other technologies were already available yet, inspite of fierce competition, C-DoT has its share of over 45% of the telephone lines in the country. A similar, focus and approach is being kept, while developing these technologies for deployment and development of skills for the future technology excellence as well.

(d) C-DoT has a defined mechanism for selecting the research subjects. This includes study and market analysis, discussion of needs with service providers, prioritisation on the above basis by its Board, the Steering Committee and the Governing Council consisting of high level representatives of the Government and of the operator.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) C-DoT for the long term has planned to develop some new systems and solutions by leveraging and value addition on the technologies already developed by it for current systems. Also, many of the new technologies which are being developed by C-DoT are based on open platform approach which make them much more modular, software intensive and future proof so that the same platforms can be used in various types of network solutions. This will help in making these platforms cost effective as well as fit for retrofitting future applications based on changing market requirement.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts of OBCs

4047. SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of employees in group A, B, C, D categories belonging to OBCs in various Departments under his Ministry alongwith category-wise number thereof;

(b) the percentage of reservation provided to OBCs by the Union Government;

(c) whether the quota provided to OBCs in various Departments/Undertakings under his ministry has been filled up;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by which it is likely to be filled up; and

(f) whether the employees belonging to OBCs are provided reservation in promotion also;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether a person belonging the general category is recruited in case person belonging to OBC is not found suitable for the post; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) The total number of employees in the Group A, B, C and D categories is furnished below :

Categorywise break up

Group	No. of employees
A	324
B	751
C	1605
D	906
Total	3586

(b) 27% for direct recruitment on all India basis by open competition, as prescribed in Department of Personnel & Training, New Delhi OM No. 36012/22/93-Estt.(SCT) dated 8.9.1993.

(c) to (e) Consequent on the introduction of post based rosters vide Department of Personnel & Training OM No.36012/22/93-Estt.(SCT), New Delhi dated 8.9.1993, *ibid*, all the constituent Units have been instructed to identify and regulate the shortfall of vacancies, if any arises, consequent on the issue of said DoPT OM and to clear the shortfall subject to the relevant guidelines issued on the subject, as an ongoing process.

(f) No Sir, as no reservation for promotions to the employees belonging to OBC's have been provided by the Government.

(g) to (i) Do not arise.

[English]

Collection of CRF

4048. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed for the collection of Central Road Fund for the year 2002-03 and 2003-04;

(b) the manner in which the share of 50% of the HSD Cess and 100% petrol cess is to be allocated to different sectors, sector-wise;

(c) whether the share allocated for under/over railway bridges and safety work has been utilised in full for the year 2001-02; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) The collection under Central Road Fund (CRF) depends on the consumption of petrol and diesel and therefore there is no target fixed for collection of the funds.

(b) As per CRF Act, 2000, the funds are allocated as under :

- (i) 50% of the cess on high-speed diesel for the development of rural roads;
- (ii) 57.5% of (50% of cess on high-speed diesel and 100% cess on petrol) for the development and maintenance of national highways;
- (iii) 30% of (50% of cess on high-speed diesel and 100% cess on petrol) for development and maintenance of roads other than national highways. 3% of this amount is kept for allocation to States for improvement of State roads under 'Economic Importance' and 'Inter-State Connectivity' schemes;
- (iv) 12.5% of (50% of cess on high-speed diesel

and 100% cess on petrol) for construction of road over/under bridges over railways and erection of safety works at unmanned rail-road crossings.

(c) and (d) The entire funds allocated to the railways for road over/under bridges and safety works during 2001-02 could not be utilised fully due to the following reasons :

- (i) Delay in finalisation of alignment, approval of General Arrangement Drawings, and submission of estimates for the approach portions by the State Governments.
- (ii) Delay in the part of the State Governments in acquiring land and removing encroachments in approaches.
- (iii) Non-prioritisation and inadequate allotment of funds by the State Governments in their annual plan.
- (iv) Delay in starting of the approach works by the State Governments.
- (v) Delay in sponsoring the proposal by the State Governments.

Insurance Cover to AIDS Patients

4049. SHRI Y.V. RAO :
DR. ASHOK PATEL :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether public sector Life Insurance Companies propose to extend insurance cover to AIDS patients in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government propose to extend any financial assistance to such insurance companies;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken to provide free treatment to the AIDS patients?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise, in view of (a) above.

(e) Government provides free medical treatment for management of opportunistic infections among HIV/AIDS patients in public sector hospitals. The National AIDS Control Organisation released funds to the State AIDS Control Societies who in turn release these funds to the respective government hospitals treating HIV/AIDS patients, towards procurement of drugs and medicines for opportunistic infections. Government also provides anti-retroviral drugs for prevention of parent to child transmission of HIV. This programme is currently being scaled up to all the districts in the high prevalence State (i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu).

The Employees State Insurance (ESI) Corporation is providing anti-retroviral therapy for AIDS patients, prescribed by trained specialists and these drugs are dispensed by the respective ESI dispensaries.

However, antiretroviral therapy for AIDS patients are not supported by Government in the National AIDS control Programme because of their prohibitive costs, indefinite period of treatment (usually life-long) and other supportive investigations (CD4/CD8 counts, viral load estimation, liver function tests, haemogram, etc.) required for monitoring the patient, while on medication.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Daman and Diu Motor Vehicles (1st Amendment) Rules, 2002 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. ADTr/DMN/F.79/104/2002-03/83 in Gazette of

U.T. Administration of Daman and Diu dated the 5th December, 2002 under sub-section (4) of section 212 of the Motor Vehicle Act, 1960 together with an explanatory memorandum thereto.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7277/2003]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : Sir, on behalf of Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan, I beg to lay on the Table :

A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 37 of the Telecom Regulatory authority of India Act, 1997 :-

- (1) The Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (Salary, Allowances and other Conditions of Service of the Officers and Employees) (Amendment) Rules, 2003 published in Notification No.G.S.R, 201 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 2003.
- (2) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Salary, Allowances and other Conditions of Service of the Officers and Employees) (Amendment) Rules, 2003 published in Notification No.G.S.R. 202 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 7th Mardi, 2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7278/2003]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of (SHRI A. RAJA) : I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, together with Audit Report thereon.
- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7279/2003]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (3) of section 36 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 :
- (i) The Debts Recovery Tribunal-III, Delhi, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group 'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 118 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.
- (ii) The Debts Recovery Tribunal-III, Kolkata, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group

'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 119 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.

- (iii) The Debts Recovery Tribunal, Vishakhapatnam, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group 'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 120 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.
- (iv) The Debts Recovery Tribunal, Ranch, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group 'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 121 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.
- (v) The Debts Recovery Tribunal, Pune, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group 'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 122(E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.
- (vi) The Debts Recovery Tribunal, Coimbatore, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group 'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 123(E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.
- (vii) The Debts Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow, Group 'A' and 'B' (Gazetted) and Group 'B' (Non-Gazetted) Posts Recruitment Rules, 2003 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 124 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th February, 2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7280/2003]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy of the 'Tenth Five Year Plan 2002-2007' (Volumes I to III) (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7281/2003]

- (2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the North-Eastern Space Application Centre, Shillong, for the year 2001-2002, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the North-Eastern Space Application Centre, Shillong for the year 2001-2002.

- (3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7282/2003]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA) : I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy each of the following statements (Hindi and English versions) showing action taken by the Government on the assurances, promises and undertakings given by Ministers during various sessions of Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Lok Sabha :

TENTH LOK SABHA

- (i) Statement No. XXIX Eighth Session, 1993.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7283/2003]

- (ii) Statement No. XXXII Thirteenth Session, 1995.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7284/2003]

ELEVENTH LOK SABHA

- (iii) Statement No. XXXI Second Session, 1996.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7285/2003]

- (iv) Statement No. XXIX Third Session, 1996.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7286/2003]

- (v) Statement No. XXIX Fourth Session, 1997.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7287/2003]

TWELFTH LOK SABHA

- (vi) Statement No. XXIX Second Session, 1998.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7288/2003]

- (vii) Statement No. XXIII Third Session, 1998.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7289/2003]

THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA

- (viii) Statement No. XXI Second Session, 1997.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7290/2003]

- (ix) Statement No. XXI Third Session, 2000.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7291/2003]

- (x) Statement No. XXI Third Session, 2000.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7292/2003]

- (xi) Statement No. XV Fifth Session, 2000.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7293/2003]
- (xii) Statement No. XIV Sixth Session, 2001
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7294/2003]
- (xiii) Statement No. XII Seventh Session, 2001.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7295/2003]
- (xiv) Statement No. IX Eighth Session, 2001.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7296/2003]
- (xv) Statement No. VII Ninth Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7297/2003]
- (xvi) Statement No. IV Tenth Session, 2002.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7298/2003]
- (xvii) Statement No. II (Item No. 1 to 58 Vol. I) Eleventh Session, 2002.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7299/2003]
- (xviii) Statement No. II (Item No. 59 to 73 Vol. II) Eleventh Session, 2002.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7300/2003]
- (xix) Statement No. II (Item No. 74 to 96 Vol. III) Eleventh Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7301/2003]
- (xx) Statement No. 1 Twelfth Session, 2003.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7302/2003]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI) :
I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy of the Merchant Shipping (Continuous

Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarer's Identity Document) Amendment Rules, 2003 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 187 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 3rd March, 2003 under sub-section (3) of section 458 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7303/2003]

- (2) A copy of the Corrigendum (Hindi and English versions) to the Annual Accounts and Audit Report* of the New Mangalore Port Trust for the year 2001-2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7303A/2003]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under subsection (I) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956 :
- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Semiconductor Complex Limited, S.A.S. Nagar, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Semiconductor Complex Limited S.A.S. Nagar, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (i) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7304/2003]

*Annual Accounts and Audit Report of the New Mangalore Port Trust were laid on the Table of the House on 18.12.2002.

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER). Mumbai, for the year 2001-2002. along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER). Mumbai, for the year 2001-2002.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7305/2003]

(5) A copy of the statement (Hindi and English versions) for the rejection of Board of Arbitration award in Compulsory Arbitration Reference No. 5 of 1993 regarding Cash Handling Allowance to Post Office Staff handling cash at Counters and those engaged for Salary/bills/pension disbursement in the Department of Posts.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7306/2003]

12.02 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA
AND
BILL AS PASSED BY RAJYA SABHA—LAID

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha :

"In accordance with the provisions of Rule 111 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to enclose a copy of the

Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2003 which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th April, 2003."

2. Sir, I lay on the Table the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2003, as passed by Rajya Sabha on the 8th April, 2003.

12.02½ hrs.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Seventh and Eighth Reports

[English]

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (Tenali) :
Sir, I beg to lay on the Table : A copy each of the following reports (Hindi and English versions) of Estimates Committee :

(1) 7th Report of the Estimates Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Finance and Company Affairs—Role of Public Sector Banks in Self-Employment Schemes including PMRY.

(2) 8th Report of the Estimates Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Communications — Telecommunications Services in Rural Areas.

12.02¼ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS'
BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Thirty-Second Report

[English]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK (Pondicherry) : Sir, I beg to present the Thirty-second Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

12.03 hrs

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Thirteenth Report*[English]*

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram) : Sir, I beg to present the Thirteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Fourth Report of the Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Health and Family Welfare Programmes for Women'.

12.04 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
LOCAL AREA DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**Eleventh Report***[English]*

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN (Tirunelveli) : Sir, I beg to present the Eleventh Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme on the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation—'Proposals to amend Guidelines on MPLAD Scheme.'

Sir, with your permission, in continuation of that I would like to submit that the Finance Bill is being presented on the 25th and there is going to be a debate for ten hours. Sir, you know, as far as MPLAD Scheme is concerned, the Members are asking for an increase of the amount from Rs.2 crore to Rs.3 crore. There is a consensus among all the Members, cutting across party lines.

Sir, I would say that if notice is given to the Government, it would be able to do it. The other day the hon. Finance Minister said that he would obey your orders.

You may direct the Finance Minister to increase the amount from Rs. 2 crore to Rs. 3 crore.

Sir, in Delhi, under this Scheme an MLA gets an amount of Rs. 2 crore. We have about six such constituencies that fall in our areas. So, it comes to about Rs. 5 crore. But we are not asking for an amount of Rs. 5 crore. We are asking for an amount of Rs. 3 crore only. The people of the constituencies expect much from the Members of Parliament. Sir, you would appreciate the sentiments of the Members and the people. I would request that the Government should include it in the Finance Bill to be taken up on the 25th of this month.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Ferozabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support the view of Shri Pandiyan. This amount should be raised to Rs. three crores.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, 1 go to 'Zero Hour'. The first notice, which I am going to permit is of Shri Suresh Kurup.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. I am going to permit all of you one after another. Shri Suresh Kurup, Prof. Premajam, Shri Ajay Kumar, Shri Krishnadas, Shri Radha Krishnan and Shri Ajoy Chakraborty have moved an Adjournment Motion. I have permitted them to speak during 'Zero Hour'.

May I request Shri Suresh Kurup to speak?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Hajipur) : Sir, what about my Privilege Motion? The Privilege Motion gets first priority *(Interruptions)* It is a very serious matter.

MR. SPEAKER : When I take up your Privilege notice, you can speak on it.

I have asked for a report from the State Government. Let the report come.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Please listen to me for a minute. Let me speak after him.

MR. SPEAKER : We will listen you after him.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajanj, U.P.) : The Business community all over the country is on strike. We have given notice of adjournment motion...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : May I request the entire House to co-operate with me. I have received a number of notices on very important issues such as the issue of textiles, the issue of garments, weavers and the present issue which the hon. Members want to raise. I am going to take all these important issues because you are all aware that there is going to be long holidays afterwards. I want to give opportunity to maximum number of Members. I would make a request that only those Members would speak whom I call upon to speak. Otherwise, there will be a confusion and the Members may not get a chance.

Now, Shri Suresh Kurup.

12.06 hrs.

SUBMISSION BY MEMBERS

(i) Re : Reported Beating Up of Some
MPs By Kerala Police

[English]

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of this House about the ghastly incident that took place in Kerala. On March 17, four of our hon. Members—Shri N.N. Krishnadas, Shri S. Ajaya Kumar, Shri T. Govindan and Shri A.P. Abdullakutty—

were brutally beaten up by the Kerala Police. On that day, they were leading a march organised by the Left Democratic Front in Kerala to the respective SP Offices of their districts

Of these four, Shri Krishnadas and Shri Abdullakutty were brutally and inhumanly beaten up. Sir, kindly look at the hand of Shri Krishnadas. His hand was broken by the police. They were leading a march to their SP Office in Palighat district. And seeing that the septuagenarian and political leader, Shri Sivadas Menon, who was the former Finance Minister in Kerala being beaten up. Shri Krishnadas went to him and prevented from beating. So, he was thoroughly beaten up. Shri Ajaya Kumar was beaten up in the district hospital where he went to meet those persons who were taken to the hospital. He was surrounded in the corridor of the district hospital and beaten up.

Shri T. Govindan and Shri Abdullakutty were beaten in their respect district headquarters at Kasargod and Cannanore. Sir, as you know, Shri T. Govindan is a heart patient. None of these police officers was asked to explain as to what happened in their district headquarters. The police officers who led this beating are going scot-free. In spite of the repeated complaints from the hon. Members of Parliament, the Government of Kerala has not taken any action or not even ordered an inquiry regarding this *lathi charge*.

Sir, this is a very serious matter. All these Members are charged by the respective police officers CrPC 307 is charged against them. IPC 307 is charged against them. So, this is a very serious matter.

The Government should come forward to this House and explain as to what action is going to be taken against the police officers. Will the Government ask the Government of Kerala to explain regarding this matter? Sir, my request is that...*(Interruptions)* Will you please sit down?...*(interruptions)*

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (Adoor) : Sir, he is misleading the House. This is not correct. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. Let the hon. Member speak.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Sir, the hon. Members have certain grievances. I would request everybody to listen to them, and if they have anything to respond, they can do so afterwards. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Sir, never in the history of this country, this sort of brutal beating up of the hon. Members by the Police had taken place. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Suresh Kurup, you need not address him. You kindly address the Chair. You can speak on this issue.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please sit down. The hon. Members are expected to observe discipline in the House, Shri Suresh Kurup, you do not refer to anything said by any other Member. You can just speak on the incident. This is a serious incident. I have permitted you to speak. You can always speak on it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I can understand your anxiety.

But in the House, we go with a certain discipline. They want to raise the issue. Let them say. It is the question of assault on the Member of Parliament. Let him say.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Sir, this is an unprecedented incident. This sort of an incident never happened in the history of this country. Four Members of Parliament in their State were beaten up in their respective constituencies. In spite of repeated complaints to the Chief Ministers and to the Government of Kerala, no action is being taken. Who will protect our Members? So, my request is that this House should discuss this issue and request the Government of Kerala to take appropriate action against the concerned police officers. Sir, you should protect us...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat) : Sir, let me say, I was leading a march of the people. It was decided by the Leftist Democratic Front in Kerala. They were demanding a probe on the firing that took place against the Adivasis on 17th March. So, before we reached the police blockade, the police started beating us. I was seeing the police beating up one of our very senior political leaders. He was the ex-Finance Minister of Kerala. He is a veteran. He is 71 years old. Shri Sivadas Menon was brutally beaten up. Since I was present there, I asked that police officer not to beat such a very senior and old veteran political leader. That police officer is a Deputy-Superintendent of Police. He knocked me very personally. He had beaten me up personally. You see, Sir, one of my bones has been broken. My right arm shoulder bone has been dislocated. I can show you now. I think it is unfair to remove my clothes here. Everybody can see the injuries on my body...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Radhakrishnan, do not encourage him to do that. This is the supreme body of the country. Why should you do that? Please do not do that.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : I think it is unfair to remove my clothes in this august House. If anybody wants to see that, I can show those injuries on my body. This bone has been broken. One police officer had beaten me up. This is the situation. So, who will protect us? It is part of my parliamentary duty to take part in the agitation of the people's movement. If riot, why should I be a Member of this Parliament? So, this is my request that this House should ask them. This House is very much competent to do that. This House should ask the Government of Kerala to take proper and immediate action against this police officer...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Shivraj Patil will also be allowed to speak. Shri Radhakrishnan, please sit down.

I have received on the same issue a notice of privilege against the Superintendent of Police, Cannanore, Kerala. The notices of 18th, 20th and 27th, three days, were given to me. One was from Shri Abdullakutty; another was from

Shri Govindan; and the third was from Shri Ajaya Kumar. I have gone through the notices. Also, I have called for a factual note in the matter from the Ministry of Home Affairs. I will be able to take the decision on the subject after I receive the factual information from the Department of Home Affairs as per the procedure. There is no doubt that the matter is of a serious nature.

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this issue relates to beating up of a Member of Parliament. Therefore, I request you to give direction for immediate action considering it a matter of breach of privilege.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, I will be permitted to speak.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Radhakrishnan, every Member will not be allowed to speak. Those affected Members have been allowed to speak.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I have given a notice.

MR. SPEAKER : You are not an affected Member. You were neither there nor were you beaten up. So, please sit down. Only the affected Members have to make their speeches.

I am allowing Shri Shivraj Patil to speak. Let us hear the deputy leader of the Congress Party.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur): Sir, if one of the hon. Members of this House is assaulted, we certainly understand his agony and our sympathy would be with him, If it were necessary, because there is a Government belonging to our Party in that State, we would certainly ask that Government to look into the matter and take appropriate action. That is the correct thing, which could be done.

Having said that, please allow me to very humbly submit that on the one hand we are with him and we join him on what he has said in his agony but yet on the other hand if this kind of a procedure were allowed we would be required to go into all the actions taken by the State Governments and then we would not have the information to say whether what has been said on the floor of the House is correct or wrong. It would be very difficult to ask and you have very rightly asked for the information from the Government. Though we, as hon. Members of this House are involved in these things, yet the precedent should not be laid in such a manner that in future it becomes difficult for each of the Governments in each of the States to reply to such things. That aspect also should not be lost sight of. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : What do you mean by that? With all due respect to you, I would like to know what you mean...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : We are not going to submit to your shouting or bamboozling because you do not understand the spirit in which we are saying this. We are not going to be shouted down. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed Shri Shivraj Patil to speak. Nothing should go on record except what Shri Shivraj Patil says.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: I am very happy that Shri Shivraj Patil has taken a right stand on the issue.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : Sir, any Member shouting on top of his voice to shut the other Member's mouth cannot be allowed. This is not the way. ...*(interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, every section of the House agrees—I believe, Shri Shivraj Patil also said

*Not recorded.

[Shri Somnath Chatterjee]

that—that the attack on Members of Parliament cannot be supported. It has to be objected.

I appreciate what he has said. I am grateful to all hon. Members for the support that has been given to Members of my Party who have been beaten up very badly. I have been in constant touch with them in the hospital. They were lying there in agony. I could talk to the doctors also.

The point is, let no impression be given that this type of brutality or activity is being condoned by any quarters. This impression should not be created here. I would request and I am sure Shri Shivraj Patil would agree that let the Government of Kerala take all possible and proper steps against the guilty officers, if they are found to be guilty.

You have already kindly observed that the privilege issue is being kept alive and you would certainly look into it with all the seriousness that it deserves. Therefore I am thankful to everybody and I hope such similar situations would not occur in this country. If it occurs, we would have to raise it again. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : May I now complete my submission, Sir?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please sit down.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : I totally agree with the spirit of the statement given by Shri Somnath Chatterjee and what he has suggested. I have already said that it would be done. Now, after he has said it, it would be reinforced and it would be done, You are also seized of the matter. The only thing I was saying was that this should be done in such a fashion that it does not create any bad precedent. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you an opportunity after Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan. You please conclude in two minutes.

[English]

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, I am giving you only two minutes to speak.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : What subject you want to take up?

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South-Delhi) : I want to say something on what he has said.

MR. SPEAKER : Discussion on Kerala has been completed. Mr. Ram Vilas please sit down.

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, whatever Mr. Somnath Chatterjee and later Mr. Shivraj Patil said is all right. But, Mr. Shivraj Patil added in the end that the issue of enquiry from State Governments should not be made a precedent.

I am to say that if such an incident occurs with a Member, the State Government should be asked first and then decision be taken, this goes in favour of the State Government only. Therefore, I do not agree with the plea that it should not be made a precedent.

[English]

Whenever there is a case of this type, we should ask from the State Government.

[Translation]

Then only we can decide whether it is a case of Privilege Motion or not.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon'ble Members, if you want your issues to be raised in the House, then please cooperate with the Chair. I am warning to all the Members not to waste

the time of the House; otherwise their issues will not be taken up in the House.

(Interruptions)

12.21 hrs.

(ii) Re : Question of Privilege

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Hajipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also put forth a Privilege Motion against the Home Minister of Gujarat. You know that....*(Interruptions)*

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : How can be there a Question of Privilege on this?

[English]

How can it be done? He is not a Member of this House?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Why do you get agitated at the mere name of Gujarat? I resigned out of Gujarat issue, the issue of secularism. The Gujarat Home Minister has put a question mark on the issue of secularism raised by me. There Christians are being surveyed with an ill-will which is totally out of context. When the Pressmen asked as to why such a survey is being done, he said that it was because Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan had raised a question in this regard in Parliament. All the newspapers there have published this news. The Delhi edition of 'The Hindu' published it on 11th March. The Parliament was in session at that time. I could have raised this very issue on the very next day, but I thought sometimes questions are put in the name of the M.Ps. and they get the full information only afterwards. Then I consulted the Question Branch and got the full information. I met you in this connection also. I have checked all the records, but there is nothing of this sort

to my name. I want to read out here that P.T.I. report from Ahmedabad.

[English]

"The Gujarat Government today admitted that it had conducted surveys on the Christian community in the State but said it was undertaken at the "local level" and in "response" to a parliamentary query.

The surveys were conducted on "local level" as part of an answer sought by the Lok Sabha to a question raised by the former Union Minister, Ram Vilas Paswan, in connection with the Anti-conversion Bill, the Home Minister, Amit Shah, told PTI."

[Translation]

I have gone through the Anti-Conversion Bill. There is nothing of this sort in that. I have not raised any questions. To malign the image of a Member of Parliament in this way is the worst of all. Since this pertains to the privilege of an M.P., the process of raising a question in the Parliament, I request you to look into this. No such question has been raised in the House.

[English]

This is a fit case for the Privilege Motion.

[Translation]

I urge you to ask for an immediate fixed information from the State Government clarifying their point as to under which title and provision have I raised such question in the House on whose basis they are holding such an inquiry. They want to oppress the minority community. I feel such practice maligning the name and fame of M.Ps. and the Opposition should be stopped and the Home Minister of the State should resign. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

Sir, what is your ruling?

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : I am giving my ruling. Please listen.

[English]

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, I have received your notice of question of privilege dated 7th April, 2003 against the Home Minister, Government of Gujarat for his alleged misleading statement against you in the Press. The matter is under my consideration.

*(Interruptions)**[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. I will call one by one.

(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE (Jabalpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also have given a notice. Everyone is speaking but my name is not called....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : You will be surely given a chance. Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajanj, U.P.) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is in regard to VAT. The traders are demonstrating....*(Interruptions)*

12.24 hrs.

(III) Re : Levying of Excise Duty on Powerloom Industry and Imposition of Value Added Tax (VAT)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Now I am giving chance to Mr. Ramji Lal Suman. He has given notice on.

[English]

Strike by traders against Value Added Tax (VAT).

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the traders all over India have gone on strike on the question of Value Added Tax, i.e. 'VAT'. A public demonstration was held in Delhi on the 7th of this month in regard to the excise-duty imposed on the readymade garments. And, yesterday, on the 8th April, the traders from all over India demonstrated in Delhi while the Government of India was discussing the matter of VAT with the State Finance Ministers. This is a serious issue and the small traders and consumers both will face catastrophe out of this. Tax would be imposed at every level. Nothing could surpass the seriousness of this issue. It will bring with itself a kind of 'Inspector Raj' in the country. What is more appalling is that common man will not be spared to seek for justice. The Government, in its usual course, would form a committee under some authority and the persons now making allegations would be hearing the matter. Till now, there were about one hundred items free from tax. Now, having this tax imposed, only 36 items are there. The 'VAT' will also include sugar, cloth, bidi, cigarette, jaggery, water, salt, roti everything. Nothing could be more serious than this. The Government have said that the imposition of VAT is now postponed for too months and will resume from the 1st of June. But this must be rolled back. This is a serious question and the Government is making claims that 16 States have accepted it. The State Government of Delhi, U.P. and Rajasthan have said that they...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Only two minutes are given for this subject. There should be no speech in the 'Zero Hour'.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : I will conclude in hardly a half minute. The Assembly of Kerala has passed a proposal to implement VAT on their own and later the Government postponed this decision. This is a serious

issue. The people from BJP sitting here have a double character. The day before, Madanlal Khurana went there to make a speech but they made him go back. He also has a double character. As far as the ready-made garments are concerned...*(Interruptions)* I know that their work is off the track since 31st March. People from different organisations also approached you in this connection. The excise-duty on ready-made garments has escalated, which should be rolled back. The Government should take back 'VAT' without delay...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a serious question. The summary is what he has just said that the small traders, workers cannot furnish accounts everywhere. They must furnish receipts otherwise are subjected to pay the tax. For this they have to keep a Chartered Accountant which they are not capable of in terms of their income. Moreover, the inquirer will himself be the judge of their cases and thus there will be no natural justice for them. This, many of you, who are lawyers, may accept. The Commission is itself the Inquirer and the Judge, this is ironical. After all, where these people are heading the country to? This Government has conspired to completely destroy the small businessmen and also the bigger ones, this is our say. The objective behind all this is to dump the stocks of foreign goods in the country by destroying the small businessmen and their trade. We require your protection in this regard. This is a concern for the nation, not for the traders only. The common people will also suffer from it. That is why we demand 'VAT' to be rolled back. This is a dangerous proposition. We want it back, otherwise, Shri Madanlal Khurana, you people will not be spared.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the matter of value-added tax is a concern not only of the Parliament but also of the State Governments. Sir, it is a fact that time and again, the ratio of distribution of revenue share between the States and the Centre has not been a practical one for the last so

many years. As a result, the State Governments have to face severe fund crisis one after another and the State Governments cannot create additional revenue chalan. Therefore, the Finance Ministers of the State Governments, irrespective of party lines, at the behest of the Union Finance Minister, under the leadership of the Finance Minister of West Bengal, sat together, discussed and then found a policy which they felt might give some strength to the State Exchequer.

Accordingly, in Stage-I, Finance Ministers of 16 States did agree to implement the concept of Value Added Tax in their own States. The problem here is two-pronged. Firstly, how can the Centre assess the health of the finances of a State and stand by them? Secondly, how can the States create sources of revenue generation to ensure stability of their own finances? We should not bring politics into this. We must objectively understand the whole issue.

The victims at the moment are the small traders, the common traders, who are not equipped to maintain records and papers on the lines of big companies. Therefore, I strongly feel that this entire issue of Value Added Tax should be stayed straight away for one year till the policy of collection is rationalised and infrastructure is put in place. It should be decided as to how the States would manage this collection. A law should be made to free the small traders from harassment.

I will give you an example. Sir, which you will appreciate because you were in the Government. A hawker who sells the loaves of bread produced by Modern Food Industries would not face a problem because the bakery management would keep the records. But, how can a small baker in Rajasthan, a small baker in Bengal, who goes door-to-door in the morning on his bicycle and sells his product maintain this kind of supporting documents and meet the requirements of the Government?

Therefore, my appeal is three-pronged : (1) Let the Standing Committee on Finance go through the matter in

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

depth; (2) Let a Committee of Members of Parliament be appointed, under your authority, to interact with the State Governments and the trading community to know their problems; (3) The entire issue of collection of VAT be stayed throughout the country till then. This is our appeal number one.

There is another serious problem. The Finance Minister should have been present here. The NDA Government, in the name of shedding tears for the poor, has taken away the facility of excise duty exemption available to the small-scale sector. As a result of that policy of the Government, readymade garment manufacturing industries throughout the country, which are run mostly by uneducated and poor people, are facing a 10 per cent excise duty hike. Yesterday, the people from Mumbai came and met me. I was horrified to know the figures that they gave me. According to the figures, people working in about three lakh garment factories in Maharashtra alone, which are operated by 10 to 20 people each, shall all be unemployed within two days.

Therefore, I request you that these two issues—the issue of readymade garments industry and the VAT—should be stayed immediately and relief should be granted to the small traders. ...*(Interruptions)* If that is not done, the Inspectors will play havoc in the name of rationalisation.

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machhlishahar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have given a notice for Adjournment.

MR. SPEAKER : Let the present matter be completed. I will give you a chance thereafter.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : The farmer is dying without water, but nobody listens. I stand here to raise farmers' issue...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Raghuvanshji, please sit down. You are a good person. I will give you a chance.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA (Delhi Sadar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the excise-duty on ready-made garments was exempted upto one crore rupees earlier, but now it is put off. We are in protest of this and demand that the exemption may be retained. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the logic behind this is that one who covers one crore rupee limit must be a big businessman. I gave an example that, say, the 'Bata Shoe Company' may be covering 30% of the total shoe-manufacture, yet the rest 70% are made by our brothers of Jatav caste at their houses. You can see long queues for this product in Faridabad, Agra or Kanpur in evening time. Similarly, some worker who installs two or three sewing machines at home, sews cloth and sells it to some factory cannot survive 'VAT', it is injustice.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : This is your Government, roll it back. Why do not you roll back it?

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : You want to politicise this matter...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Sir, he is part of the Government...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, why these people are gagging me? Let me have my say...*(Interruptions)* I am anyway supporting you and you are not letting me speak...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur) : Roll back 'VAT'.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ramdas Athawale please sit down.

[Translation]

I have got the list in front of me. If you think you can

stop them by making noise, they people can also think so. There must be discipline in the House.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Khuranaji says he supports them. I wish, he should not be ousted on the lines of Hon'ble Shanta Kumarji.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am against 'VAT' from the very beginning. The Centre says that this is a state-subject since there is a committee headed by the Finance Minister of West Bengal and the States are the final authority to implement it. Respected Dasmunsiji talked of one year's time-limit, but let me clear one thing. The 'VAT' may go well in the country, but Delhi's entire business will be spoilt once it is imposed here...
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Consider the whole country, not only Delhi.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has a reason behind. Delhi is a major distribution centre. 75% of its revenue is earned out of sales-tax. The neighbouring states desire this sale-tax be increased so that it may match that of those states. But the day Delhi's sales-tax matches to that of these states, the revenue will be reduced to the half and so will the affairs. Which Government ruled Delhi—it might be of Congress, of Respected Jagpraveshji, of Respected Vijay Kumarji or of Khuranaji—this kind of matching we never permitted. We deliberately put it lower since Delhi is not a production-centre. The stocks come here, 15 to 20 percent of these are consumed here, and the rest goes out of Delhi. The rest of the country may be covered to impose 'VAT', save Delhi. Because the public here will never accept it.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Put pressure on the Government and roll back 'VAT'...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VILAS MUTTEWAR (Nagpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for permitting me to speak on an important matter. The current Budget imposes an 8 percentage excise

duty on powerloom sector. That has unsheltered about 3 crore people working in this sector. The entire industry has come to a standstill. Demonstrations are being held at places and people have threatened to take extreme steps like self-immolation. The Government must address this situation. We have 60% of these industries in Maharashtra. They run in Nagpur, Solapur, Ichalkaranji, Malegaon, Bhiwandi, Pandharpur, Dhulia. Poor people are associated with these industries. Your this plan will benefit only big industrialists, not the tiny ones. That will ultimately cause the closure of these industries. People are holding demonstrations against this decision. On the one side, the Government claims to add new dimension to the textile industry and take steps to improve this sector, while on the other it conspires to kill the industry which tends 3 crore people who face a question of their Life and Death. What do you want—to save this industry or to kill it? On one hand, you boast of generating new opportunities of employment and, on the other, go on closing these industries. These industries are now giving up due to imposing excise-duty on them. The tiny workers know not maintaining accounts. They are even facing a more dangerous situation than that of the businessmen in regard to 'VAT', as most of them are illiterate. These industries are running basically by reviving the powerloom factories already lying closed. Mostly, poor and low-income group people run them. They toil hard to earn their daily bread and butter. They collect their raw material on borrowings and furnish it, it is hard for them to maintain full accounts. If they are covered under the realm of excise-duty, it will only be paving way for 'Inspector Raj'. These workers will be deprived of all the few they have. You have to do something in this. Fortunately, the Minister Shri Rana is here. I request you, Sir, to invoke for the protection of the powerloom industry you should enlighten us in this respect as this matter is directly connected to the welfare of three crore people. No other lower concession would do in this matter. The only way to save this industry and the interests of three crore people is to abolish the 8 percent excise-duty recently imposed. This is like divesting the cloth

[Shri Vilas Muttemwar]

industry of its clothings. Mr. Speaker, Sir, only if you stand between like Krishna in 'Mahabharat', the battle is avoided. You can save the country from a new 'Mahabharat', please play your benevolent role like that of Krishna. You should advise both the Finance Minister and the Textiles Minister that they roll back this duty at the earliest. As Mr. P.R. Dasmunsi has said that you defer this decision till this matter is referred to the Standing Committee on Finance. The suffering workers should be allowed to start their work. This is my request and hope from you.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very important matter. It should be brought under 'Discussion Under Rule 193'.

SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE (Jabalpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in regard to the turnover of rupees one crore in ready-made garments sector, you have...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Some more Members want to speak on the same matter. Later, the Minister will have his say. I have requested him to stay here. This is an important matter. I would like all the Members co-operate the Government on this. Only when you co-operate, the Minister can reply.

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue being raised by the hon'ble Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Banatwalla, your name will be associated with this.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, atleast these people should keep calm when a woman Member speaks.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have permitted me on a burning

issue of ready-made garment, thanks. Till now, the excise-duty on the readymade garments was restricted at the turnover above rupees one crore. But, in the Budget for year 2003-2004, this mechanism has been replaced with another arrangement which imposes excise-duty from point zero. This will result into a kind of forced handing over of small cottage garments industry to MNCs. More than one crore people will be shorn of their jobs. All the factories are closed, workers are agitating. Today also, people all the way from Kolkata, Mumbai, Jabalpur, Katni are agitating in Delhi. The Hon'ble Prime Minister reassured that the limit would be rupees one crore. This tax should not be carried out in accord to that. It would be better to abolish this tax by keeping that promise. I urge that this should be given a serious thought and the ready-made garments factories be allowed to farewell with extending all co-operation to them.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is really a serious matter. The Government must take some action to relieve the readymade garments industry in view of the dharnas and agitations being held when the entire House is unanimous in its voice in this matter, the Government must take appropriate action.

SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY (Banaskantha) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the Hon'ble Member.

SHRI MANSINH PATEL (Mandvi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself to this also.

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA (Meerut) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also had to say something in this matter.

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you half minute a little later. Everyone will be given sometime. Please be seated.

*SHRI K.K. KALIAPPAN (Gobichettipalayam) : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this august House to the sorry state of affairs in the weaving sector and the plight of weavers of this country. The powerloom sector is the worst hit due to 10 percent excise duty levied by the Centre

*Original in Tamil.

ignoring the plea of about 25 lakh of weavers of Tamil Nadu alone. More than a crore of people belonging to weavers' community that is the weavers and their families are greatly affected due to this taxing duty on this small-scale sector. For the past 10 days these weavers have resorted to peaceful agitation methods but the Centre has turned a deaf ear to their woes. The Government of Tamil Nadu led by our leader Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has written to the Centre to attend to the needs of the weavers who are dependent on this occupation which has met with a serious blow due to the severe tax burden brought about by the Union Government recently. I urge upon the Union Government to sympathetically consider the valid plea of the weavers of the powerloom sector and take necessary steps to ease the tax burden by way of withdrawing the recently announced 10 percent hike in excise duty. Next only to agriculture weaving industry provide livelihood to thousands of poor people of this country. We must not lose sight of this and we must earnestly make efforts to create a conducive atmosphere for these hapless weavers to continue with their traditional occupation. I urge upon the Union Government to take seriously its textile policy so that no bottle-necks are created in carrying out weaving in the powerloom sector and producing garments in the small scale sector...*(Interruptions)*

DR. V. SAROJA (Rashipruam) : Sir, we all want to associate ourselves with the issue being raised.

MR. SPEAKER : Your names will be associated with it.

SHRI ADHI SANKAR (Cuddalore) : Sir, I also associate with it.

MR. SPEAKER : It is good that your Party is also associating with what the Members on the other side of the House have said.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI (Salem) : Sir, the entire State of Tamil Nadu is associating with it.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, the entire State of Tamil Nadu will be associated with it.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad, Maharashtra) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with this issue with your permission.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch) : It is very important issue, I associate myself with it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Your name will be associated.

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I associate myself with whatever Shri Ramji Lal Suman and our party Chief Whip Shri P.R. Dasmunsi have said about VAT.

Hon'ble Finance Minister has imposed 11.2 per cent excise duty on small weavers. There are a thousand spinners in India. The Government is unable to recover excise duty from these spinners. Thanks to its corrupt officials and corruption; and the number of weavers upon whom this excise duty has been imposed is around ten lakhs. The Government would find itself unable to collect excise duty from these small weavers and the end result will be large scale corruption in the name of excise duty. The crores of people engaged as weavers would become unemployed. Therefore, I demand withdrawal of excise duty from the weavers so that those earning their livelihood through powerlooms are not deprived of their earnings.

There was a rebate on garment manufacturers upto one crore. There was no excise duty on garment manufacturers below the business of one crore. But, the Government of India has imposed excise duty on them also from 1.4.2003. Would it be possible for small garment manufacturers doing their work with two-three-four sewing machines to keep the accounts and pay excise duty? The result will be closure of all such manufacturing units. The Government of India, in my opinion, is following this very

[Shri Shriprakash Jaiswal]

policy under pressure from multi-national companies. Under this regime small businessmen, garment manufacturers and weavers would run from post to pillar and multi-nationals and big industrialists would thrive. I demand for the earlier rebate upto one crore and imposition of excise duty above one crore. There should be no excise duty on garment manufacturers below this limit...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by hon'ble Vilasrao Muttemwar. The State of Maharashtra has maximum number of powerloom workers and the excise duty imposed on them at the rate of 8 per cent is too much. Hon'ble Minister is present here. Powerloom workers, often, have three-four family members to feed at home. These days all of them are in shambles. There are about three crore people in Maharashtra who earn their bread through powerlooms.

Sir, I would like to remind you of times when you were Chief Minister of Maharashtra and provided concessions to MSEB. Weavers, at that time, had no work and they took out a procession. Hon'ble Balasaheb Thakreyji had ordered you to meet the weavers.

MR. SPEAKER : How a Chief Minister was ordered.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : He had requested and you had provided relief to them regarding power supply. If eight percent...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL : The ruling parties and opposition parties, all are unison in this matter. Why the Government does not take action on a matter in which both the sides are in unison...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : When the entire House agree to it, I fail to understand why the Government do not take any action...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, let us have discussion on it under rule 193; it is a very important matter...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Sir, there are 8000 powerloom units at Byavar and Kishangarh in my constituency Ajmer. One lakh people will become unemployed there. Increase in excise duty on powerlooms would result in closure of these powerlooms. Sir, I request the hon'ble Minister, through you to save these small powerloom units.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, please give a reply. I have called the hon'ble Minister to give a reply. Ramdas Athawaleji, I know, there are a lot of weavers in your constituency, therefore, I am asking you to associate yourself on this subject.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with all the hon'ble Members on this subject and demand withdrawal of increased excise duty...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Excise duty on garments should be withdrawn...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : It's 1 O'clock. If I adjourn the House it will be detrimental to all of you. What is this going on? I am asking the Minister to reply and specially requested him to attend. You do not want to listen to him. I will adjourn the House at 1 O'clock. It will be your loss.

[English]

Nobody should speak until the reply of the Minister is complete.

[Translation]

Let him reply.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, the point raised by the several hon'ble Members regarding small garment manufacturers and exemption given to them in excise duty upto one crore and these are being covered in the excise net now. Powerloom sector also has been included in the excise net to complete the SANVAT...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : You have destroyed them.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA : The Members belonging to the Congress, the BJP and other parties, rising above party lines, have expressed their views and feelings about the situation which has arisen in the country. Since it is a matter related to the budget, I will take it up seriously with the Finance Minister and try to find a way out.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this excise duty should be withdrawn...*(Interruptions)*

12.59 hrs.

At this stage Kunwar Akhilesh Singh and some other hon'ble Members came and stood near the Table.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned for lunch to meet again at 2 p.m.

12.59 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.03 hrs.

The Lok Sabha reassembled after Lunch at three minutes past fourteen of the clock.

[SHRI P.H. PANDYAN in the Chair]

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER*

Reported Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) cases in Some Countries

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI

*Also placed in Library. See No. LT 7307/2003.

SUSHMA SWARAJ) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to brief the Hon'ble members on the global outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and the actions taken by the Government in this regard.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) has emerged in some countries in epidemic proportion. As on 7th April 2003, a cumulative total of 2601 cases and 98 deaths have been reported by WHO from 17 countries. No case has been reported from India so far (till 8th April, 2003). However, adequate steps have been taken to prevent entry of the disease into the country and to isolate and treat a case if reported.

This viral infection is spreading through droplets/aerosols in persons having close contact with the cases, especially the health care workers and family members. It is also possible that SARS may be transmitting through other unidentified routes.

Once a person is exposed to the infection, it may take 2-10 days to develop the illness (incubation period). The main symptoms of SARS are high fever (more than 38°C or 100.4°F), dry cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty in breathing. Changes in X-Ray indicative of pneumonia may also occur. In 10% to 20% of cases, disease may become severe enough to require ventilatory support. The case fatality is around 3%.

There is no vaccine or specific drug available for treatment of SARS. However, good supportive treatment has been found effective in many cases. All suspected or probable cases of SARS must be treated in isolation with barrier nursing and universal precautions should be taken by the health care workers to prevent the further spread of disease.

I would like to inform the Hon'ble Members that the Government has taken adequate steps to prevent entry of the disease and to isolate and treat a case, if reported. The actions taken are :

- WHO recommended case definition was adopted for India and circulated to all Air Port

[Shrimati Sushma Swaraj]

Health Organizations/Port Health Organizations, Central Govt. Hospitals, Ministry of Civil Aviation/Airport Authority of India and State/U.T. health authorities along with patient management protocols.

- National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi has been designated as the nodal agency to investigate any suspected cases/outbreak. A control room is functioning round the clock.
- A proforma to screen all persons disembarking in India for symptoms of suspected/probable SARS cases has been prepared and handed over to Immigration Bureau.
- The health care facilities at International Airports and Ports have been strengthened by deploying additional doctors and evolving a standard operating protocol. The health staff is monitoring passengers of flights and ships arriving in India to report any suspected case and to take further appropriate action.
- National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi and National Institute of Virology, Pune have been identified as the nodal agencies for laboratory investigation of any suspected/probable case.
- Facilities for treatment of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in isolation have also been arranged in the Central Govt. Hospitals as also in other Infectious Disease Hospitals.
- Ministry of Health and F.W. has held coordination meetings with concerned ministries and with WHO.
- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has obtained the required primers for preparing

reagents to diagnose the viruses believed to be causing SARS.

- Media is being kept informed on the efforts made by the Government to prevent SARS from entering the country and to create public awareness.
- Two cases reported in the media that of Shri Purushotam, 18 years male admitted to Chirayu Hospital, Bhopal has been investigated and it was not found to be a case of SARS. Another case of a U.S. national, Ms. Rebecca Raleivh, 23 years female who traveled through the affected countries was admitted to Kasturba Infectious Diseases Hospital, Mumbai on 7.4.2003 on complaints of fever and cough. The general condition of the patient is improving. The case is being investigated by National Institute of Virology, Pune and preliminary results are expected shortly.

The situation is being monitored on day to day basis.

Thereby meaning, if hundred people are infected with SARS. three may die. National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi and National Institute of Virology, Pune have been identified as the nodal agencies for laboratory investigations of any suspected/probable case. Facilities for treatment of SARS patients in isolation have also been provided in all Central Government Hospitals as also in other Infectious Disease Hospitals. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has held coordination meetings with concerned Ministries and with WHO. Indian council of Medical Research has obtained the required primers for preparing reagents to diagnose the viruses believed to be carrying SARS. Media is being kept informed on the efforts made by the Government to prevent SARS from entering the country and to create public awareness.

Now, I would like to say something about the cases which have been reported as SARS cases in the media

and our hon. Members are very concerned about them. Two cases are reported in the media, first is that of Shri Purushottam, an 18 years old man admitted to Chirarju Hospital, Bhopal. I would like to tell you that this case has been investigated and it was found that it was not a case of SARS. Another case of a US National, Ms. Rebecca Releivh, a 23 years old woman who travelled through the affected countries was admitted to Kasturba Infectious Disease Hospital, Mumbai on 7.4.2003 on symptoms of fever and cough. The General condition of the patient is improving. The case is being investigated by the National Institute of Virology, Pune, I would like to inform the hon. Members, especially from Mumbai who were very anxious yesterday, that her throat swap and nasal swap samples have been found negative and blood report is awaited. The situation is being monitored on day to day basis.

You would have come to know of another case this morning when I am reading this statement, that a person was coming to Mumbai from Australia and he alighted at Hyderabad. He was admitted in a hospital at Hyderabad. I have talked to the State Health Minister. The patient's condition is improving. The good news is that his chest is clear, X-ray is clear and it seems to be a case of upper respiratory track's infection; still we have sent his sample to Pune and NIC National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi and National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune are our two major laboratories and the samples have been sent to both these laboratories.

I would like to inform the Members, especially from Mumbai as they were very concerned about Rebecca that we have attended to their concern, Rececca did not come alone, she came along with her two friends-Amy, an Australian am Kaily, an American. They had travelled to Agra and Jaipur. We tried to locate them at Agra and Jaipur and finally made contact with them at Jaipur. We have called Amy and Kaily to Delhi and got them admitted to RML Hospital in isolation. They did not complaint of any disease nor did they need any treatment. They had no

problems related to any disease but we got both of them admitted as a matter of precaution. There is another case of Mr. Maria, she was in Nepal.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let me remind the hon. Minister that if the reads the statement, then I will not allow the hon. Members to ask supplementary questions. But, if you make an extempore explanation, then they have to ask for clarifications.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Sir, in Lok Sabha, there is no provision for raising supplementary questions. I just wanted to add additional information.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If it is a statement, then I cannot allow the hon. Members to raise supplementary questions.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Orally also, I think, the Ministers can add to the statement if they have got some information. I think I should give the updated information to the House.

[Translation]

I would like to tell you that we are taking utmost care even more than the magnitude of panic and concern expressed here. We have brought here even her friends. We came to know that a lady named Maria had returned from Nepal after attending a conference. We have brought to Delhi all the people who attended the conference and got them admitted to RML Hospital. You can well witness the level of our alertness and precaution. This is something to cheer about that there has not been a single case of SARS in India...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will allow you. Please take your seat...*(In'erruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (Mumbai North-East) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to ask whether any

[Shri Kirit Somaiya]

arrangements have been made at Mumbai airport by the hon. Minister of the Government, as immigrants arrive there. She may give some information in this regard as well.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Normally, the rules do not permit clarification but as an extra ordinary case, I am allowing one or two clarifications now.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Sir, since you are allowing, I am answering to their clarifications.

[Translation]

Kiritji has asked about arrangements at Mumbai airport. I would like to inform him that not only at Mumbai airport but we have made arrangements at all the airports where international flights arrive. We have provided a printed card to the immigration officer. People alighting from international flights are made to fill the card and report such symptoms that may be related to SARS. They are made to report the countries they have travelled in order to know whether they have been to the affected countries. As I have said in my statement, it takes a period of two ten days which is called incubation period. If any symptoms are visible. they may contact us. We have strengthened the team of Medical Officers on the airports and they will get the screening done.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Ferozabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon. Health Minister has shown concern and made us aware of Government's efforts in combating the menace of SARS. As she has said that the Government is in constant touch with the World Health Organisation I would like to say on the basis of newspaper reports and other reports also suggest that SARS is still a riddle after taking a toll of so many lives in many countries. World Health Organisation too has declared today that it is clueless about its origin and treatment. The Director-General of World Health Organisation Dr Gro Halam has also said

that she does not have much knowledge about the diagnosis and treatment of this disease. I mean to say, though I am not an expert but still know that sometimes the diseases disguise themselves. It is a unique kind of disease which is spread over 14 countries. If this disease, anyhow spreads in a densely populated country like India, the consequences would be devastating. The Health Minister of Delhi, Dr. Walia has advised the people to contact the hospitals in case any such symptoms are visible. But the diagnosis would take two to seven days.

There should be proper arrangements on international airports, as has been said by our friend, just now. On the basis of the newspaper reports I submit that we need to remain on our toes. If you do not identify it. Do not know its symptoms and do not call for the services of experts, nothing is going to change.

It's a new kind of disease, so my request to the Government is to be on high alert.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Chairman, Sir. I would like to inform the hon. Member, as regards the suggestion to be alert, that the Government must always tread cautiously and remain alert. But, still, I would say if he has to compare between what has been published in the newspapers and what the Health Minister of the country says on the floor of the House, he should have faith in the Minister. Whatever I am saying is authentic and I am saying with all seriousness. I am not speaking outside the House but on the floor of the House. Newspapers won't find anything in my statement which they might refute.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE (Mumbai South-Central) : Madam, we have full faith in you. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we also donot disbelieve what she says.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Sir, the root cause of Severe Acute Respiratory.

Syndrome is the climeidia virus and as per my information 84 people have died and 2353 are suffering from it over 16 countries. I would like to ask the Minister that this virus can spread very easily. Doctors are moving around for its investigations. There is a Kasturba Hospital in my constituency and doctors, nurses, ward-boys and workers and patients all are insecure. We were directed by Thakreji to raise this issue in the Parliament. Mr. Deepak Garg from Maharashtra went there for inquiry. There are seven layer masks and they do not allow the virus to enter the respiratory system. As per the present examinations, even the three-layer mask may fail. When I enquired the Government in this regard I came to know that the Maharashtra Government had demanded for some masks complying with WHO norms which are to be provided by your Ministry. I want to know whether they are to be provided to the Maharashtra Government?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : First of all, let me tell you, they put a question that even doctors and nurses are not secure. Especially, Infectious Disease Hospitals have been identified for addressing this disease, and, the Kasturba Hospital in your constituency is also an Infectious Disease Hospital and it has got these masks. The reason why we identified these hospitals is that masks of this kind are already available there because they deal with infectious diseases. We have identified these Infectious Disease Hospitals because the doctors treating this ailment in close contact may be saved from the infection. As far as the question of seven-layer mask and three-layer mask is concerned, I have to tell it again that the three-layer Mask is very effective. As far as the norms are concerned, you may have seen ever—changing EU and WHO-norms in case of bottled water. But in Indian circumstances, the three-layer mask is very effective. When the Prime Minister of Singapore and their Health Minister visited India, our officers had a meeting with them. They also said the three-Layer masks are very effective. Even if the three-layer mask is not available, the general mask can be made three-layered and it provides the same effectiveness as the original three-layer mask would have.

Nevertheless, we are trying our best to make available the three-layer mask.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : The Maharashtra Government is demanding it.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : We are providing.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : You are providing it? Thank you.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : This disease of 'SARS' is a dangerous one. It is worth complementing that Hon'ble Minister was alert in this regard from day one. Though, she deserves thanks for this, yet we are afraid at some point, for example, as she has told that the symptoms of this disease may take a period of two to ten days to erupt. Then, it turns to be a grave concern if any infected person comes to our country during the incubation period of infection. I want to know about the preventive strategy in this regard. Secondly, most of the people are still not aware about the disease is factual position in this regard is yet to be known. Under these circumstances whether the Government would constitute an expert committee and invite recommendations from them as to how the country may be protected from this disease? Thirdly, the lack of appropriate measures at airports have been brought to our notice. I would like to know whether further action would be taken in this regard?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, respected Janab Banatwallaji was perhaps not present in the House when I answered the first question. I told that there is an incubation period of two to ten days. We have prescribed a proforma so that no one go unscanned and we catch the infected persons well within this incubation period. The counterfoil is given to the incumbent and he or she is advised to contact us if any symptoms develops within this period.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : But it is also possible he or she may not contact. You have just left it to the discretion of the patient.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Should we ask every coming person tell me, Sir, are you infected? One who's infected, on oneself shall go to some hospital. One is bound to go to some hospital he or she must be suffering from respiratory trouble, his or her temperature will be 80°C. How can one stay at home in this condition? The question of not making contact arises if one stay at home. But this is not possible, one has to go to take treatment. We are keeping full alert. And we have educated the patients also. We are taking this such extra alert, a bigger preventive measure. In such condition, no one can stay at home, one has to go somewhere, has to contact somebody. You have raised the point of constituting an expert committee. I tell you we called a meeting immediately the day we received the W.H.O.'s red-alert call. That included experts from W.H.O. and the Head (Medicines) in AIIMS, Dr. Pandey. We all discussed the situation. Sumanji also raised the point of calling experts. This situation cannot be handled by politicians. Only Medical experts can handle it. DG(ICMR) and DG(Health) are meeting everyday in this connection. We have deployed Medical officers at airports. This problem cannot be discussed without the help of experts I am speaking here only after consulting the experts.

[English]

DR. RANJIT KUMAR PANJA (Barasat) : Madam, lung infections are associated with HIV cases. I think, HIV testing of all these suspected cases might give some useful data. Has this test been done in respect of these suspected cases? That is all I want to know.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Would you please repeat your question? I could not hear you as you were not more audible.

DR. RANJIT KUMAR PANJA : Unusual lung infections are often associated with positive HIV/AIDS cases. I would like to know whether in these cases, this test has been done. If it is not done, it should be done because it might give some useful medical data.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Dr. Panja, himself is a Doctor of Medicine. He must be knowing that there is a Human Rights angle associated with the conditions of testing HIV/AIDS. You cannot test HIV without prior consultations with the council. We are trying to solve this matter separately. The samples of nasal or respiratory sputum and blood are being examined for diagnosis of 'SARS', only and not for HIV.

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, SARS disease is posing a great difficulty for the medical community to diagnose, clinch the diagnosis and also to find out appropriate antibiotic to cure this disease.

I associate with Dr. Ranjit Kumar Panja that it is very vague in symptom. It is very difficult for us to differentiate between chronic respiratory disease and also HIV, in the initial stage, as well as this SARS disease. Madam, it is a viral disease. Also virology is not giving immediate result for clinching the diagnosis. So, prevention is better than cure in this aspect.

Now, the facilities available to receive the patients are not adequate. I would like to request you to have more beds in these hospitals and also more hospitals should be identified. This should be made known to the general public through media for information.

Secondly, the medical and paramedical staff members are not spared from this disease. Extra care must be taken to give them more protective masks. That is the only thing that we could do for this disease. You can take special care to provide extra masks even if they are costly. The cost factor should not come in the way.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as regards the question of clinching this viral disease, I have already told that presently only two laboratories are able

to conduct the test. We have imported primers and prepared our own re-agents now.

[English]

We are well-equipped.

[Translation]

Presently, National Institute of Virology and NICD, Delhi are conducting this test. So, it is wrong to say that the conducting test of this virus is not possible. We have prepared the re-agents, imported the primers, even the positive and negative controls have also been imported. We have prepared a kind of diagnostic-kit and full care is being taken by NICD and NIV in the tests.

As far as the masks and preventive measures are concerned, if you read my statement, you will find that I have very clearly mentioned in it that we are specific in its prevention and cure. We have identified for treatment—in-isolation of this diseases specialized in treatment of infectious diseases. These hospitals are more prevention-specific and masks are available with them. These identified Infectious Diseases Hospitals are in almost every metropolitan city of India. We are taking every care at airports. My statement is very comprehensive about the ways of prevention and cure of this disease and we are working for this.

[English]

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (Birbhum) : I first congratulate the Minister for taking up contingency measures. It is a very special and unusual epidemic disease which is going on in the South-East Asia region. There is every chance that such type of disease can migrate to our nation also. Basically it is a viral disease. So, as the Minister has stated, there is no vaccine to prevent this disease. Even there is no specific antibiotic. Therefore, primarily, preventive measure is the mainstay of controlling this sort of disease.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are allowed here to ask a question and not start a debate.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Sir, in the form of suggestion, I am asking the questions. So many misgivings have been created, particularly by the media so far as my technical knowledge is concerned. The people are in panic. So undue panic has been created out of this epidemic disease, but we are satisfied that no such case has been detected here so far. The media has reported that this is a case of SARS and that is a case of SARS. So, one thing that needs to be noted is that the media should be restrained, particularly in this case. The people are in panic. Unusual panic should not be created. So, the media should behave responsibly in this particular campaign. I would like to know whether the Government is aware of that or not.

Secondly, regarding prevention, there is no medicine or vaccine. So, creation of proper awareness is the mainstay of controlling this disease. An important component of this is by feeding proper information to the people through the Information Education System (IES) programme. That should be taken care of and that should be given much importance. I would like to know whether the Government is taking the help of their media, DAVP, for creating proper awareness about the proper scientific because of the disease among the people and also to alleviate the undue panic among people. I want to know whether the Government is taking steps or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I was liberal in allowing the Members because it is a panic disease. It is not a debate. It is not a discussion.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : This is my brief question to the hon. Minister.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to very briefly answer his brief question. The hon'ble Member has rightly said it a viral disease. I would like to tell for us kind information that it is primarily named as 'Carona virus'. As for us prevention is concerned, we have succeeded in our efforts. That is why no case has

[Shrimati Sushma Swaraj]

still been reported. He mentioned the role of media. I would like to inform that personally I called a press-conference and requested the media to not to put any case as a case of 'SARS', as it creates panic among the masses and they might think that the disease is on spread. We are repeatedly saying that please do not call it a case of 'SARS'. Let us examine it first whether it is simple pneumonia, any infection in the upper track of respiratory system or plain fever. We have from our side repeatedly made requests to keep patience and not to call it a case of 'SARS' without confirmation.

[English]

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara) : Sir, I have a very specific question to the hon. Minister. The Ayurveda and Homeopathy practitioners claim that they have a remedy for this. Has she looked into that claim? Is it a fact or not? I just want to know whether she has looked into that area also.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : There is still no question of having any remedy of this disease. Till now, Doctors of Ayurvedic medicine say that this infection can be prevented by mixing basil leaves, ginger, black pepper and clove in the regular tea. This formula is well known by our grandmothers in India. Our Children are regularly treated with tea of basil leaves against infection. Let us say through you that 'SARS' can be prevented by taking tea with basil leaves, black pepper and clove.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The questioning and clarification comes to an end with Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi asking the last question.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Sir, I, first of all, express my thanks to the hon. Minister for expressing

her concern and taking care of this whole thing on a day-to-day basis. I agree with my colleague that we should not create panic.

I would be very specific with my only question. The Thai Airways operates from Bangkok, the Singapore Airways operates from Singapore and the Cathay Pacific operates from Hong Kong. These are three airways I have particularly mentioned because they have taken special care for their crew members and staff operating in the aircraft and dealing with passengers. I know, the Indian Airlines has inter-connecting flights with Cathay Pacific from Thailand and Singapore. So, I would like to know whether similar precautionary measures for our crew members handling, passengers have been taken. This is most important because nine cases have been reported yesterday by the BBC in Hong Kong where for wrong handling some crew members have been affected.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Chairman, Sir. Shri Dasmunsi has raised a very valid and appropriate question. I would like to inform that in the two meetings held at my level, I called for the Chairman. AAI, and advised him to arrange for masks atleast for the crew-members and immigration officials. I have even suggested him to initiate this immediately. Initially, the Ministry supplied masks from its side for first phase of safety measures. Now, they are actually being supplied to the crew-members or not, we have to confirm. We conducted a surprise inspection there only yesterday. The Secretary, Health, and the Secretary, Civil Aviation, went to inspect at the Delhi Airport yesterday night from 12 O'Clock to 2.30 a.m. to ensure whether the Immigrations staff are putting on masks or not? They found them wearing the masks. Now, whether the inflight crew-members are wearing it or not, this is to be confirmed from the Chairman, AAI. If they are not wearing it, it should be made compulsory for them. I can only tell you that we have supplied them with sonic masks on the same day.

14.35. hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the House will take up Matters under Rule 377.

**(i) Need to release funds for payment of
honorarium at enhanced rates to Anganwadi
workers in the State of Gujarat**

[English]

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara) : The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is being implemented at grass root level by the Anganwadi workers who are honorary workers and receive the negligible honorarium for the services they offer. Increase in honorarium of Anganwadi workers have been announced in the earlier Union Budget but not yet released to the State Government of Gujarat. This is a long pending demand from the State of Gujarat.

I urge the Central Government for the early release of increased honorarium amount to the Gujarat State.

**(ii) Need to set up locomotive shed at
Chakradharpur, Jharkhand**

[Translation]

SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA (Singhbhum) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, although South Eastern Railway, DRM office, Chakradharpur earns revenue but the local people are not getting any special benefit as a result thereof. There was a locomotive shed here but why it was closed down is not yet known in spite of the fact that it is highly required at this place because more use of railways for goods transportation in this area makes its presence felt on urgent basis for carrying out maintenance as well as repair work here. Thus, opening up of a shed here will certainly boost the transportation of minerals and will open employment avenues for local people and advise there.

I, through this august House, request the Government that reopening of a locomotive shed at Chakradharpur is urgently required.

**(iii) Need to improve the condition of
Beedi workers in Karnataka**

[English]

SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (Udupi) : I would like to highlight the miserable plight of about eight lakh Beedi workers in the State of Karnataka, half of which are from Dakshina Kannada region with the taluka town of Belthangady alone accounting for more than 50,000 workers. The Beedi industry used to generate additional income for the family with Women and girls engaged in large numbers making it a household enterprise.

Due to shortage of raw material there, workdays have been reduced to two or three days a week, rendering them idle and unproductive for rest of the week. The wages are low compared to neighbouring Kerala State where the State Government has initiated moves to improve their lot. The Karnataka beedi worker does not enjoy bonus, pension or other welfare/medical benefits including Provident Fund. Raw material supplies from Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Gujarat are erratic since the Tendu leaves contract is now awarded to Cooperatives.

I urge the Centre to take steps to improve the plight of beedi workers in Karnataka and to ensure uniform payment of wages and other social security benefits to them and also to ensure adequate supplies of beedi leaves for their work throughout the week.

**(iv) Need to open more educational institutions
in Bihar for proper development of human
resources in the State**

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Central Government should start centrally sponsored schemes on large scales pertaining to human resource development. For example, Zila Prathamik Karyakram should be extended to cover the whole of Bihar. In order

[Shri Rajo Singh]

to supplement it and to develop huge human resource of Bihar, it is necessary to establish some new institutions and upgrade the existing educational and technical institutions as under :

1. Setting up of Indian Institute of Information Technology;
2. Up gradation of Bihar College of Engineering, Patna to I.I.T.;
3. Setting up of Indian Institute of Management;
4. Setting up of Polytechnic and I.T.Is.;
5. Expansion of para medical training college;
6. Development of Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences on the lines of AIIMS;
7. According central university status to Patna University;
8. Setting up of a National Biotechnology Institute in Bihar;
9. Setting up of a software technology park;
10. Setting up of a Council for Vocational Training Centre;
11. Setting up of national level sports training institute;
12. Setting up of Sainik Schools;
13. Setting up of Navodaya Vidyalayas.

(v) Need to introduce Dhaka-Agartala bus service

SHRI KHAGEN DAS (Tripura West) : Sir, proper connectivity of Tripura to rest of the country is of paramount importance for its economic growth. Prior to independence, convenient rail, road and water links of Tripura with rest of the country were through Bangladesh. Subsequent to partition, Calcutta (now Kolkata) which was only 350 kilometres away from Agartala through Bangladesh became 1,800 kilometres away. Besides this, road, rail and air connectivity of Tripura with the rest of the country continues to be extremely poor. Every year, for several months, the national highway and rail link to Tripura gets disconnected due to landslides. Besides improving this, it is important for Tripura to have rail/road connectivity through Bangladesh. A protocol was signed on 10th July, 2001 between India and Bangladesh to start a bus service between Dhaka and Agartala. Tripura Road Transport

Corporation (TRTC) and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) signed an agreement on 1st March, 2002 to run the bus service. A trial run of TRTC and BRTC buses was done on 12th July, 2002. However, since then, there has been no progress. As the matter is of great importance for economic prosperity of Tripura, it is strongly urged upon the Government to take all possible steps to start the Dhaka-Agartala bus service as soon as possible.

(vi) Need to evolve a co-ordinated plan to provide free electricity to agricultural sector

[Translation]

*SHRI D. VENUGOPAL (Tiruppattur) : Sir, our national agricultural policy must help to meet the essential needs of the farmers like irrigation facilities, improved seeds, modern agricultural techniques and technology. Farmers must have easy access to water resources, water management techniques, soil testing facilities and land development methods improving its fertility. Globalisation has led to decrease in subsidies to agricultural sector. The world cannot survive without water and so is agriculture without basic irrigation facilities. At a time when dry lands are in abundance, the Government must take upon itself to provide free electricity to irrigation pumps as a fundamental duty.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to implement a uniform policy of providing free electricity to irrigation pumps throughout the country without seeking umbrage under the fact that agriculture and power distribution are in the State List.

I urge upon the Union Government's Ministries like Finance, Power, Agriculture and Rural Development to evolve a co-ordinated plan with the Prime Minister to provide free electricity for agriculture to greatly benefit Tamil Nadu and all the States of the country.

*Original in Tamil.

(vii) Need to clear the proposal of Maharashtra Government to ensure safe drinking water to the people living on the banks of river Panchganga in Kolhapur, Maharashtra

[English]

SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK (Kolhapur) : Sir, my constituency of Kolhapur is located on the banks of river Panchganga. Panchganga river water is used for irrigation as well as drinking purpose by people of Kolhapur city and numerous villages on the bank. However, due to insufficient drainage treatment plant, river water is heavily polluted causing serious health problems in the city of Kolhapur as well as rural area downstream. Government of Maharashtra has forwarded the plans to Central Government to appoint consultant to National River Action Plan. However, further action regarding approval and placement of funds has still not been done.

Sir, I request the Government to kindly give necessary approval and ensure that the people on the banks of Panchganga are not denied the facility of safe drinking water.

(viii) Need to open a Central School at Arrah in Bhojpur district, Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH (Arrah) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, is district head quarters of Bhojpur district in Bihar. Population of this district is about 25 lakh. This is one of the widest districts in Bihar. Vir Kunwar Singh University is located here. There are many educational institutions and colleges here viz. Har Prasad Jam College, Maharaja Mahavidyalaya, M. Mahadev Nand Magadh Mahavidyalaya, Jagjeevan Ram Mahavidyalaya., Brahmarshi Mahavidyalaya and number of higher schools. From the Vocational and trading point of view this is a leading vocational and trading city in Bihar which is famous for several small scale industries. Most of the population lives

in villages. The city is situated at main railway line. A number of buses ply from here to Sasaram, Banaras, Patna, Buxar, Balia, Ranchi, Tata and Kolkata. The city is very important from agriculture point of view. There are a number of big rice mills here.

Despite these achievements, there is no Kendrya Vidyalaya in the district and as a result of this many talented poor students are deprived of good education. They can not afford to get education in private schools due to poor economic background.

I, therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development to set up a Kendriya Vidyalaya in the district at the earliest.

(ix) Need to set up high power T.V. transmitter at 'Khada Pathar' in Shimla Parliamentary Constituency, Himachal Pradesh

COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, though Shimla Doordarshan Kendra in my constituency has been modernised yet it's benefit has been limited to the local population only. The factual position is this that the programmes telecast by Shimla Doordarshan Kendra could not reach the public in remote and distant places because until and unless high power TV transmitter and dish antenna are erected at the geographically significant place and located at high altitude the programmes telecast by Shimla Doordarshan Kendra could not be viewed by the public residing at remote and distant places. The ill effects of this are being felt by the innocent public, agriculturists and gardeners of this area. I have raised this issue in this House on earlier occasions also.

Sir, I request the Hon'ble Minister of Information and Broadcasting to effect a high power TV transmitter and high antenna at 'Khada Pathar' located at high altitude where already a Microwave tower is setup. Similarly there is a need to effect a transmitter at "Seema Badiyara" in Rohadu area and "Kathpol Tebba" at Arki region. If this is done, the agriculturists and gardeners of the area would be able to accrue benefit of TV programmes.

(x) Need to restart rail services between Ankleshwar and Rajpipla, and Bharuch and Dahej In Gujarat

SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA (Bharuch) : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the demand for gauge conversion of narrow gauge railway line to broad gauge railway line between the industrial area Ankleshwar and Rajpipla and Bharuch and Dahej under my parliamentary constituency. There is no rail services between these two towns because of which the local tribals have to face a lot of difficulties. The people have to pay more money besides losing precious time if they travel by road. Prior to 1968, rail services were available in this area but due to floods in the year 1968, the rail services were discontinued on account of a number of deficiencies in the rails and the rail services have not been restored afterwards although there has been a continuous demand for the last ten years to restart this rail service.

Therefore, I would like to request the Central Government through this House that these rail services may be restored and the narrow gauge rail line between Bharuch and Dahej be converted into broad gauge line.

(xi) Need for Commissioning of Metro Channel by Doordarshan In Jalgaon Parliamentary Constituency, Maharashtra

SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN (Jalgaon) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Jalgaon which is my parliamentary constituency, is a major industrial town of Maharashtra. The population of Jalgaon town is estimated to be around 5 lakn. There is substantial crop of sugar cane and banana in this area and this area has a prominent place in the country in production of sugarcane and banana.

At present, a small transmitter of television is in operation in Jalgaon town. However, the people belonging to this area are not able to avail of any facility of the Metro channel. It is very much necessary to start Metro channel

of Doordarshan for development of this area. The work of H.P.T. in Jalgaon is in progress. If Metro channel is also started alongwith it, the people belonging to my parliamentary constituency can avail of this facility.

Therefore, through you I would like to request the honourable Minister of Information and Broadcasting that the orders may please be issued for commissioning of Metro Channel urgently in my parliamentary constituency.

[English]

14.51 hrs.

ELECTRICITY BILL—Contd.*

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House shall now take up discussion on Electricity Bill, 2001. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Electricity Bill 2001 was sent to the Standing Committee on Energy on 31st August 2001 for examination and report.

Having considered the importance of this Bill, it was publicised on electronic media and in the national press. The committee went round all over the country and took evidence from various Merchant Chambers of Commerce and State Governments, and also held discussions in Delhi calling the Power Secretaries. We had interaction with various public sector undertakings, with the Power Ministry and various other organisations.

Power is the main element of infrastructure, rather critical infrastructure, for economic development and for improving the quality of life. It is rather the mother of all industries. The hon. Minister of Power himself in spite of the fact that he is the Power Minister, did take a critical view yesterday of the country's overall power situation. It

*The motion for consideration of the Bill was moved by Shri Anant Gangaram Geete on 8th April, 2003.

is unusual of a Minister to confess the present situation and asking himself for improving it.

This Bill was recommended by the Committee. The Committee made 112 recommendations. Out of these, 58 recommendations have come as amendments from the Government side and 31 recommendations are being considered to be attended to at the time of framing the rules and making the policies. I would come to that later on.

Power is a Continent Subject. The State Governments as well as the Central Government have got the power to make rules on this subject. I am glad that some of the States like Haryana and Orissa have already taken certain steps in power sector. Only yesterday, the Assam Government has passed the Electricity Bill which is modelled on the basis of Bill we have at hand.

At the time of Independence, the Department of Electricity was the sole agency responsible for generation, transmission and distribution of electricity in the country. After that, the Government took initiative and set up NTPC, NHPC and other PSUs. Today, around 70 per cent of power generation, and 100 per cent of distribution is State-controlled. The Government of India, especially the present Government, has no hesitation to open this sector up to private sector. It has formulated policies to welcome the private sector for investment in power sector.

We have five lakh villages in the country. There is an estimate given by the Government, which the hon. Minister mentioned yesterday, that eighty thousand villages are yet to be electrified. I am sorry to say but I cannot agree with the Minister on that figure. The actual figure is much higher. You go to Jharkhand; you go to Bihar—I have gone with my Committee—you go to Sunderbans area; you go to the hilly terrain of Chhattisgarh and Debra Dun areas.

But till date, the electricity has not reached those villages. One electric light planted in one village is the

criterion by which they are considering that they have done electrification! I do not blame the hon. Minister. He has taken the figure which was examined by an independent organisation earlier. I would submit that it needs to be revalidated now. His thrust should be to cover those villages not only with hydel power but also with thermal power. He should also consider the non-conventional energy. There should be more and more tie-up between their Ministry and the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources which has got tremendous possibilities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, during our Committee tour to South, we were glad to see various NGOs coming forward and taking active interest in this area. If you go to Sunderbans area, you will find that they have done well. In Lakshadweep also, they have done well. So, this is one area where I would suggest that the Government should take special care.

Sir, there is a shortage of power during the peak period. There are many areas today where power at demand is not available in the town areas. Even in the city areas, it has become difficult to get the power on demand. Why such a situation has arisen? This situation is mainly due to the fact that there is a mismatch between the hydel power and the thermal power in the country. Where there is more thermal power, there is less hydel power, and where there is more hydel power, there is less thermal power. Most of the projects have been done for political considerations. A very few of them are on the pit-heads. As a result, coal is being carried through 200 kilometres to 300 kilometres distance. There is a wastage of coal; there is a theft of coal. It adds to the cost per unit of power production. Even the quality of coal is not that good, as it should have been ideally used in the power sector. Not only that, the energy and power shortages are also reported. The figure is with me. It has been provided by his Ministry. It is at the level of eight to 12 per cent respectively.

Sir, before Independence, our position of power was 1,362 mega watts. Now, we have improved it to one lakh

[Shri Santosh Mohan Dev]

mega watts. It is a very good achievement. I must compliment our engineers of the public sector power companies because most of these works have been done by them. Some work has been done by the private sector people also. For doing all this, I must congratulate NTPC, NHPC, NEC and other organisations.

There is another point. The control of power today with Govt. is 60 per cent. The generation of power is with the State sector. So, we need to revitalise the State sector. The Securitisation policy given by the Ahluwalia Committee has been accepted by the Central Government. It has also been accepted by the State Governments. It is a good venture. We should go ahead. But what has to be done to those five lakh villages which are partly electrified? We, from the Standing Committee on Energy had recommended that 60 per cent of the villages i.e. power distribution in villages, should be done by the Central Government cause the State Governments do not have the money and the capacity to do electrification.

Sir, I know that the Government of India is asking the State Governments to take loans from the Power Finance Corporation. They are very liberal. Their rate of interest is also not high. But what happens if they take the money next year? They cannot give the Utilisation Certificate and thereby they do not become eligible for taking money.

Sir, APDPR scheme has been started. Mr. Minister, I have seen your Press release. More villages, more towns and more districts should be covered. So, I would suggest that this APDPR scheme should be implemented extensively all over the country.

Now, on the performance side of SEBs, I would say that there is a lack of quality; there is a lack of reliability; there is a lack of sincerity; and there is a huge loss on account of, what is technically called, Transmission and Distribution (T&D).

15.00 hrs.

Now, we suggested that a law should be made. The

loss that is incurred by workers should be made a cognizable offence. You have accepted it. Some State Governments, like West Bengal, has already started it; Haryana has already started it, and they are successful. This area should be given more importance. It is because on a careful study, there is an average loss of 35 per cent of generated power by theft. This is a national loss. I, in my constituency, have seen that the transformer is being burnt. When I go to the SEB, they say that there are 100 consumers, but actually 200 people are utilising this power. The balance 100 people are taking power through this illegal method. So, these rules must be made compulsory all over the country, and we must see that they should be done properly.

Now, your Government and our previous Governments, have all agreed in one point that by 2012, we should have 1,40,000 mw. But, to do it, you need Rs. 6,00,000 crore; and for that, you need private sector.

Now, what is the position of private Sector? If you go through you record given before the Committee, the number of applications that have been submitted is more than 150. Fifty-one have been given permission, and only a few have come into existence. Why is it so? It is because of the multiplicity of the organisations like CEA and others. We have been insisting that there must be one window clearance. I attended one International conference in Delhi, when the outside entrepreneurs came. They said by the time they submit a proposal, by the time it is approved, the cost goes up. Why? It is because the Budgets of different States go up. Railway fares go up. Price of coal goes up. Price of everything goes up, and that adds to the cost of the power projects, as it becomes an enviable project.

Now, for this purpose, clearance of the private sector should be given quickly. The Government has now decided that up to certain quantity of hydel projects or for certain thermal projects, you need not go to the CEA. It should be further liberalised. There should be a group who should look into it. I am not criticising the Bill. I am

welcoming the Bill. But, I am asking for certain additional alterations from my experience or touring all over the country. Normally, as a Chairman of the Standing Committee, I should not speak, but I am speaking because of my support to the Bill.

Now, there is ample opportunity to harness hydel projects in North-Eastern region, in Himalayan region, in Uttaranchal, and in Jammu & Kashmir region. But, there are constraints of speedy approval of hydel projects, especially, from the CEA. The Ministry of Environment and Forests are the dog in the manger. I am sorry to say this. I have seen as a Steel Minister myself. They will neither allow you to do it nor they will approve your project. But, let them to go to foreign countries. I have seen that in Russia, inside the deep forest, there is a power plant; and they have taken all precautions to protect the environment. This is possible nowadays. In Tripura for one monkey, the gas plan waited for three years. Subsequently, the monkey was removed from a particular forest. The 412 Tripura Government gave permission.

Now, resettlement and rehabilitation is another area. When you make a hydel project or a thermal project, resettlement of the house or the person whose land is taken, is not done properly.

Previously there was an incentive that they will not only get rehabilitation, there will also be a job incentive for each one of them. This is not being done nowadays. I do not know; I understand that the Government has taken a decision. That should not be there.

I will now come to mention about tipai Mukh hydel project. The hon. Minister of State for Power is sitting here; she has visited that area; she knows it, why it has become unviable, It is because of the fact that the security cost, the flood management cost, the construction or diversion of a by-pass, etc. are loaded on the project. If these are all loaded on the project, naturally it will go up. They are loaded on the project on the basis of 12-year gestation period. This should be brought down to 6-7 years; and automatically the cost per unit will come down.

Apart from that, for reasons like disturbances in Kashmir and North-Eastern Region, the security cost must be borne by the Home Ministry. The floods which Brahmaputra and Barak create must be a cost borne by the Ministry of Water Resources. It should not be loaded on to the Project. If it is done, it will be a wrong thing to do.

There is a mismatch between generation and transmission in the country. As against the thumb rule of 1:1 in generation and transmission, investment has been lopsided and raised from this to 2:1. That is not correct. We recommended that generation is already opened. You have now left it to the Regulatory Commission. That is not very fair. ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, let me also understand you. Shri Ponnuswamy is an old friend of mine. Kindly do not rebuke him. He is a nice person.

MR. CHAIRMAN : They were all talking. I told him that I heard everything.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Okay, please do not mind that.

The Regulatory Commission must be accountable to Parliament. You have been briefed by the officials to say that the CAG report is placed on the Table of Parliament, and so, automatically they are answerable. No. Even if CAG report is placed, the first onus of examining them lies on the Public Accounts Committee. The Public Accounts Committee also does not take all the things at a time; they take bit by bit and it takes one to three years for reports to come out. Unless they are answerable, it cannot be done. You have come to this Ministry very recently. There was a time when the Chairmen of the Regulatory Commissions in the States were rather fighting with the respective Power Ministries in the States. Fortunately with the intervention of the Ministry that has now been overcome.

You have given a term of five years; that is also good. My Party is supporting this Bill. We are not bringing forward

[Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev]

any amendment. We will request you that this particular aspect should be looked into. When you reply, we would like to get an assurance from your side that this particular aspect will be looked into, and before you go to the Rajya Sabha, you have to do something. Otherwise, we have to bring an amendment in the Rajya Sabha.

The second thing that we are asking is about rural electrification. We need to lay more stress on rural electrification. Today, electrification in rural areas is not a luxury; it is a necessity. Even an agriculturist uses electric pump. That is a necessity and not a luxury. So, more thrust should be given for electrification in rural areas. I am sure that PMGI has been introduced now and each one is giving money. You should try and make it. I know that this Department cannot do, but the Ministry of Rural Development should be asked to give more money for rural electrification than what they are giving now.

We are also not against subsidy. There is a hue and cry in certain parts of the country about cross-subsidy. Our Committee has seen that subsidy is being misused. Why?

Suppose, you are giving free 'x' quantity of power to an agriculturist. What happens? He utilises more than that as there is no check. Power is given for agricultural purposes but he uses electrification for refrigeration, air-conditioners in fact every other electrical thing is on this subsidy. So, the first thing that we have said is, subsidy should be given but that shall have to be compensated to the Electricity Board. Today, electricity boards are producing power and the Government is giving free subsidy and free power to agriculture and other small-scale industries. There is nothing wrong in it but there must be provision to compensate to the electricity boards.

Secondly, the electricity which is given must be metered. It must be specified that per *bigha* of land will get so much of electricity free and for the balanced consumption one will have to pay to the Electricity Board.

Today, a person takes electricity and misuses it. In India, in a planned economy we are still to see that this does not happen. I am sure the cross-subsidy at this moment will be rationalised and there will be nothing more to that.

Electricity Boards are on debt. They are not able to pay the salaries to their staff. The securitisation of SEBs is a step in the right direction but the Government should ensure that SEBs do not fall into debt trap again. They must give you the plan that this securitisation will help to stabilise I have seen in certain States, no billing is done for one year in rural areas. Some of the areas have gone for collection by the *panchayat*, which they consider is better. One of the persons is empowered to make billing and collection but there are a lot of defaulters. It has to be streamlined.

Last but not least, something has to be done by the Government about the Central Electricity Authority. I need not say, it has improved a lot. A new Chairman has come. He is more pragmatic and reasonable. Unless it is done, it will be very difficult. I have got one instance. One hydel project, namely BANANA Hydel Project was completed in three years' time. Indravati project of Orissa took 23 years to be completed. What will happen if a project takes 23 years to complete? We have seen four ministers and three Secretaries having come and gone. You still have one from the private sector. I do not know what will happen. I hope during my tenure I will get Tipaimukh done. More time should not be wasted now. Manipur has signed an MoU. No objection has been given by the Assam as well as Mizoram Governments. So, it should be done and the cost also should be adjusted.

I could understand from the discussion with the officials that out of 110, 93 recommendations have been accepted by the Government of which 58 amendments are being moved by the Government as official amendments, 31 recommendations are to be incorporated while framing the rules and regulations.

Now the former Ministers from my Party who are very

experienced also, say that these assurances for policy changes should have some legal sanctity. If that is done, then it will be easier for them to get it done through the Ministry of Law, Cabinet Committee, and others. It is not possible for you to accept it now. You would be going to the Rajya Sabha. We have recommended the outer time-limit of one year. But if you want to increase it to one and a half years, you could do it. But later on whosoever would be the Minister or the Secretary, that will be mandatory on them to get it passed. Otherwise, it will lose sight.

With these words, I feel happy to support this Bill and I wish you all the best. Let us hope this will bring light to the country as also to the poorest of the poor in the rural areas. I hope it will solve the problem of electricity during peak periods in the city areas. Let us hope that power will be the main infrastructural commodity for us in future. I hope as we are getting telephones on demand today, we would also get electricity on demand.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara) :

Sir, I stand to support the Electricity Bill, 2001. I was also very happy for the support that we have got from the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Energy. But I am really surprised that he has quoted the Secretary having given assurance that out of 112 recommendations so far any have been accepted, so many are going to be put in the policy, rules, regulations and so on. It is our duty to find out how many are accepted and how many we feel are actually accepted. We do not have to go to the Secretary and ask him what has been done.

At the outset, I heartily compliment our Government and our Minister for finally bringing thing much awaited and much needed Electricity Bill to reform the power sector which has been ailing for a long time. However, any discussion on the Bill without paying tribute to the late and former Minister of Power, Shri Rangarajan Kumarmangalam would be incomplete and I think we would not be doing justice to this Bill. It is because it was his vision and dedication which made it possible. I remember in the Chief Ministers' Conference in 2000, he had put up a paper for

the reforms in this sector and he said that we must have a comprehensive Bill. Till that time, it was only through piecemeal amendments to the three existing Bills of 1910, 1948, and 1998, ERC Act which was also piloted by late Rangarajan Kumarmangalam.

Sir, I would like to give credit to Shri Suresh Prabhu. He was the Minister who really had brought for yard this Bill and the time that he was in the Ministry he had deliberated with us on this. It is because I was also a Member of the Consultative Committee of this Ministry. He had a lot of vision and thinking on this and, therefore, I would like to compliment him for this (bill).

Sir, I would not like to go into the details because power sector is a very complex and complicated one. But our hon. Minister, in a very short time, has been able to grasp the nuances and intricacies of this sector and therefore, I would like to compliment him as well. But an impression seems to have been created that most of the recommendations of the Standing Committee, as was being mentioned by the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Energy, have been accepted. But I would like to differ with him completely on this. I have gone into the details of each one of them. I find that the critical recommendations — if there are 112 recommendations, all of them cannot be critical, the ones that are not critical have been put in the Bill and a few remaining ones would be incorporated as and when the rules and regulations would be framed—have not been accepted it was recommended that if the Government proposes to incorporate the recommendations of the Committee in the rules and regulations to be framed. Then when are those rules and regulations going to be framed? That was one of our first recommendations. It was recommendation no. 1.21. In that the Committee recommended that a time frame must be put for this. But the Ministry has not accepted that.

Sir, let me now come to the specification and critical areas as to where the recommendations have been very specific and I would like to have some good answers from

[Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh Badnore]

the Minister. Otherwise I would feel that he has been misled. There should not be any misunderstanding between us. I have great regard for our hon. Minister. He is also my neighbour. I have a lot of faith in him.

Sir, keeping in view the critical importance of electricity for our people. I would be failing in my duty if I do not point out some serious aberrations in the Bill that may defeat the very purpose of reforms that are sought to be undertaken. A new direction is sought to be provided through this Bill. It was a vision of the late Kumaramanglam and Shri Suresh Prabhu.

Sir, I would like to briefly highlight some of the critical areas. Firstly, the notification of the regulations is one year. That is our recommendation no. 1.22 and 10.38 and I would like to remind the hon. Chairman of our Committee in this regard. In order to bring transparency in predictability in power sector, particularly for private investors, the Committee had suggested that the Bill be amended to require Regulatory Commissions to issue all regulations within one year. This would help avoid case to case discretionary approach. The recommendation of the Committee has been rejected.

Secondly, liberalisation of distribution. This is recommendation no. 6.35. The Committee had recommended that the distribution ought to be opened up subjected to competition. There will be, no reforms in this sector without competition and in the interest of the power sector competition is the main thing. The Committee had stated and I quote, 'It is imperative that transmission and distribution are also unshackled from restrictive use'. The Committee had recommended that distribution be subjected to non-discriminatory open access within a timeframe.

Unfortunately, this recommendation has also been rejected. On the contrary, the provision regarding the issue of a second licence for distribution has been made more restrictive. Even in the Bill of 1910 this was not there. You

are making it more restrictive. They are saying that grant of the second distribution licence in the same area is permitted. Now many new conditions are being suggested through amendment at serial number 22. Now the Central Government will prescribe the requirements to be fulfilled for a second licence in any area; it may be in my area or in your area or even in Mr. Chairman's area. This will only help to continue monopolies and will hurt consumer interests.

The third recommendation of the Committee is with regard to open access for transmission. It is contained in para 7.55 of the Committee's Report. In this report, the Committee had stated that in its opinion non-discriminatory open access to transmission system is a panacea for ushering power sector reforms especially for private sector participation to a large extent. This is what you are talking about. The Government has rejected this recommendation as no amendment has been proposed on this as well.

Our fourth point was about ownership of private transmission companies. On this, the Committee had recommended, that private transmission companies should be prohibited from having ownership interest in generation and distribution as this was necessary to avoid conflict of interest. The Government seems to have rejected this recommendation also. It is a very dangerous situation that we can get into because we were in the SEBs Government monopolies. We may be heading into a private sector monopoly if this is not accepted.

Our fifth point was regarding open access in a definite time frame at para 8.68. The Committee felt that open access, is key to the power sector reforms, particularly on distribution. The Committee, therefore, recommended that open access might be introduced in a phased manner, within a definite time frame. The Government has rejected this critical recommendation and left it entirely to the sweet will of the respective State Commissions who will implement open access as and when they wish. Everybody is talking about open access. If you do not have it and if the State do not have it, how will you be able to really

wheel the electricity from one area to another? Are you going to wait for another ten years for this?

On the contrary, let me say that a new clause has been put forth there. This is clause 42(4) and this will impose a new charge on open access. On top of it, all these provisions will only help monopolies and hurt consumer interests.

Our sixth point was about re-employment of members of the Commission. Whatever Chairman of the Standing Committee has already very rightly pointed out, I am only reiterating it. At para 13.36 the Committee had recommended that the members of the Regulatory Commissions should not be eligible for re-employment in the respective States. This is also a provision in the ERC Act of 1998 and eight States have also got this whose reforms you were talking about. We have got something new. If the Government wishes to permit re-employment in the same State, it will compromise their independence. There will be no autonomy in the SERCs.

Our seventh point was about power of removal at para 13.38. This is very dangerous. The Committee had recommended that the power of removal might continue as per section 7 of the ERC Act. A similar provision exists in eight States. You know the reforms that they have done in eight States where removal is possible by the President or the Governor after a fair inquiry. The new Bill allows removal by the Minister, by the CM, upon inquiry by a retired judge who will head the appellate tribunal. This will make the members vulnerable. When the President or the Governor is doing it, why are you getting in to it? There will be no autonomy then and they will have to be subservient to the Government. But the Government has rejected the Committee's recommendation on this as well.

Our eighth point was about a separate fund for the Commission at para 13.46. We deliberated on this. We really deliberated this with a lot of Members and this was our recommendation no. 13.46. ERC Act, 1998 and eight States reform Acts require the expenses of Commissions to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. This means

approval by the legislature or the Parliament. Several States suggested that creating a separate fund will result in lack of transparency and create doubts of financial probity or conduct of the Commission leading to lack of confidence and inviting public criticism. Even the Supreme Court and High Courts function out of the Consolidated Fund. These people are going to make their own Budget. The Committee felt that the Regulatory Commissions will perform essentially Government functions. It recommended that the provisions of ERC Act should continue with the Consolidated Fund. Despite nine existing laws and the Standing Committee's recommendation, the Government has chosen on the contrary to reject it.

My next point is about legislature's oversight. These are recommendations nos. 13.47 and 13.48. The Committee felt that since the Commissions will perform crucial functions relating to the development and regulation of power sector that affects the common man, they should be made accountable to the Parliament and State Legislatures. We are making this. You do not want us to do that. It had recommended that their annual reports and programme of action should be placed before the respective House. It may be State Legislature or Parliament. Their appearance before Parliamentary Committees was also recommended. This also has been rejected.

Next point is control over Commissions. It is recommendation no. 14.22. The Bill provides that the Chairpersons of the Appellate Tribunal who will be a retired judge, will control and supervise all the Commissions in the States and the Centre. This is a strange provision, the type of which does not exist anywhere in the world or in any federal polity. Why should a retired judge sitting in Delhi control and supervise the SERC in Assam or Bihar or anywhere. Why should he supervise the non-judicial functions of the Chairpersons of State Commissions? He is going to say, do this and that. Why? You want to make them autonomy. The States will not like it. This will make them vulnerable and infringe on their independence. The Committee had recommended the deletion of this provision but the Government very wisely has not accepted it.

[Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh Badnore]

While summing up, I would like to say that the heart of the new structure lies in the introduction of open access and competition it also lies in a fair, independent and transparent regulation. Since all the recommendations of the Committee on these crucial aspects have been rejected, the fate of power reforms to my mind, will stand severely compromised. There is every reason to take a second look at these recommendations and I would urge the Government to do the same. Otherwise, I support the Bill.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it has been said that this is a new Bill, a self-contained one, and that it is a comprehensive Bill.

15.34 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

I have serious reservations about many provisions of this Bill, particularly the rejection of many vital recommendations made by the Standing Committee. I am sorry that I cannot but oppose the Bill. It is because the Bill has failed to address the real problems ailing the power sector in the country. Even at the outset I would like to make an observation. There is a wrong conception being propagated by the media and advanced by the interested parties that there are some people who are against the reforms and there are those who are pro-reforms.

The Left is identified as anti-reforms. It is a wrong notion. Reforms means advancement of technology. It means progress and the civilisation could advance only through reforms. Reforms means rejection of whatever is outdated and what does not work, be it technology, be it the mindset, be it the attitude, whatever it may be. But our question is: reforms in whose interests? We would like to know whether the sort of reforms being proposed are going to serve the national interests, the interests of millions of common people of the country, the peasantry, the rural folk, the workers in the small and cottage industries. This is the

issue. While we have been saying that reforms should be country-specific, we are ridiculed. Now, when the Nobel Laureate, the former Chairman of the World Bank and the present Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council of the American Government Mr. Joseph Stiglitz writes the same thing in his book *Globalisation and its Discontents*, you are also considering it.

Sir, in a country with uneven development like ours, you cannot compare the development in the power sector in the Northeast with the development made in Maharashtra and you cannot compare Orissa with some of the advanced States. We are in different stages of development. In the power sector, more than 60 per cent of the responsibility in respect of generation and 100 per cent of the responsibility in respect of transmission and distribution loss lie with the States only and power is in the Concurrent List. As a result of the Electricity Act, 1910 and the Act of 1948, we have been able to produce power in this country. Of course, it is not true that out of six lakh villages in the country only 80,000 villages are yet to be covered with the supply of electricity. There is tokenism at many places. In certain villages, there is only one post and one light and the Government takes those villages as electrified. It is not correct. In the per capita consumption of electricity, we are one of the lowest, lower than many of the developing countries.

So, we need reforms. But the problem is, wherever the question of reforms comes, it is equated with privatisation, as if privatisation is the panacea. It is not so. The world over, if you look at the experience, electricity is not just like any other commodity. It has become an input to improve the quality of life, industry and advancement of agriculture. In such a situation, we have to find a way out to properly address the difficulties being faced by the State Electricity Boards in respect of generation and loss. But here, we find that it is being proposed to encourage private sector participation in generation, transmission and distribution. Will they come? Why should they come? If at all they come, they will come only to earn profit. If electricity

is left to those people and organisations whose sole aim is only profit, our industry, agriculture, small scale and cottage industries will never develop and particularly those areas which are already backward will suffer the most. Is the power divide existing in the country today going to improve in any way?

Is the situation, with regard to urban-rural divide that exist today, going to improve? No. Rather, the rural sector is left to take care of itself. It is a standby. There will be two sorts of consumers. One is the richer section in the urban areas and the other is the poor section, those staying in the remote villages. Who will take care of them?

There have been some issues relating to subsidy. I do not say that the State Governments will continue their subsidy and that the SEBs will have to bear the burden. Ultimately, at some point of time we will have to address the issue. If the State Governments have the social responsibility to cater to the needs of the farmers, to look after agriculture, to encourage them, I do not say that it should not be targeted. I fully endorse the view that there is some misuse of subsidy. But this does not mean that there is no need of subsidy. Even in advanced countries like America and European Union, this way or that way, they provide the subsidy. They encourage the agricultural production. They have the industries, small, medium and large industries. In our country also, the issue of subsidy will have to be looked into not merely as a technical formula but in the larger interest of the country. The IMF and World Bank have said that let us remove it. Why then the other developed countries are not removing subsidy? But it should be rationalised. It should be better targeted. The merits and demerits should be taken as a whole and it may vary from State to State, from region to region.

There lies the importance of the role of the States. If you remove the role of the States, if you remove the role of the Legislatures, if the withdrawal of the Government as panacea in the name of reforms is there, power sector

is one area we should be very careful. We have the experience of Enron. We have been saying certain things that even after 16 per cent of counter guarantee nothing is going to happen because of profit motives. If the purchasing power contract is done in such a manner that consumers will be at the receiving end, then they will never be able to have the off take.

What is the experience of Orissa? In our country, you are taking the US model. What is the Californian experience? In the UK, Ms. Margaret Thatcher was reckless in her reforms process. Today, they are having a re-look at their energy policy, at their gas policy because of the reforms. There is a thinking of rationalisation in certain areas. We should not be reckless. That does not mean that we do not need reforms. That does not mean that the SEBs will go on incurring losses, it should not be like that. But it would have been done, even within the parameters of the 1948 Act. The fault lies elsewhere. The powers that be, they did not implement several provisions of the 1948 Act. They have been liberal for political advantages and certain things have been given away. They did not take into consideration that this may lead to a situation where the SEBs themselves will be in doldrums.

Reforms also means restructuring. Reforms also means strengthening the existing system and getting out of the ills in the system. Strengthening and restructuring is also one of the major aspects of reforms process. We have built up the institutions brick by brick with the sweat, blood and labour of the countrymen. We have built up the assets worth Rs. 15,00,000 crore. Will those assets be handed over to the private sector?

Can they give us a guarantee that they will ensure our electricity supply? No. Here lies my objection. We are not against the private participation. It needs to be done. It needs to be done judiciously without taking away the rights of the States. CEA had been there. For all these years, they were performing their role. Why should it be made Juggernaut without any authority? They have a role to play in respect of planning and co-ordination.

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

It has been rightly mentioned by my esteemed colleague just now that it is Parliament and the State Legislatures which are accountable to the people. Whenever there is a problem in the power sector, we have to answer the people. The Committee is of the view that powers granted to the Union and State Governments to issue policy directives under clauses 107 and 108 are sacrosanct and should be sparingly used. The Committee desired that such policy directives should be laid on the Table of the State Legislature as the case may be for such action deemed to be fit. Has it been accepted? If not, why?

Out of 83 recommendations, they have accepted 60 recommendations. There are certain vital recommendations which strengthen the power sector and made the reform process more meaningful and participatory. I would like to know whether the Government has accepted those vital recommendations of the Standing Committee. No. One IAS officer, one bureaucrat will decide everything.

The Committee observed that under clause 121, the Chairperson of the Appellate Tribunal has been given the general power of superintendence and control over the appropriate Commission and may, from time to time, constitute benches by notification and distribute business among the benches. Why? I do not think that one individual or retired officer or bureaucrat should determine the fate of the power sector. In the 21st Century, we badly need reforms in the power sector. Of course, it is true that certain stringent measures are necessary. We have done it in West Bengal. We have not hesitated to do so when in one major area, there had been 34 or 35 per cent loss. It should be made stringent. We already enacted a law and the people of West Bengal have been readily responding to such a stringent measure. If necessary, we must adopt such stringent measures but without taking away the rights of the States.

Actually, in 1998, when the new legislative measures were proposed in the matter of fixation of tariffs, the rights

of the States had been taken away. It should not have been done. The States should have a participatory role and even in the reform process of the power sector, the States should have its say in the matter, they should be allowed to propose an alternative. I am saying that reforms should not be equated with privatisation; reform should not be equated with catering to the needs of the vested interests, the multinational corporations, according to the dictates of IMF and the World Bank. India should have its own reform agenda according to the needs of the situation, according to the level of development, according to the psyche of the people, and according to the availability of technology. We have developed a lot. It had been admitted by the Planning Commission that over the years, these SEBs had functioned well.

But had we intervened at the right time in restructuring the process, the situation we have arrived at now would not have come. So, I oppose the Bill because it is miserably failing to address the current realities in the power sector.

Regarding consumers, I think, the consumer is the last one to be taken care of. He is not being taken care of. What is the definition of 'consumer' in the power sector? Is it the same as it is being done in the Consumer Protection Act? Who is a consumer? The definition should be clearly stipulated.

Suppose a private sector is giving power at an affordable price, but at the peak time you do not have power and only the rich people, who can afford to pay the different rates of tariff being charged, get it according to the needs of different sections of the society, it will create another division in the already divided Indian society. The division will be created not only between the rich and the poor, not only between the urban and the rural, but also within the same family. If there are two brothers and one is unemployed because he has been driven away by the public sector which has been closed and one is just amassing black-money, then how should we do it? Do you

have the technology? These are real issues. How do we then address the different levels of development in the Indian society?

How to address the problems being faced by the agriculturists? They are not getting adequate and timely credit and they are committing suicides. We have been discussing the problem of the farmers every alternate day. There is the problem of drought and natural calamity. In such a situation, how best can you cater to the urgent needs of the farming community? Exemptions given to the small and cottage sector are being withdrawn now by the Budgetary proposals. Now you say that whatever little subsidies, which are there in the cottage sector, should be withdrawn. What should they do? This small industry is being asked to compete. Firstly according to the WTO, the foreign goods are coming and they are flooding the market. They will have to compete with them. The large-scale sector is coming to compete with them. You are saying now that no subsidy would be given to them. If any State Government is providing that, they should have to put that in advance.

What was the recommendation of the Committee? The Committee recommended that the Union Government should provide substantial support to the State Governments' power sector in the matter of providing urgently needed subsidy. Have you accepted that? It is said that the Standing Committee is a mini Parliament. Its reports are adopted on the basis of consensus. You are saying that out of 83 recommendations, you have accepted 60 plus recommendations. Have you accepted this one? The Committee says, "The State Governments cannot bear the burden of the rural sector electrification." What does the recommendation No. 4.25 say? "The Committee feels that a sufficient provision should be made in the Bill to ensure that the entire funding for the rural electrification programme is met by the Central Government." It is the recommendation of the Committee. You clearly spell out whether you accept it or not. It is no use just creating some confusion by saying, yes, we are looking into it. Have you

addressed the vital recommendation in relation to the States' demand, availability of fund, financial support, subsidy issue, the farmers' interest and the interest of the cottage and small industries? It relates to the overall economic situation.

This is an important infrastructure. You are speaking about infrastructure fund and concessions to be given for infrastructure development but in respect of power, nothing is said in this year's Budget. There is not a word about it. Does it mean that another Enron, under a new name, would come and take care of it?

We should have our own model of reforms for the power sector as for other sectors. There is no dearth of professionals. We have hundreds and thousands of engineers who are on a par with the best in the world. We have our professionals in the power sector, who are also the best in the world. The private sector is waiting to have their services and offering them, 'You leave the public sector and join me; I shall give you double the salary you are getting now.' They are waiting in the wings. Can we not mobilise their intelligence and know-how to restructure the existing SEBs with the exiting provisions of the 1948 Act and thus strengthen the hands of the public sector and autonomous bodies instead of creating new bodies and strengthening the hands of the bureaucrats and a few retired individuals who have no relation whatsoever with the interests of the common people of this country? The Legislature, the Parliament and the State Governments must be involved in the whole process.

I would have been happy to support this Bill but it is too inadequate. It has miserably failed to address the real issues afflicting the power sector in the country. So, I oppose it.

There are two more hon. Members from my party who would speak on this Bill. So, with these words I conclude. I hope that they would think about the suggestions and points I have made and after a rethinking, if necessary, they would come up with a fresh Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE (Ramtek) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I heartily welcome this bill. I am not welcoming it because Hon'ble Minister belongs to my party. I would like to tell you with an open mind that the bill framed by the Hon'ble Minister, has been framed with an open mind. I have gone through each word of the whole Bill. The theme of this Bill is a common consumer. The consumer has been given priority thoroughly. I welcome this Bill also because the Hon'ble Minister has accepted this Bill as a challenge. In whatever discussions of the bills I have participated so far in the tenure of Lok Sabha as yet, no Minister ever said that he had accepted the bill as a challenge. The Hon'ble Minister stated clearly in his speech yesterday that the supply of electricity is a challenge for him and he has openly accepted it. I have not seen a Minister accepting the challenge openly. Hence, I welcome the Hon'ble Minister at this point. He did not hide anything. I can cite the example of every bill. A bill regarding Mines had been brought in the House. I had also participated in the discussion on the bill. I would not like to name the bill or the Hon'ble Minister. The Hon'ble Minister had stated that the public sector was running in profit and had gained a profit of Rs. 600 crores that year and that we were making progress. I had brought the Annual Report of the Ministry with me. I am one of the partners of the N.D.A. Therefore, I have some restrictions also. I saw that an Hon'ble Minister was stating about a profit of Rs. 600 crores but when I noticed the data for the last three years, It showed that earlier the profit was in thousand crores and prior to that the profit was Rs. 1500 crores and this year it recorded a profit of Rs. 600 crores.

16.00 hrs.

It means that we have earned profit but the trend of profit is going downwards. I appreciate the open introduction put up by the Hon'ble Minister. He has said that we have not been able to provide connection to 50 percent houses in entire country so far. This is a fact which he has brought out. He has also stated that we have not

been able to provide electricity supply to approximately 80,000 villages of entire country. One thing is repeated here. I have listened to the speeches of the two Members who have spoken ahead of me. One thing is being criticised. I request you and I tell you with my experience that the Bills that have been introduced and the recommendations in respect of which have been made by the Joint Committees, do not contain such Bills in respect of which more than 50 percent recommendations have been accepted. This is the first Bill in respect of which most of the recommendations have been accepted. There was one point raised that the important recommendations were not accepted and less important recommendations were accepted.

[English]

Standing Committee is the highest body.

[Translation]

I cannot agree with the point that out of ten recommendations five are useless and only five are important, I consider all the ten as equally important. It may be a criticism for the sake of criticism but it cannot be a criticism on the merit. I have marked one more thing from the views of both the Members. They said that it would give way to monopoly, it may result into this or that and so on. This is the policy of the Government.

[English]

The Government has to compete with the private players.

[Translation]

When our national agenda has been worked out, the question of monopoly does not arise at all.

[English]

The theme of the Bill is policy making and decentralization of the power. This is the theme of the Bill.

[*Translation*]

So far as the power policy formulated by the minister is concerned, I appreciate that on the basis of issues and not grammatically. All factors, areas have been touched therein. Issues such as private participation, openness and power trading have also been covered in it. A new concept of rural and remote device has also been given there.

[*English*]

Decentralization of management at the level of Panchayats.

[*Translation*]

This has also been mentioned, that no Bill has been brought forward concerning electricity to the panchayat level.

[*English*]

There is an important concept of direct relationship between the consumer and the power generating companies.

[*Translation*]

Here, the issue of employment protection has been discussed. Contradiction on subsidy has come up, the states intending to provide it have been given an opportunity for it. The issue of National Tariff has also been covered. With the touching of all the areas in the Bill I consider it as a progressive one. I have seen three major points in it.

[*English*]

Electricity is the prime sector.

[*Translation*]

Captive generation is encouraged. State Electricity Boards and CRC's have been provided autonomy. The concept of Electricity trading has been promoted. Yesterday

the Minister quoted in his speech that the Prime Minister has talked about eight percent GDP growth. Everybody knows about increasing the growth but after analysing every thing I felt that unless there is a direct relationship between electricity and economy, we cannot practically translate the theory of eight percent GDP growth. When we say

[*English*]

Electricity and economy is directly related with each other

[*Translation*]

In other words the engine of economy is energy and its main source is electricity. For example, I would like to say the trains running in the olden days were coal based. Thereafter they were replaced by diesel engines and now they are running through electricity. Let it be any concept, area or sector may it be transport or irrigations, machine or industry electricity is the engine for all.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.) :
After hearing your challenge, electricity has started playing hide and seek game in the House.

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE : It means

[*English*]

progress and Development is directly related with electricity.

[*Translation*]

Light is also supporting us, nobody can hide the truth. It is becoming more brighter. When I say that the economy is liberalised then I directly mean that the profile of the economy is decided by the market and it is directly related with the economy and electricity, then the economy should also be matched with the electricity and only then, we can bear the fruits of development. The economy has been liberalised but the electricity is not matching to it, I have found out two reasons for it. Hon'ble Minister had open

[Shri Subodh Mohite]

heartedly mentioned in his speech the other day that the first point is of cross subsidy. About State electricity he has quoted in the Bill that all the State Electricity boards have come up under all sustainable condition. And then what about our mismatch in the area of agriculture, Defence, Domestic and Industry. Secondly, it is the deficiency in the system. The biggest lacunae which we are witnessing is the deficiency in the power generation. The efficiency of generation, which should have been 35 percent, is only 28 percent. Second deficiency is related to T and D losses. T and D losses, which should be 7 to 8 percent, have raised to the level of 50 percent. Due to this deficiency our economy is not matching the expectations. Therefore, we should have electricity at the real price. I am not saying that it is required for irrigation, domestic, industry but we would have to remove the deficiency of the real price means system, we should increase the efficiency, pay attention towards the T and D losses and towards our fields.

Hon'ble Minister has said in his speech that he accepts it as a challenge. Sir, he has accepted the challenge because I think the passing of the Bill doesn't mean providing electricity to all. Mere passing of the Bill cannot be called progress, Passing of a Bill and its implementations are two different things. When Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had made the first Five Year Plan then he talked a lot about the economy and efficiency and also electricity issue was referred but that plan was not implemented and we were unable to fulfil the accountability but this is a different issue. Therefore, I would like to give a new concept to the Hon'ble Minister. As our chairman had also mentioned that our power sector is quite a complex sector. Therefore, it is not possible for a single person to do renovation, revolution or enhancement of the system in a limited time frame. So, there is no justification to criticise any person. Five years time is a very limited period. I want to give a concept, "modest Target Concept". What we would in five years or in ten years. What would

be our short term and long term projects? This is a matter of discussion, but I would like to give a suggestion that the Hon'ble Minister should fix a target that the efficiency of the power generation would be increased by one percent in a year. The T and D losses would be reduced by one percent and the efficiency of the generation would be increased by one percent in a year. So far we'll not introduce this concept, we will not be able to achieve the effective results in such a short duration. We have to fix the responsibility of concerned officer. After preparing a follow up document, we have to prepare a target action plan. Accountability have to be fixed, only then we will be able to take a concrete step in the matter of electricity.

Mr. Geete, I am not praising you just for the sake of thanking you, but I am very well aware of all the steps related to the electricity. There were three or four times grid failures before you had taken charge of this Ministry, but since then you have taken the charge of this Ministry even a single major grid failure has not occurred and the implementation of the projects have been accelerated. For instance, I can quote you the example of Delhi. The procedure of Delhi have become very smooth.

Last thing, I would like to say about the area of my constituency. You are Minister of Power from my party. I have some expectations from you and I have got elected from the Ramtek constituency from Vidarbha, therefore the people of that area have some expectation from me. You are the first Minister of the NDA Government, who has announced a project of one thousand megawatt for my constituency. People have seen the tenure of 13 congress Ministers, they have seen many power Ministers, but till date they have seen a dream of power only. Our position is also same as prevailing in Bihar. I am a Member of Parliament from that area, therefore people of that area have some expectations from me also. I would like to humbly say that our dream should come true. Once again I would like to say that despite the criticism, this is a very good bill.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for providing me an opportunity to participate in the discussion being held in the House on Electricity Bill, 2001.

Even after 55 years of independence of the country more than 50 percent rural population of the bigger states of the country i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh are still deprived of the electric facility. Certainly this is a matter of shame for all of us. Today all the Electricity Boards are suffering losses worth crores of rupees. Till date as per the information available the state Electricity Boards have suffered a loss of about rupees 20 thousand crores. The common men of the country have been bearing this loss. The theft of the electricity has become a major problem now a days. Our own experience is that the supply of electricity to the factories is made certainly with the connivance of the officials of the State Electricity Boards. The common men have been paying for it. The theft of electricity amounting to thousands of crores of rupees is going on in the name of loss of power. It should be considered as no how the power losses should be checked. We are unable to find out any way in this regard even after 55 years of our independence. Whenever we discuss on this issue it appears that the state Electricity Boards do the patch up work in the name of power losses. If you physically verify, the power loss then you will find that the percentage of theft of power by the various industries is exorbitant in comparison to theft of power in the rural areas. If the theft of power by those industries is stopped then most of these industries will be closed. Being a MLA of Uttar Pradesh I have been a member of Uttar Pradesh power Consultative Committee, during 1993 to 1995. Therefore, I can say that we have pointed out towards the power theft but Uttar Pradesh state Electricity Board is not at all capable to handle that problem. Today, the major problem is of co-ordination between the demand and the supply. We are not in a position to supply power to more than 50 percent villages. When we solve this problem, the demand for the power will automatically be doubled. Today, on an average we are not supplying

electricity to the villages of the country for 12 hours. If we ensure 24 hours supply of electricity, then the demand of electricity will be increased by four times. Keeping in view the rate at which the power is being generated and the pace at which the population is increasing and the demand of electricity is increasing, certainly we have to find out any way by making changes in the present situations for better coordination. Today, there is totally a lack of work culture in the State Electricity Boards. When the transformers located in the villages are burnt then it are not replaced by the officials of the Electricity Board for months together. In those villages where influential and powerful people live, they collect the bribe money which is in turn paid to the concerned engineers and then only transformers are supplied to them. The other aspect is this that there is no power supply but even then electricity bills are sent to the customers and they are being compelled to ensure that payment against those bills is made. You will not supply electricity and even then send electricity Bill, how this new practice came in to being. When we visit our constituencies people come to us with the receipt of long pending exaggerated electricity bills. We find ourselves constrained and helpless to get those bills rectified. I myself have seen that the people working as middlemen have an access in these electricity offices and they can get easily the bill amounting to Rs. 5 thousand converted into Rs. 1 thousand only just in one hour period. This is a common practice. If a vigilance committee is constituted in this regard, then certainly we can very well notice this practice on regular basis in the sub-divisional electricity offices in Uttar Pradesh.

Today, the farmers are worst affected due to non-supply of electricity. To face the worldwide challenges electricity will have to be made our life line. When Electricity will become necessary component of our life, then only we can take our country to the path of progress. I have recently visited Himachal Pradesh and other States as a member of the Committee on Science and Technology and Environment and Forest. When some power generating units came forward to generate power there, the States

[Kunwar Akhilesh Singh]

started talking about imposing cess on water whereas what we have noticed is that they are supplying some electricity to them free of cost and some at the cost price under the contracts signed with States. They are also fulfilling their responsibility by taking initiative in regard to balance the environmental disturbances. I have noticed that a number of practical problems are cropping up regarding supply and production of electricity. If you will bring bill with this intention, make electricity available to the rural areas on cheaper rates and cover those rural areas where there is no power supply, then certainly we will welcome this Bill. If you are extending the electricity supply to the rural people on cheaper rates then we will welcome it. There should be a healthy competition for this. We are not at all agree on the point that it should not be privatised. If we need competition then private sector should definitely be invited for the same. Telephone sector is one of the examples in this regard. When the private sector was brought in, the consumers got the maximum benefit. Thus, consumers are getting better facilities as a result thereof. Today, the way frequent environmental imbalances and changes are being observed the electricity has certainly become necessary component of our life. Today villages and cities can be seen without power supply, even for 3-4 hours everyday. Every public representative from Prime Minister to Gram Pradhan level has to face public anger specially in villages. Ofcourse, there is a need to develop a mechanism which could come up to the expectations of the people and ensure smooth power supply to them. If you have brought the Bill with this intention, then this is a welcome step.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi) : Sir, I congratulate the hon. Minister for piloting the Electricity Bill, 2001 and I support it wholeheartedly. This Government, the Government led by hon. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, has got a vision to develop India and take it on the path of rapid development. The hon. Prime Minister

has emphasised the importance of infrastructure in the country like roads, inter-linking of rivers, and electricity which plays a very vital role in engineering the growth. For the engine of growth to move, you require electricity. So, a comprehensive Bill has been brought by the hon. Minister and I congratulate him for that.

Since the Electricity Act of 1948, we might have taken electricity to about five hundred thousand villages, increased the generation of power from 1300 megawatt to, say, a lakh of megawatt. We plan to achieve another lakh of megawatt by 2012 so that our economy will come on par with that of the developed countries of the world and our industrial climate will improve. This Bill was necessary. As the subject of electricity is in the Concurrent List of the Constitution, part of it is managed by State Electricity Boards and part of it is managed by the Central Electricity Authority. It has been seen that the State Electricity Boards are incurring losses to the tune of Rs. 30,000 crore a year. I was reading the Minister's recent statement in the papers which says that the loss might reach a staggering Rs. 1 lakh crore a year. With this condition approaching, how can we think of achieving the target of providing electricity to the 31 per cent villages and to the 41 per cent urban centres in the country, which have not been electrified? How can we achieve this? How can we think of electrifying the 80,000 villages which are yet to see the light of the day? Without electricity there cannot be improvement in agriculture, there cannot be improvement in rural industries and there cannot be improvement in industrialization to develop the natural resources of the country.

Sir, I come from the State of Orissa. When the reform process was going on in Orissa—Orissa was one of the first States in the country to get a Regulatory Council—we opposed it tooth and nail. I was BJP MLA then and I was leading the BJP legislators party in Orissa. We opposed it tooth and nail. Today when I was going through the blueprint of the power sector, I was shocked to see that transmission and distribution losses—which were 23 per cent before reforms—have reached 51 per cent today,

I think that the same thing does not apply uniformly for the whole country. This is the blueprint of the power sector. I thank Shri Suresh Prabhu for this. When he was the Power Minister, he called a meeting of all the Eastern and North-Eastern Members of Parliament to discuss the problems of the power sector. Citing that, I urge that it has to be carefully dealt with. We are walking on a sword's edge because we have signed the WTO agreement. When we think of the WTO, the developed countries are refusing to sign the Kyoto proposal. They are refusing to come to an agreement on agriculture. With this new challenge which is there ahead of us, how do we meet the requirement? So, we have made an earnest beginning by this Electricity Bill to improve the electricity sector by amalgamating the 1910 Act, which has been in existence since before Independence, and the 1940 Electricity Supply Act. I thank the late Kumaramangalam for introducing the legislation for setting up of a Regulatory Commission in 1998. He is no more with us. He was the first person who came up with the idea of piloting this type of a legislation for meeting the requirements of electricity in the country.

I would like to cite some figures in this connection. Today, the total energy shortage during 2000-01 is 39.816 million units amounting to 7.8 per cent; and the peak shortage is 10,157 Megawatts translating to about 13 per cent of peak demand.

So, we are always below the peak demand. Today, we are about 10,000 megawatt below in providing electricity to the people. Therefore, the 16th Electric Power Survey has recommended for creation of another one lakh megawatt of additional capacity to be added by 2012, which I mentioned earlier.

Sir, during the 10th and 11th Plan, a capacity addition of 46,500 megawatt has been tentatively fixed for the Central public undertakings. Besides, the State level SEBs and the private sector will add another 41,800 megawatt. About the capacity addition, targets of 66,400 megawatt through power and 10,700 megawatt through non-conventional resources have been fixed for 2012. But to

achieve this goal, do we have that kind of money? We have to get that kind of money and we have to make all kinds of investments to make India a developed country by 2020, as the hon. Prime Minister has projected in so many fora.

Then, about the thermal power, as I mentioned earlier, it is a based loop generation power. It is not to meet peak hour consumption. But because of the flaws in the 1948 Act, we are meeting the peak hour demand through our thermal power plants. Similarly, in the hydel power sector also, we have been able to achieve only 17 per cent of our total potential.

Sir, we have got a lot of potential of the hydel power. Take, for example, Arunachal Pradesh. The assessed potential is 50,328 megawatt, but we have only been able to achieve 10 megawatt. In these 52 years, we have only been able to achieve 10 megawatt in Arunachal Pradesh! If such is the situation, why would there not be insurgency; why would there not be social unrest; why would there not be terrorism; and why would there not be ethnic problems? Sir, the people are not getting the fruits of development. They are being denied the fruits of development.

In Uttar Pradesh and in Uttaranchal, the potential is 18,000 megawatt, but they have been able to achieve only 1,600 megawatt. But my State of Orissa has done well. Our potential is 2,999 megawatt and we have achieved 50 per cent.

Sir, though the Eastern sector is the power surplus zone, we do not have the proper evacuation facilities. As a result of it, a lot of power is lying idle. The *per capita* investment and consumption of electricity of India is the lowest in the whole world. It is only about 350 kilowatt. If proper evacuation facilities are created in the State of Orissa, which is supposed to be one of the poorest States in the country, it would be of great help and to the country as a whole.

Sir, the latest Economic Survey has already pointed out that 47.7 per cent people live below poverty line.

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

Considering these factors, I stress that this Bill was the need of the hour. The 1948 Act completely failed to achieve the objective of providing electricity to the country. Most of the Electricity Boards, on whom we believed that they could meet the demand of the States, have gone sick.

But at the same time, I would like to make some suggestions here. When these thermal power plants are coming up, the rehabilitation packages have also to be there. Take, for example, Brijraj Nagar. I had a communist colleague in the Assembly, Shri M. Prasanna Panda. He used to always sit on *dhama* for rehabilitation packages. That time also, I was in the BJP. The rehabilitation packages of the thermal plants are never proper. Till today, a lot of evacuees have not been settled. Same is the case with the hydro electric projects.

Therefore, the Prime Minister has rightly announced that before any mega project is taken up, the rehabilitation package will be implemented first. With this, I would like to say that the spirit of the Prime Minister in announcing the rehabilitation package first should be appreciated, and then we should think of development. It is because human development or common man's development is the primary objective of any Government.

But before I end, I want to say that the amount of money which we require to achieve this additional 1,00,000 mw development by 2012, is Rs. 8,00,000 crore. So, I am sure the Government in future will keep enough money for the development of this. Sir, the point regarding hydro power projects should be emphasised. It is because I come from a hydro power area where a project like Upper Indravati as Shri Santosh Mohan Dev has initially mentioned, took 23 years to complete. It is because the time factor is very important for any project. That project was to be completed in 5 years with an investment of Rs. 200 crore. By the time, it was completed, it became Rs. 2,300 crore. Today, it is generating some power. But do you

know that the hydro power completely depends upon the monsoons and the flow of water? This year we have a very bad drought. So, proper planning should be made. Projects like Narmada should be further come up. But the evacuees' position must be honoured. The interest of the people who are leaving their land, hearth, and home for the development of the country, should be safeguarded.

Sir, with these few words. I thank you for giving me time, and I support this Bill with the right earnest.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur) : Sir, support this Bill. Having said this, I would like to underline some points which should be considered by the Government and on which the assurance should be given by the Government to the Members of the Parliament, and the people at large.

This Bill tries to consolidate three Bills, and creates conditions in the country in which it would be possible to generate more electricity, to transmit electricity from the generating stations to the consumers and to have a machinery which can distribute electricity to the consumers in a proper manner.

Sir, my apprehension is that in the Ninth Five Year Plan, initially, the Government, I think, had decided to generate 48,000 mw of electricity. But this target was reduced to 28,000 mw of electricity. Again this target was reduced to 20,000 mw of electricity. So, it indicates that it was not possible for the Government to meet the targets which were fixed by the Government itself.

Now, here the Government is trying to say that by privatising, it would be possible to meet this target. It has to be considered by us—who are sitting in this Parliament—whether this can be done.

On behalf of the Congress Party, I would like to say that if the private sector is willing to enter this area, is willing to generate electricity, and is willing to transmit and distribute this electricity, we shall have no objection. It is

because electricity is required for development of industry, development of agriculture, development of so many other productive activities and for domestic and household purposes.

It has not been possible to attract enough in this area from the private sector also. One of the instances which can be quoted on the floor of the House is that of the power generation in Rajasthan. In Rajasthan, the Government had decided that the power generation will be done by the private sector; and for 15 years, they waited and waited for the private investment to come and to generate power. Since a decision was taken by the Government of Rajasthan that with the help of private investment electricity will be generated, the Government was also not investing to produce electricity and the result was that not even one MW of electricity was added.

If this situation develops nation-wide, will it help us? This is the issue which has to be taken into account. In Maharashtra also, a decision was taken that we will allow not only the private sector to enter this area, but also the foreign sector. We went to the extent of guaranteeing returns on the power generated by the private sector in Maharashtra. The result is that today the foreign company is not generating power and the Government of Maharashtra also did not invest in that; and, in a State like Maharashtra where industrial development is taking place by leaps and bounds, there is a mismatch between demand for electricity and generation of electricity.

Supposing this happens in the country, what will the Government of India do? If the private sector is willing to come into this area and invest, we should welcome them with open arms and give them encouragement. But if they think that they do not have enough funds or the gestation period is too long or they do not have the guarantee that there would be returns and unless the Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra gives a guarantee, they will not invest, what will happen? This is a real apprehension in my mind. I think that if this situation develops in the country, there will be a big gap between

demand and supply of electricity. Industrial development is taking place, agriculture is asking for more electricity and people in their houses also are asking for more electricity. Where will the electricity-required come from, if it is not generated either with the help of private sector or with the help of the Government or with the help of any other source? That is the real apprehension in my mind. We would like the Government to assuage our feelings, to dispel our apprehensions and tell us in the House and outside also that they would take precautions to see that this kind of a condition will not be allowed to develop in the country.

We have a new Minister, young Minister; we wish him all the best. We will cooperate with him in any way he requires the cooperation for generating, transmitting and distributing electricity. His predecessors also have done well, like Shri Kumaramangalam. We expressed our feelings towards Shri Kumaramangalam the previous Minister and we do have the same feeling for this Minister also. The present Minister has to apply his mind to this real problem. They shall have to have a policy or a plan to do that. Fortunately for us, they have said that there will be a national electricity policy. We would like to have a national electricity policy. But will that policy be a policy made by some officers and considered by one or two Ministers and not considered by the Members in the House and people outside? Even Five Year Plans are not being discussed on the floor of the House.

Long-term policies are also not being discussed. If you make the National Electricity Policy, will you present that policy to the House for the consideration of the Members before you take a final decision on that policy? The experts and the officers have to help us. Without their help we cannot really prepare a policy but at the same time, the input from the people's representatives, who are working at village, taluka, district, State or at national levels, should also come before that policy becomes a really implementable policy, a policy which can produce the results. I am asking whether the Government will present this National Electricity Policy to the Parliament for the

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consideration of the people before a final decision is taken. This is a just demand by the Members of the Parliament. If the Government does it, we will welcome it. If it does not do it, we will demand it. If the Government finds it difficult to present it, then there will be agitation both inside and outside the House. Ultimately they will keep quiet and everybody will suffer. That kind of a condition should not develop in the country.

The Government wants to prepare a National Electricity Plan. I hope, that Plan will also be presented to the House. At least let it be presented to the House so that those who want to consider that plan can consider it and if anybody wants to contribute anything towards this, he can contribute.

I think Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev has also rightly pointed out that our emphasis is on thermal power generation and not on hydel power generation. Fortunately for us, in Himalayas, North-Eastern States, and Western and Eastern Ghats, we have sites where water can be used for generating power. Why should we not use those sites? It is true that the gestation period for the hydel power station is longer than the thermal power station. Probably the money required for it is also more. But the power generated with water is cheaper than the thermal power. Why should we not adopt this route? If we adopt this route, not only we will be generating electricity required for industrial development but we could also make available water required for irrigation and drinking purposes. That is why a comprehensive look at the plan and the policy of generating power by using water should be taken.

Why are we depending on the conventional methods of generating power? Sometimes people have been discussing as to what is happening in Iraq. Theories have been propounded by one persons that the sources of generating energy are limited in the world which means coal, oil and gas are limited and after 100 or 200 years, the sources will not be enough for meeting the demands of the people. In my opinion, this is a wrong theory. They

have said that the industrial development will be commensurate with the sources of energy available on the globe. In my opinion, this theory is wrong. Matter is energy and energy can be changed into matter. The only thing we have to do with respect to this is to develop the technology for doing it. Hydrogen can be used. Nuclear energy, solar energy or wind energy can be used. Let this not be done just to show that we are also capable of using this source of energy. Let there be sufficient contribution made for using the solar energy in the country. The Sun is the perpetual source of energy. It is going to be unending. It could be used far trillions of years. If we do not start today, we would be starting after 15 years or 20 years but we will be late by that time. If India can take a lead in any area in which technology can be developed and can be given to our people as well as to the people outside the country, that is the solar energy area.

The war is going on in Iraq. I heard the speech given by the President of America. The first paragraph of his speech related to the amount of money that would be given for developing the technology to use hydrogen for generating energy. He said that so many trillions of rupees would be given to the research stations to develop the technology to use hydrogen. Probably, he wanted to say that they are not fighting the war for oil and that they have other things to develop and that they are doing that. That apart, the question is that it has become necessary for us to use the non-conventional sources of energy. I do not think that the Government of India or the State Governments are paying much attention. The Government of India is paying some attention to the development of non-conventional energy. At least, there is a Department for non-conventional sources of energy, There is also a Department which looks after nuclear energy. But the State Governments are not paying attention to the development of non-conventional energy. The Union Government is not paying sufficient attention to this area. We have the sources of generating energy and yet we are not tapping them. We are accepting the theory that the sources of energy are limited so the industrial development is going to be limited

and we cannot do anything. We are helpless. This kind of situation should not be allowed.

With respect to generation, transmission, and distribution, I think Shri Dev could enlighten me, because he was the Minister and he knows better than I do. I do not think that the Department of Energy is spending enough amount of money on research and development. If the Department is not doing it and if the Government is not doing it, who will do it? Now, in the present circumstances, you are allowing the private sector to enter into this area. In foreign countries, it is the private companies which are spending the money on development of technology for developing energy. But in our country, we are not spending sufficient money in this area as well as in other areas also. Now, is it not necessary for you to say that you will be spending money on development of technology.

In my opinion, this is going to be the most important Bill of this Session at least. This is going to be the most important Bill for generating electricity and for giving impetus to development of industry, agriculture, and many other areas. But on an occasion like this when you have moved a very important Bill, we would, at least, like to have an assurance from the Government of India that is is not the privatisation—as it is said by my friend—which is the panacea to deal with this problem. The panacea to deal with this problem is new technology and new methods of management. If there is nothing in the Bill, mentioned about it at least, we would like to have an assurance from the Minister that this would be done as far as distribution and transmission are concerned.

One apprehension in my mind is that when the generation, transmission, and distribution were done under one roof, it was very difficult to remove the mismatch between generation and transmission. Now you have the Government producing electricity, private companies producing electricity, and the transmission will be done by some other company. How would you bring about coordination? You have created certain authorities like National Load Despatch Centres, Regional Load Dispatch

Centres, and other Centres probably for bringing about coordination and cooperation. But I am apprehensive. At least, 5 years to 10 years will pass before a harmonious working between companies generating the electricity, companies transmitting the energy, and companies distributing it will be done.

The interim period will be very difficult to manage not only for you but also for the State Governments. It is because they are working in different compartments and they are not subject to the orders from one authority. There are possibilities that they may have different interests. There might be a clash of interests as well. This is one very grey area that the hon. Minister would have to handle in a very proper way.

The third thing is about distribution. I am all afraid that transmission is going to be the easiest thing where the companies would be there and, in a way, by passing this Bill all the assets owned by the Government will be given to the companies. At what cost they would be given, we do not know. We have apprehensions in our minds about that. This, is not a property of the Government. This is not a property of the BJP. This is not a property of the Members of the Congress party. This is a property of the people. If the Government proposes to transfer this property to the private companies, then please get proper returns on the property. Otherwise, you would be going against your own interests. We would be going against our own interest and we would be going against the interest of our people. This is not a property built on the money paid from the pockets of the Members from the Congress Party. This is a property built by the previous Congress Governments with the money paid by people. Please do not transfer this property to the company without getting proper returns for that. Privatisation is not the panacea. If necessary, the Government may go in for privatisation by all means. We are not going to object to that. That is why, when I got up to speak, I started by saying that I support this Bill. But still I have apprehension in my mind. I would be failing in my duty if I do not express my views on this. This is not your property. This is not my property. This is not the property of the Government of the

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day. This is not a property that has been built by this Government. This is a property that has been built by the previous Governments. This is also not their property. They did not build it. This is the property of the people. Please get proper returns for the property that you would be giving to the companies. We have very clear doubts on this point. Please do not misunderstand us. We are not alleging things against any individual as such. We are alleging against the system, the policy that you have adopted. We have the bounden duty to express our views fearlessly on the floor of the House without having any regard to the feeling of anybody but without any malice towards anybody. But we do have apprehension in our minds on this point.

Sir, as far as distribution is concerned, I have an apprehension that these companies that would be distributing power would find it very difficult to distribute electricity to the consumers. It is because they can distribute the electricity which is available to them. If electricity is not generated, if it is not transmitted, then they will find it difficult to distribute it.

Sir, on tariff, my apprehension is that with this law and with this system, the tariff that would be collected is not going to be less than what you are charging now. The price of one unit of electricity may go up to Rs. 10 within a period of few years. In case of Enron; the price went up, it did not come down. You are going with the presumption that with this kind of an arrangement, the price will come down. I have doubts in my mind on this point. The hon. Minister can convince me and dispel my doubts that my doubts are misplaced. I would be very happy to be convinced by you that my doubts are misplaced and that I am wrong. I would be very happy if the hon. Minister convinces me that I am wrong on this point. But I do think that with this kind of an arrangement, the tariffs are going to be more and the price that the consumers will pay for electricity would be more.

My second doubt on this point is that if you do not have new power generating stations with you and if more than fifty per cent of the power is going to be generated by the private sector—which is not going to happen in ten years' time and it will take some more time—then you will have no control. They would decide what the price would be. If there is a competition, maybe the price will come down. Telecommunication is no comparison. Please do not compare this with the telecommunication. Telecommunication has given good results. Do not compare that with power generation. Power generation will give dividends, maybe after fifteen or twenty years' time, but not immediately. The prices are not going to come down. That is not going to be in accordance with the demands of the people. Transmission problems will be taken care of. But there is something in between also. So, I think, on this you have to convince the House.

The next point is regarding electrification of rural areas. How do we electrify the rural areas? Our wealth lies in Himalayan region and in undeveloped areas. There are many things available there, like minerals. But the power has to reach there. Power is not reaching the rural areas, power is reaching the urban areas. Power should reach urban areas. We want industries. Power should be taken there. But what about the rural areas? Do not think that in rural areas, we have to take power only to see that their huts and their small houses are electrified. There also we need power. For agriculture, we need power. For the development of forest also, we need power.

My apprehension is that with more activities by the private sector and with less attention by the Government in this area, power going to the rural areas will be reduced and the rural areas will suffer because of this.

The last point that I would like to make is about reforms. We are for reforms. But your definition of reforms and our definition of reforms are different. If we have understood you correctly, your definition of reforms is privatisation and downsizing the Government. Our definition of reforms is, it is not only privatisation and downsizing

the Government but also using the capacity available in all sectors in the country—with the individuals, with the organisations which belong to the private sector, public sector and Government sector. Our definition of reforms is not only privatisation but also to search for new technology, if it is not available, developing new technologies and using that. Our definition of reforms is helping the common man with this. Your definition of reforms is privatising and giving the product or the activities to them and then allowing the benefits to trickle down to the people. That is not a policy acceptable even in America. You say that let them produce and the produce will trickle down to the needy. You are not saying that you will allow this, at the same time you will do something else also. You are not saying that. If you are saying that and if you want to say that on the floor of the House, then we will be very happy and will welcome that kind of statement from you. That is not our definition. Our definition of reforms is not downsizing or making the employed persons unemployed, but our definition of reforms is utilising the hands available with the existing organisations by expanding their activities, to continue to give them employment so that it is properly utilised.

Shri Anant Geete, it may be your policy and your party's policy. I am saying this because we have heard some statements on this from your party. We will not quarrel with that. We are not different from you on the point of employment. In the name of privatisation, if we neglect the common man, if we neglect the man at the lowest rung of the society, then that cannot be called reforms. We are for reforms. You say that you are also for reforms. If you expand your definition of reforms and include our definition of reforms and then say that you have started these reforms and then we have adopted them, we will say 'yes'.

17.00 hrs.

But if you are limiting your reforms only to privatisation and downsizing, we would say that your reform is different from that of ours. That is not the kind of reform we have started.

Sir, this is a good Bill, but there are many lacunae in it. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev is the Chairman of the Committee on Energy and earlier he was also a Minister. He said that the Committee had heard officers, consumers and made several recommendations. The Government was kind enough to accept many of them, probably 80 and I was told that certain recommendations were not accepted. It was told on behalf of the Government by some officers—and their words can be accepted—that those recommendations would be included in the rules also. If you say that those kind of reforms, not all reforms but which are acceptable, will be included in the rules, we would certainly be very happy. We wish the Minister all the best and we hope that this Bill would help us.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to participate in the Motion for consideration of the Electricity Bill, 2001, on behalf of my Party, DMK.

The main purpose of the Bill is to make provisions for the generation being delicensed and captive generation being freely permitted. Similarly, there is a provision for private transmission licences also, though there would be transmission utilities at the Centre and State levels. Similarly, the Bill provides for generating companies to take up distribution of electricity also.

So far as generation, transmission and distribution are concerned, all these three functions are being handled by the State Electricity Boards, which are Government undertakings. In the name of delicensing, the Bill aims for gradual privatisation of the whole sector, which would be against the social objectives of a welfare State. Our DMK Party has made it clear that we are against privatisation of sectors which are serving the social objectives of the poor and down-trodden.

As the House knows, over the long period of more than 60 years, various State Electricity Boards have accumulated large assets with which the whole nation should be proud of. They were one of the partners in the development and building of modern India in the post-

[Shri C. Kuppusami]

Independence period. It is these Electricity Boards which stood the test of time throughout these years and were catering to various strata of the society, right from major industries to the people who are living below the poverty line and the farmers who depend on the vagaries of weather. Therefore, I would submit that the funds-starved State Electricity Boards may be restructured by infusing more funds and modernising the whole system, instead of resorting to privatisation indirectly. Since we have got every apprehension, we would urge that in the name of structural reforms, the State and the Central Governments should not resort to anti-labour measures like retrenchment of workers, compulsory Voluntary Retirement Schemes etc.

Apart from this, more than 40 per cent of our people are living below the poverty line and in rural areas. Farmers are the backbone of our country and more than 70 per cent of the people are engaged in agriculture. Moreover, you know the farmers are called *annadatha*, because it is they who provide us food. There was a time we were having food shortage and we used to go with begging bowl to Western countries for importing food. Thanks to the Green Revolution and hard work of our farmers, India is a food surplus country and we are even exporting foodgrains to other countries. Keeping this fact in view, the Government should protect the interests of the farmers. The scheme of giving the farmers free electricity should be continued in Tamil Nadu.

The Government of Tamil Nadu wants to introduce a scheme to provide a lumpsum amount in lieu of free power to farmers depending on the categories of pump set they are holding, namely whether 3 HP, 5 HP or 10 HP.

Sir, you know, in Tamil Nadu, the farmers are not getting Cauvery water in the Thanjavur Delta. Ground water level has gone down and they have to use centrifugal pumps or sub-marginal pumps with not less than seven HP, to get water for irrigation. Hence this differentiation should not be made because many small and marginal

farmers are also having higher power pump sets and this differentiation would harm the interests of farmers at large. Moreover, identification of beneficiaries will also be a problem and would lead to unnecessary harassment to farmers and breeding corruption. In order to maintain transparency, I would suggest that the lumpsum amount which the State Government intends to give to the farmers may be directly given to the Electricity Board and they can be provided free electricity.

There is also another scheme for the people who are living in single tenements, jhuggi-jhopdi, where one light point and free electricity is provided. Those people should be continued to be provided with free electricity. There is a proposal to introduce lumpsum payment to farmers and the people having single light point. The State Government suggests that they would be charged, as per tariff, for electricity and the Government would provide them lumpsum payment through other agencies. But it is not a workable proposition since the electricity charges are higher, which the poor people would not be able to pay.

Secondly, the lumpsum reimbursement, which is supposed to be only partial and not 100 per cent would not reach the poor people as there would be lot of malpractices and that would breed den of corruption. Ultimately, the poor people would suffer and the middlemen would prosper. There is no guarantee that the money would reach the poor people and the farmers. There are so many intermediaries and the money would melt away before reaching the poor. In the State of Tamil Nadu, already agitations are going on and the farmers' organisations and various political parties, including the DMK led by our leader Dr. Kaliangar Karunanidhi have opposed the proposal to do away with free electricity supply to farmers. Till they are brought to the level playing field, till they are brought above the poverty line, we strongly feel that they should continue to be provided free electricity as they cannot afford in the era of liberalisation, privatisation to pay for higher tariff.

With these words, I request the hon. Minister of Energy to consider the above points which I raised, and also direct

the State Governments to continue with the scheme of supplying free electricity to the farmers and the poor people and downtrodden. The workers' interests should be taken care of and the hon. Minister should give an assurance on the floor of the House that not a single worker would be retrenched consequent upon enactment of this Bill and their conditions of service should not be altered prejudicial to their interests.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI (Salem) : Thank you very much Sir.

Sir, I rise to express my point of view with regard to this reform process which is to be undertaken by the Government through this Electricity Bill 2001. Before, I support this Bill, we will have to look at the situation that is prevailing in this sector. The reforms process is not mooted today. It started way back in the year 1992 when the former Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao was in power.

We all must accept the fact that the power sector is in a serious crisis. The hon. Minister has admitted this while requesting for consideration of this Bill.

Given the fact that power is a critical infrastructure for our economic development reflecting on the quality of life in this nation, we will have to look at it from a different angle with the experiences which we have gained earlier in the reform process. There are about 80,000 villages which include four lakh hamlets, which are still to be provided with electricity. To achieve the goal of power for all by 2012, we need to generate 1,42,000 MW of electricity at a cost of Rs. six lakh crore. Where we do we go for such a huge investment? Who will do this? Therefore, reform is probably necessitated.

Sir, the situation in the power sector is deplorable due to the fact that the aggregate commercial loss per annum is Rs. 25,000 crore in this country and the State Electricity Boards are in a do or die situation. They are in utter financial mess and there have been arrears of Rs. 40,000 crore due to the Central utility. Therefore, reform is

necessary. So, there is a mismatch between supply and demand as has been explained by honourable and learned Shri Shivraj V. Patil. There is 12 per cent energy deficit. We are not able to meet the demand. There is no generation. Therefore, reform is essential. Our concern is that the legislation which the present Government brings forth should not be another showpiece on mere papers alone. This legislation should necessarily serve the purpose.

17.12 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

When the reform started in 1990s, we expected adequate investment in this field but it was not forthcoming. Mainly we concentrated on generation. This was the fundamental mistake that crept in. The process was carried only in the field of generation but we never concentrated on transmission and distribution. Therefore, the entire reform process at that point of time failed. So, the whole process could not take off as anticipated. There was no competition as envisaged at that point of time. The rates were very high for those who also came forward. Shri Shivraj V. Patil has explained the case of ENRON. It was four to five times more than the cost. Ultimately, the Maharashtra State Electricity Board, where from the hon. Minister also hails, had to burn its finger. The dues were so high that they could not do away with it. Therefore, we will have to have a look at it with a holistic approach.

Though the reform process is a welcome one, there are certain apprehensions. I feel that the Bill is handing over ample power to the Government of India, making the State as nugatory. Electricity is in the Concurrent List, whereas what we see is that this Bill is drafted as if this subject were in the Union List. We feel that it is a writ of the Centre, which is to run all over the country. And whether it is the National Electricity Policy or whether it is the National Policy on standalone systems for rural areas or Tariff Policy or National Policy on electrification for local distribution in rural areas and a host of other policies, they are to be framed by the Centre and the Central

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Government alone, of course, with the consultation of the State Government.

How far is it going to work out? The question that needs to be addressed is this. With the variety of diverse nature of the problem and the continental size of the country, will it be feasible or even advisable to have such type of provisions in the Bill? Even the Central Electricity Authority, as we see in the Bill, has to have not more than 14 members. All such members, as per the provisions of the Bill, hold office during the pleasure of the President. This is what has been enunciated in section 70 sub-section 6.

Look at the case of Enron. The serious implication of this provision is amply evident in the way the approvals were granted for company like Enron. Unless the CEA is an independent body, the desired result could not be achieved. If this Central Electricity Authority is not an independent body, what the Government is willing to do and what the Government wanted to do will not be carried out. Therefore, we will have to view it in a situation where the Government's interference should be totally minimised. It needs to be seriously debated whether we need such a statutory authority without independence at all.

There is another provision regarding the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity. The Chairperson of the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity, that is, ATE as per section 121, shall exercise general power of superintendence and control over the appropriate commission, it is highly question whether such powers need to be given to the ATE at all. This is relevant particularly in view of the fact that all the proceedings before the appropriate commission shall be deemed to be judicial proceedings. So, the powers proposed to be given to the ATE will definitely undercut the independence and authority of the Regulatory Commissions at the Centre as well as in the States.

A reference may also be made to yet another

provision, that is, section 113 sub-section 3 which states that the members of the ATE shall be appointed by the Central Government on the recommendation of the Selection Committee referred to in section 78. Where do we expect independence? Moreover, the Commission members have to be given oath of secrecy by the Minister concerned. Though they have a judicial power, the oath of secrecy will be administered by the Minister of the Department concerned. All these have to be looked into.

There is another very important aspect. Before the superannuation of each member, the selection should have to be made in three months' time. The Committee shall finalise the list and it has to forward it to the Minister or to the Government whereas no time limit is fixed for the Government. What happened? On the earlier occasion, it took almost 15 months to appoint the Chairman of the Commission by the Government of India. Then what right have we got to insist on reforms? This happened in some of the States also. There was undue delay. If such is the attitude of the Government, will you take on to the reforms which we envisaged?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Therefore, we have to look at the Bill in a different angle by looking at all the provisions. My learned friend, Shri Kuppasami, while deliberating, made a reference to the State of Tamil Nadu.

In his speech, he said that free electricity to farmers should continue in Tamil Nadu. I would categorically say that free electricity for farmers continues still, given the fact that the State Government is bearing the subsidy and the small and marginal farmers are given Rs. 1,250 per annum to meet the electricity expenses. I would like to ask the hon. Member who was responsible for this. Today, we are talking of reforms. We want this sector to take off and to tune to the present situation but it was the DMK Government and the then Chief Minister who were responsible for signing the memorandum of understanding with the Regulatory Authority. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (Thanjavur) : It was signed by the officials. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Selvaganpathi.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Their then Minister is facing privilege charges in the Tamil Nadu Assembly. ...*(Interruptions)*

The State Government has clearly understood the situation and is giving a subsidy to the farmers to the tune of Rs. 1,250. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Selvaganpathi, please conclude now.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Sir, I have just now started and taken about four or five minutes. I am addressing the core issues with your permission. Please give me two more minutes. Since the issue was raised by the other hon. Member, I am responsible and duty bound, to answer that.

The Government is giving Rs. 1,250 whereas the charge or bill given to the small and marginal farmers is only Rs. 1,000. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM : The small and marginal farmers cannot lift their water. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : I am not yielding. I am speaking on facts. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is not yielding.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : My only request is that hon. Members should not mislead the House on this issue. Free electricity still continues and subsidy is given to the farmers even as the State Government is reeling under a serious financial crunch. The Government, under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, is advancing Rs. 1,250 to the farmers. Today, the small and

marginal farmers are being taken care of by the State Government. So, whom are they pleading for today? Have they become the mouthpiece of the big landlords? The intention of the State Assembly was to charge only the big farmers and to give subsidy to the small farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM : They are having thousands and thousands of acres of land. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Have they become the spokesmen of the landlords?...*(Interruptions)* They have also made a reference to the agitations and said that the DMK Party's agitation is going on in this regard.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM : Sir, the words which are objectionable must be removed. He has mentioned some words that are objectionable. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : This is the situation in the State of Tamil Nadu. The Government of Tamil Nadu is aware of the situation and is taking all necessary steps to protect the small and tiny farmers.

There is another fundamental question. The Government of India has come forward with a package of Rs. 34,500 crore to bail out the State Electricity Boards. Eighty per cent of the arrears come from the BIMARU States, that is, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. They have entered into a tripartite agreement as well. If this were the situation, I would like to pose a question to the hon. Minister. Which are the States that are going to be benefited out of this? The States that are performing well, especially the southern States, are being penalised. What happened in the case of the National Thermal Power Corporation? Only a single unit has so far been started in the State of Tamil Nadu. The National Power Corporation has only one unit in Ramagundam. Even as eighty per cent of the arrears of the four BIMARU States is being taken care of by the Government of India, not a single unit of the NHPC has been started in the State of Tamil Nadu. What is happening? All our services and efforts are being utilised to subsidise the four Northern States who are not performing.

[Shri T.M. Selvaganpathi]

Therefore, I urge upon the Government of India to see to it that in regard to the subsidies which we give to the farmers, there is a social obligation on the part of the Government, which has to be compensated by the Government to bail out the State Electricity Boards and the States' financial crunch.

Sir, with these few words, I conclude my speech.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA (Ambala) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to congratulate my friend Geeteji for bringing, this Bill on power sector reforms which will prove to be a milestone in power sector in India.

The Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had expressed his deep concern about the situation in power sector in the meeting of the National Development Council and he had said that the time has come that the way we have laid down our road network, brought about revolution in telecommunications sector, as well as in ONGC sector the same type of revolution is required to be brought about in power. Therefore, a tripartite MoU was signed by which a package of Rs. 40 thousand crores was prepared for improving the condition of RBI, NTPC and State Electricity Boards.

The power sector of India is the backbone of economic development of the country and today, the reforms are urgently needed in this sector. Even after 55 years of independence, the power generation has been to the tune of 1,01,660 megawatt till 2001 in which centre's contribution is 30.4 percent, the State Electricity Board's contribution is 59.9 percent and the contribution of the private sector is only 9.7 percent. It is a matter of concern that the private sector has not come forward in power generation sector. Similarly this is also a matter of concern that Multinational companies or FDI's have not made their way in power sector. The main reason of it has been that earlier there was the Act of 1910, Act of 1948 or the Act of 1998 for

this purpose and all these Acts were such Acts that the private sector and FDI did not come forward in our country due to this very reason.

Today, when we see that transmission loss varies from State to State between 20 percent to 40 percent in our country which is really a matter of concern. Likewise, the theft of electricity is also a common thing. Why this tendency developed today? Though there are a number of honest industrialists in the country who make full payment of the electricity bill, yet there are such people who are engaged in power theft. When rich people are caught red handed in power theft, this gives encouragement to the common man and he tries to cash in on by fixing the hooks on the wires passing through electric supply poles. With the introduction of this bill, the situation in power sector will certainly improve because strong provisions have been made in the Bill in order to check this large scale power theft.

Today, rural electrification is the need of the hour. Even after 55 years of independence, 80 thousand villages are still waiting for electrification. I would like to congratulate the NDA Government and Shri Geeteji for making a proposal to ensure that every house in India will be lighted by the year 2007. With the implementation of this scheme, every citizen in our country will certainly be able to avail this facility.

Several committees have made recommendations about the type of Bill which is under discussion today. Shri Deepak Parikh Committee had recommended that the 'SEBI' should bring about improvement in this sector by clearing all the pending dues. At the same time, the Kohli panel also recommended that we would generate one lakh Megawatt power in the country by 2012 for which an amount of Rs. 9 lakh crores will be required. He had put up some suggestions for managing this huge amount

[*English*]

imposition of cess, special power bonds, tax exemptions and multilateral bonds.

[*Translation*]

He had given these types of suggestions.

I would like to say that if the Ministry of Power adopts this resolution, that this will no more remain a nightmare; it can be achieved. When our respectable Prime Minister resolved to construct world level roads from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Mumbai to Guwahati and said that it would cost around Rs. 60 thousand crores then our friends sitting in opposition had made a mockery of it that how we will mobilise resources and manage to get a sum of Rs. 60 thousand crores. But, I am happy to say that the work which was likely to be completed by 2004 is now going to be completed by year 2003 itself by the NDA Government.

Similarly, I would like that our dream of generating more than one lakh megawatt power in the country by the year 2012 is also fulfilled. I would also like to urge the Hon'ble Minister that our former Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao during his visit of Yamunanagar in Haryana about 12 years back, inaugurated a power station of one thousand Megawatt capacity through remote control from Delhi. 14 hundred acres of land has been acquired for this purpose and this entire land is fertile land but no progress has so far been made in this regard. There were so many fertile fields there...(*Interruptions*) For this purpose an agreement had been signed with Eisenberg Haidinber Company but that work could not be completed till date for reasons unknown.

I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister to put pressure on the Government of Haryana. If this work is related to your area, then you should bear the burden of setting up Yamuma Nagar Thermal Power Plant as crores of people of our area depend on it. Similarly, there is a minimum requirement of an amount of Rupees one hundred crores in order to bring the Thermal Plant situated in the district of Panipat to the maximum level of efficiency. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister through you that an amount of Rupees one hundred crores be granted for modernising the Panipat Thermal Power Plant in

Haryana. Whatever reforms we are going to bring about in power sector, I feel that our consumers are the focal point of it. We want to supply electricity to the consumers on affordable rates. Just now our friend Shri Shivraj Patil was stating that it would not materialize. They are in the habit of interfering with any work we want to carry out. There is a revolutionary change in telephone and roads sectors and we have reduced the prices. With passing of this bill, we will bring about a revolutionary change in power sector also and the dream of providing electricity to the people on affordable rates will be fulfilled under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Kataria, please address the Chair. Why are you taking interest in replying to other Members?

[*Translation*]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA : Today, two important developments are going to take place through this bill.

[*English*]

Firstly, openness to the consumers, and secondly.

[*Translation*]

We should generate power.

[*English*]

They will have the freedom to choose the customers.

[*Translation*]

A number of apprehensions are being expressed in the regard. This Government will hike the electricity rates by bringing private companies in this sector. But, if you take the example of United Kingdom and other countries, be it Latin American Country or Australia, you will notice that all these nations have achieved much progress by switching over to the private power sector and the people

[Shri Rattan Lal Kataria]

of these countries are provided much relief. We are going to get the same sort of relief through this bill. At the end, I would like to say that we have not been able to exploit the hydel power capacity of our country to a large extent. We have been able to exploit only upto 25 percent of the hydel sector so far. There is a great potential in this sector. I would like to tell the Hon'ble minister that my Lok Sabha constituency is adjacent to Ambala hill area, Himachal and if any major factory come up in the hydel area then it will certainly help in supplying electricity in the remaining areas. Moreover, a number of dams are being built up in the area adjoining to Himachal. Now, I would like to request you that a hydel project may please be set up in Panchkula under my Lok Sabha constituency.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there was a much fanfare about the Electricity Bill and it was hoped that power crisis will be solved with its enactment, it was propagated so but discussion is going on. The Bill was introduced and thereafter the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee and it was thoroughly reviewed. The Standing Committee made 150 recommendations. Some have been implemented, some have been accepted by the Government and it is said that some of them will be accepted later on. Hon. Minister has presented 130 amendments and amendments from our side are in addition to that. We do not know about the fate of the bill. Amendments are pouring in before its introduction. It reflects that some efforts are being made. But I would like to say that we should bring the bill in a proper manner. The bill in question is a salmagundi of Electricity Act, 1910; Indian Electricity Law of 1948 and Regulatory Commission Act of 1988. It is not clear how this bill is joint to solve the power crisis prevailing in Bihar? Broadly, there are four steps—generation, transmission, distribution and electrification. Expenditure on these stages should be in a ratio of 4:2:1:1. We have a target of one lakh megawatt additional power capacity by 2012 in the country. If an expenditure of Rupees four crore is required for one megawatt then we

should have four lakh crore rupees for one lakh megawatt. Rupees two lakh crore on generation, one lakh crore on transmission, and one lakh crore on distribution and electrification. It comes to a total of eight lakh crore rupees. Where shall we have it from? We have been hearing of privatisation, then also where will this money come from? We even do not know as to what was Enron-foreign investment or privatisation do not know what type of project it was.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : Independent Power Project.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : We should learn from what happened to that. If privatisation is there, will it be for profiteering or for welfare. I do not think privatisation will solve the power crisis, and heavy investment will be made in the power sector. Orissa is the pioneer in the field of power reforms and it was said that there are reforms. But we all are aware of what happened there. The situation has deteriorated as compared to earlier date. The formula you are applying has been a failure in a State then how do you expect it to work in other states. Dose of the medicine should be reduced as there is improvement in a disease. But when the disease is aggravating even after application of the medicine then one has to stop the medicine or increase the dose, it should be paid proper attention. We need 8 lakh crore rupees, there was a much fanfare about construction of roads under Prime Minister Gramin Sadak Yojana and Golden Quadrilateral Scheme for which a separate fund was made. Similarly a fund for development of railways has been made, then when are we going to have a fund for power sector development too? No development is possible without power. Power is lifeline of development. Computer sector and telecom sector revolution will have a set back without power. Trains can not run without electricity and there will be darkness. Therefore, electricity generation should be accorded top priority. We people are here with you, you go ahead. A number of persons are there in the government who will not like to have it done

and will put hurdles. Generation should be given priority. If there is no power generation, it will hamper the development of the country. As Shri Patilji was saying that we should go for solar energy, Einstein had given a theory of mass and energy with the formula— $E = MC^2$ but it requires technology. However Disinvestment must be made in power sector. We read about Power Development Scheme and National Power Fund, what is the situation in this regard? In case the funding is poor, we shall come forward to help you.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, hydel power has been much neglected. The minimum ratio between hydel power and thermal power should be 60:40. It will be better if there is sufficient hydroelectricity only. If there is not this much of power. Potentiality, then it should at least 40% hydroelectricity. Nature has bestowed our nation a good potentiality of hydel. There are Himalayan rivers in North-East, then it is Kosi river in Bihar where we can generate 3800 megawatt power. Similarly, schemes are being formulated for Bagmatgi at Nunthar, for Gandak at Narayanghat, for Sarayu at Kamali, we are entering into an India-Nepal agreement. Similarly there is a vast potentiality for generation of hydel power in Kerala. Orissa and several parts of the country. Therefore, electricity particularly the hydel power should be given utmost priority. If other development schemes are put on back burner for 2-4 years, we will bear with it, but hydel development should not be stopped. No problem if other development works follow. Please see the difference between power generation through water and through coal. A lot of our water resource has flown for no use, we should have some concrete scheme to stop this wastage. Keeping in view the available resources our economists have not formulated any farsighted schemes. Therefore the hydel has been neglected. We are here with you if utmost priority is given to hydro-electricity. Hon. Bhavana Chikhaliyai is present here, she should go to the Prime Minister to convey the views are being expressed in the country. There is already a special provision, for development of North-East, it will be better if the money is invested in hydel projects. All our learned men should ponder to tell why hydel is put on back

burner and how we shall be able to go ahead without hydel. It will take a lot of time if we discuss thermal power and nuclear power. Its ash has a bad effect on environment. We generate power with thermal power gas, oil then there should be a national power grid for transmission from which power can be transmitted from one place to another. Eastern part of the country have surplus power and other three parts are facing power shortage. Had there been power grid, then power could be transmitted from one part to another. Therefore, National Power Grid should be set up. We should have a scheme for interlinking of rivers to carry water from one place to another. National Power Grid should be given priority as electricity runs through wire. Transmission and electrification need to be paid more attention.

There is problem of power theft also. It was just said that all the three Acts have been repealed. Electricity supply Act has been repealed. Electricity Board was under the same Act which you have repealed. Electricity Act, you have repealed, Regulatory Commission you have repealed. I do not know how you will correct it. We have read out all the clauses. Electricity Board will be reconstituted again. Electricity Board should be divided into three parts.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now you please conclude.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : I am talking on the issues which are in the interest of the Country.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are only two points—one is electrification and the other is distribution. Now you please conclude.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Sir, there are distribution losses and power theft. We have any metal for conductors, there are transmission losses. This is a national problem. In Delhi power has been privatised. The consumers are in distress. Ask the hon. Members as to what are the woes of privatisation. This will be fatal to the poor and the farmer community. The Government says that there will be round the clock power supply in every house by the year 2012. This is a dream. We wish this dream

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

may come true! I want to know as to how many houses are electrified till now. There is really a power crisis. Therefore we should correct the transmission and distribution losses. The Government has a formulated Kutir Jyoti Yojana. It covers SC and ST population. Let the Government tell us as to how many tribats have been supplied power...*(Interruptions)* The scheme should be monitored. Power supply must be ensured to the people living below the poverty line, The day they get power, India will be number one country in the world. We are lagging behind in the field of power. The day when power will be provided to Bihar, Bihar will be number one in the country. The 220 megawatt thermal power unit at Muzaffarpur is invariably shut down. The State Government and Electricity Board are of the view that this plant should be handed over to NTPC. The NTPC should take it. An amount of Rs. 2000 crore should be invested in Bihar for 499 megawatt projects. The Bihar Government and Electricity Board are not able to spend this huge money, so the situation should be improved by handing it over to NTPC. The State Government and Electricity Board are agreed over it. A proposal for 400 KV has have been approved for transmission from Gorakhpur to Guwahati via Muzaffarpur. This work will take time but it should be accorded priority. Similarly a 400 KV line has been approved from Farakka via Bihar Sharief. The work of sub-distribution was to be done which has still not been done. The Finance Department and the Planning Commission had said that there will be an expenditure of Rs. 375 crore but this work has not been done so far. I had also talked to hon. Finance Minister on his scheme. He said that it has to be referred to the cabinet. If the matter goes to the Cabinet in the month of June, then there will be the rainy season. We shall lose a full year. Hon. Finance Minister should take personal interest in it for early implementation of the sub-transmission scheme.

The next point is that Telughat Project was incorporated but its office is at Patna. Bihar has not got its due share

as per reorganisation Act. It was a unilateral decision at the behest of Department of Home Affairs. I do not know how the department of power accorded its approval to it. It is a gross injustice with Bihar. We have invested capital in Telughat corporation and DVC. How Bihar has been denied benefits of these projects...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now you please conclude.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Now, a new Chief Minister has taken charge in Jharkhand. The former Chief Minister Shri Babulal Marandi has stated that the Minister there, indulged the illegal work as Chairman of Telughat Nigam in order to get contracts for his own people. I will bring all these things to light. The public interest is being ignored. Bihar should have share in Telughat Nigam and D.V.C. as we have put our money in it. Wherever we put our money, we will certainly get our shares. This must be taken into consideration. What is being done under the Development Reform Programme? What did we get as share? As amount of Rs. 37 crore was received in lumpsum in connection with the minimum need programme out of which Jharkhand received Rs. 28 crores and Bihar received an amount of only Rs. 9 crores. What this policy is? Unless Bihar does not make progress, Hindustan (India) can not register progress...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Raghuvanshji told me that we should inform Shri Atalji about what we are discussing in the House. I would like to say to Shri Raghuvanshji that if he supports all the bills in the manner in which he has supported this bill, then this work will be complete very soon.

*Not recorded.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : We will support all those bills which will be in the public interest...
(Interruptions)

17.59 hrs.

[English]

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Electricity Bill 2001 is a bold and a comprehensive initiative. My Party is wholeheartedly supporting the Bill. In the power sector, we also have initiated reforms in Andhra Pradesh.

Sir, power is a tool for economic development. Power is mother of the industries. Without industrial growth, there is no economic development; there is no poverty reduction; and there is no employment.

18.00 hrs.

The Andhra Pradesh Government initiated power reforms in the year 1995-96. After the initiation of power sector reforms, the State Government has faced a lot of problems also. Reform is the need of the hour to improve power sector, throughout the country. That is why, we are supporting this Bill. The Government of India should also promote private investment.

The dues of the Electricity Boards to the Central Government utilities are to the tune of Rs. 40,000 crore. Commercial losses of the Electricity Boards last year were to the tune of Rs. 25,000 crore. I am the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Railways. In India, so many Electricity Boards have not paid their dues to the Indian Railways for the last 15 years due to bad financial health. They have no investment for further generation in that particular State. So, the private investment is the need of the hour. The Government of India has also to encourage private investment. Hopefully, with this Bill when passed, private investment will come to our country. I am requesting all the political parties. Everybody knows this that we

cannot store power like any other commodity.

Generation and consumption should match. What is our country's requirement? What is the generation to be made? We have to plan accordingly. The subject of electricity is included in the Concurrent List. Till today, the Government of India is making legislations on the power sector and even the State Governments are passing certain legislations. Till today, power sector is governed by three legislations. After passing this Bill, there will be one uniform Act, that is, the Electricity Act, 2001, which we are considering for passing.

Even the political parties are also incorporating this in their manifestos. After reform process started by the Congress Government in 1991, in the year 1992 we gave permission for the private investment in the power sector. Now also, the political parties, for their gains, are incorporating 'free power' for farmers in their manifestos. After 54 years of Independence, at this point of time, we have to think whether it is vital or not, before putting 'free power' for farmers in the manifestos.

For example, the Congress Party, at the national level, has a policy; I am appreciating it. They have no 'free power' for farmers. But the State parties, at their levels are adopting their individual policies. How will it be? There should be a concrete policy, for any political party, at the national and at the State levels.

The Tamil Nadu Government also recently announced that they would give free power. After the Electricity Regulatory Commission was established, they have fixed price for electricity used by farmers. Ultimately, the Government is providing subsidies to the farmers. If a Government is wealthy and if it is interested in the farming community then it can give subsidy to the poorest of the poor, but it should not put burden on the Electricity Boards.

MR. SPEAKER : Just a minute. With the consent of the House, I am extending the time of the House, till the Bill is approved and passed. I am extending the time till bill is passed.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : We have to discuss exclusively about this; we have to adopt things like VAT. We have to follow certain norms or policies, as political parties. Then if we have a common policy, it will help the country in developing power sector. That is why, I am supporting this Bill.

Theft and transmission losses are also alarming. With this Act we can control the theft and transmission losses. In some States these theft and transmission losses have reached even 40 per cent, which is most alarming. No Electricity Board can survive or no State Government can function with such a huge loss. It will be very difficult to function because there will be no investment. In some of the States, even 40 per cent of the villages have no electricity. In this scenario, we have to reduce the transmission losses and theft.

This Bill has a number of clear-cut provisions to reduce the theft. There is a mandatory obligation on the State Governments to provide a State Electricity Regulatory Commission. An Appellate Authority is also there to dispose of the cases. This Bill is a new initiative and a bold step in the power sector. So, I support it wholeheartedly.

A number of States are going in for reforms. They are facing a lot of problems. The Government of India should create a common kit out of which those States which are taking more initiatives in this regard should be given more fund. We will have to take initiatives in the power sector, otherwise, the States will face a lot of problems. The Government of India should give adequate help to the States which are going in for reforms.

With these words I conclude.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Palanimanickam has requested me to make one clarification. He is allowed to speak to that extent only.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM : Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. One of the hon. Members, Shri Selvaganpathi has made an allegation against the previous DMK Government in Tamil Nadu that we are accepting this

Electricity Bill to forego free electricity to the farmers. He has misled the House. Without sufficient proof, he has made this statement in the House I object to it and may clarify that our Government had not given any proposal to the Government of India to withdraw free electricity to the farmers.

18.07 hrs.

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Forty-eighth Report

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to present the Forty-eighth Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

18.08 hrs.

ELECTRICITY BILL—Contd.

[English]

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR (Akola) : Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER : Not opportunity, but for giving priority.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : Thank you, Sir. I have been a part and process of this Bill right from 2000. Let me go on record that what we received as the first Bill was not a Bill for the Government of India but was a Bill for the Government of Philippines. So, what we are doing is, we are copying this Bill that was drafted for another nation.

The Committee was criticised for taking there than two and a half years and for sitting over the Bill. But what the Committee was trying to do was to Indianise the Bill. There

were provisions which were not in favour of the nation. They were basically sought to be drawn on situations that were there in California, and those situations were sought to be brought into this new Bill. The Committee saw to it that we delete some of the provisions. We made certain changes in it and some of them had been accepted and that have been projected as a new Bill.

Sir, let me be on record that the main provisions which the Committee has suggested have not at all been accepted and I am going to deal only with these major provisions which are going to affect us. I have my own apprehensions that if the Bill is passed as it is and accepted as it is, the first casualty is going to be the rural sector. I will just refer to the comparison that has been given by the Ministry. That was one of our major objections. A comparison was given to us between the 1948 Bill and this is what it has to say.

"This clause aims at addressing the requirement and catering to the needs of the rural areas without connectivity to the Grid."

If there is no connectivity of the rural areas to the Grid, where from the rural sector is going to draw its power? This is what the Ministry has to say :

"This process of encouraging renewal energy sources will be the source of power to the rural areas."

Sir, what is the generation in the non-conventional sector? It is not even one per cent of the total requirement. Of one lakh megawatt which we produce today, it is not even one per cent and by 2012, an additional one lakh megawatt is going to be needed. I would like to ask Shri Yerrannaidu who is supporting this Bill, if the rural area is not going to be connected by the National Grid, where from is the rural area going to draw its electricity? Are they going to keep them in dark?

Sir, unbundling of the State Electricity Boards is already in process. The Central Government is pressing them by doling out nearly Rs. 30,000 crores before them

as a package. But I am only concerned with the transmission side. I am not going to discuss the distribution because once the National Grid is limited to the areas of cities, there would be problems. Even among the cities, there are some city areas which have more commercial areas and some have less commercial areas. The distribution is going to be privatised. There is nothing in the Bill which says that there is going to be some correlation between the commercial areas which will be privatised and the rural areas which will be left out.

The Committee has suggested that there should be some correlation in the commercial areas that are going to be distributed and privatised. The Bill is silent. The Committee's recommendation has not been accepted. I would like the Minister to clarify specifically one issue whether he sticks to the statement of detaching the rural areas from the National Grid, as has been stated by the Ministry, or whether he assures the House that all rural areas will be connected with the National Grid.

The second clarification which I would like to have from the Ministry is that if you are going to privatise distribution in those areas, which are commercial, those areas which are not commercial, and those areas which are going to be commercial, what is going to be the situation in the rest of the areas? Are they going to be a burden on the State Electricity Boards? Already captive sector has been introduced. The captive sector has been introduced only in the heavy industrial sector. They are the biggest pay masters for the State Electricity Boards and if the biggest pay masters are going to be the captive generators, then the biggest loss is going to be of the State Electricity Boards. By framing a National Policy, which is a concurrent subject, I do not know how many of us have realised in this Bill that as far as generation, transmission, and distribution is concerned, this Parliament has become irrelevant. There is nothing in the Act and in the provisions where this Parliament can control the generation sector, at least, if you come to the State Assemblies, they have been made redundant. As far as generation and distribution are concerned, the only thing which you have

[Shri Prakash Yashwant Ambedkar]

to do is to hand it over to the private sector and no other role remains for you.

Sir, the Committee had suggested to the Ministry to develop some kind of a relation between the State Legislature and the Ministry in order to deal with the subjects that are in the Concurrent List. I would like to inform this august House that the Government of Kerala, right from the beginning, are against this Bill. They are on record saying that they are not going to accept the provisions of this Bill and that they are going to have their own State Electricity Bill. I would further like to inform this august House that the provisions as contained in their Electricity Bill are much better than what has been provided for here in this Bill. They are proposing to give electricity at a much cheaper rate than that would be provided by this Government after the passage of this Bill. Now, in case of such a conflict, what is the role of the Central Government? I know there is a Constitutional provision of providing the powers of the State Assembly in case of a conflict. But this is a situation where it is not a question of conflict. It is a case of dealing with a subject in the Concurrent List. It is a question of distribution of power. In accordance with section 64 and 65 of the Act of 1948, in case of a sanction above Rs. 10 lakh, the concurrence of the State Assembly was necessary. Today, the Government proposes to do away with it. Some of the State Assemblies are not ready to give away that power. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how the Ministry is going to react in such a situation.

Sir, some Members have spoken about private participation. I had been the one person who had been saying right from the beginning that private sector will not come into this sector. Let me give the figures. There were 18 projects, each of 500 MW capacity. Out of these many, only three have commenced, and out of three, only one is functioning and the other two have closed down. What are the benefits that were given for these 18 projects? They were given Sales Tax benefit. They were given Income Tax

benefits and they were also given guarantees. But even then majority of these projects have not come up. Some of these projects were announced as early as in 1994-95, but they have still not materialised. If the Government still believes that private players would come for the new projects in the power sector, then I do not think that is a right thing to do. At least in a planned regime we have a situation where the States would jack up their demands for power. Therefore, the Planning Commission used to give some funds for the generating sector. But in the last ten years, there has been very little contribution from the Government side. As far as the new Budgetary provisions for the last three years are concerned, I did not find any provisions being made by the Government for the generating sector.

Sir, it is being said that the country has a shortage of 12 per cent of the peak period. Yes. We do have that shortage. What is the power situation in this country? In the Eastern sector, there is a surplus of 42 per cent and there has been a surplus of this magnitude in this sector for the last ten years. We have not exploited this. We are only talking about shortages. If this 42 per cent surplus is evacuated from the Eastern sector, then the peaking demand would come down by six per cent. This has not been done since we do not have transmission. I would very categorically like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would like to exploit this surplus 42 per cent power in the Eastern sector or not.

The power tariff depends upon what kind of mix we have. During the Fifth Five Year Plan the mix was 40 per cent hydel and 60 per cent thermal. What is the situation in the Tenth Five Year Plan? This mix has come down. It is 27 per cent hydel and the rest is thermal and nuclear. It has always been said that setting up hydel projects takes a long time. I do agree. But where is the bottleneck? The bottleneck is the CEA. I can understand the Ministry of Environment and Forests taking time to clear a project. But even after the projects are cleared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, they get stuck up in the CEA. The Committee, therefore, has suggested that the powers of the CEA be diluted.

I do not mention what happened in Enron case. Our learned friend Shri Shivraj Patil did mention it. But the book by Shri Abhay Mehta not only does have a mention about it, but also he has produced a note which the CEA has got from the Ministry of Finance. I would like the Minister to be on record whether the DABHOL project was finally sanctioned by the CEA, by the Ministry of Power or whether the final sanction was given by the Ministry of Finance. If the note is to be believed, then the DABHOL project was sanctioned by the Ministry of Finance and not by the Ministry of Power or the CEA as it should be.

Let me give the example of one project because this question of the cost of a hydel power project has been agitating our minds for quite a long time. We have made a suggestion that the time factor should be looked into. The project in question, that is, Malana Private Power Project, was handed over to the private sector for completion. It was suggested that the project would take about eight and a half years to complete. But the private firm completed it within three years and that too with cost effectiveness.

There is another factor which you will have to look into. If power from the northeastern States, which is going to be the cheapest power, is to be tapped for use in the respective States and at other places, then the cost factor of maintaining the law and order should not be in-built into those projects. In all the projects that are coming up in the northeastern States, the cost of maintaining the law and order is loaded into the projects and therefore, they are becoming unviable.

Lastly, our most important suggestion to the Ministry was with regard to our neighbours on the international borders for whom electricity is going to be one of the biggest revenue generators. In some cases, the Ministry of External Affairs has taken the initiative. But this Bill does not contain any provision where trading can take place and where purchase can take place from those neighbours who are independent countries. We have already gone into a situation where there are rivers which are connected with

each other because of which some development has taken place. If this Bill is going to be totally in the hands of the administration as it has been suggested, then, with the multiplicity of the bodies and powers that we have created not only in the dispatch load centres, but also in the authorities that we have created, your task is going to be that much difficult. I would like the Minister to tell us whether he wants to really make this Bill a functioning legislation.

One very big question that was asked to us, not by the laymen, but by the Chambers of Industry was this.

They said that by the two Acts of 1910 and 1948, involving the private sector was possible. Then what is the need for a new Bill? Let me tell you we were in no position to answer that. We put the same question to the Ministry itself. The only satisfactory answer which they gave was that it is for the unbundling of the SEBs. The other answer which they gave was that whenever there is going to be excess of generation, you can have a system of loading and off loading of power. There is no other justification which was given for the Bill. Maybe the Minister will be able to convince us as to what is the necessity for introducing the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : Before the next Member starts speaking, I would like to bring to the notice of the House that most of the political parties have exhausted their time. But since the Bill is important I am going to allow the Members to speak. I would request them to be as brief as possible. They should furnish their speech within five to ten minutes.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you. I rise not to support the Bill. I have some reservations about this Bill. I oppose some clauses of this Bill. I have listened to the speech made by the hon. Minister. I attentively listened also to the speech made by the Deputy Leader of the principal Opposition Party, Shri Shivraj Patil.

[Shri Prabodh Panda]

18.27 hours

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

At the very outset, I must say that I could not understand the logic of endorsement that is made in the speech of hon. Shri Shivraj Patil. He spoke well. He was quite analytical. But I could not find any logic of endorsement there.

Sir, India ranks sixth in the world in terms of energy demand, accounting for 3.5 per cent of all commercial demand in 2001. With the GDP growth of eight per cent for the Tenth Five Year Plan, the energy demand is expected to grow at 5.2 per cent. Although the commercial energy consumption has grown rapidly, large parts of the population of our country do not have access to it. Despite the resources growing in our country, we should agree and admit that large sections of our country are still without electricity. There is no rural electrification. So, sufficient power generation, transmission, distribution and supply is required. Now-a-days, we cannot think of a civilisation without power generation and without proper distribution or transmission. We cannot think of it. But I must say that the basic idea of this Bill is not to protect the interest of the consumers. The basic idea of this Bill is to facilitate multinational companies and to facilitate the greedy policies of globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation.

This draft is made based on this idea. So, this is the philosophy behind this Bill and my main objection to this Bill is only due to this philosophy. What is the concept of this Bill? The concept is to create the market, users and companies and open the sector to the multinational corporations or big companies. Then, the concept is to withdraw the basic responsibility to provide power to the people at large.

Sir, captive generation of power is freely permitted as per the provisions of this Bill. Then, there are provisions

for giving private transmission licences and for imposing surcharge for taking care of the current level of cross-subsidisation. Some hon. Members mentioned about the tariff. Shri Shivraj Patil has rightly mentioned that if this Bill is passed, it is apprehended that within one or two years, the tariff will go up by not less than Rs. 10 per unit of power. Will it help the consumers in general? It will not help them. So, I am opposing this Bill.

Sir, what is the attitude shown in this Bill towards farmers and people in rural areas. Several hon. Members referred to the situation that existed in the former Soviet Union. I am pleased to refer to Lenin, the founder of the former Soviet Union. He made a comment that rural electrification in the hands of the State of the proletariat is socialism or communism. But ours is not a State of the proletariat. Here, the Government of the day is doing enough to facilitate the multinational corporations. So, this is my basic opposition to this Bill.

Sir, some hon. Members have rightly asked as to what is the urgency to bring forward this Bill now? I think, the urgency is due to the commitment made to GATT and due to the commitment made to the WTO. We are facilitating the private companies and here we have enough experience to draw from the case of Enron. If all the three aspects of the power sector, namely generation, transmission and distribution are opened to the private sector, who will control them? There will be total anarchy. The most injurious thing to the development of the country is that the power sector would be under the control of private companies in different colours and in different forms. This is not the role of a welfare State. My question is: is our State a welfare State?

I would like to know whether we have a responsibility towards the downtrodden people. We are going to phase out the cross subsidy. Will it help the people who are engaged in agriculture? Will it help the middle class people? Will it help the poor people? I think, all this should be reviewed.

At the very outset, the hon. Minister in his speech has

stated that most of the recommendations of the Standing Committee have been taken into consideration. What was not taken into consideration was related to the policy. What was the policy?

I am not going to take much time of the House. I oppose this Bill and I think, the Government should not be in a hurry. They should think over it again. This is a concurrent subject.

Lastly, the hon. Minister has mentioned about the national policy on electricity. I must say that it should be announced after discussion in the House and the House should be taken into confidence.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Electricity Bill, 2001 has been moved in the House. It is being discussed and hon. Members who have participated before me have discussed it very well. I have risen to support the Bill. The issue of power is important. Today, electricity is not merely being used to provide light. The growth of the nation depends upon electricity. I give an example of Dabhol, Enron Electricity company did not work smoothly. At present in Maharashtra Rs. 110 are to be paid in a month. The Central Government should extend its cooperation in this regard also. The Central Government has mortgaged, the house to the Enron company. They have mortgaged the President House also. Central Government has done such a great work. It is very bad. The Government is following the policy of privatisation but it should clarify about the privatisation and assure the people that they will get such and such number of units at such and such rates. The Government should also watch that whether electricity is being supplied to the rural areas or not. Today, the farmers and industries are not getting the electricity properly. It is very essential to supply the electricity to them. Separate question of Central and State Government are being mentioned here. There is a need to chalk out a plan about the electricity after discussing it jointly. We should empower the Electricity Boards. Now a days 40% of the electricity is pilferaged and

as a consequent thereof Electricity Boards are running in losses. It is also necessary to check such pilferages. Geeta is our voluminous book. The Hon. Geeteji has also moved discussion on a comprehensive Electricity Bill. Hon. Bahanji is also supporting them. I would like to submit that Hon. Geeteji belongs to Maharashtra if power supply is improved then the name of Maharashtra will also be in picture. I hope so.

[English]

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this comprehensive Bill has come after the experience of about 90 years. The first part of 38 years was for commercial purpose and subsequent part of 52 years from 1948 was for social purpose of developing a modern India under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. We know the history that when Lenin wanted to socialise the entire USSR, he felt that electricity was one of the main tools through which the entire society could be brought under socialism. In the same way, the welfare States had also taken into consideration that resource of electricity should be in the hands of the people, that is, the State, and it should be equitably distributed to the people according to the needs of the day.

We succeeded in the first part of the four decades where Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru generated power through natural resources, which were available in India, and through hydel projects. He dedicated hydel projects as one of the dynamic machinery, which made new and modern India to compete in the world arena. Subsequently, Indira Gandhi, as the dynamic Prime Minister, developed thermal projects and also atomic technology, which became electricity-producing sector for India. No doubt, the world was astonished over the presence of atomic energy being utilised for peaceful purpose and also for the development of India during the period of Shrimati Indira Gandhi.

Now, we have got the capacity; we have got the resources; we have got non-conventional energy resources; we have got tidal energy, which we can utilise; we have

[Shri E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan]

got wind energy; we have got water; we have got coal and other materials which can be utilised for the purpose of generating electricity. We have also got carbon products available for generating electricity.

What is the necessity for privatisation? It is purely because of non-planning and not executing things properly. Even in this Bill, we thought that we could honour your predecessor, Shri Suresh Prabhu, who brought this Bill. He was a very enthusiastic young man and at that time, he was having a vision that he could achieve certain generation of electricity for the needs of the Indian people.

But at the same time, when we have gone through this Bill, we find that Clauses 7, 8 and 9, which speak about the generation of electricity, are not at all focusing upon the specific areas where generation is going to be open, generating electricity project is going to be open to the private sector. It is a pinching way of telling that if you start a hydel project, then you come to the Government and get the clearance. What about the other projects? We have to focus those things. Generation of electricity is important because high demand is already there. The agriculturists are trained to utilise electricity. The small-scale industries, medium industries and heavy industries are also trained to utilise electricity. Every household is utilising electricity. People have started making their food by using electricity. People are using air-conditioners and other things. That type of demand for electricity is there. How much are we generating? That focus is absent in this particular enactment. We feel that that should be focussed. Only then, the private sector investment, especially the foreign investment, can come into India.

It is a consumer product and it is a hot cake, which can be sold very easily in developing India. People are ready to get electricity by paying the cost provided it is made available at any time. Even the agriculturists are ready to get electricity if you are ready to give it immediately.

What is the situation in India? We have to wait for so many years for getting a small pump set connected by electricity. There is no doubt that the electricity line is going a long way. It has got its transmission loss. Wastage is also taking place. At the same time, how best do we have to utilise the technology so that we can reduce the transmission wastage and utilise that power for the purpose of the agriculturists? That type of demand is now coming forward. The people are ready to pay. In Tamil Nadu, they have to deposit Rs. 25,000 for getting a connection. The people are ready but the Government is not ready and the State Electricity Board is not ready to give the connection because they do not have the power to distribute. That is the situation in every State. ...*(Interruptions)* I may be permitted to speak for a few more minutes.

Therefore, given the priority in this sector, we have to find out a way to see that there is generation of more electricity so that this enactment gives a new way for the foreign investment to take place in this sector.

Secondly, I would like to concentrate on transmission loss. Transmission wastage is only due to the mismanagement. You have now captive power generation. Captive generation is also allowed here. Even a small sugar mill can generate electricity. They are selling at a higher profit. They are not selling to the agriculturists, but they are selling to the State Electricity Boards which subsidise it and then sell it to the agriculturists. That is the way it is happening now. Therefore, there is a resource available. We can produce electricity through the sugarcane molasses. That is the raw material available now. But that electricity is not having the value addition to the agricultural products. Also, it is not used by the agriculturists straightaway for getting a proper price for that particular electricity by fair means. They are selling to the Electricity Boards and the Electricity Boards are selling again by giving subsidy. Therefore, this aspect should be noted. A clear line should be demarcated so that the agriculturists are getting the benefit Throughout India, the agriculturists

should have the benefit of getting electricity at a cheaper price.

We are agitating in Tamil Nadu against the Government policy. They are asking for money for the electricity supplied to the agriculturists. But, at the same time, we know that if the price of the foodgrains is raised, if proper price is given to the agricultural products, then we will not be worried about the electricity being paid by the agriculturists. But if the price of the foodgrains is lowered and at the same time they are asked to pay for the electricity, that means the agriculturists are going to fail in the debt trap. Therefore, they have to come out of the debt trap. Only for that purpose, we are asking for it. Here you have given a provision.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI (Salem) : Sir, could my learned friend explain to the House in which Congress-ruled State free electricity is given?

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN : I would like to request my learned friend to advise his Chief Minister to increase tile price of the foodgrains, that is, the paddy price should be increased, the price of sugar should be increased and the price of cotton should be increased. If the price of every agricultural product is increased, then we are ready to follow a timetable of electricity price in the Congress-ruled States. ...*(Interruptions)* Kindly ask your Chief Minister to do this and then you can come and ask me.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : I have asked a pointed question which State Government ruled by the Congress Party is giving free electricity to the agriculturists and the farmers. He is not coming out with an answer. None of the Congress-ruled States have given free electricity to the agriculturists. Then, what authority have they got to question the Government of Tamil Nadu?

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN : I am not yielding. I have already replied, therefore, I do not want to yield to him for that question.

Now, the grant is given under clause 98. The Government is going to give grant for which purpose? "The Central Government may, after due appropriation made by Parliament in this behalf, make to the Central Commission grants and loans of such sums of money as that Government may consider necessary." Since there is Central grant, the States, which are giving free electricity to the agriculturists, should subsidise it.

Finally, I would like to sum up my submission by saying that the comprehensive Bill is appreciated, but at the same time it needs some more trimmings so that it can come to the market. The Preamble is not at all telling about the system, how it is competitive and how the private sector is going to come into the electricity field.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (Parbhani) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of my Shivsena Party, I strongly support the Electricity Bill, 2001.

The Minister of Power introduced this Bill yesterday and today he would have heard the speeches of many hon. Members. He had already clarified the role of Power Ministry yesterday itself. I congratulate him instantly. I think there is no need to reply the debate. I do not know whether our friend from Communist Party, Shri Prabodh Panda is looking something good in this Bill or not. He has mentioned here these points. One, the security aspect of the consumers is not taken into account in the Bill; Secondly, what provisions have been made for villagers in reference to rural electrification and thirdly, what necessitated to bring this Bill in hurry. Hon. Minister of Power would reply it but it would have been better if Shri Panda had said about it after going through this Bill.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon. Minister of Power has introduced this Bill in the House with some particular specifications. Government have itself clarified its role. So far as enhancement of rural electrification is concerned the Minister of power has a lot of experience of it. He has been the Councillor of Mumbai Metropolis. His constituency is

[Shri Suresh Ramrao Jadhav]

Ratnagiri district which is a region of small villages and towns. Thus, he has experience of Mumbai Metropolis and small villages. I am viewing his this kind of experience in this Bill. The Minister of Power has placed four important objectives about electricity in this Bill. It has the provision of generation, i.e. the provision of quick generation of electricity. Our country consist of more than 100 crore of people and has vast geographical areas. It is not an easy task to provide electricity to all. Howsoever speeches we may deliver here. Hon. Minister has himself admitted that so far we have not been able to provide electricity to 80,000 villages. Electricity could not be supplied to fifty percent of the people. The Bill has been introduced by the Minister in the House in a bid to provide power to every home in future.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is a mention of power generation in this Bill. What should be done to increase power generation. All such aspects have been very well defined in this bill. Losses are occurred in transmission. It is correct that we generate electricity but when electricity is transmitted, then fault develops. In order to prevent this irregularity several provisions have been made in this Bill. Distribution of electricity is a very important thing. When the electricity is generated, then comes consumer. Several significant provisions have been made in the Bill to provide electricity to every house and the fields of the farmers. Shri Prabodh Panda has alleged that the Government have not taken care for the protection of the consumer. The Power Minister would answer about it in his reply. The hon'ble Minister in clause 43(1) and 56(2) had expressed his intentions about introducing the Bill. While giving utmost priority to the consumer and considering the consumer a focal point he has introduced the Bill in the house. The Minister of Power said in his speech at the time of its introduction that the interest of the consumer is above all.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would conclude mentioning some specialties of this Bill. The theory of tariff and how the Central Electricity Authority will check pilferage of power

has been considered in this Bill. Electricity worth twenty thousand crore rupees is beings pilfered. If we succeed in checking pilferage of electricity through this Bill then it would be helpful in solving the problem of shortage of electricity to a great extent.

Lastly, I would like to say that both the Ministers of Power belong to Maharashtra. There is a severe shortage of power in Maharashtra. There is a shortage of electricity by 1800 to 2000 Megawatt. The farmer of Maharashtra is suffering due to shortage of electricity. Farmers are not getting electricity for eight to ten hours daily due to the load shedding. There is load shedding for two to three days in a week...(Interruptions) Mr. Shinde is the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. I would request, through you, both the Ministers of power to improve the situation of electricity and pay special attention towards the farmers of Maharashtra. It is essential to provide electricity in the rural areas, small towns and every house in Maharashtra.

19.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, just now many of our friends have expressed their concern. These two Ministers are capable enough in providing, electricity to each and every house in a country of one hundred crore population. This Bill would be helpful in overcoming the shortage of electricity in future and it would also be effective in this matter. If this Bill is implemented in letter and spirit, we would certainly succeed in handling the shortage of electricity, with these words, I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY (Asansol) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, while speaking on this Electricity Bill, 2001, I want to oppose certain points because they are worth opposing. I think that when this Bill was prepared, it was prepared under the prescriptions of market fundamentalists and they have prescribed that there should be competition in the power sector and that is why, the private parties should come to the power sector. Still, there is no bar on the

private parties to come to the power sector and private parties are still working in the power sector.

This Bill is concentrated on unbundling and dismantling of the State electricity system. Why? Private parties will not come to the power sector unless the tariff is hiked to their satisfaction. Private parties are not coming. That is why, they are insisting that the tariff should be hiked. Then, they will come. This is the experience of Orissa and other States.

In the international arena and in the national arena, you cannot show any example where they have been successful with this reform and restructuring in the power sector. France and Norway are the capitalist countries, but still they do not require reform and restructuring in the power sector. They have plainly told the market fundamentalists of the world that this will create a complex situation and will be burdensome on the State. That is why, they refused to accept reform or restructuring, whatever you call it, in the power sector. Even Norway has not accepted it.

That is why, through you, I am asking the hon. Minister of Power whether under such international scenario and national scenario, it would be possible to come successful by reforming power sector. They have just hiked the tariff. What are the recommendations of experts regarding hiking of the tariff? I can quote something, but time is very limited.

In Uttar Pradesh, the World Bank appointed some Consultant, namely, M/s. PUTNAM. They have submitted the recommendations for the hike, but they have not been accepted. But, what is the trend? The trend is very very dangerous for the people, and for the consumers. How much is the hike? In the agricultural field, the hike is to the tune of 612.8 per cent. Even the public works have not been spared. The hike in the public works is to the tune of 254.7 per cent. On the other hand, the percentage of increase in food industries is not more. It is just 16.5 per cent or so. What is the uniform tariff? The large industries will consume electricity at the same tariff that is

to be borne by the cultivators and the agriculturists. That is why I think that this Bill should be reviewed. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has rightly said, without forming a National Power Policy, this Bill will not work. On the basis of the National Power Policy if this Bill would have been presented over here, then to say that they will progress by 2012 by saying "Electricity to all people" would have been better. Had this been so, then this Bill would have been welcomed. But, in this way, it would not be possible. That is why I will request the hon. Minister to review it in this way. Unbundling and dismantling of the State electricity system should not be there. Although this is a concurrent subject, yet this should be stopped.

[Translation]

*SHRI ADHI SANKAR (Cuddalore) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity at participate in the discussion on Electricity Bill 2001. While moving the Bill in this august House for consideration, hon. Minister Shri Anand Geethe in his introductory remarks stated that there are over 4 lakh reunite villages yet to have electricity connection. There are about 80 thousand villages that are yet to have access to electricity. As far as domestic purpose electricity supply is concerned, there are about 50 percent of households that go without electricity connection still. He said that the aim of this Bill is to attend to their needs. The Minister in his introductory speech further stressed on the need to stem power theft and the necessity to augment further the power generation. Among the consumers, certain section must continue to have subsidies and steps must be taken to provide subsidies to the needy in the new regime. The reform process that is sought to be taken up now must benefit the consumers. Employment generation in the power sector must not be lost sight of Uninterrupted power supply must be ensured. The consumers must get power supply in a quality measure at competitive rates. Hon. Minister while commencing this debate spelt out the need to cater to the needs of the consumers in an effective way.

*Original in Tamil.

[Shri Adhi Sankar]

A country's economic growth or its industrial growth can be gauged from the performance and utilization of power sector. As far as our country is concerned, Electricity Boards of many of the States are in the red. Many of the State Governments seeking umbrage under the plea that they have paucity of funds, hand over the responsibility of setting up power generation units to the private sector. Thereafter the State Electricity Boards are forced to buy power from such private sector operators at an exorbitant rate. Apart from power generation even the power distribution has been handed over to private sector in States like Delhi and Orissa. Shri Govindasamy and Shri Rathnasabapathy the President and General Secretary of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board Workers' Progressive Union have written to the Centre through our leader Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi that care must be taken while going ahead with this Electricity Bill. I urge upon the Minister to look into these valid suggestions to protect the interests of all the Electricity Boards and its employees.

I would like to draw your attention to the fall out that will be there after the enactment of this Electricity Act. All the Electricity Boards must hand over within an year all their assets to the respective State Governments. Thereafter it will be vested with the State Governments to restructure the State Electricity Boards and streamline their functioning.

The functioning of the State Electricity Boards could be streamlined by way of segregating power generation, transmission and distribution. Right now this has been done in some of the States in their Electricity Boards. The private sectors that are entrusted with power generation and distribution can sell electricity to anyone at any price they may determine. There can not be any Governmental control on this. As of now some private sector units generate power in Tamil Nadu but they can sell it only to the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board as they do not have transmission lines of their own. The private players in the communication industry can have exclusive cable

connections of their own as their's is a limited service. But electricity is different. The law provides for setting up separate transmission lines if the private players in the power sector so desire. If such separate networks are created it could pave way for unfair competition, unwanted rivalry, undesirable stand-offs, confounded confusion, and enormous transmission loss and power theft.

Both the private sector and public sector shall have different yardsticks to determine power tariff. This will perpetuate the vertical divide of the haves and have-nots in the society. Power generation and distribution is an essential service. Outsiders and even foreigners may step into this sector with profit motives. The gigantic monolithic power sector currently or till recently in the hands of the Government will slip into the hands of the private sector. In the long run, this will affect the interests of the consumers especially the poor and the middle class. This will come in the way of taking power to the remote villages where our underprivileged brethren live. One day electricity may become a luxury item and may be beyond the reach of the poor and underprivileged sections of the society. As such, the privatization in the name of globalisation has cut in to the reservation system. Cut in jobs and denial of reservation in jobs will affect the deprived sections of the society more. Erosion of reservation in jobs will affect the deprived sections of the society more. Erosion of reservation in jobs will lead to the conglomerates running electricity business as their own. Only their own men can find place there. This will lead to further privatization of already commissioned and functioning Hydel and Thermal power projects. Operations with loss may be staged managed with a design if only to sell away public sector units to the private sector. About 9 lakh of employees with the Electricity Boards including the Engineers would lose jobs and job security would go. I appeal to the Union Ministry of Power to look into these aspects and plug the loopholes in the system that is scught to be restructured.

In Tamil Nadu, the power supply for agricultural pump sets was free during the rule of our leader Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi. In order to benefit about 16 lakh agriculturists

in Tamil Nadu, an order was issued on 17.11.1990 to provide free electricity for agricultural purposes with retrospective effect from 1.9.90. Sugarcane growers of Tamil Nadu were provided with free electricity to crush the sugarcane they have cultivated. During our leader's rule in Tamil Nadu, the functioning of the thermal power units were commendable and also won awards during the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000. During Dr. Karunanidhi's rule, it was decided to establish 60 sub-stations every year. Hence 233 sub-stations at a cost of Rs 1720 crores with a capacity of 3245 MVA were set up by our Government.

In Tamil Nadu, when our DMK Government led by Dr. Karunanidhi was in power, the power tariff for domestic consumption was 134 paise per unit as on 7.1.2000. At the same time it was 350 paise per unit in Andhra Pradesh as on 4.6.2000. In Karnataka it was 183 paise per unit as on 16.7.1998 and 215 paise per unit in Maharashtra as on 1.5.2000. Power tariff for HPT for industrial purposes was 460 paise per unit in Tamil Nadu, 518 paise in Andhra Pradesh, 527 paise in Karnataka, 444 paise in Maharashtra during the same time. LPT power tariff for commercial purposes remained to be 383 paise in Tamil Nadu, 502 paise in Andhra, 460 paise in Karnataka, 440 paise per unit in Maharashtra during the same time.

What is happening in Tamil Nadu is to the country. The erstwhile achievements are being blacked out. Hon. Member Shri Selvaganapathy in his intervention stated that free supply of electricity for agricultural purposes is continuing in Tamil Nadu. Free supply is different and grant of subsidy is different. ...*(Interruptions)*

We indeed feel happy to be the mouthpiece of the peasants. At the same time we find you to be the trumpets, puppets and tools in the hands of big capitalists and those who trade in power and expressing my pain at that let me conclude my speech.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Adhi Shankar, please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Sir, a point of clarification.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Sir, the hon. Member referred to my name. I may be permitted to clarify. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Objectionable remarks, if any, will be expunged.

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity—to a lady Member—to place my views on this Bill. It is a very important Bill.

I rise here to support this Bill with seeking a few clarifications from the hon. Minister. The Electricity Bill, 2001 is, no doubt, a bold and comprehensive initiative. On the whole, the Electricity Bill proposes to consolidate the laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading and use of electricity. It talks about taking measures conducive to development of electricity industry, rationalisation of electricity tariff, constitution of a Central Electricity Authority and Regulatory Commissions etc.

Sir, due to paucity of time, I would pose certain questions and clarifications instead of making a full-fledged speech.

Sir, there is a book "Milestones of Success" published by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India. I would appeal to the hon. Minister and also the hon. Prime Minister of India to have a critical analysis of the schemes mentioned there. There is a heading "Power" at page 46 of this book. Its first paragraph says :

"Bureau of Energy Efficiency set up in March, 2002 following Energy Conservation Act coming into force."

There are so many paragraphs, and all are required to be analysed critically.

[Dr. V. Saroja]

The Bill is now under discussion. The capacity addition of 4,110 MW has been finalised for the 10th Five Year Plan. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether they are going to achieve the goal of the 10th Five Year Plan with this Bill? Of course, I congratulate the former Power Minister and now this hon. Minister for bringing forth this piece of legislation. But is it practically possible to implement all these things mentioned here?

But the most important and critical evaluation that is required to be done is in regard to the non-conventional energy. As the hon. Member, Shri Shivraj V. Patil rightly pointed out that we have almost exhausted the natural resources—the coal and oil. All of us know that for import of oil, as on date, we are paying Rs. 85,000 crore. There are financial constraints. So, especially taking into consideration the post Iraq war, are we in a position to contain everything, neglecting this non-conventional energy? Sir, I have my own doubts that we are not going to achieve any of the points that have been mentioned in this Bill. Where are we lacking?

Power is a critical infrastructure for economic development and for improving the quality of life. The installed power capacity has been increased from 1,362 MW to over 1 lakh MW since Independence. But what is the *per capita* utilisation of power in India today? The *per capita* consumption of electricity is 330 kilowatt which is the lowest in the world. With the painful heart I stand here to report—please underline this—that India has the lowest *per capita* utilisation of electricity. Whereas the *per capita* consumption of power in Brazil is 1,783 kilowatt. In China, it is 719 kilowatt; in UK, it is 5,843 kilowatt; in Australia, it is 6,606 kilowatt; in US, it is 8,747 kilowatt. But where are we now?

Sir, we have about 80,000 villages which are yet to be electrified. What are the shortcomings? The shortcomings are: inadequate power generation capacity; lack of optimum utilisation of the existing generation capacity; lack of grid discipline. Lack of grid discipline is a very important

point. We have to take steps. Then, there are inadequate inter-regional transmission links; inadequate and ageing transmission and distribution network.

So, they have to modernise the network.

The large scale theft and slow pacing of reforms is very important.

During the Ninth Five Year Plain, it was revealed that the State Governments had achieved 87 per cent, the central sector had achieved only 30 per cent, and the private sector had achieved 30 per cent. In the hydel and thermal, it was 46 per cent, whereas in the nuclear power, it is 100 per cent.

I want to know whether we are utilising this 100 per cent nuclear power. If not, how the Ministry is going to utilise this nuclear power?

The country is using only one-fourth of the hydel power. India is using only 17 per cent of the hydel potential, whereas in Norway, it is 58 per cent, in Canada, it is 41 per cent, and in Brazil, it is 31 per cent.

Am I not correct that the hydel generation of energy is cost-effective? Transmission loss and other losses are comparatively less in other areas.

The central source of financial crisis for the State Electricity Boards' losses, is due to the transmission and distribution. In 1977, it was about 25 per cent. During 1999-2000, it was 31 per cent. Sir, are we not carefully examining and finding out the loopholes?

During 1991 the gross subsidy was Rs. 7,494 crore, whereas now it is Rs. 32,429 crore.

The hon. Minister said that we have to be more careful in tapping the hydel power, and also in doing. We are not paying more attention to hydel power.

As far as the non-conventional energy is concerned, due to want to time, and also as the Bill has not been

specifically authorised to non-conventional energy, I would request the hon. Minister to have a full-fledged discussion on the non-conventional energy, by inviting the Chief Ministers and the Energy Ministers of all the States. The Government of India should take into confidence all the State Chief Ministers in order to see that electricity which is the sheet-anchor of the development of the country, could achieve its goal.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had given many amendments to the Bill presented by the Hon'ble Minister. According to the old tradition in our Legislative Assembly I thought that I would be getting an opportunity to speak. But I got that opportunity in the last. Geete Saheb has presented this Bill for the second time. It was presented for the first time by Shri Suresh Prabhu but for the second time he has presented it in the House yesterday. There are two three points in it on which I have some apprehensions, which are to be explained by the Minister. Your entire Bill is divided into 180 clauses. In this you have written that this Bill is brought for repealing Indian Electricity Act, 1910, Indian Electric Supply Act, 1948 and Electricity Regulatory Commission Act, 1998 and overlapping of subjects specified in these clauses.

What I mean to say is that three old Acts which were formulated have been mentioned there in the Bill. We are considering the Bill. After some time the House would pass this Bill and this will become an Act. Which is accepted, the definition has been inserted in this bill to cease this fact. I would like to know that when we would withdraw it and when it is withdrawn and in between your rules would not be framed which you have mentioned in the Act that rules would be framed, detailed, outlines would be formulated, it would be preferred properly how would it happen? Kindly clear our doubts in this regard.

Our second point is about the financial memorandum given by you, you may go through the third para given in it. "The annual recurring expenditure to be incurred on the salary and allowance of the Chairman, members

officers and employees of Appellate Tribunal is 3.95 lakh rupees each year. The non recurring expenditure towards the residence establishment including furniture, office expenditure etc. and miscellaneous heads of the Appellate Tribunal is 29 lakh rupees for each year. There is no mention of other recurring of non recurring expenditure in the Act." It is not certain, why you have written so. The financial memorandum and data given by you are not certain. The data with you now is the same which you have given. Until the rules are framed they are not accepted till then under which rule or regulation would you incur the expenditure kindly clarify this objection.

When hon'ble Suresh Prabhu had introduced the Bill, he had moved a motion to refer it to the Select Committee and it was also referred to a Select Committee. But I would like to know why did you not accept it?

I want to read page 373 para 13.17 with your permission. "The committee find that according to the clause 76(5)(b) the Chairman of the Central Electricity Authority shall be the ex-officio member of the Central Regulatory Commission. This provision was already existing. By amending it, it was recommended that the Committee desire that since the CEAO has been entrusted the work pertaining to planning, therefore it is not desirable to include the Chairman of CEAO as a permanent member to the committee. Although committee feels that the assistance of the Chairman of CE should be taken in the technical matters of CEIC. Why did you not accepted it? It is written in remark given by your department that has not been accepted. Reason should be given in the column for not accepting it. There is no surcharge there, any financial matter is not involved, any administrative matter is also not involved, even though why did you not accepted it? If you have accepted to it, the reasons therefor should be narrated. You have sent an expression note to the Parliament. I want to request you to kindly look into it.

Again it is written in para 13.18 of page 74 that, "The Committee find that according tot he 78(5) the Central Government shall, within one month from the date of occurrence of any vacancy due to death, resignation or

[Shri Rajo Singh]

removal of a Member and six months before the superannuation or end of tenure make a reference to the Selection Committee for filling up of the vacancy. This is your provision. But you did not follow the instructions of the Committee. The Committee said—The Committee feels that the Selection Committee does not have any important role under the clause 78 and 85 and this matter could be delayed. Therefore they feels that the Members could be selected through the Public Service Commission only. So the Committee recommended to amend these two clauses in accordance to it. Sir, the subject matter is quite lengthy, there are several such points, which should be accepted, but they have not accepted it. I want to know particularly about the two points that what is their problem. This document is quite good, but who will implement it. Whether you will implement it? You will not do. Whether it will be implemented by the Minister for State? She will also not implement. Whether the Prime Minister would implement it? He will also not do it. You have been given in writing and you have implemented it. We asked you, why so many amendments have been brought? You said that Shri Santosh Mohan Devji is the Chairman of the Standing Committee and he has go experience of being a Union Minister in the Government of India and to run the administration and such a experienced person has recommended it. The Committee consists of the Members from all the parties. Our Deputy leader is sitting here in the House, once he sat on this Chair. It was his vision that there would be Standing Committee and the representatives from all the parties would be the Member of these Committees and they would discuss the subject matter in length. Whatever recommendation would be made, those will be appropriate.

Sir, I am not deviating from the subject. Hon'ble Member, Shri Subodh Mohiteji is present here in the House, who said that it is a progressive bill. Even we accept it. But Shri Suresh Prabhuji from your party is also present. There would be some representatives from your party also in the Select Committee. Why the recommendations of the Select Committee has not been

accepted. His department said—not accepted. They said so, but they have not given any explanation as a public representative, it has become your responsibility include it, you have not included these two recommendations. They are under the influence of officers. The Committee recommended to check it, and they have not accepted it and you are compelled to circulate it in the House.

I want to say something about Bihar. The funds provided for the rural schemes, have not been utilised. The Minister of State gave a reply in this regard. If the funds have not been utilised, whether your accountability is over. You say that the electricity has to be provided in 80 thousand villages, whether you will go on foot to provide the electricity. Law would be passed, but we have got two proposals pertaining to hydel power projects, but you are not providing funds for this purpose. Two hydel projects—Kainur and Katband—are lying pending and you are not providing funds for it. If these funds are arranged, the electricity would be available. I want to asks that since what time Kahalgaon, Munger, Lakhisarai, Shekhpura, Nalanda lines are lying pending. You should work on it. The Power transformers being installed in the Power station is not manufactured in your factory. The requisition for the same has been submitted and a letter has been written to the secretary to the Ministry that we need it, but nothing concrete has so far come up.

I think that this law is not at all useful and it is not going to provide any benefit to the public even. Earlier there was a saying that the God has given us three things—climate, water and air. No one should have a right on those things but today nothing is possible without electricity. You go to Bihar. You will find darkness everywhere. You will not be able to study in candle light and will not be any need for spectacles. If we will go there, we will sit leisurely. Today electricity is essential for our life. Therefore your leader has taken over the department of electricity. Whether you are there in this department or Mr. Suresh Prabhu may be there, but Mr. Thakre has demanded this Ministry from the Government of India after giving much thought to this choice, so that small of the smallest villager as well as the big industrialist may (touch his feet) be under his control.

Shri Mohite said, there is a shortage of electricity in Maharashtra. How it had happened there? There should not be any shortage of electricity there because the charge of electricity department is under your control from the very beginning. There is electricity crisis in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh...*(Interruptions)* The Government do not belong to a certain class, it belong to the Public. The Government should work in the interest of the public while passing this law and making the necessary amendments regarding it.

[English]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it goes without saying that electricity is the life of civilisation. But the civilisation can sustain if the people at large are benefited by the economic growth. So, we cannot overlook this important aspect.

In this Bill the responsibility of rural electrification has been given to the Panchayats, local bodies, and cooperatives. It is a very funny matter because Panchayats, local bodies, and cooperatives do not have the required technology, machinery, mechanism, etc. But the creamy and commercial areas have been given to the private players. So, this is a very important issue. In this Bill, clause 6 says:

"The Appropriate Government shall endeavour to supply electricity to all areas including villages and hamlets."

I would request the hon. Minister to delete the word 'endeavour'. Rather, I would like to add:

"The Appropriate Government shall supply electricity to all areas including villages and hamlets."

It is the duty of the welfare State and the Government to supply electricity to all the people including the interior areas. The word 'endeavour' does not mean that everybody will get power. The Government will endeavour but the Government will not succeed in supplying power to interior areas. That is why, I would request the hon. Minister to delete the word 'endeavour'.

Clause 7 of the Bill says:

"Any generating company may establish, operate and maintain a generating station 'without obtaining a licence under this Act if it complies with the technical standards relating to connectivity with the grid referred to in clause (b) of section 73."

I would like to add a few more words, namely, 'generating company will also discharge the responsibility of rural electrification'. These words should be added in this clause. The private players are being allowed to generate power without the responsibility of supplying electricity in the rural areas. Around 75 per cent people of our country live in the rural areas. They do not have power and they are not getting so many other benefits. The Government is planning to phase out the withdrawal of subsidy. Our country is divided into haves and have nots. Sir, until the haves and have nots system is withdrawn, I think, subsidy cannot be withdrawn also.

It is because ours is a Welfare State and thus it should give subsidy in order that the have-nots of the society could uplift their conditions. That is why, withdrawal of subsidy would be improper.

Sir, I would like to quote what is mentioned in clause 10 of the Bill in regard to the duties of generating companies. It says:

"Subject to the provisions of this Act, the duties of a generating company shall be to establish, operate and maintain generating stations, tie-lines, sub-stations and dedicated transmission lines connected therewith in accordance with the provisions of this Act or the rules or regulations made thereunder."

The words 'for rural electrification' should be added to this clause.

The generating companies who are willing to set up any generating station does not require any licence. But for transmission and distribution, a private party will require permission from the Central Electricity Commission or from the State Electricity Commissions.

[Shri Lakshman Seth]

Sir, Government is run by the representatives of the people. The peoples' representatives are answerable and accountable to the people. The Commission is not directly accountable to the people. So, what would happen is that these State Electricity Commissions or the Central Electricity Commission, as the case may be, would aggressively accord permission to the private players in matters of transmission. Distribution and trading without imposing any conditionalities. What would happen in that case? There would be imbalance. That is why, 'Government' is being replaced by a Commission and a Tariff Regulatory Authority. What would happen in the long run is that the Government would have to go to the courts for getting relief. That is why all the aspects, like how the Government proposes to provide electricity to the rural areas, how the poor people, including those belonging to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and those belonging to the Other Backward Classes, would get relief from the Government, should be spelt out in the Bill itself. These things should not be left to be decided by the Commissions or the Regulatory Authority, who does not have any accountability to the people at large. These things should be taken into consideration.

Sir, it has been mentioned in the Bill that at a later stage a National Policy on Electricity would be declared. This National Policy would spell out so many things with regard to rural electrification, tariff and such other things. Now, whenever that National Policy comes the representatives of the people would have the opportunity to give their opinions on it. The people at large would have the opportunity to give their views and also the experts and professionals would find an opportunity to express their opinions on that. After the National Policy has been declared, the Bill could be introduced in keeping with the National Policy. What would happen now is that this Bill would be passed, the law would be enacted and only after that the National Policy would be introduced. That would be an improper thing to be done. That is why I do not accept this Bill. There are so many shortcomings and

lacunae in this Bill. This Bill is meant for privatisation of the power sector. After the passage of the Bill the private players will have an opportunity to make profits and the people of this country will have to bear the burden of the profits to be earned by the private players. So, I would like to request the hon. Minister to first come out with the National Policy on Electricity and then in keeping with that policy an exhaustive Bill could be introduced in the House. That is my humble submission.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Electricity Bill, 2001 has been brought in regard to generation, transmission, Distribution, trade of electricity and its various other uses. This Bill has been brought by amending the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, Electricity supply Act, 1948 and Electricity Regulatory Commission Act, 1998. Shri Anant Geete is holding the charge of Ministry of Power. Shrimati Jayawantiben Mehta also belongs to Maharashtra, without power, no industries or offices can be run and no work can be done. Today, electricity is needed in every field, Atalji is also aware of the situation when one is out of power. Now he is in power for the last five years and knows how much energy lies in the power. I mean to say that power is like this only. Both of our Ministers in charge of power, Shri Anant Geete and Shrimati Mehta are being backed by Shri Balasaheb Thakre and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpai respectively. Through this Bill, efforts have been made to improve the situation of electricity. We have not been able to provide electricity to our 80 thousand villages even after so many years. Besides this an amount to the tune of 4 lac crore rupees is needed to generate 1 lac megawatt of electricity. This point needs consideration. We have the experience of Enron company. When this company was engaged by the Government of Maharashtra for generation of power. The rate of electricity was fixed at two rupees and twenty five paise per unit. Enron is an American company which came to Mumbai and they spent a lot of funds there. Recently Mumbai High Court had given a judgment in regard to commencement of its operations. The common man should

be aware of the quantum of power generated and the rate of electricity should also be fixed at minimum. If the rates are fixed at four, five or ten rupees, it will become a big problem. This is a good Bill like other Bills, however, they are not implemented properly.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is large scale theft of power in the country. Provision has been made in the Bill for a fine of five to ten thousand rupees and three months of imprisonment for those who indulge in power-theft. I think that this should be increased. Those who are indulging in power-theft should be fined twenty thousand to two lakhs of rupees and should be imprisoned for a period of one year to one and half years. It will be more appropriate if such provision is made in the Bill.

Sir, Maharashtra earns maximum revenue to the tune of Rs. 9,200 crores in the country. Despite this, we are still in need of two thousand megawatt of electricity. It is true that presently there is coalition government in Maharashtra. However, it was your party's government four and half years ago and we had asked them to generate the needed two thousand megawatt of electricity. However, that was not done and your party went out of power. Two Ministers from Maharashtra are here. Therefore, arrangements should be made to allocate funds to Maharashtra needed for generation of two thousand megawatt of power. Maharashtra government is ready to take up several projects. You have to do this work also. I support this Bill on behalf of my party. We will support you, but will never support your party. This is a good Bill, but we have to see that how it can be implemented properly. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR (Akola) : Whatever is in my mind, has come out in the open.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Whatever is in my mind, it is there only, put whatever has come out in the open is probably in our mind. There is no politics in this matter. This is a good bill which will bring development in the country. If there is power, there will be progress in the country. That is why, we support this Bill.

"Agar hamein bijli nahi milegi
Toh saare desh mein andhera fael jayega.
Andhere ke kaaran Atal Bihri Vajpai
Ka raj chala jayega,
Aur hamara raj ane se
Ujala ho jayega."

With the words that you will also take steps in building a bright future, I conclude.

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, 23 members of the House have participated in the debate on Electricity Bill and all the political parties except one have supported this Bill.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Which is that party,

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : They are also having some reservations. Their opposition is not that much strong.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Hon'ble Members have given many suggestions here, which are very important, I extend my thanks to the Hon'ble Members for all those valuable suggestions. If I will start replying all the points, which were raised in the House, it will take a lot of time. Therefore every member has raised a few points, which I think are need to be replied and even the Members would also like that out of the points which they have raised some points are very important, although every point is important, but some of the points are necessarily be replied to.

Shri Santosh Mohan Devji had started the discussion on this from the opposition side. He himself is a Chairman of the Standing Committee on Energy. When this Bill was introduced in the House for the first time, it was referred to the Standing Committee by the House. The Standing Committee after having discussion on this Bill with all the persons related to the energy on different levels, National and State level institutions and consumers finally submitted its Report in the House. Standing Committee had made approximately 112 suggestions in its Report out of which

[Shri Anant Gangaram Geete]

89 have been accepted by us. Out of them, 58 suggestions have been incorporated directly into the Bill and we will certainly try to incorporate 31 suggestions, which are accepted by us while framing policy on energy and formulating rules.

As Mr. Subodh Mohiteji said, that it might be the first Bill; in which 80 percent suggestions have been accepted. While speaking on this bill, Shri Santosh Mohan Devji has showed his concern about the rural electricity and I completely agree with the concern.

20.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, still the number of such villages in the country is 80 thousands, where we have not been able to supply electricity so far. When I moved this proposal in the House, I clearly stated that still there are 50 percent people in the country to whom we are unable to supply electricity. As per the definition of supply of electricity and electrification of villages, if we provide a bulb on the border of the village, the whole village is considered to be electrified. This is wrong. This should not happen. We need to improve it. This definition is needed to be changed. Therefore we have written a letter to the Chief Ministers of all the states to give their suggestions to make appropriate changes in the definition. According to the present situation of electricity in the country, we want that the electricity should be made available to at least ten percent houses in the villages, only then the village should be considered as electrified.

Sir, I completely agree with Shri Santosh Mohan Devji and I confess that the condition of electrification of villages is very unsatisfactory. He has raised many points, but one of them was about the State Regulatory Commissions. They should be made accountable to someone. There should be some sort of control over them. This provision has been made in this Bill. An appellate tribunal would have a control over these Regulatory Commissions of the States and the Chairman of this

Tribunal would be a non-political person and he will look after them...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, neither the Assemblies nor the Parliament are going to have control over these bodies. So, we would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the methodology that the Government is going to follow so that the Parliament and Assemblies will have control over these bodies.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : I will certainly answer your this point too. These Regulatory Commissions are working independently. The State Governments do to have any control over them. Although State Governments constitute them but they can not give any directions to them because they have been granted some judicial powers. As in the Judiciaries of the states there are High Courts and there is Supreme Court in the Centre, which have control over the High Courts, such sort of arrangement is being made in it. Today the states, where such sort of Regulatory Commissions are already existing and we realise from our experience that these Regulatory Commissions are certainly fulfilling their responsibility. If there is some control over them, then it would be of the Appellate Tribunal, whose Chairman would be the retired Judge of the Supreme Court. Therefore the concern expressed by you is of no use...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : Sir, the judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts are responsible to this House by way of impeachment procedure. Our question is: what is the methodology that the Government is going to follow in this case?

[Translation]

As the Chief Justice of Supreme Court is answerable to this House and the Chief Justice of High Courts of the

States are answerable to the Legislature Assemblies because the motion of impeachment could be moved against them in the Legislative Assemblies of the States or in Lok Sabha. Whether such sort of arrangement is being made by you in these Regulatory Commissions so that they could be made answerable to the States or the Centre?

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : I would like to remove your misunderstanding. There are many disputes pending with the Regulatory Commissions. If the verdicts being given by the Regulatory Commissions do not give solution then, we are approaching the High Courts. Much time is being taken by the High Courts to give their decision and in this sector quick decisions are required and therefore there are a lot of cases, which are lying pending for years together in the High Courts, on which quick justice is desirable, quick decisions are required, which we are not getting. This arrangement is required for it. Therefore, I am repeating it time and again that if someone is not satisfied with the decisions of the Regulatory Commission, then one can go to the High Court against them. Here we have made a provision to constitute an Appellate Tribunal, but the decision given by this Appellate could be challenged in the Supreme Court only. By doing so we have tried to maintain the dignity of the Regulatory Commission and we have also as certainly honoured the dignity of the Supreme Court Judge as its Chairman.

[English]

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : The role of the Assembly has been minimised. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Please let me complete my answer. I completely agree with what Shri Virendra Palji has said that Minister of Power, Shri Kumar Manglamji who is no more with us, had made an important contribution in having brought this Bill, which has been introduced here in the House for passing. We can not

ignore the contribution made by ex-Minister, my colleague Shri Suresh Prabhujji, in whose tenure this Bill had been introduced in the House. Apart from it, the Standing Committee as well as all of you, the members of the House, have made an important contribution in it. He has given a suggestion about the open excess. We have made a provision to provide open excess in the transmission sector and it has been given in the distribution sector also. The reason behind it is that the competition is required in the energy sector particularly in the area of distribution. Therefore Regulatory Commission will have a control over the open excess, likely to be provided by us, as per his suggestion. The Government will not be having any direct control on it, I have given the clarification on the concern expressed by him.

Shri Roopchand Palji has opposed the Bill but he has mentioned here about the provisions to enact the stern laws to check the theft. First of all the West Bengal enacted the stern law to check the theft and even they implemented it too. As soon as the law was implemented, the results were evident. Theft cases have come down in West Bengal. Not even the number of theft cases have come down but the recovery has also increased. He welcomed the provision made in this Bill to check the theft. Apart from West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana and now Gujarat have also enacted the law and almost every state has given their consent to enact such sort of law. Gradually this law would be enacted in each and every state.

Shri Akhilesh Singhji is not present here. He mentioned here the deteriorating condition of the State Electricity Boards. The condition of almost every state is a matter of concern today. There are many reasons behind it. I do not want to go into all the reasons but I would like to refer particularly the loss of transmission and distribution and in particular the percentage of theft in the loss of distribution. There is a need to improve the condition of State Electricity Boards. The Government of India are running programmes for the said purpose and IPDR programme is one of them. There are two parts of this

[Shri Anant Gangaram Geete]

programme. One is related to the distribution system, which includes the technical problems, the fault occurs or the transformer trips somewhere, etc., It deals with the technical improvement. The Government of India provides the financial assistance for this purpose. The second part deals with the loss of State Electricity Boards. The State Electricity Boards are being encouraged to reduce their losses as the 50 percent of it would be distributed among them in the form of incentive. The House would be happy to know that this year we have received the claims of almost 1600 crore rupees under this incentive scheme, out of which we have to distribute Rs. 800 crore as incentive. The claim for Rs. 1600 crore means that the State Electricity Boards have reduced their losses upto Rs. 1600 crores. The loss has been reduced. We are trying for it. The Government of India is making efforts in this regard.

Shri Shivraj V. Patil have raised many points here. He had raised a point regarding the JPP i.e. Independent Power Producers. He had referred here the Enron Dabhol Power Project. I have accepted this fact in my speech that we had expected a major contribution of Independent Power Producers in the generation of Power but unfortunately we did not get the expected results. This is a fact. There are many reasons behind it. I do not want to go into those reasons, but the Independent Power Producers, Private investors and those who are interested to invest in the power generation sector wants security of their investments. The second thing, which he considers is that if he invests and deals in the power generation sector and when he will sell his generated power, he will get some profits. Whether it is a person or an organisation, no one enters into the business without the profits. In this Bill...(*Interruptions*) they do not have much opportunities to earn profit. The State Regulatory Commission is the authority to decide the rate of consumer tariff for the power generated by the independent power producers. The electricity should be sold at the rates decided by the State Electricity Commission. This would not create greater

possibilities to earn more profits. But certainly they want that security should be provided to the investor, so that he can provide electricity at cheaper rates. For this purpose certainly they should be provided with facilities required for it, which were not provided to them earlier, and I think that through this Bill the independent power producers would get better results in this area in the years to come. Certainly such provisions have been made in this Bill.

I fully agree to the second point, which was raised by Shri Shivraj V. Patil and several other members too, that the condition of the sources of energy generation, which we have i.e. hydel power, conventional energy, which is very cheap and the other is thermal power, which we have may it be coal based or gas based or diesel based, and also condition of all such sources that we have today, is degrading. The diesel and gas are becoming costlier. The price of coal is rising. There are reasons exist responsible for the shortage of such sources in future. There may be shortage also. Even for the water sources we are dependent on the nature. There was famine last year in the whole country. Even there was shortage of water also. The shortage of water has not only effected the fields or drinking purpose but also the generation of energy and there is need to pay more attention towards the sources of non-conventional energy and generation of energy. Definitely attention has been paid towards it in this Bill.

You had raised another issue which was about the definition of reforms. I fully agree with you but we consider this definition in other way that there could be no other definitions for reforms other than protection of the interests of a hundred crore people of our country. We too know the same definition and we have brought this Bill with the same view. There is no mention about privatisation in anywhere in the Bill. There is neither any compulsion nor any binding. It is for the State Government to decide. There is no binding for it. There is no restriction on any one in this Bill. There is no such provision that you have to go for privatisation only. It is for the State Government to take

decision on it but without privatisation, the targets fixed by us that we want to provide electricity in each and every village by 2007 and to each and every house by 2012 and to meet the target we would have to...*(Interruptions)* In order to meet this target we would have to generate additional energy of one lakh megawatt. Mr. Chairman, Sir, when Shri Raghuvansh Babu expressed his views as a member then he gave the details that 8 lakh crore rupees are required to provide electricity to the consumer and when such a huge amount is required then there should be participation of Union Government, State Government, Private area, foreign investment, domestic investment and we can attain the target only when we join all these together and I am fully hopeful that we can certainly meet the target. One member has asked that you have set a target of 41,000 megawatt in the tenth plan. I am happy to inform the house that certainly, target of 41,000 megawatt has been set for the tenth plan. Today there are projects of 30-32000 megawatt. They are at different levels and the targets set for the tenth plan would certainly be met and the provisions made in this Bill would certainly be helpful in meeting the target. Mr. Chairman, Sir, Raghuvansh Babu while expressing his views as a member had specifically highlighted the importance of energy. Today our development depends on energy. The country can not progress without energy and then he said that if electricity is provided in each and every house of the country that we would be at no.1 and if electricity is provided in every house in Bihar then certainly Bihar would also be No. 1. I would go a step, forward that if electricity is provided to every house it would certainly strengthen our situation. We can progress to that extent and therefore I fully agree with you. Shri Subodh Mohite had told in his speech that with mere passing of the bill we can not meet the target. We will have to prescribe as to how much losses are we going to reduce and quantity of power generation we would undertake.

Certainly we are thinking in this line but we have also decided and orders have also been given to the State Governments. In this way we are trying to reduce the losses. In the coming five years our effort would be to

reduce the losses gradually. We have set a target to generate 41,000 megawatt electricity in the tenth plan, we would try our best to meet the target. According to that we are trying to meet the demand of electricity as per our set target.

Shri Prakash Ambedkar have raised a very important issue asking whether the provision for providing electricity through grids to the rural people of remote areas had been made in this Bill. I would like to tell him that this provision has been made in the Bill. We want to provide electricity in the rural areas through grid, therefore its provision has also been made in it. But unfortunately in a very remote area, where the grid cannot reach in time, we are promoting the distributed generation system. If any private body, person, cooperative or local self government body is interested in setting up a project, generating electricity undertaking distribution then we have a distributed generation system for it, we are trying to make the distributed generation system very effective so as to ensure the supply of electricity in each and every village of the country. You had mentioned about national grid. We have a regional grid and five regional grids. East, West, South, North and North East. We are going to construct a national grid. Today surplus electricity is there in north eastern states. We are taking electricity towards south from there. We had got it inaugurated by the Prime Minister. There is 700 kilometer long transmission line between Talcher and Kolar, through this line surplus electricity is being taken towards Kolar from Orissa and they are providing electricity to the four southern states. In this manner electricity is being supplied from the surplus areas to the shortage areas.

Shri Rajo Singh is sitting here. He had raised two points. One was about the ECA Chairman. I would like to inform them that while taking decision on prescribing tariff of CERC, for technicalities of procution transmission, distribution specialists are required. This provision has also been made in the present law and sitting Chairman of CERC is its Member. According to the law laid down for the constitution of Regulatory Commission, the Chairman

[Shri Anant Gangaram Geete]

and the members are selected by the selection committee. The experience of Regulatory Commission had always been fairly good. We do not feel that there is any need for any change. Therefore, as per the suggestions made by the Standing Committee there is no need to make any changes in the present context.

You all know that we have passed many Bills and enacted them and also made several changes as per the need of hour as well as on our requirement. In this context if required we can certainly make changes in the interest of the country of the region concerned in future.

I may not be able to answer to all the Members. All the Members of Maharashtra have expressed their concern about shortage of 2500 megawatt of electricity in Maharashtra. We have assured the Chief Minister of Maharashtra and Minister of energy that Government of India and Ministry of Energy would certainly extend their cooperation in this regard. Whatever additional energy we have, may it be from unlocated quota or power trading corporation, or it is being take from eastern region to southern region or to the western region or it is to be provided out of the power which we are taking from eastern region to eastern, we are making our all out efforts on behalf of the Union Government as well as Ministry of energy to make all such arrangements and Maharashtra would also be helped in this process. Time does not permit me to answer all the points raised by all the Members and due to paucity of time I would take up only general issues.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to make it clear that this Bill will provide a link for the development programmes initiated to make the power sector successful. This Bill should not be dragged into controversies leading to the apprehensions of privatisation. Today some Members think that this has been done for multinationals or privatisation. I would like to say in this context that this Bill relates to generation, transmission, distribution and efforts to provide

regular supply of electricity to the consumers on an affordable price through open competition. Our electricity boards are capable enough to excel in this field with the vast experience they possess. There is no binding for privatisation in this Bill and I have also mentioned it. Simultaneously there is an extensive provision to protect the interests of the consumers. There is a provision for setting up an independent regulatory commission and appellate tribunal, which I have, also mentioned. So also there is a provision for implementing the national policies on transmission alongwith some sort of restriction after discussing it with the State Governments. Not only that provisions for supply of electricity to the small hutments of the village and declaration by Government in this regard are also contained in this Bill. Therefore I assure the House that this Bill would bring an open competition in the field of electricity for development and it comprises of accountability of Government towards protection of consumer interests and electrification of the country especially in the rural areas as well. I hope it would have a positive and reaching results,

Finally I would like to say that Bill is not a historical scripture written on an iron pillar but it is an resolution for moving towards a new direction and based on the experiences, appropriate changes would be brought before the House as and when required in the interest of the country as well as public interest. I thank you all the members and request to pass this Bill.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : We Shall extend our support to this Bill today. But we reserve the right to move one or two amendments in the Rajya Sabha because we are not satisfied. Pleased do not worry; we are supporting the Bill today. But we are not satisfied about the accountability of the Regulatory Commission before the Parliament. The C&AG Report comes here, but first the Public Accounts Committee takes it up and then it comes here. So, on this issue, we would like to have a further dialogue with you.

Secondly, you have mentioned about the rural

electrification. We are glad that you have said minimum ten per cent. So, on that, we would like to have some firm commitment from you. It has been the demand from all sides of the House. The rural electrification is a very basic need of the day. So, on these two points, we would like to have a further dialogue with you. You also said that there is no provision of privatisation, but there is a provision of privatisation.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : It is not binding...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : There is an option, but it is not a compulsion. But there is a provision, as Shri Shivraj V. Patil has also said. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : I have also agreed...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : So, there is no need of privatisation. Please do not say it and it should not go on record...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : I have also agreed...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Wherever it is necessary, it has to be done.

Sir, with these few words, I thank him for a very lucid reply. It is his maiden reply. I think, he has done a high-tension power line today.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill to consolidate the laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading an use of electricity and generally for taking measures conducive to development of electricity industry, rationalization of electricity tariff, ensuring transparent policies regarding subsidies, promotion of efficient and environmentally benign policies, constitution of Central Electricity Authority, Regulatory Commissions and

establishment of Appellate Tribunal and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 Definitions

Amendments made :

Page 2,—

for line 27 *substitute*—

"generate electricity primarily for his own use and includes a power plant set up by any co-operative society or association of persons for generating electricity primarily for use of members of such cooperative society or association." (4)

Page 2, line 40,—

for "supplied with electricity" *substitute* "supplied with electricity for his own use". (5)

Page 3,—

for line 3, *substitute*—

"electric plants of a captive generating plant referred to in section 9 or generating station referred to in section 10 to any transmission lines or sub-stations or generating stations or the load centre, as the case may be;" (6)

Page 6, line 44,—

omit "and the operating staff thereof". (7)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is an amendment to be moved by Shri Rajo Singh. Are you moving your amendment?

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai) : Sir, I am not moving my amendment.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN Shri Basu Deb Acharia—not present.

The question is :

"That clause 2, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 3 National Electricity Policy and Plan

Amendment made :

Page 7, line 17,—

for "(including tariff policy)" substitute "and tariff policy" (8)

Page 7,—

for line 19, substitute—

"resources such as coal, natural gas, nuclear substances or materials, hydro and renewable sources of energy" (9)

Page 7, line 20,—

for "National Electricity Policy" substitute "National Electricity Policy and tariff policy" (10)

Page 7,—

for lines 22 and 23, substitute—

"(3) The Central Government may, from time to time, in consultation with the State Governments and the

Authority, review or revise the National Electricity Policy and tariff policy referred to in sub-section (1)." (11)

Page 7,—

after line 28, insert—

"Provided further that the Authority shall—

- (a) notify the plan after obtaining the approval of the Central Government;
- (b) revise the plan incorporating therein the directions, if any, given by the Central Government while granting approval under clause (a)." (12)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia—Not present.

The question is :

"That clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 3, as amended was added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clauses 4 to 7 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 4 to 7 were added to the Bill.

Clause 8 Hydro electric generation

Amendments made :

Page 8,—

for line 6 to 11, substitute—

"8 (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in section 7, any generating company intending to set up a hydro-generating station shall prepare and submit to

the Authority for its concurrence, a scheme estimated to involve a capital expenditure exceeding such sum, as may be fixed by the Central Government, from time to time, by notification." (13)

Page 8, line 12,—

for "(3)", substitute "(2)". (14)

Page 8, line 13,—

for "(2)", substitute "(1)". (15)

Page 8,—

omit lines 22 and 23. (16)

Page 8, line 24,—

for "(4)", substitute "(3)" (17)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 8, as amended stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 8, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 9 and 10 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 11 Direction to
generation
companies**

Amendment made :

Page 9, line 14,—

after "natural calamity" insert "or such other circumstances arising in public interest" (18)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is an amendment to be moved by Shri Rajo Singh. Are you moving your amendment?

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH : Sir, I am not moving my amendment.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 11, as amended stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 11, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 12 was added to the Bill.

Clause 13 Power to exempt

Amendments made :

Page 9, line 27,—

for "in the public interest", substitute "in accordance with the national policy formulated under section 5 and in the public interest". (19)

Page 9,—

omit lines 31 to 34. (20)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 13, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 13, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 14 Grant of licence

Amendments made :

after line 13, insert—

"Provided also that in case an Appropriate Government transmits electricity or distributes electricity or

undertakes trading in electricity, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, such Government shall be deemed to be a licensee under this Act, but shall not be required to obtain a licence under this Act :

Provided also that the Damodar Valley Corporation, established under sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Damodar Valley Corporation Act, 1948, shall be deemed to be a licensee under this Act but shall not be required to obtain a licence under this Act and the provisions of the Damodar Valley Corporation Act, 1948, in so far as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, shall continue to apply to that Corporation:" (21)

Page 10,—

for lines 17 and 18, *substitute*—

"Provided also that the Appropriate Commission may grant a licence to two or more persons for distribution of electricity through their own distribution system within the same area, subject to the conditions that the applicant for grant of licence within the same area shall, without prejudice to the other conditions or requirements under this Act, comply with the additional requirements (including the capital adequacy, credit-worthiness, or code of conduct) as may be prescribed by the Central Government, and no such applicant who complies with all the requirements for grant of licence shall be refused grant of licence on the ground that there already exists a licensee in the same area for the same purpose." (22)

Page 10, line 26,—

for "distribution of electricity", *substitute*—

"distribution of electricity, but he shall comply with the measures which may be specified by the Authority under section 53". (23)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 14, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 14, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 15 Procedure for grant of licence

Amendments made :

Page 11,—

for lines 6 to 11, *substitute*—

"(a) publish a notice in two such daily newspapers, as that Commission may consider necessary, stating the name and address of the person to whom it proposes to issue the licence;" (24)

Page 11,—

for lines 28 and 29, *substitute*—

"(8) A licence shall continue to be in force for a period of twenty-five years unless such licence is revoked." (25)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 15, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 15, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 16 Conditions of licence

Amendment made :

Page 11, line 35,—

for "first, second and third", *substitute* "first, second, third, fourth and fifth". (26)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 16, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 16, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 17 to 21 were added to the Bill.

Clause 22 Provisions where
no Purchase
takes place

Amendment made :

Page 14,—

for lines 27 to 29, substitute—

22(1) If the utility is not sold in the manner provided under section 20 or section 24, the Appropriate Commission may, to protect the interest of consumers or in public interest, issue such directions or formulate such scheme as it may deem necessary for operation to the utility.

(2) Where no directions are issued or scheme is formulated by the Appropriate Commission under sub-section (1), the licensee referred to in section 20 or section 24 may dispose of the utility in such manner as it may deem fit." (27)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 22, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adapted.

Clause 22, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 23 to 26 were added to the Bill.

Clause 27 Constitution of
Regional Load
Dispatch Centre

Amendment made :

Page 16, lines 4 and 5,—

for "the business of trading in electricity", substitute "the business of generation of electricity or trading in electricity". (28)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause as amended stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 27, as amended was added to the Bill.

Clause 28 was added to the Bill.

Clause 29 Compliance of
directions

Amendments made :

Page 16,—

for lines 39 to 46, substitute—

"(4) The Regional Power Committee in the region may, from time to time, agree on matters concerning the stability and smooth operation of the integrated grid and economy and efficiency in the operation of the power system in that region." (29)

Page 16, line 47,—

for "(6)", substitute "(5)". (30)

Page 17, line 4,—

for "(7)", substitute "(6)". (31)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 29, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 29, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 30 to 32 were added to the Bill.

Clause 33 Compliance of directions

Amendments made :

Page 18,—

omit lines 1 and 2. (32)

Page 18, line 3,—

for "(5)", substitute "(4)". (33)

Page 18, line 8,—

for "(6)", substitute "(5)". (34)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 33, as amended, stand part or the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 33, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 34 was added to the Bill.

Clause 35 Intervening transmission facilities

Amendment made :

Page 18,—

after line 17, *insert*—

"Provided that any dispute, regarding the extent of surplus capacity available with the licensee, shall be adjudicated upon by the Appropriate Commission."

(35)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 35, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 35, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 36 Charges for intervening transmission facilities

Amendment made :

Page 18, line 24,—

for "proportionately allocated to" substitute "allocated in proportion to the use of". (36)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 36, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 36, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 37 was added to the Bill.

Clause 38 Central Transmission utility and functions

Amendments made :

Page 18,—

for line 36, substitute "generation of electricity or trading in electricity." (37)

Page 19,—

for lines 15 to 19 *substitute*—

- “(i) any licensee or generating company on payment of the transmission charges; or
- (ii) any consumer as and when such open access is provided by the State Commission under sub-section (2) of section 42, on payment of transmission charges and a surcharge thereon, as may be specified by the Central Commission.”

(38)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia is not present. The question is :

“That clause 38, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 38, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 39 State Transmission
Utility and Functions**

Amendment made :

Page 20,—

for lines 15 to 19, *substitute*—

- (i) any licensee or generating company on payment of the transmission charges; or
- (ii) any consumer as and when such open access is provided by the State Commission under sub-section (2) of section 42, on payment of the transmission charges and a surcharge thereon, as may be specified by the State Commission.”

(39)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That clause 39, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 39, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 40 Duties of
transmission licences**

Amendment made :

Page 20,—

for lines 40 to 44, *substitute*—

- “(i) any licensee or generating company on payment of the transmission charges; or
- (ii) any consumer as and when such open access is provided by the State Commission under sub-section (2) of section 42, on payment of the transmission charges and a surcharge thereon, as may be specified by the State Commission.”

(40)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That clause 40, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 40, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 41 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 42 Duties of
distribution licences
and open access**

Amendments made :

Page 21, for lines 26 to 47, *substitute*—

“42. (1) It shall be the duty of a distribution licensee to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and

economical distribution system in his area of supply and to supply electricity in accordance with the provisions contained in this Act.

(2) The State Commission shall introduce open access in such phases and subject to such conditions, (including the cross subsidies, and other operational constraints) as may be specified within one year of the appointed date by it and in specifying the extent of open access in successive phases and in determining the charges for wheeling, it shall have due regard to all relevant factors including such cross subsidies, and other operational constraints :

Provided that such open access may be allowed before the cross subsidies are eliminated on payment of a surcharge in addition to the charges for wheeling as may be determined by the State Commission :

Provided further that such surcharge shall be utilised to meet the requirements of current level of cross subsidy within the area of supply of the distribution licensee :

Provided also that such surcharge and cross subsidies shall be progressively reduced and eliminated in the manner as may be specified by the State Commission :

Provided also that such surcharge shall not be leviable in case open access is provided to a person who has established a captive generating plant for carrying the electricity to the destination of his own use.

(3) Where any person, whose premises are situated within the area of supply of a distribution licensee, (not being a local authority engaged in the business of distribution of electricity before the appointed date) requires a supply of electricity from a generating company or any licensee other than such distribution licensee, such person may, by notice,

require the distribution licensee for wheeling such electricity in accordance with regulations made by the State Commission and the duties of the distribution licensee with respect to such supply shall be of a common carrier providing non-discriminatory open access.

(4) Where the State Commission permits a consumer or class of consumers to receive supply of electricity from a person other than the distribution licensee of his area of supply, such consumer shall be liable to pay an additional surcharge on the charges of wheeling, as may be specified by the State Commission, to meet the fixed cost of such distribution licensee arising out of his obligation to supply.

(5) Every distribution licensee shall, within six months from the appointed date or date of grant of licence, whichever is earlier, establish a forum for redressal of grievances of the consumers in accordance with the guidelines as may be specified by the State Commission.

(6) Any consumer, who is aggrieved by non-redressal of his grievances under sub-section (5), may make a representation for the redressal of his grievance to an authority to be known as Ombudsman to be appointed or designated by the State Commission.

(7) The Ombudsman shall settle the grievance of the consumer within such time and in such manner as may be specified by the State Commission.

(8) The provisions of sub-sections (5), (6) and (7) shall be without prejudice to right which the consumer may have apart from the right conferred upon him by those sub-sections." (41)

Page 22,

omit lines 1 to 9. (42)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 42, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 42, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 43 Duty to supply
 on request**

Amendments made :

Page 22, lines 15 and 16,—

for "or within six months, whichever is earlier"
substitute "or within such period as may be specified
by the Appropriate Commission." (43)

Page 22,—

After line 16, insert—

"Provided further that in case of a village or hamlet
or area wherein no provision for supply of electricity
exists, the Appropriate Commission may extend the
said period as it may consider necessary for
electrification of such village or hamlet or area." (44)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 43, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 43, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 44 to 48 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 49 Agreements with
 respect to supply or
 purchase of electricity**

Amendment Made :

Page 23,—

for lines 32 to 34 substitute—

49. Where the Appropriate Commission has allowed
open access to certain consumers under section 42,
such consumers, notwithstanding the provisions
contained in clause (d) of sub-section (1) of section
62, may enter into an agreement with any person for
supply or purchase of electricity on such terms and
conditions (including tariff) as may be agreed upon by
them." (45)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 49, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 49, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 50 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 51 Other business
 of distribution
 licensees**

Amendment Made :

Page 24, after line 2, insert—

"Provided also that nothing contained in this section
shall apply to a local authority engaged before the
commencement of this Act in the business of
distribution of electricity." (46)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 51, as amended, stand part of the
Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 51, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 52 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 53 Provision relating to
safety and electricity
supply**

**Clause 56 Disconnection of
supply in default
of payment**

Amendment Made :

Page 24, line 10,—

for "The Authority may specify", *substitute* "The Authority may, in consultation with the State Government, specify". (47)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 53, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 53, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 54 was added to the Bill

Clause 55 Use etc. of meters

Amendments made :

Page 25, line 11,—

for "No person", *substitute* "No licensee". (48)

Page 25, line 12,—

for "through a meter to be installed and operated", *substitute* "through installation of a correct meter". (49)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 55, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adapted.

Clause 55, as amended was added to the Bill.

Amendment made :

Page 25,—

for lines 40 to 42, *substitute*—

"Provided that the supply of electricity shall not be cut off if such person deposits, under protest,—

(a) an amount equal to the sum claimed from him, or

(b) the electricity charges due from him for each month calculated on the basis of average charge for electricity paid by him during the preceding six months, whichever is less, pending disposal of any dispute between him and the licensee." (50)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 56, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 56, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 57 to 60 were added to the Bill.

Clause 61 Tariff-Regulations

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia is not present.

Amendments made :

Page 26,—

for lines 43 and 44, *substitute*—

"(g) that the tariff progressively, reflects the cost of supply of electricity, and also reduces and eliminates

cross-subsidies within the period to be specified by the Appropriate Commission." (51)

Page 27,—

omit line 1. (52)

Page 27, line 2,—

for "(i)", substitute "(h)". (53)

Page 27,—

for line 4, substitute—

"(i) the National Electricity Policy and tariff policy." (54)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 61, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 61, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 62 Detrmination of
Tariff**

Amendment made :

Page 27,—

after line 20, insert—

"Provided that in case of distribution of electricity in the same area by two or more distribution licensees, the Appropriate Commission may, for promoting competition among distribution licensees, fix only maximum ceiling of tariff for retail sale of electricity." (55)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 62, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 62, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 63 Determ!nation of
Tariff by bidding
process**

Amendment made :

Page 27,—

for line 40, substitute—

"shall adopt the tariff if such tariff has been determined through transparent process of bidding in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Central Government." (56)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 63, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 63, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 64 Procedure for
tariff order**

Amendments made :

Page 28,—

for lines 1 to 6, substitute—

"(2) Every applicant shall publish the application, in such abridged form and manner, as may be specified by the Appropriate Commission." (57)

Page 28, line 7,—

for "(4)", substitute "(3)" (58)

Page 28, line 17,—

for "(5)", substitute "(4)" (59)

Page 28, line 20,—

for "(6)", substitute "(5)" (60)

Page 28, line 26,—

for "(7)", substitute "(6)" (61)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 64, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 64, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 65 Provision of subsidy
by State Government**

Amendment made :

Page 28, line 30,—

for "State Government shall", substitute "State Government shall, notwithstanding any direction which may be given under section 108,". (62)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 65, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 65, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 66 Development of
Market**

Amendment made :

Page 28, line 39,—

after "as may be specified", insert "and shall be guided

by the National Electricity Policy referred to in section 3 in this regard". (63)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 66, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adapted.

Clause 66, as amended, was added to the Bill. ,

**Clause 67 Provision as to
opening up of
Streets, railways,
etc.**

Amendments made :

Page 29, line 44,—

for "dispute", substitute "dispute [including amount of compensation under sub-section (3)]". (64)

Page 29, after line 45, insert—

"(5) The Appropriate Commission, while determining any difference or dispute arising under this section in addition to any compensation under sub-section (3), may impose a penalty not exceeding the amount of compensation payable under that sub-section."

(65)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 67, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was, adopted.

Clause 67, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 68 and 69 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 79 Functions of
Central Commission**

Clauses 80 and 81 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 82 Constitution of
State Commission**

Amendments made :

Page 34,—

for line 52, substitute—

“(h) to specify Grid Code having regard to Grid Standards.” (72)

Page 34,—

for line 55, substitute—

“(j) to fix the trading margin in the inter-State trading of electricity, if considered necessary;

(k) to discharge such other functions as may be assigned under this Act.” (73)

Page 35,—

for lines 1 to 3, substitute—

“(2) The Central Commission shall advise the Central Government on all or any of the following matters, namely :—” (74)

Page 35,—

omit lines 10 and 11. (75)

Page 35, line 15,—

after “National Electricity Policy” insert “National Electricity Plan and tariff policy”. (76)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That clause 79, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 79, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Amendment made :

Page 35,—

after line 46, insert—

“Provided further that Chairperson and other Members of the State commission appointed, before the commencement of this Act, under the Electricity Regulatory Commissions Act, 1998 or under the enactments specified in the Schedule, may, on the recommendations of the Selection Committee constituted under sub-section (1) of section 85, be allowed to opt for the terms and conditions under this Act by the concerned State Government.” (77)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That clause 82, as amended stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 82, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 83 Joint Commission

Amendment made :

Page 36,—

after line 38, insert—

“(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, the Central Government may, if so authorised by all the participating States, constitute a Joint commission and may exercise the powers in respect of all or any of the matters specified under sub-section (3) and when so specifically authorised by the participating States.” (78)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 83, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 83, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 84 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 85 Constitution of
Selection Committee
to select Members
of State Commission**

Amendment made :

for line 5, substitute—

"(c) the Chairperson of the Authority or the Chairperson of the Central Commission...Member."

(79)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 85, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 85, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 86 Functions of State
Commission**

Amendments made :

Page 37,—

for lines 37 to 39, substitute—

"electricity to any person, and also specify, for purchase of electricity from such sources, a percentage of the total consumption of electricity in the area of a distribution licensee." (80)

Page 38,—

for lines 1 to 5, substitute—

"(j) fix the trading margin in the intra-State trading of electricity, if considered, necessary;

(k) discharge such other functions as may be assigned to it under this Act.

(2) The State Commission shall advise the State Government on all or any of the following matters, namely." (81)

Page 38,—

omit lines 13 and 14 (82)

Page 38, line 18,—

after "National Electricity Policy" insert "National Electricity Plan and tariff policy." (83)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 86, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 86, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 87 and 88 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 89 Term of office and
conditions service of
members**

Amendments made :

Page 38, line 40,—

for "three years", substitute "five years" (84)

Page 38,—

for lines 42 to 45, substitute—

"Provided that the Chairperson or other Member in the Central Commission or the State Commission shall not be eligible for reappointment in the same capacity as the Chairperson or a Member in that Commission in which he had earlier held office as such :

Provided further that no Chairperson or Member shall hold office as such after he has attained the age of sixty-five years." (85)

Page 39,—

omit lines 11 and 12. (86)

Page 39, line 13,—

for "(b)" substitute "(a)" (87)

Page 39, line 15,—

for "(c) substitute "(b)" (88)

Page 39,—

for lines 17 to 22, substitute—

"Explanation.—For the purposes of this sub-section, "commercial employment" means employment in any capacity in any organisation which has been a party to the proceedings before the Appropriate Commission of employment in any capacity under, or." (89)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 89, as amended stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 89, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 90 to 111 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 112 Composition of
Appellate Tribunal**

Amendment made :

Page 44,—

for lines 31 and 32 substitute—

"112. (1) The Appellate Tribunal shall consist of a Chairperson and three other Members." (90)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 112, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 112, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 113 Qualifications for
appointment of
Chairperson and
Members of Appellate
Tribunal**

Amendment made :

Page 45,—

for lines 19 to 22, substitute—

"knowledge or experience in dealing with the matters relating to electricity generation transmission and distribution and regulation or economics commerce law or management." (91)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 113, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 113, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 114 to 125 were added to the Bill.

21.00 hrs.

Clause 126 Assessment

Amendment made :

Page 48,—

for lines 36 to 38, substitute—

"Explanation.—For the purposes of this section,—

- (a) "assessing officer" means an officer of a State Government or Board or licensee, as the case may be, designated as such by the State Government;
- (b) "unauthorised use of electricity" means the usage of electricity—
- (i) by any artificial means; or
- (ii) by a means not authorised by the concerned person or authority or licensee; or
- (iii) through a tampered meter; or
- (iv) for the purpose other than for which the usage of electricity was authorised." (92)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 126, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 126, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 127 Appeal to
 adjudicating Officer**

Amendments made :

Page 48,—

for lines 39 to 42, substitute—

127. (1) Any person aggrieved by a final order made under section 126 may, within thirty days of the said order, prefer an appeal in such form, verified in such manner and be accompanied by such fee as may be specified by the State Commission, to an appellate authority as may be prescribed." (93)

Page 48, line 47,—

for "adjudicating officer", substitute "appellate authority referred to in sub-section (1)." (94)

Page 48, line 49,—

for "adjudicating officer", substitute "appellate authority referred to in sub-section (1)." (95)

Page 49,—

for "adjudicating officer", substitute "appellate authority referred to in sub-section (1)." (96)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 127, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 127, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 128 to 135 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 136 Theft of electric
 lines and materials**

Amendment made :

Page 53,—

for lines 41 and 42, substitute—

"located including during transportation, without the consent of the licensee or the owner, as the case may be, whether or not the act is done for profit or gain; or"; (97)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 136, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adapted.

Clause 136, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 137 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 138 Interference with
meters or works
of licensee**

which may extend to ten thousand rupees." (101)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

Amendments made :

Page 54, line 26,—

for "duly registering; or," substitute "duly registering,"
(98)

Page 54,—

omit line 27. (99)

Page 54,—

for lines 33 and 34, substitute—

"(c), for causing such alteration or prevention as is
referred to in clause (d), and that the meter, indicator
or apparatus". (100)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 138, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 138, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 139 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 140 Penalty for
maliciously wasting
electricity or
inuring works**

Amendment made :

Page 54,—

for lines 44 and 45, substitute—

"supply line or works, shall be punishable with fine

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 140, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 140, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 141 Extinguishing
public lamps**

Amendment made :

Page 54,—

for lines 47 and 48, substitute—

"fine which may extend to two thousand rupees."
(102)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 141, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 141, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 142 to 144, were added to the Bill.

**Clause 145 Civil court not
to have jurisdiction**

Amendment made :

Page 55, line 27,—

for "in section 126 and", substitute "in section 126 or
an appellate authority referred to in section 127 or"
(103)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 145, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 145, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 146 to 152 were added to the Bill.

Motion Re : Suspension of Rule 80 (1)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 104 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 104 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152A

Amendment made :

Page 57,—

after line 2, insert—

"Part XIV A

Special Courts

Constitution of Special Courts. 152A. (1). The State Government may, for the purposes of providing speedy trial of offences referred to in sections 135 to 139, by notification in the Official Gazette, constitute as many Special Courts as may be necessary for such area or areas, as may be specified in the notification.

(2) A Special Court shall consist of a single Judge who shall be appointed by the State Government with the concurrence of the High Court.

(3) A person shall not be qualified for appointment as a Judge of a Special Court unless he was, immediately before such appointment, an Additional District and Sessions Judge.

(4) Where the office of the Judge of a Special Court is vacant, or such Judge is absent from the ordinary place of sitting of such Special Court, or he is incapacitated by illness or otherwise for the performance of his duties, any urgent business in the Special Court shall be disposed of—

(a) by a Judge, if any, exercising jurisdiction in the Special Court;

(b) where there is no such other Judge available, in accordance with the direction of District and Sessions Judge having jurisdiction over the ordinary place of sitting of Special Court, as notified under sub-section (1). (104)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That new clause 152A be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152A was added to the Bill.

Motion Re : Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 105 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 105 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152B

Amendment made :

Page 57,—

after line 2, insert—

2 of 1974. Procedure and power of Special Court

152B. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, every offence punishable under sections 135 to 139 shall be Procedure triable only by the Special Court within whose jurisdiction such offence has and power been committed.

(2) Where it appears to any court in the course of any inquiry or trial that an offence punishable under sections 135 to 139 in respect of any offence that the

case is one which is triable by a Special Court constituted under this Act for the area in which such case has arisen, it shall transfer such case to such Special Court, and thereupon such case shall be tried and disposed of by such Special Court in accordance with the provisions of this Act :

Provided that it shall be lawful for such Special Court to act on the evidence, if any, recorded by any court in the case of presence of the accused before the transfer of the case to any Special Court :

Provided further that if such Special Court is of opinion that further examination cross-examination and re-examination of any of the witnesses whose evidence has already been recorded, is required in the interest of justice, it may resummon any such witness and after such further examination, cross-examination or re-examination, if any, as it may permit, the witness shall be discharged.

(3) The Special Court may, notwithstanding anything contained in subsection (1) of section 260 or section 262 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, try the offence referred to in sections 135 to 139 in a summary way in accordance with the procedure prescribed in the said Code and the provisions of sections 263 to 265 of the said Code shall, so far as may be, apply to such trial :

Provided that where in the course of a summary trial under this sub-section, it appears to the Special Court that the nature of the case is such that it is undesirable to try such case in summary way, the Special Court shall recall any witness who may have been examined and proceed to re-hear the case in the manner provided by the provisions of the said Code for the trial of such offence :

Provided further that in the case of any conviction in a summary trial under this section, it shall be lawful for a Special Court to pass a sentence of imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years.

(4) A Special Court may, with a view to obtaining the evidence of any person supposed to have been directly or indirectly concerned in or privy to, any offence tender pardon to such person on condition of his making a full and true disclosure of the circumstances within his knowledge relating to the offence and to every other person concerned whether as principal or abettor in the commission thereof, and any pardon so tendered shall, for the purposes of section 308 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, be deemed to have been tendered under section 307 thereof.

(5) The Special Court may determine the civil liability against a consumer or a person in terms of money for theft of energy which shall not be less than an amount equivalent to two times of the tariff rate applicable for a period of twelve months preceding the date of detection of theft of energy or the exact period of theft if determined which ever is less and the amount of civil liability so determined shall be recovered as if it were a Degree of civil court.

(6) In case the civil liability so determined finally by the Special Court is less than the amount deposited by the consumer or the person, the excess amount so deposited by the consumer or the person, to the Board or licensee or the concerned person, as the case may be, shall be refunded by the Board or licensee or the concerned person, as the case may be, within a fortnight from the date of communication of the order of the Special Court together with interest at the prevailing Reserve Bank of India prime lending rate for the period from the date of such deposit till the date of payment.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section, "civil liability" means loss or damage incurred by the Board or licensee or the concerned person, as the case may be, due to the commission of an offence referred to in sections 135 to 139. (105)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That new Clause 152B be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152B was added to the Bill.

Motion Re : Suspension Rule 80 (I)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 106 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 106 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152C

Amendment made :

Page 57,—

after line 2, insert—

Special Court to 152C. Save as otherwise provided in this have powers of Act, the Code of Criminal Procedure Court of Session. 1973, in so far as they are not inconsistent

with the provisions of this Act, shall apply to the proceedings before the Special Court and for the purpose of the provisions of the said enactments, the Special Court shall be deemed to be Court of Session and shall have all powers of a Court of Session and the person conducting a prosecution before the Special Court shall be deemed to be a Public Prosecutor. (106)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That new Clause 152C be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152C was added to the Bill.

Motion Re : Suspension of Rule 80 (i)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 107 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 107 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause : 152D

Amendment made :

Page 57,—

after line 2, insert—

2 of 1974 152D. The High Court may exercise, so far
Appeal and as may be applicable, all the powers
revision conferred by Chapters XXIX and XXX of the
Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, as if the
Special Court, within the local limits of the
jurisdiction of the High Court is a District
Court, or as the case may be, the Court of
Session, trying cases within the local limits
of jurisdiction of the High Court. (107)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That new Clause 152D be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152D was added to the Bill.

Motion Re : Suspension of Rule 80 (i)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 108 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in

Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to Government amendment No. 108 to the Electricity Bill, 2001 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152E

Amendment made :

Page 57,—

after line 2, insert—

Review 152E. The Special Court may, on a petition or otherwise and in order to prevent miscarriage of justice, review its judgment or order passed under section 152B, but no such review petition shall be entertained except on the ground that it was such order passed under a mistake of fact, ignorance of any material fact or any error apparent on the face of the record :

Provided that the Special Court shall not allow any review petition and set aside its previous order or judgment without hearing the parties affected.

Explanation.—For the purpose of this Part, "Special Courts" means the Special Courts constituted under sub-section (1) of section 152A. (108)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That new Clause 152E be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 152E was added to the Bill.

Clauses 153 to 156 were added to the Bill.

Clause 157 **Appointment of Chief Electrical Inspector and Electrical Inspector**

Amendment made :

Page 58 line 22,—

after "an Electrical Inspector under this Act" substitute "exercise such other powers and perform such other functions as may be prescribed" (109)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 157, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 157, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 158 to 164 were added to the Bill.

Clause 165 **Recovery of sums payable under Act**

Amendment made :

Page 60,—

for line 17 and 18, substitute—

165. Any penalty payable by a person under this Act, if not paid, may be recovered as if it were an arrear of land revenue." (110)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 165, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 165, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 166 was added to the Bill.

Clause 167 **Transitional provisions**

Page 61,—

*after line 31, insert—**Amendment made :*

Page 60,—

for lines 47 and 48, substitute—

"for such further period beyond the said period of one year as may be mutually decided by the Central Government and the State Government. (111)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 167, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.**Clause 167, as amended was added to the Bill.***Clause 168** **Inconsistency in laws**

Page 62,—

after line 23, insert—

"(t) the authority to whom the appeal shall be filed under sub-section (1) of section 127;". (114)

Page 62, line 24,—

for "(t)" substitute "(u)" (115)

Page 62, line 26,—

for "(u)" substitute "(v)" (116)

Page 62,—

after line 27, insert—

"(w) the powers to be exercised and the functions to be performed by the Inspectors under sub-section (1) of section 157;". (117)

Page 62, line 28,—

for "(v)" substitute "(x)". (118)

Page 62, line 30,—

for "(w)" substitute "(y)". (119)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

*Clause 168, as amended, was added to the Bill.**Clause 169 and 170 were added to the Bill.***Clause 171** **Power of Central Government to make rules**

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 171, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.**Amendments made :**Clause 171, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

Clause 172 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 173 Powers of Central
Commission to make
regulations**

Amendment made :

Page 63,—

after line 35, insert—

"(qa) the period within which the cross-subsidies shall be reduced and eliminated under clause (g) of section 61;" (120)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 173, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 173, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 174 and 175 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 176 Powers of State
Commissions to
make regulations**

Amendment made :

Page 66,—

for lines 11 to 15, substitute—

"(p) reduction and elimination of surcharge and cross-subsidies under the third proviso to sub-section (2) of section 42;

(q) payment of additional charges on charges of wheeling under sub-section (4) of section 42;

(r) guidelines under sub-section (5) of section 42;

(ra) the time and manner for settlement of grievance under sub-section (7) of section 42;

(rb) the period to be specified by the State Commission for the purposes specified under sub-section (1) of section 43;" (121)

Page 66, *for line 29, substitute—*

"(za) the period within which the cross-subsidies shall be reduced and eliminated under clause (g) of section 61;

(zaa) the terms and conditions for determination of tariff under section 61;" (122)

Page 66,—

omit lines 36 and 37

Page 66,

line 38, *for "sub-section (4)" substitute "sub-section (3)".* (124)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 176, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 176, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 177 to 179 were added to the Bill.

Clause 180 Repeal and saving

Amendment made :

Page 67,

after line 46, insert—

"(d) all rules made under sub-section (1) of section 69 of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 shall continue to have effect until such rules are rescinded or modified, as the case may be :

54 of 1948

(e) all directives issued before the commencement of this Act, by a State Government under the enactments specified in the Schedule shall continue to apply for the period for which such directions were issued by the State Government." (125)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 180, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 180, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The Schedule

Amendment made :

Page 69,—

after line 10, insert—

"8. The Madhya Pradesh Vidyut Sudhar Adhiniyam, 2000 (Madhya Pradesh Act No. 4 of 2001)". (126)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Schedule as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The Schedule as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 1 Short title, extent and commencement

Amendment made :

Page 1, line 5,—

for "2001", substitute "2003". (3)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Enacting Formula

Amendment made :

Page 1, line 1,—

for "Fifty-second Year", substitute "Fifty-fourth Year". (2)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The Long Title

Amendment made :

That in the long title,—

for "development of electricity industry," substitute "development of electricity industry, promoting competition therein, protecting interest of consumers and supply of electricity to all areas," (1)

(Shri Anant Gangaram Geete)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Long Title, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The Long Title, as amended, was added to the Bill.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Sir, I bag to *[English]*
move :

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now the House stands adjourned
to meet again tomorrow at 11.00 A.M.

21.19 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned til Eleven
of the Clock on 10th April, 2003/
20 Chaitra, 1925 (Saka)*

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