

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Third Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, May 15, 2000/Vaisakha 25, 1922 (Saka)

(The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock)

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I want to raise an important and serious issue which is related to 1984 riot affected Sikh brethren of Kanpur, 16 years have passed since those incidents. The Rangnath Mishra Commission constituted in this regard had submitted its report a long back...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You can raise this matter in the Zero Hour, not in the Question Hour.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: A promise was made to give Rs. 50,000 for education and marriage of the children of the deceased alongwith a package...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This matter has been raised many times in the House. We cannot suspend the Question Hour. Please understand.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The judgement in respect of grant of package was given by the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court. The High Court had expressed dissatisfaction and annoyance in this regard but the State Government of Uttar Pradesh is not complying with the orders of the High Court. What should be done in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: You please raise it during the Zero Hour.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I should be given first priority to raise this issue during Zero Hour.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: All right. Q. No. 681.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

LPG Connections

*681. SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY:
SHRI RAMANAND SINGH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a plan to release one crore LPG connections during the current financial year;

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

(c) the total number of LPG agencies awaiting clearance in the country, State-wise; and

(d) the specific steps being taken to clear the backlog?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government have a plan to release 1 crore LPG (domestic) connections during calendar year 2000 which will liquidate the waiting list registered with LPG distributors of Public Sector Oil Companies as on 1.12.1999. State-wise details of LPG (domestic) connections to be released against the waiting list during the year 2000 are given in Annexure-I.

(c) and (d) The total number of LPG agencies awaiting clearance in the country, State-wise is given in Annexure-II.

Locations found feasible are included in the Marketing Plan and advertised by the CIL Companies from time to time for selection of distributors through the Dealer Selection Board (DSB). The DSBs which were functioning earlier have been dissolved and new Boards are being constituted.

Annexure-I**State-wise Details of Pending Waiting List**

States	Waiting List as on 1.12.1999
Andhra Pradesh	994278
Arunachal Pradesh	1167
Assam	32995
Bihar	482377
Delhi	0
Goa	40019
Gujarat	494208
Haryana	251783
Himachal Pradesh	0
Jammu & Kashmir	0
Karnataka	413798
Kerala	862785
Madhya Pradesh	552324
Maharashtra	837248
Manipur	5755
Meghalaya	1134
Mizoram	2817
Nagaland	1743
Orissa	178282
Punjab	699424
Rajasthan	584270
Sikkim	0
Tamilnadu	1192428
Tripura	1755
Uttar Pradesh	1137580
West Bengal	545138
State Total	9313508
Union Territories	
Andaman & Nicobar	12828
Chandigarh	0
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0
Daman & Diu	0
Lakshadweep	0
Pondicherry	0
Total	12828
All India	9326336

Annexure-II**State-wise Position of Distributorships awaiting Clearance as on 1.4.2000 (Provisional)**

States	No. of Distributorships Awaiting Clearance (Provisional)
Andhra Pradesh	197
Arunachal Pradesh	7
Assam	59
Bihar	190
Delhi	15
Goa	28
Gujarat	163
Haryana	78
Himachal Pradesh	23
Jammu & Kashmir	16
Karnataka	106
Kerala	121
Madhya Pradesh	333
Maharashtra	305
Manipur	11
Meghalaya	7
Mizoram	6
Nagaland	6
Orissa	53
Punjab	98
Rajasthan	151
Sikkim	0
Tamil Nadu	193
Tripura	12
Uttar Pradesh	568
West Bengal	113
Union Territories	
Andaman & Nicobar	6
Chandigarh	5
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0
Daman & Diu	0
Lakshadweep	0
Pondicherry	3
Total:	2873

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Mr. Speaker Sir, from the statement given by the hon. Minister, it is very clear that the number of persons who are awaiting LPG connections, as per the waiting list with regard to the State of Tamil Nadu, is 11,92,428. It is about 12 per cent of the total waiting list in the country and is the highest when compared to the other States of the Union.

I would like to know whether the Central Government would come forward to wipe out this huge waiting list. I want to know whether the Government has taken any steps in this regard, if so, what are those steps?

MR. SPEAKER: Straight supplementary, straight reply!

SHRI RAM NAIK: Yes, Sir. It is true that when you look at the waiting list of the whole country, it is 93,26,336 and the State of Tamil Nadu is having a waiting list of 11,92,428. Sir, in the year 1999-2000, so far we have given new connections to 89 lakh customers and we have decided to liquidate the waiting list positively by the end of December 2000.

As on 1st of April, we have the waiting list of 83 lakhs. Now, we will clear that waiting list. Tamil Nadu and all other States, which are included in this list will be definitely getting the LPG connections by the end of this year. It will be liquidated totally.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: As per the Minister's reply, there is a plan to release one crore LPG connections in the calendar year. Already the LPG outlets in all the towns have exceeded their limit of domestic connections, which is causing undue hardships to the consumers. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would increase the LPG retail outlets without any delay.

The Dealer Selection Boards have been dissolved. I would like to know as to why there is so much of delay in constituting the Dealer Selection Boards. What is the procedure for constituting the Dealer Selection Boards?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must take the House into confidence. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you need not reply to the second portion of his supplementary. You can reply to the first portion.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Sir, the second portion is very important. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, as of now, there are 8,161 retail outlets, that is gas agencies all over India. Now, with the increased supply of the LPG, we have decided to allow 2,910 more gas agencies. So, they will be established. It is true that there has been some delay because the earlier Dealer Selection Boards were dissolved. They were dissolved because they did not perform well. Advertisements were received but no interviews were held. So, the Government thought it

advisable to reconstitute the Dealer Selection Boards. These are being re-constituted and the names would be published as early as possible.

(Translation)

SHRI RAJO SINGH: The way in which the board is constituted...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is Question Hour, not a debate.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: The hon'ble Minister has given satisfactory reply to the first part of the question that entire backlog will be cleared by December but 2873 agencies are awaiting clearance all over the country. Out of them 333, are in Madhya Pradesh, 568 in Uttar Pradesh, 305 in Maharashtra, 197 in Andhra Pradesh, 190 in Bihar, 151 in Rajasthan and 113 in West Bengal. I want to know by when these agencies will be cleared because due to non-clearance of these agencies forest of environment is being adversely affected as large number of trees are being felled in Madhya Pradesh. Therefore, I request the hon'ble Minister to kindly clarify as to by what time these agencies will be given clearance?

SHRI RAM NAIK: In my reply to the main question I have already said that 2873 new agencies are to be opened and these agencies will be opened only after re-constitution of the Dealer Selection Boards and I hope these agencies will be set up after re-constitution of these boards. In this context I am making efforts for reconstitution of the Dealership Selection Boards so that they could start functioning as early as possible as gas is available everywhere but there are no agencies and the existing agencies are overburdened. I will ensure that burden of the existing agencies is reduced and more people could get jobs and for this I will try to appoint the agencies as early as possible.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, my second question is that all over the country 93 lakh...*(Interruptions)* Will the hon'ble Minister try to increase the quota of the Members of Parliament? ...*(Interruptions)*

(English)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ramanand Singh, please take your seat.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I admire the steps that the Minister is going to take to complete the backlog quotas. I would like to know whether the Minister is aware of the fact that though in most of the cases of dealerships and agencies for distributing the LPG connections to the consumers throughout the country are done by the Dealer Selection Boards, it was detected later on that the official holder of the agency is disposing it to the *benamidar*.

Benamidars are operating it and indulging in a lot of corruption. They are wary with the consumers and they are cheating them. I would like to know whether such cases were brought to the knowledge of the Minister. I would also like to know whether the original owner who took the dealership and disposed it to the *benamidars* shall be taken to task.

SHRI RAM NAIK: If the hon. Member provides such information to me certainly I will take action.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I will give it to you today. There are three in my constituency. Benamidars of Rajasthan and Delhi are operating there.

MR SPEAKER: You can give it later.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, let me make it clear. I will take prompt action but the point was that last year because of the election, those things were not settled. After that, they were dissolved. So, after dissolving the Dealers Selection Board, if anywhere any agency had been given by this way or that way or by backdoor, I would appeal not only to the hon. Member but also to the entire House to kindly bring such instances to my notice, and I will take strict and quick action on them.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister, while replying, said that he would clear the arrears of gas connection in Tamil Nadu after the Board is reconstituted. There are also so many private agencies in Tamil Nadu. They have been manufacturing gas. Will they be taken and given preference to suit the needs of the people? I would like to know this.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Whatever the Government is distributing, by way of dealership, is pertaining to the gas on which the Government has control, that is, the PSUs which we are operating. In 1993, this item was relaxed so that any one can come and compete. They have started, and now they are doing the work independently, commercially on private basis. So, what we would be doing is that the Public Sector Undertakings that are having gas, that will be done, and others will not be taken into consideration by the Government.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether he will fix any time limit in this regard and tell by when boards will be reconstituted because there are so many districts in which there are no agencies. For example I hail from Sheogarh district where not even a single agency is existing and the people have to go upto forty to fifty kilometres to refill the gas cylinder. So I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will give a definite time limit in this regard? The boards were dissolved eight to nine months back and these boards have not been constituted since then. Therefore, will the hon. Minister take measures to constitute these boards early?

SHRI RAM NAIK: I am assuring you that it will be done within a prescribed time frame but I am not giving you any certain time limit because in case of any shortcoming my position will become awkward. I will complete this work within the time frame.

SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE: I want to know the time by which clearance will be given to 333 agencies pertaining to Madhya Pradesh so that gas could be made available to the people in the State?

SHRI RAM NAIK: I have already replied to this question that same formula will be applicable to Madhya Pradesh as is applicable to Tamil Nadu and Bihar. We will complete this work as early as possible.

[English]

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Sir, come from Barmer constituency and my neighbouring constituency is Jaisalmer. There are about 28 lakhs people staying there in the 70,000 square kilometre area. There are only four agencies existing there. In Jaisalmer District, there is one agency against 68,000 people; and in Barmer District, there is one agency against 1,10,000 people. There are places like Pokhran, Siwana and Balotra. There are big towns. The population varies from 15,000 to 35,000. For the last four years, I have been constantly writing to your Department. The reply is that you have carried out a survey, and it will be done. Now, you give me an assurance that you will do it. You are not giving any time frame also. At least, you should take the House into confidence. I am requesting you to take some action against them. Even the existing agencies are conniving with the Department.

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot tell anything. You can ask the supplementary only.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: I am going to put the supplementary. They are conniving with the Department so that new agencies should not be opened. They are distributing the new agencies' share. My question is this. In my area, how long it will take to open new agencies? Secondly, there is a nexus between the officials and the already existing agency-holders. Will you take some action so that this nexus is removed?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, when we are making available adequate quantum of gas, we have also decided to set up more gas agencies. Broadly we intend to set up a gas agency in either the block or the Tehsil—whichever may have a larger area as in some places the blocks are bigger and at other places Tehsils have larger area—having a population of more than fifteen thousand and covering an area of upto 10 kilometres so as to cover small villages also.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER: In my Parliamentary Constituency there is no gas agency for a population of even one lakh.

SHRI RAM NAIK: I know that work has not been done in this regard but I will try to complete this work. The hon'ble Members have also given me in writing in this regard. I have ordered survey in this context but the figures with me are ten years old i.e. pertaining to the 1991 census. Therefore, I request you to kindly give me latest population figures of your areas where you want an agency to be set up and on the basis of those figures... (Interruptions)

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Survey has been conducted and you have given your approval also...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You please let him reply.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: In my constituency there is no gas agency even at district level. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM NAIK: If there were no gas agencies previously it does not mean that gas agencies will not be set up in future also. I assure you that agencies will be set up in future. Block or Tehsil—whichever is having larger area—having a population of more than fifteen thousand will be selected for setting up gas agencies. The hon'ble Members can give their suggestions in this regard and I take the rest of the responsibility.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, according to the waiting list given by the hon'ble Minister there are one crore people in the waiting list for LPG connection as on date. I want to know from the hon'ble Minister as to how this waiting list is prepared? So far as my knowledge goes a particular LPG agency can issue a certain number of connections. As soon as its quota of eight thousand or nine thousand connections is exhausted it stops further registrations as it has no capacity and moreover it is not authorised to do so. As such are the figures available with us only national figures? In Bihar there are four lakhs people in the waiting list and I have received twenty thousand applications from my district Chhapra alone. I want to know from the hon'ble Minister as to what is the prescribed norm for registration in the waiting list and what is the limit of waiting list for any distributor. I would also like to know whether the Government propose to revise that limit and whether the Government will give publicity to it so that the people could know about it. I am saying this because people are not aware and they apply directly to us for gas connections. I would like to tell hon. Minister that the waiting list should be analysed and the people should be told about their priority so that they may get their names registered for the new waiting list.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: What is the supplementary?

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, we are facing a lot of problem. We are given hundred coupons, their number should be increased to five thousand so that the waiting list may be cleared simultaneously. Our position is really bad. Either you dispense with our quota or increase it to five thousand so that we may give coupons to all.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister is going to reply to your supplementary.

I will disallow your supplementary.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NAIK: There are the figures of those who are in the waiting list and even today people are getting their names registered with the agencies. All the agencies should be informed in a uniform manner through the oil companies...(*Interruptions*)

Whoever wants the gas connections, should get his/her name registered there. I will convey this information to everyone...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, the advertisement should be published in the newspaper...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Minister reply...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NAIK: The entire country comes to know of whatever is said in the House and we will try to act keeping this thing in view.

Sir, the hon. Member has also said that they get very limited number of coupons for providing gas connections and their number should be increased. I am happy to say that we are making available more gas connections in the country. Earlier we used to provide 40 gas connections per M.P. for each quarter of the year, but in January we pressed it from 40 to 50 gas coupons and from the quarter beginning in April we are going to increase it from 50 to 80 gas coupons for each member...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Mr. Minister, please complete your reply...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, we will give an increased quota of 80 instead of 50 gas connections to each Member. We will start giving 100 coupons instead of 60 coupons at present for the Members of the Consultative and Standing Committees. We will seriously consider the demand of the hon. Member seeking to provide more

gas connections for each Member and I assure you that we will certainly take a decision in this regard if more gas is available.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 683.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 683 please.

...(Interruptions)

SOME HON. MEMBERS: What about Q. No. 682?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has requested that he wants to withdraw his Q. No. 682. He has withdrawn his Q. No. 682.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: I am a Member here. My name is also there...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 683 please. He has already withdrawn the question. The hon. Member has requested to withdraw his Q. No. 682, and he has withdrawn it.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Sir, I have not withdrawn.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not talking about Q. No. 683. I am talking about Q. No. 682. Now, it is Q. No. 683.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: It is all right.

Q. No. *682

Withdrawn by the Member.

Transportation of LNG

*683. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the IOC, BPCL, ONGC and GAIL have issued the global notification for prequalification of shipowners for transportation of Liquefied Natural Gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the prequalification conditions laid down in the notification;

(c) whether the participation of Indian shipping companies in the proposed LNG transportation arrangements has been ruled out at this stage;

(d) if so, whether the Government have any proposal to relax the prequalification conditions for the Indian companies to participate in the same; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No, Sir. However, Petronet LNG Limited which is a joint venture company promoted by IOC, BPCL, ONGC and GAIL have issued a global notification for pre-qualification of owners and operators of ship for transportation of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Qatar to the proposed LNG terminals at Dahej (Gujarat) and Kochi (Kerala) on a time charter basis.

(b) The main conditions for pre-qualification of the ship owners/operators are as follows:

- (i) Equity ownership in one or more LNG tankers each having capacity not less than 1,25,000 cubic metres; and
- (ii) Full experience in operating and managing (both technical management and crewing) one or more such LNG tankers; and
- (iii) The LNG tankers operated by the bidder should have transported minimum of 0.65 million tonnes of LNG under time charter arrangement during each of the previous three years.

(c) No, Sir. It has been made obligatory for the bidders to associate Indian shipping companies in the ownership and operation of the LNG tankers and offer training programme to Indian personnel. This was specially stated in the detailed document issued for pre-qualification and also reiterated during the discussions with the bidders.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Mr. Speaker Sir, the hon. Minister has told in his reply that I.O.C., B.P.C.L.,

ONGC and GAIL company has not issued a global notification. However Petronet LNG Limited which is a joint venture company prompted by IOC, BPCL, ONGC and GAIL have issued a global notification for prequalification of owners and operators of ships for transportation of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Qatar to proposed LNG terminals at Dalej and Kochi on a time charter basis. Sir, the work of transportation in India has begun only few years back and not a single shipping company of the country including the public sector company, the Shipping Corporation of India, has been considered competent to do the job, though the company has a fleet of 117 ships and it plans to purchase seventeen more ships in the coming one to ten years. When these ships owned by S.C.I. are suitable for transporting L.P.G. then I fail to understand why Shipping Corporation of India has not been considered suitable for transporting the LNG?

Shipping Corporation of India being an efficient public Sector company I would like to know whether you are contemplating to make special provision for Shipping Corporation of India after relaxing some of the conditions of the pre-qualification of owners and operators of ships for transportation of LNG?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, no company has imported LNG in India till now. Hence India should come forward in the field of evolving new technologies and potential for the ships and tankers used during the transportation of the imported LNG. In the pre-qualification bid which we had offered on 8th February, it was clearly stated that the qualified companies should have equity participation *i.e.* share participation with the shipping companies of India and they are also supposed to train their Indian counterparts and it will happen only when the tenders are invited and at that time these things will be considered. There are seven to eight such companies in India which can fulfil the criteria of equity participation. Along with it the companies which had sent their bids for prequalification, have also been acquainted with all these things by holding discussion with them. But sometimes misconceptions may arise, hence I would like to apprise the House of the condition which we have laid in this regard.

[*English*]

"The bidder will be required to associate a reputed Indian Shipping Company in the ownership and operation of LNG tanker and offer training programme to Indian personnel."

[*Translation*]

Hence it will be obligatory for these companies to participate in the training programme of increasing the standard and efficiency of Indian counterparts. In this context we are also trying to improve our indigenous potential.

SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had already told that the Shipping Corporation of India offered their bid for the transportation of LNG. Despite all this why have you laid this pre-condition that each of the LNG tankers operated by the bidder should have a capacity not less than 1,25,000 cubic metres and the LNG tankers operated by the bidder should have transported minimum of 0.65 million tonnes of LNG under charter arrangement during each of the previous three Shipping years. The hon. Minister has told in his reply that there are six to seven such companies like Dabhol, power company which are in joint venture with the Shipping Corporation of India for the transportation of LNG and have proved their capacity in this field. If Dabhol Company can work in a joint venture with them, what is the problem in reaching at an agreement with Petronet LNG Company? If the Shipping Corporation of India cannot do this work alone then will the Government consider awarding the work in ports to Shipping Corporation of India and some private shipping company of India so that the foreign exchange could be saved?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let me remove some of the doubts and apprehensions expressed by the hon. Member. Enron is a private company and yet it has entered into a joint venture with the Shipping Corporation of India. The foreign companies which will give their bid, have also to enter into a joint venture with Indian Companies, such is the condition for the prequalification. I would like to assure the House that whatever necessary steps are essential to promote the potential of the country in this regard will be taken. A committee has been set up for this purpose after holding discussion with the Ministry of Surface Transport and it is looking into the matter. It will submit its report in a few days and the decision of inviting tenders will be taken on that basis later on but right now the preliminary process of pre-qualification is going on.

[*English*]

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Sir, LNG is the future fuel of India. This is a new fuel. There are so many difficulties for us for power generation. LNG is the alternative fuel to enhance improvement in power sector, and establishment of new Units. There are so many Units. Unfortunately, the earlier question has been withdrawn.

All the power plants that have been proposed are limited only to the paper. So, to work these things LNG has to be imported. The necessary technology has to be imported. The Indian shipping companies along with the foreign companies can make the arrangement. In the shipping sector the Shipping Corporation of India itself is a very large company in the world. That is one part.

The next part is that arrangements have to be made to import this, and for storing it. They say that they have one terminal in Dahej in Gujarat and another in Kochi on the West Coast. On the East Coast there are two places that have been thought of.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Murthi, this is on transportation of LNG.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Sir, I am coming to that. This is on transportation and storage put together. The two places in the East Coast are in Ennore in Tamil Nadu and the other place is Kakinada or Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. These two places are also for storage facilities. Unless it is simultaneously planned, you cannot import this fuel. You cannot keep it in the tankers or in the ships. The import by tankers is one and the storage is another.

I want to know whether the Government is proposing to have any terminal in the East Coast also in these two places and when the Shipping Corporation of India will do it. The hon. Minister of Surface Transport, Shri Rajnath Singh has made a contradictory report that they are considering the LNG transportation policy soon.

My question is this. Are they working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas or not? I would like to have answers to these two points.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, about the second part, I have already said that the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and the Ministry of Surface Transport are working together to have a good policy for shipping of the LNG which would be coming to India for the first time. On the question whether there can be some more terminals, I would like to say that they can be at so many places. But we have taken a decision that we should first bring it to the West Coast in Dahej in Gujarat and Kochi in Kerala. We will be concentrating on that first. It is an on-going exercise and it can be done subsequently at other places. As on now, these are the two priorities on which we are working presently.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH: Sir, at the present moment, LNG is a very cost-effective fuel for so many industries.

It is found that the Government have decided to import LNG through ships to West Coast and Southern Coast. The Eastern region has been lagging behind in so many fields. Earlier, I drew the attention of the then hon. Petroleum Minister in this House to the matter of importing of LNG by ships to the Eastern region to place like Haldia, so that the total East Coast area can be developed by this cost-effective fuel. Even our West Bengal State Government wrote a letter to the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas to participate in the equity share for import of LNG at Haldia.

May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is contemplating to import LNG in the East Coast like Visakhapatnam, Haldia, Paradeep etc.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, as I said, we have the East Coast, the West Coast etc. We have lengthy coastal lines. But we are first concentrating on the West Coast. In Paradeep we are going to have a Rs. 8,000 crore new refinery. The hon. Prime Minister would be going and laying the foundation stone on 24th May.

So, we are trying to develop, and efforts are also being made to find out if some gas is available from Bangladesh. So, we are trying to ensure that we bring more and more gas, and the hon. Member has rightly said that it is in demand.

Sir, I would say that if petrol and diesel were the fuels of the last century, the current century's fuel is gas — LNG or LPG. We will try to bring in more and more gas and also try to produce it within our country.

[Translation]

Assistance to SEBs by REC

*684. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes under which the Rural Electrification Corporation provides assistance to the State Electricity Boards;

(b) the details of the financial assistance provided by the corporation to each of the State Electricity Board during the last three years;

(c) the target fixed under each scheme alongwith the success achieved therein;

(d) the details of the proposals sent by each State Electricity Board to the said Corporation to seek financial assistance during the current financial year; and

(e) the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) provides financial assistance for village electrification, intensive electrification of already electrified villages, energisation of pumpsets and System Improvement Schemes.

(b) Details of financial assistance provided by Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the State Electricity Boards/State Power Departments during the last three years are given at Annexure-I.

(c) The targets and achievements of village electrification and pumpsets energisation under REC funded schemes during the last three years are given at Annexure-II.

(d) and (e) The details of proposals received so far in Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) from the State Electricity Boards/State Power Departments for financial assistance during the current financial year and their present status are given at Annexure-III.

Annexure I

Financial Assistance Provided by REC during last three years

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl.No.	States	1999-2000 Disbursement	1998-1999 Disbursement	1997-1998 Disbursement
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	30091	24866	6094
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1540	662	1174
3.	Assam	296	62	0
4.	Bihar	281	0	147
5.	Goa	243	361	386
6.	Gujarat	36190	31296	3931
7.	Haryana	3418	2357	636
8.	Himachal Pradesh	2771	3041	2060
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	1637	3178	2187
10.	Karnataka	27613	29486	8655
11.	Kerala	24176	13703	5200
12.	Madhya Pradesh	9071	13461	6626
13.	Maharashtra	40246	23991	26976
14.	Manipur	1761	1326	1359
15.	Meghalaya	44	0	0
16.	Mizoram	625	444	256
17.	Nagaland	1256	333	173
18.	Orissa	6473	6641	3612

1	2	3	4	5
19.	Punjab	33231	3614	3314
20.	Rajasthan	34729	22872	12009
21.	Sikkim	15	0	0
22.	Tamil Nadu	21078	16433	11476
23.	Tripura	1129	753	323
24.	Uttar Pradesh	15110	13719	9011
25.	West Bengal	139	29	322
26.	Delhi	0	0	0
27.	NEEPCO	10000	0	0
	Sub Total	305142	214848	106327
	Others*	##	5412	3054
	Total:	305142	220260	109381

(*) RE Cooperatives & SPDGS and grant for KJP/ECP etc.

(##) Included in respective States.

Annexure-II

Target-Achievement of Village Electrification and Pumpset Energisation Under REC-funded Schemes during the last three years

Period	Village Electrification (Nos.)		Pumpset Energisation (Nos.)	
	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
1997-98	3000	3045	2.40 lakhs	2.42 lakhs
1998-99	2000	2502	2.50 lakhs	2.79 lakhs
1999-2000 (Prov.)	2000	2108	2.50 lakhs	2.45 lakhs

Annexure-III

State-wise Details of Schemes Received and Present Status of Sanction by REC during 2000-2001

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl.No.	State	Schemes received		Schemes sanctioned	
		No.	Cost	No.	Loan sanctioned
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Haryana	3	700	—	—
2.	Punjab	6	5139	6	5139

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	J&K	4	969	2	206
4.	Rajasthan	1	10000	—	—
5.	Maharashtra	25	2481	1	414
6.	Goa	2	247	—	—
7.	Manipur	1	430	—	—
Total:		42	19966	9	5759

Note: Balance schemes are under appraisal for sanction.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to ask the Hon'ble Minister as to what is the number of villages in our country and till now, how many villages have been provided with electricity by the Government. How many villages have not been provided with electricity and by when, the Government is going to achieve the target of providing electricity to all the villages?

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the 1991 census, there are 5,87,258 villages in India and till 29 February, 2000, 5,06,401 villages have been electrified which comes to 86.2% of the total...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: It is not correct. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: Let me complete the reply please. Presently, there are 80416 villages left where electricity is yet to be provided; this comes to 13.8 per cent.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: My second question is that the power generation, which is the responsibility of the Government, has been assigned to the Enron Company for the generation of power in Maharashtra. What steps have been taken by the Government to meet the target of the electricity generation. The Government will have to do it efficiently. The Government is required to invest more and more funds for the generation of power. More electricity should be produced for the development of the country. That is why the Government should tell us as to how much power is required for our country; what is going to be done by the Government to generate power, when the target will be achieved and how much expenditure is expected to be incurred on it.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Member wants to know about the demand and supply. I can tell that certainly efforts are being made

to fill the gap in supply of power and for that several schemes have been prepared. In order to enhance power generation on the basis of those schemes, necessary orders for reforms and restructuring of the board have been issued. The Regulatory Commission has also been constituted for that and thus all efforts are being made to enhance power generation. We have fixed the target for providing power to all by the year 2012.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: If the target is not achieved by 2012, then? ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has just stated that steps are being taken regarding the demand and supply. I want to ask a specific question as to what was the target fixed for electricity production in the Eighth Five Year Plan and what is the percentage that has been achieved.

Part (b) of my question relates to enhancement of electricity. It is true that States have their own Electricity Boards but my submission is that you can ask the administration of Union Territories to enhance the production of electricity in their areas. In Delhi, tenders were floated 15 years back and MoUs were also signed but the process is not being completed. What steps are being taken in this regard?

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the original question that Shri Athawale ji has asked, is about the rural electrification.

I too am replying about the rural electrification. So far as the question that has been asked just now by the hon'ble Member, Shri Khurana ji, is concerned, I would like to inform that in the Ninth Five Year Plan a target of 409 Megawatts in 1997-98, 191.3 Megawatts in 1998-99, 1625.40 Megawatts in 1999-2000 was fixed for the Central sector. Recently, we have fixed a target of 659 Megawatts for Central Sector and a target of 6170 Megawatts remains left for 2001-2002, which means a target of 9,729 Megawatts has been fixed for Central Sector. In State Sector, a target of 1954 Megawatts in 1997-98, 1278 Megawatts in 1998-99 and 2506.6

Megawatts in 1997-2000 had been fixed, which means a target of 10,005.2 Megawatt was fixed by us. By March, 2000, we have achieved a target of total 12,000 Megawatt (approximate).

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Tell us about percentage.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: We have not yet calculated percentage. I will tell you after calculating the percentage.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Madam, we are deviating from the main question. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. GIRIJA VYAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the way, Hon'ble Minister has answered the question, and keeping in view the situation in State Electricity Boards, through you I would like to say that only about 13 percent villages are remaining; but since you live in Mumbai you are not aware of the situation prevailing in rural areas. Moreover, the figures given by you are not correct and it seems that exaggerated figures have been given to you in this regard...*(Interruptions)*. In both the situation, Government's indifference is quite apparent. 42 schemes have been sent by various states during 2000-2001 which include 3 schemes from Haryana, 6 from Punjab, 4 from Jammu and Kashmir, 1 from Rajasthan, 25 from Maharashtra, 2 from Goa, and one from Manipur. Out of these 42 schemes, only 9 have been approved by the Government. The Government's indifference in this regard is quite apparent. Will the Government try to overcome this indifference and will adopt a positive attitude regarding the rural electrification?

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: The Hon'ble Member has said that exaggerated figures have been given but it is not correct. The reply is based on the facts. You have asked statewide details about the 42 schemes which are related to Haryana, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Goa and Manipur. I have given details of the schemes relating to 2001-2002 which have been received by REC. The present finance year has just started. It is certain that whatever schemes will be received during this year and whatever amount is desired by the State through REC, adequate amount will be provided to them through REC. There will be no dearth of funds.

DR. GIRIJA VYAS: Kindly approve those projects that you have received...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is not like this. Please be seated.

...*(Interruptions)*

(English)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rudy, what is this? This is not a debate. This is Question Hour. How can you disturb the Question Hour? You are always standing up like this.

(Translation)

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, just now she has told that only one project of Maharashtra has been approved and out of the total 42, only 9 projects have been approved. Hon'ble Member has asked about the reasons for not approving more schemes. I would like to submit that when we ask for the financial details of the projects which are sent to us by the States, they do not supply such details. That is why approval of the projects gets delayed.

(English)

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to just join in replying the question. As the hon. Minister of State has quite rightly stated, the figures given are correct. But, I think it is my duty to explain to the House that when we talk of a village having been electrified, the original definition used to be that one pole has to reach some where in the village. Then, in the last two years, our Government has amended it saying that not one pole, but there must be at least one light in the village. Thereafter, we are reconsidering it. In fact, a Group of Ministers has been constituted to go into this. We are also equally worried because there are some States that will take a couple of hundred years at the pace at which they are going, to do rural electrification. I do not want to take names here. So, we need to definitely look at it. There is a Group of Ministers in which myself, the Finance Minister, the Deputy-Chairman of the Planning Commission are sitting together and working out solutions. The Finance Minister, in his Budget Speech, categorically mentioned that he was providing budgetary support over and above the plan that was provided for rural electrification. We are working out a scheme. We are quite conscious of the problem.

(Translation)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Minister has informed in his reply that under the rural electrification programme, Rs. 6,200 crore have been sanctioned in the last three years as assistance to States. As per his reply, the details are: Rs. 1000 crore in 1997-98, Rs. 2020 crore in 1998-99 and Rs. 3051 crore in 1999-2000 have been sanctioned. Thus, out of

the total sanctioned amount of approximately Rs. 6200 crore, only four crore rupees have been sanctioned for Bihar during last 3 years. From the answer of the Minister, it seems that the target of rural electrification of 9th five year Plan is not going to be fulfilled, because against the set target to provide electricity to all villages, only 85% of the villages have been electrified till now and 15 per cent villages are yet to be electrified.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards the fact that the Union Government has approved Rs. 40 crore for the State of Bihar under the Ninth Five Year Plan, but these funds have not been released to the Bihar Government. It's payment has been withheld. It becomes clear from the hon'ble Minister's reply that he has sanctioned Rs. 6200 crore. Out of which Bihar has received only Rs. 4 crore. 32 thousand villages in the State are still to be electrified, but the amount of Rs. 40 crore sanctioned for Bihar is not being released. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Government will release those funds to the Bihar Government and whether the Government is ready to give to Bihar its due share out of Rs. 6200 crore?

[*English*]

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, I would like to make it very clear that there has been a little reluctance on the part of Rural Electrification Corporation in giving loans to Bihar State Electricity Board. The reason and cause is simply this that for the first time a new word had to be coined in the power sector and that is 'de-electrification'. In other words, we are given figures that many thousands of villages, in fact tens of thousands of villages, have been electrified and then we are informed the next year that they have been de-electrified, reasons being both the cables as well as poles get stolen. That is the answer given. So, we had asked for an investigation into this. At that particular moment of time came the State elections of Bihar and investigations had been stayed for that moment. As soon as the investigation is completed and the report comes to us, we will be able to come to a final decision. We believe that this is not possible unless...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister is not replying the question, I have asked, but he is saying something else. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: He is giving a right reply...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

This concept of de-electrification is a new one.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rudy, why are you replying to the question? Let the Minister reply to the question.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, see the plight of Bihar. De-electrification is taking place in Bihar.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

[*Translation*]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister is not replying to the question I have asked. I have very clearly asked whether the hon'ble Minister is ready to give to Bihar its due arrear of Rs. 40 crore and Bihar's due share out of money sanctioned in last three years...(*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker, Sir, why Rajiv Pratap Rudy is rising in support of the hon'ble Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: When de-electrification is taking place, how can villages in Bihar be electrified? And the Member is talking about money...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rudy, you are unnecessarily interfering in the reply of the Minister. What is this?

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rudy, when the Minister is giving his reply, why are you unnecessarily disturbing the House?

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, my State is crying, my State is weeping. There is no electricity...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rudy, this is too much. Please take your seat. What is this?

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please complete your reply.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I can reply, if I am given the opportunity from both the sides. I need the opportunity...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please complete.

Statement

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have requested the hon. Minister of Power from Bihar to come along and meet me. We are having a meeting, and in that meeting, we will be addressing this issue. I think, staying the action is all right for a little while but it should not become the cause of action to ensure that electrification of rural areas in Bihar is stayed.

In fact, we want to speed it up and we will pay special attention to Bihar. I assure the hon. Member that we will speed it up...(Interruptions)...Rs. 389.98 crore is due to REC from Bihar upto 31.3.2000...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister is not replying to my question. In protest, I boycott the House...(Interruptions)

11.51 hrs.

Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh then left the House.

[English]

Transfer of Polluting Technologies

*887. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that developed countries are transferring highly polluting technologies to the developing countries;

(b) if so, whether such technologies are being transferred to India as well;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith name of countries transferring such technologies;

(d) whether the Government have taken any steps to stop such transfer;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) A system of environmental clearance under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and consent mechanism under the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 has been put in place to prevent environmental degradation from highly polluting technologies. This ensures that such technologies do not get transferred to India.

(f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister, the details of the system and technology being inducted by Government of India to check pollution. The pollution is increasing day by day in the country. The pollution level is very high in Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore and Mumbai — it is 67% in Delhi and 66% in Mumbai and similarly the pollution level is very high in other two metropolitan cities. Is the Government considering any proposal to check pollution in metropolitan cities and to impose ban on industries? Mr. Speaker, Sir, daily we read in newspapers that the developed countries are transferring their industry to our country. Government also think, if the developed countries will set up their industries in our country, the foreign capital would be invested in the country. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister the names of the countries which are transferring industries to our country indicating the names of such industries? Tell us about them?

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the question pertains to import of bad technology or the imported technology. But at the same time, the hon. Minister has posed another question...

MR. SPEAKER: Not 'the hon. Minister' but 'the hon. Member' has posed a question.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Yes, I am sorry. I stand corrected. The hon. Member has posed a question.

Sir, we are taking very strict control measures. We are having the State Pollution Control Board as well as

the Central Pollution Control Board. We are enforcing strict norms in the Capital City of Delhi and other places. At the same time, improved fuel efficient processes, technologies and standards have been introduced. In regard to auto fuel, we have reduced the sulphur content to 0.05 per cent in N.C.R. So, pollution is being taken care of.

Sir, in this regard, we have identified 29 categories of industries. We have also identified 24 areas as hot spots, and 17 categories of highly polluting industries. We are taking proper action.

Whatever technologies or such other things are there, they must be up-to-date. So, we are taking care of pollution.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what action the Government have taken to remove factories which are the main cause of pollution in Delhi and other big cities and what steps the Government is taking to check pollution caused by such companies and factories.

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Of course, again, his supplementary question does not relate to import of technology. He is asking about the Yamuna Action Plan and the Ganga Action Plan-II. There are many industries which are polluted. Of course, they are polluting the Yamuna. There are many polluting drains which are directly discharging municipal effluents into the Yamuna, but at the same time, we have taken proper action in this regard. All these industries must have Effluent Treatment Plants.

Now everything is being monitored. There is no cause for panic or worry.

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH: The subject of pollution is very important. I am quite sure that the hon. Minister would give a lot of importance to this important aspect. There are various technologies which are coming up. Under these circumstances, I would like to say that air pollution has become one of the most important aspects. Visakhapatnam is identified as one of the highly polluted areas. I would request the hon. Minister to let me know whether the Government has taken any special measures. If not, what action the hon. Minister is going to take to prevent pollution in this area?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: The Government is aware of the fact that Dr. B.B. Ramaiah has just now mentioned.

We are having interaction tomorrow in a meeting of Ministers of Environment which is being inaugurated by the hon. Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. All the Ministers of Environment of various States are meeting tomorrow. We will have interaction and proper action will be taken.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: In 1992 itself, Visakhapatnam has been identified as one of the most polluted areas. But no action has been taken so far.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Everything will be discussed tomorrow.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I wish to know from the hon. Minister whether India has asked developed nations to give us green technology which means it is environmental friendly, at a rate that is affordable by India because the world expects India to contribute to green technology and to conserve environment whereas our studies have shown that it is only the developed nations which have contributed maximum to the pollution that we are all suffering from. Will the hon. Minister tell us if he has negotiated with the developed countries to give green technology at a cheaper price because we are the developing nation and we have not yet got the refrigerators, air conditioners and aircraft which are health friendly?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: We are discussing this matter in the multilateral forums and whatever green technology is available in the developed nations for green house gas abatement they have supply it to us under Kyoto Protocol in accordance with principles and rules yet to be decided. We are very much in interaction in this regard. It is at a preliminary stage. By this year end, we would be concluding what type of clean development mechanism, what type of green technology that could be transferred to our country and at what conditions. All these matters are expected to be settled only by November-December, 2000.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Are we asking these countries because the developed nations have contributed to the pollution?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: We have an approach about this matter in the multilateral forum. We have not yet arrived at any settlement. We are asking for green technology.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I would like to know whether the hon. Minister is aware that some ships are coming with hazardous material to our ship breaking yards. Thus the Basel Convention is being violated by the developed nations from where the ships are coming.

I would like to know whether the Government has taken up this matter with the developed nations from where the ships are coming so that a ship, before it is sent to the breaking yard, is decontaminated.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: In the Basel Convention, hazardous waste related issues are being raised. I will definitely report to the House the outcome of the discussion. I have already discussed related matters in the Basel Convention.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Are the discussions still going on?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: For the information of the House, a draft notification regulating the handling of used lead acid batteries has been prepared. Import of arsenic, cyanide and mercury containing wastes has been banned under EPA. Matters related to wastes oil and, at the same time, related to ship breaking, have been discussed in Basel Convention last year.

12.00 hrs.

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Sir, green technology and environmental aspects are international issues. My question to the hon. Minister relates to the Government of India's multilateral agreement on environment with the UN. I would like to know the number of agreements the Government of India has executed with the UN and the major benefit of these agreements.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I will pass on to the hon. Member whatever information I could pass on to him.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Growth Rate of Power Generation

*685. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the growth rate of annual power generation capacity in the country has decreased drastically during the last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the target fixed for the power generation during the Ninth Five Year Plan especially in the north-eastern region, State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to augment the growth rate of power generation during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) The annual rate of growth of power generation as well as capacity over the last five years is indicated below:

Year	Capacity as on 31st March (MW)	Annual rate of growth of capacity addition	Annual rate of growth of electricity generation
1994-95	81171	—	—
1995-96	83293	2.6%	8.3%
1996-97	85795	3.0%	3.8%
1997-98	89102	3.8%	6.6%
1998-99	93253	4.6%	6.6%
1999-2000	97836	4.9%	7.1%

(c) According to the Ninth Five Year Plan document, the gross generation in utilities was likely to be 606.7 B.U. by 2001-02. This assessment was based on the likely capacity addition as perceived at the beginning of the Plan period. Targets for power generation are decided at the beginning of each year depending on the

implementation schedule of on-going projects, scheduled maintenance work, regional power demand, grid parameters and transmission capabilities etc. The target for power generation in the country for 2000-2001 is 500.7 B.U. The targets for the North Eastern Region State-wise, are given below:

North Eastern Region

Name of State	Central Sector (MU)	State Sector (MU)	Private Sector (MU)	Total (MU)
Assam	2274	1290	180	3744
Tripura	360	381	NII	741
Meghalaya	NII	520	NII	520
Arunachal Pradesh	NII	20	NII	20
Nagaland	277	NII	NII	277
Manipur	450	NII	NI	450

(d) The following steps are being taken to augment the growth rate of power generation in the current year:

- (i) Station-wise, Unit-wise monitoring of the actual generation *vis-a-vis* targets is done on a daily basis in CEA.
- (ii) New capacity addition programme of both thermal and hydro power stations is regularly monitored.
- (iii) Action is taken for early restoration of the units under forced outage.
- (iv) Power stations which need renovation and modernisation are offered assistance under 'PAGER' Scheme of PFC.
- (v) Efforts are being made to increase PLF of thermal plants.
- (vi) Maximisation of transfer of power from surplus regions to deficit regions.

[*Translation*]

Purchase of Land by IOC in Northern India

*686. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of land purchased by Indian Oil Corporation for construction of petrol pumps in northern parts of the country during 1999-2000 alongwith the locations thereof;

(b) the area of land yet to be purchased for the purpose;

(c) whether the prices fixed by the Government in regard to the purchase of the said area of land have been ignored by IOC; and

(d) if so, the names of the persons from whom the said area of land was purchased alongwith the location of the land and the prices thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) During the year 1999-2000, Indian Oil Corporation Limited has purchased 91 sites in the Northern Region, the details of which are given in the attached Statement.

(b) In the year 2000-2001, presently IOC has plans to purchase land at 151 locations in the Northern Region.

(c) and (d) The valuation of land purchased so far has been determined by a Committee of three officers for each site on the basis of the report given by the Government approved valuers.

Statement

Sl.No.	Location	District	State	Area of land in sq.mtr	Type of location COCO/ 'A' site/ Jubilee Retail Outlet	Amount paid (Rs. lakh)	Name of Owner
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Hissar	Hissar	Haryana	1600	'A'	24.80	Smt. Vidhya Devi
2.	Kohand	Karnal	Haryana	5083	Kargil	24.32	M/s. Decent Spinners Pvt. Ltd. Karnal
3.	Nangal Strohi	Mahendergarh	Haryana	12940	Jubilee	38.74	Smt. Santosh Devi
4.	Aurangabad	Mathura	U.P.	1793	COCO	32.09	Sh. Dharmender Singh Tomar & Others
5.	Gangeru	Muzaffarnagar	U.P.	1400	COCO	3.19	Sh. Suresh Kumar Sharma
6.	Harduaganj	Aligarh	U.P.	1200	COCO	15.80	Sh. Suseel Kumar Jain
7.	Khair	Aligarh	U.P.	1400	COCO	22.05	Sh. Hari Shankar Azad
8.	Kosi	Mathura	U.P.	1360	COCO	12.28	Sh. Brijender Kumar Pathwal
9.	Kuchesar Road	Ghaziabad	U.P.	1672	COCO	13.13	Sh. Sresh Kumar Sharma
10.	Sirsa Tapu	Etah	U.P.	1888	COCO	4.71	Sh. Surender Pal Singh
11.	Surtr	Mathura	U.P.	1781	COCO	4.81	Smt. Saliya Agarwal
12.	Daurala Mill	Meerut	U.P.	2185	COCO	10.05	Sh. Jawahar Sharma
13.	Shobhapur	Meerut	U.P.	1545	COCO	10.51	Smt. Prama Sen
14.	G. Noida	G.B. Nagar	U.P.	10000	Jubilee	206	Govt. Land
15.	G. Noida (Holand Tractor Crossing)	G.B. Nagar	U.P.	8000	COCO	107	Govt. Land
16.	Transport Nagar	Agra	U.P.	1161	COCO	24.86	Govt. Land

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
17.	Uaka Bazar	Sidharth Nagar	U.P.	1115	"A"	4.35	Sh. Shri Ram
18.	Vishwanath Gurj	Pratapgarh	U.P.	1115	COCO	4.76	Sh. Sahdeo Singh
19.	Ambari	Azamgarh	U.P.	1115	COCO	7.85	Smt. Ahmadi Begum
20.	Sagarl	Azamgarh	U.P.	1115	COCO	8.92	Sh. Intizar & Niaz Ahmed
21.	Sabar Had, Jaunpur	Jaunpur	U.P.	1115	COCO	6.47	Sh. Mirza Azafar Beg./Sh. Mirza Atzal Beg
22.	Balpur, Gonda	Gonda	U.P.	1115	COCC	3.35	Sh. Ganjendra Kr. Tiwarl
23.	Dudahi, Kushinagar	Kushi Nagar	U.P.	1115	COCC	3.29	Sh. Lal Bahadur Rai/ Sh. Santosh Kumar & Sh. Vishwanath
24.	Wattler Gurj, Basti	Basti	U.P.	1126	COCO	9.29	Sh. Bharat Bhushan Bhatia
25.	Mahadeva Basti	Basti	U.P.	1115	COCO	7.25	Sh. S.P. Upadhyay
26.	Akbarpur- Molipur Road, Ambedkar Nagar	Ambedkar Nagar	U.P.	1115	COCO	6.87	Sh. Kamala Prasad Singh & Sh. Surya Pratap Singh
27.	Mahua Kothi, Allahabad	Allahabad	U.P.	1115	COCO	3.75	Sh. Shakeel Ahmed & Sh. Md. Akhtar
28.	Laxman Nagar, Sravasti	Sravasti	U.P.	1115	COCO	7.25	Sh. Mukhtar Ahmed
29.	Dulehpur, Allahabad	Allahabad	U.P.	1115	COCO	7.24	Sh. Panna Lal/ Sh. Channu Lal Etc.
30.	Durgapur, Sultanpur	Sultanpur	U.P.	1115	COCO	7	Sh. Shiv Pratap Shukla
31.	Pannugunj,	Sonbhadra	U.P.	1115	COCO	2.65	Sh. Sidha Nath Misra
32.	Kohdaur	Pratapgarh	U.P.	1115	COCO	4.91	Sh. Jehir Alam
33.	Mirzapur Reva Road,	Mirzapur	U.P.	3063	COCO	16.06	Sh. Rais Chandra Shukla
34.	Reara	Baffia	U.P.	2524	COCO	9.50	Smt. Shall Aggarwal
35.	Hata Bazar	Gorakhpur	U.P.	1394	COCO	12.10	Sh. T.N. Gupta

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
36.	I.G. Shaheed Park	Sultanpur	U.P.	1882	COCO	5	Sh. Ram Ashray Pathak
37.	Ghurpur	Allahabad	U.P.	1533	COCO	10.76	Sh. Ishiyaq Ahmed & Sh. Md. Ahmed
38.	Muskra	Hamirpur	U.P.	1206	COCO	2.75	Sh. Javed Halim Khan
39.	Kurara	Hamirpur	U.P.	1394	COCO	0.42	Sh. Piyush Srivastava
40.	G.T. Road*	Kanpur (Part-I)	U.P.	355	'A'	11.49	Dr. Rajender Narain Dwivedi
41.	(2 Sellers-120)	Kanpur (Part-II)	U.P.	269	'A'	8.71	Smt. Chandra Prabha Dwivedi
42.	Jehanikhara	Hardoi	U.P.	2899	COCO	4.99	Sh. Sanjay Singh/ Sh. Krishna & Col. Brijesh
43.	Sikanderpur	Kannauj	U.P.	1779	'A'	3.76	Sh. Raj Kumar Sharma
44.	Haldergerh	Barabanki	U.P.	3790	COCO	6.50	Sh. Poller
45.	Sakrar	Jhansi	U.P.	2091	COCO	2.70	Sh. Mahender Pal Singh
46.	Pandwaha	Jhansi	U.P.	2091	COCO	12.54	Sh. Prabhu Dayal
47.	Jhinjak	Kanpur Dehat	U.P.	2091	COCO	13.50	Sh. Raj Kumar Singh / Sh. Dharamveer
48.	Kalmitti-Bangarmau	Unnao	U.P.	1280	COCO	1.79	Sh. Raj Kumar Gupta
49.	Kabrai	Mahoba	U.P.	2846	COCO	1.28	Sh. Rakesh Kumar
50.	Rauzageon	Faizabad	U.P.	3717	COCO	4.45	Sh. Subhash Chandra Pandey & Sh. Ambika Prasad Pandey
51.	Shambhua Crossing	Kanpur	U.P.	2200	COCO	3.50	Sh. Rajaram
52.	Kasba Murdgunj, Etawah	Auraiya	U.P.	3511	COCO	3.21	Sh. Ambika Singh
53.	Between Nawabgunj-Sohramau	Unnao	U.P.	2490	COCO	2.80	Smt. Vinod Rani
54.	Etawah	Etawah	U.P.	3803	COCO	11	Sh. Prakash Yadva & Sh. Ashok Kumar

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
55.	Gola Gokaranath	Lakhimpur Kheri	U.P.	2000	COCO	9.60	Sh. Rajpal Aggarwal & Others
56.	Dhampur Nagina	Bijnor	U.P.	1764	COCO	9.70	Sh. Subhash Chand Maheehwarl
57.	Said Nagar	Rampur	U.P.	1400	COCO	1.32	Sh. Kuldeep Singh & Others
58.	Todarpur	Saharanpur	U.P.	979	COCO	4.05	Sh. Inshad Khan/ Smt. Sarvari Begum
59.	Thakurdwara	Moradabad	U.P.	1750	COCO	2.16	Sh. Pragat Singh/ Sh. Balvinder Singh
60.	Gandewad	Saharanpur	U.P.	2000	COCO	2.84	Sh. Pavan Singh
61.	Agrauli Tiraha	Shahjahanpur	U.P.	1400	"A"	1.20	Sh. Shiv Ram
62.	Middle of Rudrapur Bilaspur Town (Inderpur)	Rampur	U.P.	2750	COCO	8.90	Sh. Jaavinder K. Grover
63.	Didihat (Hill Site)	Pithoragarh	U.P.	402	"A"	1.50	Sh. Deepak Singh Kanyal
64.	Transport Nagar	Bareilly	U.P.	1680	COCO	30.20	Govt. land
65.	Malviya Nagar	Jaipur	Rajasthan	1120	COCO	78.40	Govt. Land
66.	Badgaon Naka	Bundi	Rajasthan	3253	COCO	6.96	Sh. Hukum Chand Jain
67.	Bhaleri	Churu	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	0.55	Collector, Churu
68.	Randhiser Paheri	Churu	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	0.96	Collector, Churu
69.	Lawan	Dausa	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	1.30	Sh. Ram Pratap/Sh. Ram Sahel Gujjar
70.	Mania-I	Dholpur	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	3.72	Collectro Dholpur
71.	Mania-II	Dholpur	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	8.25	Collector Dholpur
72.	Kalthoon	Kota	Rajasthan	1672	COCO	2.61	Sh. Ashok Nandwana
73.	Todaraisingh	Tonk	Rajasthan	1619	COCO	1.60	Sh. Surindera Kandi
74.	Sawalpur	Bhilwara	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	1.92	Collector Bhilwara
75.	Between Gazipur- Hindaun Road	Dausa	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	0.66	Collector Dausa
76.	Jaipur	Jaipur	Rajasthan	1120	COCO	99.60	Jaipur Development Authority

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
77.	Jaipur	Jaipur	Rajasthan	1680	COCO	171.66	Jaipur Development Authority
78.	Sewar	Ajmer	Rajasthan	2031	COCO	0.61	Collector Ajmer
79.	Merta City	Nagaur	Rajasthan	2090	COCO	1.93	Sh. Ghamandi Ram
80.	Dungarpur	Dungarpur	Rajasthan	1178	COCO	10.77	Sh. Kesarimal Shah
81.	Pratapgarh	Chittorgarh	Rajasthan	2787	COCO	6.90	Sh. Nand Lal Meena & Sham Lal Meena
82.		Mandi	H.P.	1161	COCO	15.88	Sh. Khazana Ram Shyam Singh/Daya Ram
83.	Bharwain	Una	H.P.	1587	COCO	7.75	Daulat Ram, Mohar Singh, Kashmir Singh, Amar Singh, Shamsher Singh, Mast Ram, Joginder Singh
84.	Bangana	Una	H.P.	1045	COCO	12.42	Surinder Kumar, Amal Dev, Smt. Ram Piyari
85.	Raja Ka Talab	Kangra	H.P.	876	COCO	7.01	Keshav Dutt
86.	Har-Raipur	Bhatinda	Punjab	3373	COCO	10.90	Wallati Ram, Hans Raj
87.	Thuthiwall	Manasa	Punjab	3147	COCO	8.80	Gurnail Singh, Ajalb Singh
88.	Bundala	Jalandhar	Punjab	1114	COCO	21.00	Swaran Singh
89.	Jamulpur	Ludhiana	Punjab	1449	COCO	60.86	Surjit Singh, Amarjit Kaur
90.	Chabbawal	Hoshiarpur	Punjab	2536	COCO	15.08	Bhajan Singh, Dharmo, Seeto, Charan Kaur, Krishana
91.	Mahipur	Hoshiarpur	Punjab	1743	COCO	13.11	Inderjit Kaur, Harjit Kaur, Arvinder Singh

* 2 plots of land have been purchased which have been combined for establishing 1 Retail Outlet. (S. No. 40 & 41)

[English]

Marketing Rights to Major Oil Companies

*688. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the major oil companies have been pressing the Government to change the pre-conditions for marketing rights so that they can market oil products

in India by investing in areas which offer the possibility of reasonable returns;

(b) if so, whether the Government have agreed in principle to change the pre-conditions for marketing rights; and

(c) if so, the time by which the new set of marketing rights over petroleum products is likely to be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some changes in the preconditions have been recommended in the "India Hydrocarbon Vision 2025".

(c) No decision has been taken as yet.

National Forestry Action Plan

*689. SHRI JITENDRA PRASADA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in order to give a boost to forestry funding, the Government have proposed the creation of banking institution in which various State Forest Corporations (S.F.Cs) could have a holding;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have also proposed to enhance the investment in forestry sector to implement the National Forestry Action Plan;

(d) if so, the special features of this Plan;

(e) whether the Government propose to ensure its success by making it a peoples movement; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) For enhancing the availability of funds for implementation of National Forestry Action Programme, number of options have been examined including setting up of a Forestry Development Bank. No decision has been taken to set up the Forest Development Bank.

(c) It is estimated that Rs. 1339 billions would be required over a period of twenty years to implement the National Forestry Action Programme. The annual allocation for forestry sector has been stepped up by the Central Government and the State Governments have been requested to step up their allocation to forestry sector. Shelf of projects have been prepared to secure funding from external agencies.

(d) The National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP) is a comprehensive strategic long term plan for the next twenty years to address the issues underlying the major problems of the forestry sector in line with the National Forest Policy, 1988. The objective

of the NFAP is to bring one third of the area of the country under forest/tree cover and to arrest deforestation for achieving sustainable development of forests. The five main components of this Plan are: 1. Protect Existing Forest Resources. 2. Improve Forest Productivity 3. Reduce Total Demand 4. Strengthen Policy and Institutional Framework 5. Expand Forest/Tree Area.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. The National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages people's involvement in development and protection of forests. The mechanism of Joint Forest Management adopted in 1990 is to re-generate and develop degraded forests for environmental needs and to provide fuel wood, fodder, non-wood forest products and timber to local people living in and around forests. The JFM has been institutionalised by most of the State and the emphasis has been on the formation of village institutions such as, Village Forest Committees. Central Government had issued fresh guidelines on 21.2.2000 to further strengthen the Joint Forest Management.

Power Projects in States

*690. SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are in receipt of proposals from various States including Kerala for setting up of new power projects in the States during 1999-2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have accorded sanction to the aforesaid proposals; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (d) A State-wise summary of projects appraised by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) or under examination as on March, 2000, is given in the statement enclosed.

In case of projects under examination, consultations are in progress to expedite various pending inputs like clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, fuel linkage, inter-state clearance (if applicable), land and water availability etc.

Statement

Sl.No.	State		CEA Cleared/Appraised			Under Examination in CEA		
			Hydro	Therma	Total	Hydro	Therma	Total
1			3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Haryana	MW	0	0	0	0	0	0
		No.	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.	Himachal Pradesh	MW	2412	0	2412	170	0	170
		No.	6	0	6	2	0	2
3.	Jammu & Kashmir	MW	1087.5	0	1087.5	0	0	0
		No.	3	0	3	0	0	0
4.	Punjab	MW	50	0	50	0	500	500
		No.	1	0	1	0	1	1
5.	Rajasthan	MW	0	1992.7	1992.7	0	71	71
		No.	0	4	4	0	1	1
6.	Uttar Pradesh	MW	2034	3217	5251	0	800	800
		No.	4	4	8	0	1	1
7.	Delhi	MW	0	330	330	0	0	0
		No.	0	1	1	0	0	0
8.	Gujarat	MW	0	4056.7	4056.7	0	256	256
		No.	0	10	10	0	2	2
9.	Madhya Pradesh	MW	960	6919.5	7879.5	0	703.48	703.48
		No.	3	13	16	0	2	2
10.	Maharashtra	MW	0	3784.1	3784.1	400	0	400
		No.	0	4	4	1	0	1
11.	Goa	MW	0	0	0	0	0	0
		No.	0	0	0	0	0	0
12.	Andhra Pradesh	MW	271.4	3846	4117.4	0	0	0
		No.	2	8	10	0	0	0
13.	Karnataka	MW	90	2802.6	2892.6	0	800.1	800.1
		No.	1	5	6	0	4	4
14.	Kerala	MW	160	1192.2	1352.2	0	128	128
		No.	1	2	3	0	1	1
15.	Tamil Nadu	MW	0	6285.5	6285.5	0	357.88	357.88
		No.	0	10	10	0	2	2

1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8
16.	Pondicherry	MW	0	32.5	32.5	0	0	0
		No.	0	1	1	0	0	0
17.	Bihar	MW	0	240	240	0	1320	1320
		No.	0	1	1	0	1	1
18.	Orissa	MW	0	3000	3000	150	0	150
		No.	0	3	3	1	0	1
19.	West Bengal	MW	125	1070	1195	0	0	0
		No.	1	3	4	0	0	0
20.	Sikkim	MW	1200	0	1200	0	0	0
		No.	1	0	1	0	0	0
21.	DVC	MW	0	0	0	0	0	0
		No.	0	0	0	0	0	0
22.	Assam	MW	0	0	0	0	0	0
		No.	0	0	0	0	0	0
23.	Ar. Pradesh	MW	600	0	600	0	0	0
		No.	1	0	1	0	0	0
24.	Manipur	MW	90	36		0	0	0
		No.	1	1		0	0	0
25.	Mizoram	MW	330	0	330	0	0	0
		No.	2	0	2	0	0	0
26.	Meghalaya	MW	84	0	84	0	0	0
		No.	1	0	1	0	0	0
27.	Tripura	MW	0	0	0	0	0	0
		No.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Sankhya Vahini Project

*691. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV:
COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to scrap Sankhya Vahini Project;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the total investment made therein;

(d) whether Ministry of Information Technology has raised some objections for scrapping of the above project;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for raising such objections;

(f) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(g) the present status of the project?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (f) There is no proposal to scrap *Sanjhya Vahini* Project. So far, no investment has been made on this project.

Ministry of Information Technology asked for certain clarifications, mainly relating to:

- (i) Basis of selection of IU Net.
- (ii) Policy with regard to leasing of fibres.
- (iii) Waiver of Customs Duty.
- (iv) Share holding pattern and assets of IU Net.
- (v) Extent of funding of IU Net by CMU.
- (vi) Area of activity and experience of the Company.
- (vii) Procedure to be followed by IU Net for identifying selecting the supplier of the equipments etc.

These have been adequately addressed and explained to MIT. To the extent required these have also been built into the Draft JV Agreement.

(g) Although the Project has been approved by the Government in principle, the JV Agreement between the two main promoters is yet to be signed.

Review of Contempt of Court Act, 1971

*692. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
DR. ASHOK PATEL:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of cases of contempt of courts pending in various courts at present, court-wise;
- (b) whether the Government propose to review the Contempt of Court Act, 1971;
- (c) if so, whether the Government propose to make the provisions of this Act more stringent; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Available information is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) to (d) No, Sir. Various provisions of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 were reviewed recently in pursuance of the suggestion of the P.C. Jain Commission set up to review Administrative Laws and it was decided not to amend the said Act of 1971 for the present.

Statement

Pendency of Contempt of Court Cases

Name of the Court		Pendency as on	Admission Matters (actual number of files)	Regular Matters	Total
Supreme Court of India		1.5.2000	188	157	345
High Courts		Pendency as on	Civil	Criminal	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Allahabad	12/99	0	28827	28827
2.	Andhra Pradesh	12/99	1680	0	1680
3.	Bombay	12/99	219	76	295
4.	Calcutta	12/99	2581	0	2581
5.	Delhi	12/99	2209	186	2395

1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Gauhati	12/98	1778	22	1800
7.	Gujarat	12/98	0	3	3
8.	Himachal Pradesh	12/99	33	1	34
9.	J&K	12/99	3569	52	3621
10.	Karnataka	12/99	1411	0	1411
11.	Kerala	12/99	210	0	210
12.	Madhya Pradesh	12/99	689	36	725
13.	Madras	12/99	865	0	865
14.	Orissa	12/99	2132	0	2132
15.	Patna	9/99	5426	60	5486
16.	Punjab & Haryana	12/99	2478	50	2528
17.	Rajasthan	9/99	1113	25	1138
18.	Sikkim	12/99	0	6	6
Grand Total:			26393	29344	55737

Internet Industry

*693. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made any plan for the growth of Internet industry in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) has provided internet nodes in certain areas of the country;

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

(e) whether there is an expansion programme to provide more of such nodes by VSNL in the country;

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

(g) the time by which these nodes are likely to be available for commercial lease?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (g) The Government has embarked on a very liberal policy aimed at promoting Internet within the country. As per the Internet Policy, no

license fee is payable by the ISP licensee for 5 years and a nominal fee of one rupee per annum is payable after 5 years.

The Internet Policy provides interconnection of networks and setting up of International Gateways by the Internet Service Provider independent of VSNL.

Salient features of the Internet Service Provider (ISP) policy is given in the Statement-I enclosed.

The Government has also announced duty concessions to Internet industry in the Budget of 2000-2001. Concessional rate of 5% basic duty applicable to specified telecom equipments has been extended to Internet Service Providers for import of Routers, ATM switches and frame relay switches.

The Government has also initiated many steps through Department of Telecom Services (DTS) to help Internet industry grow at fast pace and to supplement Government Policies on Internet. Salient features of these steps are given in the Statement-II enclosed.

IT Bill is also expected to provide a major boost to this industry.

VSNL is providing Internet services from six locations viz. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Calcutta, Pune and

Bangalore. DTS is providing Internet services at 89 stations (as of March 2000).

The proposal of VSNL for expanding the Internet Services in the country is under consideration of the Government.

Statement-I

Synopsis of the ISP Policy

(a) Any Indian company with a maximum foreign equity of 49% is eligible.

(b) Category 'A' service Area — whole of India. Category 'B' Service Area—20 territorial Telecom Circles, four Metros—Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta or Chennai and four major Telephone Districts — Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad or Pune. Category 'C' Service Area — any Secondary Switching Areas (SSA) of DOT with geographical boundaries as on 1.4.98.

(c) An applicant company may be granted any number of licences and there will be no limit of number of licences granted in a particular area.

(d) Period of licence is 15 years.

(e) Licence fee is waived upto 31.10.2003 and will be Re. 1/- per annum thereafter.

(f) Performance Bank Guarantee—Rs. 2 crores for Category 'A' Service Area, Rs. 20 lakhs for each Category 'B' Service Area and Rs. 3 lakhs for each Category 'C' Service Area.

(g) International connectivity—Through gateways of DOT, VSNL or authorised public/Government organisations. Private ISPs are allowed to set up gateways after obtaining security clearance. ISP's can take bandwidth directly from foreign satellites which are coordinated over India.

(h) Establishment of transmission links—Private ISPs can obtain transmission links on lease from DOT, licensed Basic Service Operator, Railways, State Electricity Boards, National Power Grid Corporation etc. They may also establish their own transmission links within its service area for carrying traffic originated and terminated by his subscriber, provided that such capacities are not available from authorised agencies and such to permission of Telecom authority.

(i) Telephon on Internet is not permitted

(j) The ISPs are free to fix their own tariff. However, TRAI may fix tariff at anytime which shall be binding on the licences.

Statement-II

Salient features of steps taken by Department of Telecom Services (DTS) for growth of Internet in the country

National Internet Backbone (NIB) — DTS plans to establish a National Internet Backbone for carriage of Internet traffic. It aims at providing easy interconnect point to the ISPs besides establishing Points of Presence for DTS as an Internet Service Provider. It is proposed to set up at least one Internet node in every Secondary Switching Area.

A 20% concession is presently being offered by DTS on the annual leased line rentals for leased lines taken for Internet access and for software export purposes.

Recognised educational institution/Government organisations/Newspapers and News agencies are presently being given 50% concession on port charges by DTS. 100% Export Oriented Units (having annual export turn over above US\$ 1,00,000) - software exporters are also getting 20% concession on annual port charges.

Half of the telephone connections required by licensed ISPs (as well as VSNL) for providing Internet Services may be released on out-of-turn basis in Non-OYT General category by DTS, for providing Internet Dial-up ports to the extent of 1/12th of their Dial-up subscriber base, on demand by ISP.

Store and forward services over the Internet (v/z. Voice, Data, Video etc.) have been permitted by DTS subject to no dialing out at the destination end through Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN)/Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) lines/E1R2 links and information being sent from one Internet node to another Internet node without switching to PSTN/ISDN.

Funds for DoT Expansion

*694. SHRI KRISHNAMRAJU:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications has projected to arrange finances by borrowing to meet its target of expansion programme during 2000-2001 and for the Ninth Five Year Plan;

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

(c) the details of mode of borrowings from the market, either by floating bonds or any other means;

(d) whether in 1998, the DoT had managed its entire capital outlay including network expansion without resorting to any external borrowing;

(e) if so, the details of the plans that are being considered for expansion during 2000-2001;

(f) whether the Government propose to get this expansion programme supervised by TRAI;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the efforts made by the Government to have more revenue realisation and to effect economy in the establishment?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) To finance the shortfall in resources to fund the Plan Outlay of 2000-2001 of DTS (excluding MTNL), market borrowings (Bonds) to the extent of Rs. 2152 crores have been approved out of Plan Outlay of Rs. 16,000 crores. For the Ninth Five Year Plan market borrowings (Bonds) component of the funding plan is expected to be Rs. 14304 crores out of a need based outlay of Rs. 66193 crores. However, the borrowing component may increase if further re-balancing of tariff takes place, which will reduce internal generation.

The reason for borrowing is shortfall in internal generation of resources to finance the increasing size of the Plan to keep up with developmental targets.

(c) The mode of borrowing is by floating of bonds through MTNL.

(d) During the years 1997-98 and 1998-99 no market borrowings (Bonds) were resorted to by DOT.

(e) For the plan Outlay of Rs. 16,000 crores the main physical targets set for the year 2000-2001 are as under:

(A) Local Telephone System	
(i) Net switching capacity (lakh lines)	67
(ii) DELs (lakh lines)	53.50
(B) LD Switching System	
Tax capacity (lakh lines)	4

(C) LD Transmission System	
(i) Microwave systems (RKM)s	10,000
(ii) OFC System (RKM)s	1,00,000
(iii) MCPC VSAT	164
(iv) IDR	25
(v) VPTs	1,00,000

(f) and (g) TRAI's mandate is limited to tariff setting and other regulatory functions and they have no role in supervising expansion programme of DTS.

(h) The Department of Telecom Services has been constantly expanding and upgrading its network to augment its revenues. The pace of expansion has been growing and in the current year we propose to add 53.5 lakh working lines and also strengthen our access and the long distance network to increase the capacity and efficiency of the system. The Department has plans to progressively introduce Value Added Services like Internet, Cellular Mobile Services etc., to further augment its revenues. On the other hand, all necessary measures to economise on expenditure are being taken. The per line maintenance expenditure has been kept under check during the last five years despite substantial increase in the wages and the prices of products. The staff available per thousand lines is being brought down constantly which at present stands at about 20 persons per 1000 lines as against about 57 in 1992-1993.

Restructuring of CPSU

*695. SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to restructure National Hydro Power Corporation, National Thermal Power Corporation and the Power Grid Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have appointed any consultant committee to study the disinvestment process of these Central Power Sector Undertakings;

(d) if so, whether the report of the consultant Committee has been received by the Government; and

(e) if so, the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) In order to enable the Government to implement an Accelerated Power Development Programme, the Government is considering various options for mobilizing resources to supplement the funds likely to be provided in the plan and to leverage the strengths of different central public sector undertakings under the Ministry of Power. A final decision on the modality of leveraging the financial strength of different CPSUs covering various aspects like disinvestment, privatization etc. will be taken in consultation with Planning Commission and concerned Ministries.

(c) M/s. ICICI and M/s. State Bank of India (SBI) Capital Markets were appointed as Consultants to suggest various options of raising resources of the Central PSUs to invest in Accelerated Power Development Programme.

(d) and (e) ICICI and SBI Capital Markets have suggested several options for financial engineering/restructuring of power sector CPSUs for generating additional resources. These options include:

- (i) Disinvestment of GOI stake in CPSUs.
- (ii) Sale of assets of CPSUs.
- (iii) Cross holding in power sector CPSUs.
- (iv) Consolidation of fragmented composites.

Special Courts for Corporate Litigations

*696. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up special courts to handle corporate litigations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of such cases pending in various courts at present, State-wise;

(d) the number of cases disposed during each of the last three years, court-wise; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to expedite settlement of these cases?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) No such proposal is under consideration at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Statements I and II, one relating to pendency of such cases in the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts and the other relating to disposal of such cases by the said Courts, are enclosed. No information is being maintained in the Deptt. of Justice regarding corporate cases in the Subordinate/District Courts.

(e) Pendency of all types of cases including those relating to litigation between two or more corporates, is a cause of concern for both the Government and the Judiciary. Various steps have been taken by the Government for the speedy disposal of cases. These include amendment of the Code of Civil Procedure and the Code of Criminal Procedure, increase in the number of posts of Judges/Judicial Officers and adoption of alternative modes of dispute resolution, such as, arbitration and conciliation. Lok Adalats have been given a statutory base as supplementary forum for resolution of disputes.

Steps taken by the Supreme Court of India and various High Courts to expedite disposal of cases include, *inter alia*, more practical categorisation and grouping of cases, non-accumulation of defective matters, setting up of specialised benches etc.

Statement I

(A) Number of Company cases Pending in the High Courts as per latest available Information

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	Pending as on	Total
1	2	3	4
1.	Allahabad	31-12-99	304
2.	Andhra Pradesh	31-12-99	289
3.	Bombay	31-12-99	2175

1	2	3	4
4.	Calcutta	31-12-99	559
5.	Delhi	31-12-99	9698
6.	Gauhati	31-12-98	153
7.	Gujarat	31-12-98	1242
8.	Himachal Pradesh	31-12-99	74
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	31-12-99	25
10.	Karnataka	31-12-99	4003
11.	Kerala	31-12-99	513
12.	Madhya Pradesh	31-12-99	287
13.	Madras	31-12-99	10149
14.	Orissa	31-12-99	335
15.	Patna	30-09-99	74
16.	Pujab & Haryana	31-12-99	394
17.	Rajasthan	30-09-99	396
18.	Sikkim	31-12-99	0
Grand Total:			30,650

(B) No. of corporate cases pending in Supreme Court as on 1.5.2000 is 258 (*i.e.* 40 admission matters and 218 regular matters).

Statement-II

(A) Number of Company cases disposed of by High Courts during 1997, 1998 and 1999

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	During the Year		
		1997	1998	1999
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Allahabad	123	99	118
2.	Andhra Pradesh	387	1112	1071
3.	Bombay	2157	2825	4568
4.	Calcutta	631	400	744
5.	Delhi	3068	3149	5764
6.	Gauhati	55	38	NA*
7.	Gujarat	626	649	NA*
8.	Himachal Pradesh	38	22	18
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	0	11	0
10.	Karnataka	649	595	958

1	2	3	4	5
11.	Kerala	177	148	153
12.	Madhya Pradesh	94	125	86
13.	Madras	4513	330	1352
14.	Orissa	31	12	9
15.	Patna	105	21	11**
16.	Punjab & Haryana	350	724	444
17.	Rajasthan	104	126	22**
18.	Sikkim	0	0	0
Grand Total:		13108	10386	15316

*Information not received.

**Information received upto September, 99.

	Year	Admission matters	Regular matters
(B) Supreme Court of India	1997	76	58
(under categories Company Law, MRTP & allied matters)	1998	120	5
	1999	159	0

Bidding in STD

*697. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications has recommended a bidding process on entry fee for selecting private companies to be allowed in the STD sector;

(b) if so, whether the DoT has forwarded its recommendations to the reconstituted Telecom Regulatory Authority of India;

(c) if so, the details of the main proposals made therein; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The main proposals referred to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for their

reconsideration include service area of operation, type of competition, entry fee and bidding process for selection, licence fee in the form of revenue share, infrastructure providers etc.

Conference of State Election Commissioners

*698. SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a conference of State Election Commissioners was held at New Delhi recently;

(b) if so, whether the Election Commission has mooted several proposals to the Government to bring further changes in the election laws;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of issues discussed in the conference and the outcome thereof; and

(e) the action contemplated by the Government on the views of the Election Commission?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Yes, Sir. A conference of State Election Commissioners was convened by the Election Commission of India in New Delhi on 18.4.2000.

(b) No, Sir. No proposal has yet been received by the Government on the basis of discussions held in the meeting.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The Conference discussed the following issues:

- (i) Conditions of service of State Election Commissioners (SECs);
- (ii) Functioning of SECs with reference to executive interference;
- (iii) Common Electoral Rolls;
- (iv) Use of Electoral Photo Identity Cards;
- (v) Loaning of election materials, electronic voting machines by the Election Commission of India to State Election Commissions;
- (vi) Criminalisation of politics;
- (vii) Disciplinary control over election machinery; and
- (viii) Registration of political parties and symbols.

(e) Does not arise.

Seminar on India's Forest Beyond 2000

*699. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a seminar on 'India's Forest beyond 2000' was held at New Delhi recently;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held in the seminar and the name of persons participated therein;

(c) whether the target of bringing 33 percent landmass area under forest cover has not been achieved by the Government so far; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The seminar on 'India's Forests beyond 2000' was organised during April 19th — 21st, 2000 by the Commonwealth Forestry Association, India and the Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education with sponsorship from the Planning Commission and supported by the Department for International Development, UK and Ford Foundation. The seminar discussed the following issues:

- (i) Forest Policy Options
- (ii) Management Options
- (iii) International Agenda
- (iv) Institutional Mechanism
- (v) Inter-sectoral linkages

The seminar was attended by 171 participants drawn from Government of India, various State Governments, academic and research institutions, NGOs, social workers, press and international organisations and members of Commonwealth Forestry Association. The recommendations of the seminar are enclosed at Annexure-A.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The National Forest Policy 1988 envisages that the national goal should be to have a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover. As per State of Forest Report, 1997 prepared by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), the total forest cover in the country is 63.34 million ha (19.27% of total land mass). Besides this, it has also been estimated that tree cover on private lands in the country is about 16 million ha. This makes the total forest and tree cover on 24.13% of total land mass of the country. National goal of one-third area under forest and tree cover could not be achieved due to non-availability of resources. Government has prepared a comprehensive National Forestry Action Programme for 20 years for sustainable development of forests as well as to bring one-third of country's area under forest and tree cover. The total funds required for this purpose is estimated to be Rs. 133902.78 crore in twenty years.

Statement*India's Forests Beyond 2000*

The delegates attending the Commonwealth Forestry Association of India and Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education Seminar on "India's Forests beyond 2000" made the following recommendations for a vision for forestry in India in the new millennium.

Technical Session-I (Forest Policy Options)**Recommendation 1**

Recognising that the overall national development planning process requires harmonisation between the policies of various sectors;

Recommends that, in order to achieve the objectives of gender sensitive Sustainable Forest and tree Management conservation and support to rural livelihoods be addressed in simultaneously and in parallel.

Recommendation 2

Recognising the need to quantify and publicise adequately the contribution of forests to the Green Gross National Product;

Recommends that national forest resource accounting should be institutionalised within the national economy.

Recommendation 3

Recognising the need for the widest participation of people if wise and sustainable management and development of the nation's forests is to be achieved;

Recommends communities, individuals, NGOs, CBOs, Panchayats and the corporate sector and combination of these be encouraged to join with forest service management to ensure sustainable forest management and development.

Recommendation 4

Recognising that, to achieve the objectives of the National Forest Policy there is a need to examine the feasibility of its targets;

Recommends that the Central Forestry Commission be reviewed and strengthened, with the following terms of reference:

- Examine the feasibility of achieving the targets of forest/tree cover set in the National Forest Policy.
- Develop a strategy for achievable trees and forest cover.
- A clear strategy should be chalked out to ensure adequate flow of funds for development of forestry sector.

Recommendation 5

Recognising the productive potential of forests for the benefit of forest-dependent people;

Recommends that forest production, wherever silviculturally possible, should aim to produce the widest range of goods & services for the best benefit of forest-dependent people, surplus revenue to be used to increase resource flow for forestry sector development.

Technical Session-II (Management Options)**Recommendation 6**

Recognising that reliable data on the extent of forests and of tree wealth outside forested areas and areas likely to be suitable for tree planting is not readily available in the country;

Recommends that, to improve strategic planning for resource management, data on forest and tree resources be augmented and that existing and newly-acquired information be made accessible to all stakeholders.

Recommendation 7

Recognising that the management objectives for the sector have been identified, prioritised and published in the National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP);

Recommends that these objectives be implemented in a time-bound manner as a matter of urgency in line with the board provisions of the NFAP.

Recommendation 8

Recognising the poor productivity levels of forests in India and potential of trees and woodlands on non-forest lands to meet the local and national needs;

Recommends that research institutions should seek to evolve technological innovations for resource

assessment, planning, management and improving the productivity of forests and tree plantations on non-forest lands.

Technical Session-III (International Agenda)

Recommendation 9

Recognising the increasing attention paid to the global and national roles of forestry in international fora;

Recommends a task force be set up to study the issues on international forestry matters with the following terms of reference

- keeping in view the overall national interest, consult widely with national stakeholders and develop a national stand on forestry related issues.
- develop a strategy for achieving harmony between national and international policies.
- make a report to government to ensure that India's position is clearly understood and presented in the international arena and recommend a national programme to systematically pursue economic and other opportunities from new international developments, agreements and conventions.

Recommendation 10

Recognising that, with depleting external assistance, it is increasingly the country's primary responsibility to manage its own forest resources;

Recommends that the funding under EAPs does not become a substitute for sustained basic domestic support and that it should be an additionality to the national plan allocation.

Technical Session-IV (Institutional Mechanism)

Recommendation 11

Recognising the overwhelming need for the sustainable development and growth of the forest sector;

Recommends that the institutional structure of and potential revenue flows from forest management be thoroughly assessed and an appropriate enabling legal framework be evolved by involving different stakeholders. An interdisciplinary task force could be considered for this process.

Technical Session-V (Inter-Sectoral Linkages)

Recommendation 12

Recognising that the holistic management of forests, lands and water resources requires the coordination of many sectors in addition to the forest sector if the production of the goods and services from these resources is to be optimised for the benefit of civil society;

Recommends that appropriate mechanisms for coordination at all levels be developed centrally and that in particular the policies for tariffs, pricing, financial instruments, market development and inter-state movement be dovetailed to meet these objectives.

Circle Stamp Depots

*700. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:
SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether various Circle Stamp Depots (CSDs) place higher demand on private printers than Government printers for postal stationery and obtained supplies in excess of their requirement during 1995-97;

(b) if so, the reasons for placing higher demand with private printers;

(c) the normal requirement of postal stationery in a CSD and the details of order placed with Government and private printing presses during each of the last three years, press-wise and item-wise;

(d) whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken thereon; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. It is not correct to say that various Circle Stamp Depots placed higher demand on private printers than Government printers on postal stationery and obtained supplies in excess of their requirement during 1995-97.

(b) In view of above, does not arise.

1997-98 34.07% of total requirement

(c) The normal requirement of postal stationery in a CSD is 120 days of consumption of that particular item. During each of the last 3 years orders were placed only on Government printing presses, for all stationery items, except for 3-flap Inland Letter Cards, which is not produced by the Government printing presses. The single flap iLC produced by the Govt. presses is not machinable, and the Government presses have been asked to procure the required production facility. Against the total requirement of Inland Letter Cards, orders on private presses, have been placed as follows:

1998-99 26.24% of total requirement

1999-2000 7.93% of total requirement

Details of orders placed with Government and private printing presses, during each of the last three years, press-wise and item-wise are given in the enclosed statement.

(d) to (f) In view of above does not arise.

Statement

Summary of Orders Placed on Government/Private Presses

(In lakh Pieces)

Sl.No.	Year	Status	Press	Single Post Cards	Reply Post Cards	Competition Post Cards	Inland Letter Cards	Embossed Envelope	Foreign Aero Gram	Registered Envelope
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	1997-98	Government Presses	India Security Press, Nasik	4670.37	638.20	131.32	1734.12	1902.65	146.2	271.92
			Security Printing Press, Hyderabad	3886.62	—	—	3472.40	1529.00	—	—
		Private Presses	Madras Security Printers, Chennai	—	—	—	1347.60	—	—	—
			Calcutta Security Printers, Kanpur	—	—	—	1343.11	—	—	—
2.	1998-99	Government Presses	India Security Press, Nasik	1270.29	457.14	0.64	1036.20	1128.82	286.47	249.44
			Security Printing Press, Hyderabad	2428.00	—	—	2900.00	770.00	—	—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		Private Presses	Calcutta Security Printers Ltd., Kanpur	—	—	—	700.00	—	—	—
			Madras Security Printers, Chennai	—	—	—	700.00	—	—	—
3.	1999- 2000	Government Presses	India Security Press, Nashik							
			Security Printing Press, Hyderabad	2672.55	230.30	0.60	1638.01	1036.64	254.63	254.90
		Private Presses	Calcutta Security Printers Ltd., Kanpur	—	—	—	140.56	—	—	—
			Madras Security Printers, Chennai	—	—	—	140.56	—	—	—

Inland Letter Cards in 1997-98 to 1999-2000

Sl.No.	Year	Total Supply (in lakh Pcs)	(%)	Supply by Government Presses* (in lakh Pcs)	(%)	Supply by Private Presses # (in lakh Pcs)	(%)
1.	1997-98	7897.23	(100)	5206.52	(65.93)	2690.71	(34.07)
2.	1998-99	5335.20	(100)	3935.20	(73.76)	1400.00	(26.24)
3.	1999-2000	3545.33	(100)	3264.21	(92.07)	281.12	(7.93)

* Two Flaps only.

Three Flaps only.

Purchase of Power from NTPC

7413. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any request from Kerala Government regarding unification

of purchase price of power from National Thermal Power Corporation station at Kayamkulam in Kerala pooling the price of power from all Central power stations in Southern Region; and

(b) if so, the details alongwith action taken in this regards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The suggestion of the Government of Kerala for pooling of tariff for various power stations of National Thermal Power Corporation is not practical at present since Kayamkulam station has been dedicated to Kerala on its insistence. Power Purchase Agreement for the entire power from this station has also been signed by the Kerala State Electricity Board. The station, based on naphtha, was reasonably priced when it was planned. At present day's high cost of naphtha, no other State would be willing to buy power.

Clearance to Punjab Refinery Project

7414. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have accorded environmental clearance to the proposal for a Refinery in Punjab submitted by the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited; and

(b) if so, the status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The proposal for a Refinery in Punjab submitted by the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited was accorded environmental clearance on 6th November 1998.

Waiting List for LPG Connections in Tamil Nadu

7415. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons on the waiting list for LPG connections in Tamil Nadu, district-wise;

(b) the strategy adopted by the Government to clear the backlog;

(c) the number of LPG agencies functioning in the State and quota of LPG connections with each one of them, district-wise; and

(d) the time by which the Government propose to provide LPG connections to the waitlisted persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The number of persons on the waiting list registered with the distributors of the Public Sector Oil Companies as on 1.1.2000 was about 14.25 lakhs in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(b) to (d) The total number of LPG distributors operating as on 1.4.2000 was 450 in the State of Tamil Nadu.

New LPG connections are released in a phased manner throughout the country depending on the LPG availability, waiting list, slack available with the distributors and their viability. However, the Government has a plan to release around 1 crore LPG connections during the year 2000 to clear all waiting list registered with the distributors of Public Sector Oil Companies as on 1.12.1999.

[Translation]

Centrally Sponsored Projects in Gujarat

7416. SHRI MANSINH PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of centrally sponsored environmental projects launched in Gujarat during the last three years;

(b) the details of the achievements made so far and the amount of assistance provided under each project; and

(c) the details of such projects proposed to be launched in near future in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The details of Centrally Sponsored Environmental Projects implemented in Gujarat during the last three years and the details of the achievements made so far and the amount of assistance provided under each project during the above period are given in the Statement attached.

(c) All the ongoing schemes would be continued in from the State Government.
the State for which project proposals have been invited

Statement

Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme	Achievements during 1997-98 to 1999-2000	
		Financial Rs. in lakhs	Physical
1	2	3	4
1.	National River Conservation Plan	300.00	Rs. 220 lakhs has been incurred in the execution of works
2.	Eco Development around National Parks & Sanctuaries	521.00	
3.	Integrated Afforestation and Eco Development Project	108.57	990 ha. area covered
4.	Area Oriented Fuelwood Fodder Project	505.53	7860 ha. area covered
5.	Non Timber Forests Produce	232.99	1045 ha. area covered.
6.	Tree Pasture and Seed Development Scheme	27.86	—
7.	Development of National Parks & Sanctuaries	52.91	—
8.	Modern Forests Fire Control Methods	80.78	—
9.	Assistance to Botanical Gardens	6.50	—

[English]

Telecom Value Added Services

7417. SHRI SAHIB SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Telecom circles who have introduced value added services like E-mail, internet, video conferencing, Radio paging etc. in the country; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for introduction of these services in all the Telecom circles in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) List of Telecom Circles/Metro Districts/MTNL who have introduced Intelligent Network (IN), Internet and Integrated Digital Services Network (ISDN) is given in the attached Statement. Internet and ISDN can be used for the purpose of E-Mail and video conferencing respectively. Paging services are being provided by private operators and not by Department of Telecom Services.

(b) It is proposed to provide IN and ISDN Services in Andaman & Nicobar Telecom Circle during the current year (2000-2001).

Statement**Status of Telecom Circles**

Sl.No.	Name of Circles/ Metro Districts/ MTNL	Status on availability		
		Internet	IN	ISDN
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	Available	N/A	N/A
2.	Andhra Pradesh	-do-	Available	Available
3.	Assam	-do-	-do-	-do-
4.	Bihar	-do-	-do-	-do-
5.	Gujarat	-do-	-do-	-do-
6.	Haryana	-do-	-do-	-do-
7.	Himachal Pradesh	-do-	-do-	-do-
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	-do-	-do-	-do-
9.	Karnataka	-do-	-do-	-do-
10.	Kerala	-do-	-do-	-do-
11.	Madhya Pradesh	-do-	-do-	-do-
12.	Maharashtra	-do-	-do-	-do-
13.	North East	-do-	-do-	-do-
14.	Orissa	-do-	-do-	-do-
15.	Punjab	-do-	-do-	-do-
16.	Rajasthan	-do-	-do-	-do-
17.	Tamil Nadu	-do-	-do-	-do-
18.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	-do-	-do-	-do-
19.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	-do-	-do-	-do-
20.	West Bengal	-do-	-do-	-do-
21.	Chennai Telephones	-do-	-do-	-do-
22.	Calcutta Telephones	-do-	-do-	-do-
23.	MTNL Delhi	-do-	-do-	-do-
24.	MTNL Mumbai	-do-	-do-	-do-

N/A = Not Available.

Losses Suffered by Refineries

7418. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of refineries which caught fire along with loss suffered during each of the last three years;

(b) the name of refineries opened or closed during the above period; and

(c) the remedial steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to save the oil refineries from such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Visakh Refinery caught fire on 14.9.1997 resulting in suffering of loss of Rs. 72 crores and shutdown of the refinery from 14.9.1997 to 15.2.1998. However, there were incidents of fire in some of the units of the refineries in the last 3 years.

(c) All fire incidents are investigated by multi-disciplinary teams and remedial measures as recommended are implemented in a time bound manner.

Adequate measures are adopted for safety of the plant and operating personnel as per the prescribed Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD) standards.

Upgradation of Refineries

7419. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to upgrade refineries to produce desulphurised fuels; and

(b) the time by which the desulphurised fuel is likely to be available in the entire country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Nine refineries have installed Diesel Hydro Desulphurisation (DHDS) facilities for desulphurising diesel fuel from 1.0% max to 0.25% max sulphur content.

The sulphur content in petrol has also been reduced from 0.2% to 0.1% max w.e.f. 1.4.2000 as per BIS 2000 fuel specifications.

Further, industry is supplying 0.05% max sulphur petrol to all categories of petrol vehicles and 0.05% max sulphur diesel, to all new non-commercial diesel driven vehicles in NCR w.e.f. 1.4.2000.

(b) 0.25% max sulphur diesel and 0.1% max sulphur petrol is available in the entire country since 1.1.2000 and 1.4.2000 respectively.

Bonds for North-South-East-West Corridor Highway

7420. SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Highways Authority of India has decided to issue bonds to raise money for funding Prime Minister's North-South and East-West corridor highway proposal;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made assessment regarding total amount required for this project; and

(c) the time by which the work on this project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The amount required for implementation of National Highway Development Project is Rs. 54,000 crore.

(c) The project is targeted to be completed by 2009.

SCs/STs in the Ministry

7421. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of SCs/STs and OBCs provided jobs in Departments/autonomous bodies and subordinate offices under his ministry during each of the last three years, category-wise;

(b) the number of SCs/STs and OBCs posts lying vacant in each of the above offices as on March 31, 2000; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to fill up these vacant posts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The requisite information is being collected and the same will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Telephone Registration Fees in Rural Areas

7422. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to reduce registration fees, telephone call charges and rentals for rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to improve the telephone services in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The Government of India did not increase the tariffs for telephone call charges and rental in rural areas despite steep increase notified by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India in its tariff order of 1999. In addition, Government has granted flexibility to field units to give 50% concession in registration charges of Non-OYT telephones in rural/urban areas during festival season/special occasions on merits of each case.

(c) The Government has taken following steps to improve the telecommunications services in the rural areas:

- All rural exchanges have been converted to electronic exchanges.
- To improve the STD services, reliable transmission media is being provided progressively.
- Telecommunications services will be provided in all the villages by 2002.
- Induction of new Technologies like WLL & C-DOT/PMP is being planned for providing VPTs and meeting scattered demand of telephones in the rural areas. Satellite based technology is proposed to be used to provide VPTs in far flung inaccessible areas of the country.

[English]

Order for Survival of ABL Power Projects in Bihar

7423. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ABL, Durgapur has no work order and at the verge of closure;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for the survival of the said company;

(d) whether the Government propose to shift the office of the company from Calcutta; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The promoters of M/s. ABB-ABL Limited have informed in the recent past that there is no workload in both the boiler manufacturing units owned by them including the factory at Durgapur in West Bengal. The promoters have also stated that as a result of continuing low workload situation, the Company, is likely to turn sick unless corrective steps are taken.

(b) and (c) So far as placement of orders is concerned, in an era of global competition, it is neither possible nor desirable for the Central Government to ask a project developer to award any contract to ABB-ABL Limited in preference to another. Thus, ABB-ABL, like any other manufacturer/supplier, has to compete with others on a level playing field. The company has been advised to consider exploring the vast opportunities available under renovation and modernisation schemes of thermal plants with funding from the Power Finance Corporation. With reforms in the power sector, new investments are picking up and offer profitable avenues for efficient equipment manufacturer.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Demand and Supply of LPG in West Bengal

7424. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the demand and supply of LPG in West Bengal during the last two years;

(b) whether there has been any shortage in supply of LPG cylinders in the State;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to meet the shortage in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The sale of LPG by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies in the State of West Bengal during the last two years are as under:

Year	LPG Sale In TMT
1997-98	242.5
1998-99	272.7

(b) to (d) At present, the demand of LPG customers enrolled with the Public Sector Oil Companies in the State of West Bengal, is being met by and large in full. However, whenever LPG backlog develops, PSU Oil Companies take various measures including maximising imports, operating the bottling plants on extended hours/ Sundays and holidays, etc. to meet the demand in the affected markets. Presently there is no LPG backlog in the State of West Bengal.

[Translation]

LPG Supply to Panchayats in Darbhanga, Bihar

7425. SHRIMATI SUSHILA SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of panchayats in Darbhanga district of Bihar which are being supplied L.P.G.;

(b) the number of such villages which are 100 to 500 yards away from the main road;

(c) whether the Government propose to deliver LPG cylinders at doorsteps in those villages;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the number of L.P.G. agencies proposed to be set up in Darbhanga, Bihar during 2000-2001 alongwith the locations thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Under the extant directions, LPG distributors supply LPG in their authorised area of operation and all the four existing LPG distributors of Indian Oil Corporation Limited in Darbhanga district of Bihar are operating within Municipal limit of Darbhanga.

(e) 3 locations viz. Laharia Sarai, Jale and Rahi in Darbhanga District of Bihar have been identified for setting up of new LPG agencies.

Barauni Refinery

7426. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated by the Government for development and expansion of the Barauni Refinery during the last three years;

(b) whether the allocated amount has been utilised fully;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Government of India has not given any budgetary support for development and expansion of the Barauni Refinery during the last three years. However, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) has spent Rs. 262.89 crore from its own funds during 1997-98 to 1999-2000 for development and expansion of the Barauni Refinery.

Setting up of New Laboratories and Pilot Plants in Oil and Natural Gas Field

7427. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up new laboratories and new pilot plants in field of Oil and Natural Gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have identified the locations for setting up these laboratories; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) and Bongaigaon Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited (BRPL), the public sector undertakings under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, have plans to set up new laboratories/pilot plants as under:

ONGC: A new work station at its KDMIPE, Dehradun, for Hydrocarbon Migration modelling for improved estimates of charge of hydrocarbons in the prospect and to implement Enhanced Oil Recovery methods in different fields of Gujarat on a pilot scale.

GAIL: New laboratories for gas pipeline systems, Natural gas utilisation and Natural gas conversion in Noida (U.P.).

BRPL: A Pilot Plant at Dhaligaon, Assam, for developing improved technology for manufacturing Alfa Olefin in technical collaboration with Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun.

[English]

**Ban on use of Talaque Word for Divorce
of Muslim Women**

7428. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Women has demanded to the Union Government to stop the practice of divorcing muslim women by pronouncing the word Talaque;

(b) if so, whether the muslim women of the country have also urged for the stoppage of this practice;

(c) if so, the details of the facts in this regard; and

(d) the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (d) The National Commission for Women has brought to the notice of the Central Government the plight of Muslim women who experience instantaneous verbal triple talaque. The Central Government, as far as possible, does not interfere in the personal laws of the minority communities unless the necessary initiative for such changes comes from a sizeable cross section of the community concerned.

Clearance to Pipeline Water Supply

7429. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal to lay new underground pipeline for water supply to Coco-Cola group project through forest land in Thane District of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the company has started the work of laying down pipeline without prior permission of the Union Government; and

(d) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Regional Office, Bhopal of this Ministry had received a proposal under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 from the Government of Maharashtra for diversion of 0.304 ha. of forest land for laying underground pipeline from Vaitarana river via Wada Bhiwandi road to Hindustan Cococola Bottling plant in Thane district of Maharashtra during February, 2000. This proposal was approved by the Regional Office on 25.2.2000.

(c) The proposal did not involve any violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(d) Question does not arise.

Funding to Power Projects by IDBI

7430. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Industrial Development Bank of India has provided any assistance for power projects in the country during the year 1999-2000;

- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of projects cleared/rejected/pending as on date;
- (d) the total amount required for the purpose; and
- (e) the time by which the pending proposals are likely to be cleared by IDBI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During 1999-2000, Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has sanctioned an assistance of Rs. 5254

crores to 23 companies for setting up private power projects in the country. Details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) to (e) Since its inception till March 31, 2000, IDBI has sanctioned an assistance of Rs. 17,188 crores to 50 companies while 12 proposals were rejected. As on March 31, 2000, 3 applications for financial assistance of Rs. 4887 crores were pending with IDBI out of which an assistance of Rs. 700 crores was sanctioned to one project in April, 2000. The remaining two applications will be considered by the IDBI after various key arrangements/contracts such as fuel supply, escrow, Power Purchase Agreement, security package, license renewal etc. are finalised by the companies.

Statement

Assistance to power projects by IDBI during the year 1999-2000

Sl. No.	Name of the Company/State	Capacity (MW)	Assistance sanctioned	
			Nature of Assistance	Amount (Rs. Cr.)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	NCC Power Corporation Ltd., Andhra Pradesh	232	RTL	57
			FCL	143
			Total	200
2.	Vemagiri Power Generation Ltd., Andhra Pradesh	542	RTL	9
			FCL	200
			Total	209
3.	Atria Power Corporation Ltd., Karnataka	108	RTL	30
			DPG	90
			Total	120
4.	BPL Power Projects (AP) Ltd., Andhra Pradesh	520	FCL	200
			DPG	200
			Total	400
5.	Sujana Power (Tuticorin) Ltd., Tamil Nadu	110	RTL	75
			Lease	25
			Total	100
6.	Sujana Power (Gangaikondan) Ltd., Tamil Nadu	110	RTL	75
			Lease	25
			Total	100
7.	Reliance Power Ltd., Gujarat	500	FCL	653
			Total	653
8.	SPIC Electric Power Corporation (P) Ltd., Tamil Nadu	525	RTL	130
			DPG	500
			Equity	40
			Total	670

1	2	3	4	5
9.	Hinduja National Power Corporation Ltd., Andhra Pradesh	1040	RTL Total	200 200
10.	Jindal Steel & Power Ltd., Madhya Pradesh	55	RTL Total	100 100
11.	Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation Ltd. (APGENCO), Andhra Pradesh	400	RTL Total	50 50
12.	Gujarat State Energy Generation Ltd., Gujarat	156	RTL FCL Total	50 150 200
13.	Konaseema EPS Oakwell Ltd., Andhra Pradesh	220	RTL FCI DPG Total	50 150 9 209
14.	Tri Sakthi Energy Private Ltd., Tamil Nadu	525	RTL DPG Total	50 350 400
15.	Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation, Jammu & Kashmir	0	RTL Total	40 40
16.	Reliance Patalganga Power Ltd., Gujarat	447	FCL Total	550 550
17.	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation, Gujarat	250	RTL FCL Total	400 100 500
18.	Shri Maheshwar Hydel Power Corporation Ltd., Madhya Pradesh	400	RTL Equity Total	100 50 150
19.	Indian Seamless Power Ltd., Maharashtra	18	RTL	20
20.	Jindal Tractebel Power Company Ltd., Karnataka	260	RTL	60
21.	NHPC		Corp. Loan	200
22.	Subhash Kabini Power Corporation Ltd., Karnataka	20	PFS DS	36 5
23.	Indell Electrometals Ltd., Kerala	21	PFS	13

[Translation]

Electronic Telephone Exchange in Rajasthan

7431. SHRIMATI JAS KAUR MEENA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of manual telephone exchanges proposed to be converted into electronic ones in Rajasthan during Ninth Five Year Plan, district-wise; and

(b) the funds allocated for the purpose in the plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No manual telephone exchanges are proposed to be converted into electronic in Rajasthan, as no local manual telephone exchanges were existing at the beginning of Ninth Five Year Plan.

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

[English]

Oil and Natural Gas Fields in Maharashtra

7432. KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of oil and Natural gas fields in Maharashtra; and

(b) the total quantity of oil and Natural gas produced by these fields during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) There are no oil or gas producing fields located in the State of Maharashtra.

[Translation]

Petrol Pumps to SCs/STs in Madhya Pradesh

7433. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps being run by the persons belonging to the SCs/STs in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the number of petrol pumps being run by unauthorised persons in the State, district-wise;

(c) whether there is any proposal to order a vigilance probe in this regard; and

(d) if so, the time by which the unauthorised persons are likely to be removed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) As on 1.10.1999, there were 94 retail outlet dealerships belonging to SCs/STs persons functioning in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) No retail outlet dealership is reportedly being run by unauthorised persons in Madhya Pradesh.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Telephone Exchanges in Maharashtra

7434. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges expanded with their capacity in Maharashtra during the last three years and as on March 31, 2000, district-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to expand the remaining telephone exchanges in the State during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The number of Telephone Exchanges expanded with their capacity in Maharashtra during last three years, district-wise is given the attached Statement-I.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The location-wise details of the proposed exchanges in Maharashtra State during 2000-2001 are given in the attached Statement-II. The plan for 2001-2002 is yet to be finalised.

Statement-I

*District-wise Details of No. of Exchanges and Capacity Added during 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000
(Upto 31.3.2000) in Maharashtra*

Sl.No.	Name of District	No. of Telephone Exchanges expanded during 1997-98		No. of Telephone Exchanges expanded during 1998-99		No. of Telephone exchange expanded during 1999-2000	
		No. of Exchs.	E/C Added	No. of Exchs.	E/C Added	No. of Exchs.	E/e Added
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Ahmednagar	57	7540	91	5600	98	29457
2.	Akola & Washim	16	7136	26	12320	40	2142
3.	Amravati	21	4260	28	3803	40	9802
4.	Aurangabad	16	5008	31	7348	42	11252
5.	Beed	14	2440	7	2352	35	8298
6.	Bhandara & Godia	17	2932	22	3784	40	11120
7.	Buldhana	14	1128	20	6368	45	6236
8.	Chandrapur & Godchiroli	19	7643	32	9592	39	10174
9.	Dhule & Nandurbar	30	7324	46	9018	45	6944
10.	Thane	12	33800	10	36950	11	36500
11.	Jalgaon	29	9720	64	7715	45	17079
12.	Jalna	11	196	14	2376	25	4417
13.	Kalyan	16	67364	30	24616	42	56072
14.	Koliapur	60	15156	75	14932	45	22152
15.	Latur	15	1537	23	3683	38	6487
16.	Nagpur	18	17100	25	11344	45	23884
17.	Nanded	22	34004	26	1592	45	6862
18.	Nasik	37	28406	102	35326	60	11288
19.	Osmanabad	21	4240	17	2676	14	4996
20.	Parbhani & Hingoli	17	3268	31	4320	11	8804
21.	Pune	33	43286	38	30448	65	78020
22.	Raigad	79	15756	70	19050	43	14416
23.	Ratnagiri	23	5408	33	10003	40	12554
24.	Sangu	81	22240	06	12328	50	26256
25.	Stara (Satava)	42	12362	45	5940	50	18294
26.	Sindhudurg	25	2980	26	3566	20	5156

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
27.	Solepur	37	9798	43	2950	65	20114
28.	Wardha	11	1660	14	3530	38	10344
29.	Yeotmal	12	3664	21	5108	35	9296
30.	Mumbai	60	161860	90	167950	106	227150

Statemet-II**Proposed Expansion in Maharashtra State during 2000-2001**

Sl. No.	Location	Gross Capacity to be added
1	2	3
1.	Newasa	2000
2.	Rahuri	1000
3.	Sangamner	2000
4.	Shevgaon	2000
5.	Shirdi	3000
6.	Shrirampur	1000
7.	Shrirampur	1000
8.	Ahmednagar	3600
9.	Karanja	3000
10.	Murtizapur	3000
11.	Amravati	2000
12.	Amravati Midc	1500
13.	Amravati (M)	2000
14.	Daryapur	2000
15.	Warud	3000
16.	Aurangabad	4000
17.	Waluj	2000
18.	Cantonment	4000
19.	Silk Colony	2000

1	2	3
20.	Shivaji Nagar	4000
21.	Chikalthana	5000
22.	Paithan	2000
23.	Chitegaon	1000
24.	Majalgaon	2000
25.	Parli-V	3000
26.	Parli-V	1000
27.	Bhandara	1000
28.	Nandura	2000
29.	Buldana	1000
30.	Chikhali	1000
31.	Malkapur	1000
32.	Shegaon	3000
33.	Bhadrawati	2000
34.	Warora	2000
35.	Dhule	6000
36.	Dhule	1000
37.	Dhule MIDC	1000
38.	Dondaicha	1000
39.	Nandurbar	1000
40.	Shehada	1000
41.	Shirpur	2000
42.	Jamner	3000
43.	Pachora	3000
44.	Bhusaval	3000

1	2	3
45.	Challegaon	2000
46.	Raver	2000
47.	Kalgaon	3000
48.	Naigaon	2000
49.	Kaiyan	11000
50.	Ambemath (E) MIDC	4000
51.	Dombivli MIDC (M)	1000
52.	Dombivli MIDC-2	2000
53.	Dombivli (W) RSU-II	4000
54.	Nandivli	4000
55.	Ulhasnagar Camp-4	6000
56.	Vasai (W)	1500
57.	Vairar	1500
58.	Kolhapur	6500
59.	Ichalkaranji	3000
60.	Gokul-Shirgaon	2000
61.	Jaysingpur-I	1000
62.	Warananagar	3000
63.	Latur MIDC	1000
64.	Umrer	2000
65.	Itwar (SAK)	1000
66.	Kamptee (SBLD)	3500
67.	Katol Road (SBLD)	3000
68.	Nandevan (SAK)	3000
69.	Umrer	1000
70.	Nagpur	17000
71.	Degloor	2000
72.	Ahmedpur	2000
73.	Sneha Nagar	1000
74.	Taroda Naka	1000
75.	Nasik	7000
76.	Nasik	3500

1	2	3
77.	Deotali	5500
78.	Igatpur	2000
79.	Nandgaon	2000
80.	Nasik Road	8000
81.	Upnagar	6000
82.	Niphad	2000
83.	Ozar	1000
84.	Sinnar	1000
85.	Yeola	1000
86.	Omerga	2000
87.	Oshanabad	1000
88.	Tuljapur	2000
89.	Hingoli	1000
90.	Sali	2000
91.	Baramati (RSU)	500
92.	Pashan (MKR-III)	5000
93.	Salunke Vihar	1000
94.	Shivaji Nagar (MKR-III)	3000
95.	Warje (MKR-III)	5000
96.	Aundh	1000
97.	Talawade	1000
98.	Urulikanchan	3000
99.	Daund	2000
100.	Ghodnadi	3000
101.	Indapur	2000
102.	Junnar	3000
103.	Lonavala	2000
104.	Lonavala	2000
105.	Narayangaon	1000
106.	Saswad	1000
107.	Walchandnagar	3000
108.	Pune	4000

1	2	3
109.	Pune	5000
110.	Khopoli	1000
111.	Mahad	1000
112.	Papoli	1000
113.	Khed	2000
114.	Murugwada	500
115.	Ratnagiri	1000
116.	Ratnagiri MIDC	500
117.	Kavihe Mahanal	2000
118.	Islampur	1000
119.	Jath	1000
120.	Miraj	1000
121.	Vita	2000
122.	Koregaon	2000
123.	Dattanagar	1000
124.	Karad	1000
125.	Malvan	2000
126.	Pandharpur	1000
127.	Solapur	2000
128.	Hingangat	1000
129.	C. Parade	3000
130.	Cooperage	5000
131.	Fountain	5000
132.	City	4000
133.	Kalbadevi	1000
134.	Mandvi	4000
135.	Gamdevi	4000
136.	Malabar Hill	3000
137.	Mazgaon	8000
138.	Byculla	7000
139.	Worli	9000
140.	Prabhadevi	8000

1	2	3
141.	Shivaji Park	3000
142.	WDL+WDL TRK TRM	12000
143.	Slon	10000
144.	Curry Road	1000
145.	BDR+CT Bank=ICICI	9000
146.	BDR KRL Comp	4000
147.	Khar	4000
148.	Vile Parle	11000
149.	Juhu Danda	1000
150.	Andheri	7000
151.	Versova	8000
152.	Jogeshwari	3000
153.	Marol	17000
154.	Seepz	1000
155.	Goregaon	8000
156.	Gokuldham	6000
157.	Sakdnaka	5000
158.	Sakdnar	5000
159.	Malad	8000
160.	Samatanagar	7000
161.	Kandivli	12000
162.	Shimpoli	2000
163.	Charkop	6000
164.	Borivali	7000
165.	Bhayander (W)	4000
166.	Bhayander (E)	4000
167.	Dahisar	4000
168.	Mira Road	6000
169.	Mankhurd	10000
170.	Sita Estate	1000
171.	Chembur	8000
172.	Ghatkopar+CNE	11000

1	2	3
173.	Tagore Nagar	1000
174.	N. Nagar	1000
175.	Godrej	2000
176.	Powai	6000
177.	Powai Corn. (III)	1000
178.	Mulund	13000
179.	P. Pakhadi	1000
180.	Cheri	15000
181.	Wagle Estate	6000
182.	Mumbra	4000
183.	Vashi	4000
184.	Vashi Sect-7	1000

[Translation]

Rewiring

7435. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major scam has been committed in the name of re-wiring in VIP areas of General Manager (Central) under the MTNL, Delhi;

(b) if so, whether rewiring has not been carried out even in a single house of the MP flats in the North Avenue and the South Avenue;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to conduct any inquiry into the matter;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Only now a plan has been finalised and rehabilitation of the external plant in North Avenue and South Avenue will be undertaken during the current financial year i.e. 2000-2001.

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

1	2	3
185.	Vashi Rly. Stn.	1000
186.	Turbhe	4000
187.	Belapur	2000
188.	Rabale	3000
189.	Panvel	3000
190.	Nhava	1000
191.	Sheva (J.N.P.T.)	1000
192.	Kopar Khairane	2000
193.	Kalamboli	2000
194.	Uran	2000
195.	Taloja	1000
196.	Nerul	3000

[English]

Chutok Nimoo Basgo Hydro Electric Power Project

7436. SHRI HASSAN KHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal for development of Chutok and Nimoo Basgo Hydro Electric Power Project in J&K State; and

(b) if so, the present status of the projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Chairman and Chief Executive Councilor, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh, had submitted a Memorandum to the then Prime Minister for the execution of the Nimoo-Basgo Hydro-Electric Project (30 Mega Watts) in Leh as a Central Sector Project. The Government of Jammu & Kashmir have conveyed their "No objection" for implementation of the Project by National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC) in the Central Sector only in February 2000. The Ministry of Power has thereafter asked NHPC to take up Survey & Investigation of the Nimoo-Basgo H.E. Project.

(b) A copy of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the Nimoo-Basgo H.E. Project has been received by NHPC in March, 2000, on the advice of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir. The DPR is under examination in

NHPC to assess its suitability for being taken up for execution. The Ministry of Power has given its consent under the relevant provisions of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 for NHPC to establish, operate and maintain the project. The Ministry of Power has also asked NHPC to take up the Chutak Hydel Project (18 MW) in Kargil to mitigate the problems being faced by the State. The NHPC has asked the State Government to hand over to them a copy of the Detailed Project Report of the Project.

Vallarpadam Oil Tanker Berth in Cochin

7437. SHRI GEORGE EDEN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received the study report on proposed Vallarpadam Oil Tanker Berth in Cochin;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of proposed amount for the work of oil tanker berth during current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) There is no scheme titled "Vallarpadam Oil Tanker Berth" in Cochin Port Trust. However, there is a proposal to develop Transshipment Container Terminal at Vallarpadam.

Enhancement of Telephone Connections Quota of MPS

7438. SHRI MUDRAGADA PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representation from the Members of Parliament to enhance the quota of telephone connections from the present limit of 50 connections to 100 connections ; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The quota of telephone connections available to Hon'ble Members of Parliament has been enhanced recently from 25 to 50 connections after the judgement of the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala in the O.P. Number 11507 of 1998/T. No written representation has been received to further increase the quota and as such there is no such proposal at present to enhance the quota of telephone connections available to Hon'ble Members of Parliament.

Regularisation of Workers

7439. SHRI ANADI SAHU: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the contingent workers of Beas Construction Board which were absorbed in Bhakra Beas Management Board in 1993 have been regularised;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any time frame has been fixed to regularise them;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether all these employees were observed in Bhakra Beas Management Board as per their qualifications and experience as directed by the CAT in 1992; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (d) The surplus contingent paid employees and work-charge employees of Beas Construction Board (BCB) declared surplus on account of transfer of Beas Project to Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) were inducted into BBMB in 1993. Subsequently, BBMB decided to regularise the services of these employees against the corresponding available sanctioned vacant posts. Accordingly, certain employees were regularised to the extent of corresponding available sanctioned vacant posts. The process of regularisation of the services of remaining employees inducted in 1993, is likely to be completed by September, 2000.

(e) and (f) The surplus contingent paid employees and work-charge employees of BCB were inducted into BBMB in the same post/capacity held by them in the BCB.

Unscrupulous Lawyers

7440. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court in a recent judgement has blamed the unscrupulous lawyers for the ill-treatment and harassment meted out to the witness in criminal cases adjourned again and again till the witness is worn over or tired;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of safeguards available to such witnesses in the law and the status of witness as per law;

(d) whether the Government propose to amend the Act concerned to make the lawyers answerable to their conduct and to follow the dictates of the law to check harassment of witnesses and to delay the disposal of cases by taking undue adjournments;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the steps taken to implement the observations made by the Supreme Court in the said judgement?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) As reported in the Hindustan Times dated 02.05.2000 under the caption "SC slams 'unscrupulous lawyers'", the Supreme Court has blamed "unscrupulous lawyers" and the courts for the ill-treatment meted out to witnesses in criminal cases. As reported, the Supreme Court has observed that it has become more or less a fashion to have a criminal case adjourned again and again till the witness tires and gives up. It is the game of unscrupulous lawyers to get adjournments on one excuse or the other till a witness is won over or is tried. Not only that, a witness is threatened; he is abducted; he is maimed; he is done away with or even bribed. A witness also suffers inside the courtroom. He has no place to sit and no place even to have a glass of water. And when he does appear in court, he is subjected to unchecked and prolonged examination and cross-examination and finds himself in a hapless situation. For all these reasons and others, a person abhors becoming a witness.

(c) to (f) The Law Commission of India, which undertook a comprehensive review of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, has, *inter alia* recommended "Protection and facilities to witnesses". The 154th Report of the Law Commission on the said subject has already been laid in the Parliament. The Report is under process in the Ministry of Home Affairs in consultation with State Governments.

Shortage of Staff

7441. SHRI G.J. JAVIYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is shortage of staff in the Gujarat Telecom Circle;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacant posts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) In general, there is a no shortage except in few cadres like J.T.Os., T.T.As., Drivers, Stenographers and J.A.Os.

(b) and (c) There was a ban on amendment of recruitment rules in view of Fifth Central Pay Commission and ban on recruitment. The ban on amendment of recruitment rules has since been lifted and recruitment rules to the cadre of JTOs, TTAs and Driver etc. have been amended. Ban on recruitment of TTAs and Drivers have been partially lifted. Now the process for direct recruitment is being initiated and is likely to be completed by the end of this year.

Shortage of Post Office

7442. SHRI BAHADUR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is shortage of Post Offices in Bayana region of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal for opening of new post offices in the region;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which said post offices are likely to be opened; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) No proposal is pending for opening of new post offices in Bayana region. Only one proposal of Bhagwati Colony, Bayana was received and after examination it was not found justified on financial norms.

Cases of Revival of Dealership

7443. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 350 dated December 1, 1998 and state:

(a) whether the Government has issued letters to the Oil Corporations for inviting the applications for such pending cases of revival of dealerships, and

(b) if not, the reasons for delay and the time by which the letters are likely to be issued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government have issued guidelines on 15.1.1999 delegating powers to the oil marketing companies to consider the cases of revival of Retails Outlet dealerships which became inoperative after 1.1.1996 and LPG distributorships, which have not been terminated due to misconduct or malpractice, subject to certain norms.

Resitment of Petrol Pumps

7444. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil Corporation are empowered to resite such petrol pumps in same trading area/market or in same class of market in District if these petrol pumps are having sales below economic viability limits and were originally allotted 'C' class of markets;

(b) if so, whether the trading area of 'C' class of markets is taken 5 Km. radially as per the definition in Volume Distance norms; and

(c) if so, the extent to which industry is/was resiting petrol pumps of 'C' class market within a trading area on National Highway/State Highway which were passing through same town/market/trading area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Oil Companies are empowered to consider requests for resitements covered under the guidelines issued by the Government which *inter alia* includes the resitement in the same market/trading area.

Public Interest Litigation

7445. SHRI P. KUMARASAMY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Public Interest Litigations have served any useful purpose;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware that facilities to file PILs are being misused; and

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent such misuse?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Since public interest litigation is usually entertained by court for purposes of redressing the grievances of the downtrodden masses, public injury, enforcing public duty, protecting social rights and vindicating public interest, it has to some extent served the purpose of helping the poor and underprivileged for getting justice.

(b) In order to prevent misuse of public interest litigation, the Supreme Court has recently laid down certain guidelines in *Raunaq International Ltd. Vs. I.V.R. Construction Ltd.* (AIR 1999 SC 393) and *Malik Brothers Vs. Narendra Dadhich & Others* [1999 (5) SCALE 212] which are as follows:

- (1) The public interest litigation should not be merely a cloak for attaining private ends of a third party or of the party bringing the petition.
- (2) The court should examine the previous record of public service rendered by the organisation bringing public interest litigation.
- (3) Before entertaining a writ petition and passing any interim orders in such petition, the court must carefully weigh conflicting public interests. Only when it comes to a conclusion that there is overwhelming public interest in entertaining the petition, the court should intervene.
- (4) Even when public interest litigation is entertained, the court must be careful to weigh conflicting public interests before intervening.
- (5) The party on whose instance interim orders are obtained has to be made accountable for the consequences of the interim order. In appropriate cases, the petitioner asking for interim orders should be asked to provide security for any increase in costs as a result of delay or any damages suffered by the opposite party in consequence of any interim order. Stay orders or interim order if passed must be moulded to provide for restitution. If the public interest litigation fails, the public must be compensated for the delay in implementation of the project and the cost escalation resulting from such delay on account of the interim order.
- (6) If the court finds that in the garb of public interest litigation, actually an individual's interest

is sought to be carried out or protected, it would be the bounden duty of the court not to entertain such petition.

- (7) The court should restrict the flow of cases in the name of public interest litigation, otherwise traditional litigation will suffer and courts of law, instead of dispensing justice will have to take upon themselves administrative and executive functions.

(c) In view of the above guidelines prescribed by Supreme Court regarding public interest litigation, no measures are intended to be taken for prevention of misuse of public interest litigation at the moment. In fact, it is for the courts to ensure that frivolous litigations in the name of public interest litigation by persons having vested interests are not entertained.

Bills Pending for Assent

7446. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Bills sent by the Karnataka Government for assent of the President during each of the last three years;

(b) the details of Bills which have given assent by the President so far; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to get assent for the remaining Bills?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) During the period from 1.4.1997 to 10.5.2000, the State Government of Karnataka forwarded 18 Bills for the assent of the President.

(b) The President's Assent has been conveyed to the State Government for 13 Bills. A statement showing the details is enclosed.

(c) The remaining Bills are pending for want of clarifications from the State Government and comments from the Central Ministries/Departments.

Statement

State Legislative Proposals Sent by the State Government of Karnataka for the President's Assent and their Position w.e.f. 1.4.1997 to 10.5.2000

Sl. No.	Name of the Bill	Date of receipt	Date of assent	Present position of the pending Bills
1	2	3	4	5
1.	The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development (Amendment) Bill, 1997.	21-4-1997	12-8-1997	
2.	The Karnataka Silkworm Seed, Cocoon and Silk Yarn (Regulation of Production, Supply, Distribution and Sale) (Amendment) Bill, 1997.	21-4-1997	13-8-1997	
3.	The Karnataka Rent Control (Amendment) Bill, 1998.	7-4-1998	20-4-1998	
4.	The Mysore Palace (Acquisition and Transfer) Bill, 1998.	19-05-1998	28-08-1998	
5.	The Electricity Laws (Karnataka Amendment) Bill, 1998.	08-08-1998	21-10-1998	
6.	The Karnataka Highways (Amendment) Bill, 1997.	08.08.1998	09.12.1998	
7.*	The Code of Civil Procedure (Karnataka Amendment) Bill, 1995.	28.06.1995	02.12.1998	* Though the Bill was received during June, 1995 but it was assented on 2nd December, 1998.

1	2	3	4	5
8.	The Karnataka Co-operative Societies (Second Amendment) Bill, 1997.	29.06.1998	18.03.2000	
9.	The Karnataka Souharda Sahakari Bill, 1997.	07.07.1998	28.03.2000	
10.	The Karnataka Inland Fisheries (Conservation, Development and Regulation) Bill, 1998.	07.07.1998	Pending	Clarifications of the State Government on the observations of the Ministry of Environment and Forests are awaited since 17.9.1999
11.	The Tunga Bhadra Sugars (Deve Sugars) Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking) Bill, 1998.	30.11.1998	18.01.1999	
12.	The Karnataka Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1999.	03.05.1999	09.08.1999	
13.	The Karnataka Taxation Laws (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999.	24.05.1999	Pending	The Bill is under examination in consultations with the concerned Administrative Ministries of the Central Government.
14.	The Mysore Tobacco Company Limited (Acquisition of Shares) Bill, 1998.	25.06.1999	Pending	Clarifications of the State Government on the observations of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry are awaited since 11.04.2000.
15.	The Bangalore Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, 1999.	27.07.1999	28.12.1999	
16.	The Karnataka Electricity Reform Bill, 1999.	02.08.1999	20.08.1999	
17.	The Karnataka Forest and Certain other Law (Amendment) Bill, 1999.	03.08.1999	Pending	Clarifications of the State Government on the observations of the Ministry of Environment and Forests are awaited since 25.04.2000.
18.	The Karnataka Ground Water (Regulation for protection of sources of drinking water) Bill, 1999.	05.08.1999	Pending	Clarifications of the State Government on the observations of the Ministries of Water Resources and Rural Development are awaited since 29.12.1999.
19.	The Karnataka Rent Control (Amendment) Bill, 2000.	08.04.2000	24.04.2000	

Marketing Network by Multinational Oil Companies

7447. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether multinational oil companies are more interested in vast oil marketing networks in India than oil exploration;

(b) if so, whether the Government have permitted them for refining of oil as well as marketing of petroleum products;

(c) if so, whether such a step would not hit the indigenous Public Sector Oil Companies which are quite capable of undertaking on their own; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to protect the rights of indigenous Oil Companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Multinational oil companies have shown interest in both, oil exploration and oil marketing.

(b) to (d) Government, in November, 1997, decided to dismantle the Administered Pricing Mechanism in a phased manner. The said decision, *inter alia*, includes the following:

"Investments in the refining sector will be encouraged by providing reasonable tariff protection and making marketing rights for transportation fuels viz. MS, HSD and ATF conditional on owning and operating refineries with an investment of atleast Rs. 2000 crores or oil exploration and production companies producing atleast three million tonnes of crude oil annually."

Further, on 26.5.98, Government decided that the Marketing of controlled petroleum products would continue to be regulated in accordance with the present regime until Administered Pricing Mechanism is fully dismantled.

No decision has been taken as yet for granting marketing rights to private and joint sector refineries.

Export of Round Logs

7448. SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether export of round logs from the A&N Islands is generally banned but permitted in special cases;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years;

(c) whether such a permit has been given in the year 1999-2000 to the A&N Forest and Plantation Development Corporation;

(d) if so, the details of quantity;

(e) whether Government Saw Mill at Chatham had to engage in re-sawing of beams in January and February 2000 as no logs were available while 90 cu. mtrs. of logs were exported by the A&N Forest & Plantation Development Corporation to Chennai;

(f) if so, whether the Government plan to totally ban export of round logs as the local demands are not being met fully; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. Export of round log from A&N Islands has been banned by local administration since 1995, however, it is permitted under special circumstances.

(b) to (d) No export was permitted since 1995, however, only during 1999-2000 permission was given to Andaman & Nicobar Islands Forest & Plantation Development Corporation Ltd. to export 3850 CMT of timber out of the total production of around 27,500 CMT. The permission was granted in order to avoid deterioration of timber as the local wood based industries were not lifting timber despite repeated notices.

(e) Re-sawing of beams is done regularly in one shift in Chatham Saw Mill. During January and February, 2000 the quantum of re-sawing was increased as the logs available in the divisions could not be transported to Chatham Saw Mill because of ban on movement of vessels registered under Inland Vessels Act beyond port limits and due to non-availability of suitable watercrafts registered under Mercantile Shipping Act.

(f) and (g) The ban on export of round logs already exists. Only in special cases, permission has been given to avoid deterioration of timber lying undeposited due to unwillingness of the industries to accept or purchase the same for processing in their local industrial units.

[Translation]

Violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

7449. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received complaints from various States regarding Violation of Forest (Conservation), Act, 1980 during the last three years and current year, till-date;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The information regarding details of Violation of Forest (Conservation), Act, 1980 during the last three years is being collected.

(c) Action against violation of Forest (Conservation), Act, 1980 is taken by the Central Government as per the provisions of Forest (Conservation), Act and its Rules & guidelines.

English]

Criminal Cases

7450. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of criminal cases which finally result in conviction in the country;

(b) the details of such percentage in case of corruption matters;

(c) the reasons for low incidence of success in such matters; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) A Statement is enclosed.

(c) and (d) The Law Commission in its 154th Report on the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 has observed that the quality of Criminal Justice is closely linked with the calibre of the prosecution system and many acquittals can be ascribed not only to poor investigations but also to poor quality or prosecutions (Chapters II & III).

The Law Commission has recommended a separate investigating agency directly under the supervision of a Supdt. of Police for investigation of grave offences and as distinct from those entrusted with the enforcement of law and order. The recommendation has been referred to the State Governments for appropriate action.

The Commission has also recommended setting up of Directorates of Prosecution in every State and that State Governments should prescribe guidelines to ensure coordination between the Director of Prosecution and the Investigating Agency of the Police for efficient prosecution of cases. The recommendations have been conveyed to the State Governments for implementation.

Statement

Conviction Rate of IPC Cases during 1968 (All India)

(a):

Sl.No.	Crime Heads	Conviction Rate
1.	Murder	34.8
2.	Attempt to commit murder	33.5
3.	Culpable homicide not amounting to murder	36.9
4.	Rape	26.7
5.	Kidnapping & abduction	28.8
	(i) of women and girls	28.2
	(ii) of others	30.3
6.	Dacoity	25.2
7.	Preparation and assembly for dacoity	30.8
8.	Robbery	30.1
9.	Burglary	36.0
10.	Theft	40.4
11.	Riots	26.0
12.	Criminal breach of trust	26.2
13.	Cheating	27.4
14.	Counterfeiting	27.2
15.	Arson	24.0
16.	Hurt	28.3
17.	Dowry deaths	31.1
18.	Molestation	31.1
19.	Sexual Harassment	60.6
20.	Cruelty by husband and relatives	19.6
21.	Other IPC crimes	42.9
22.	Total cognizable crimes under IPC	37.4
(b):		
	Prevention of Corruption Act	27.6

Source: National Crime Records Bureau.

[Translation]

Kawas and Gandhar Power Projects in Gujarat

7451. SHRI AKHILESH YADAV:
SHRI TUFANI SAROJ:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Thermal Power Corporation has decided to award supply contract to ABB Extom Power for the construction and equipment supply for the second phase of the Kawas and Gandhar Power Projects in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the criteria laid down in this regard;

(c) whether the gas turbines offered for these projects by ABB Extom Power are traditional whereas BHEL-Siemens V-94 3A is state-of-the-art; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No, Sir. Two bids were received by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) against International Competitive Bidding (ICB) basis for Main Plant Package for Stage-II of Kawas and Gandhar projects. As the bidders did not meet the qualifying requirements and taken major deviations on key requirements of the bidding documents, making the bids non-responsive, NTPC Board has decided for a rebid.

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

(c) and (d) M/s ABB-Alstom Power had offered Gas Turbine Model 13-E2. The model offered is the latest upgraded and uprated version of their traditional 13E series Gas Turbine models. These gas turbines fall in the category of turbines with less than 200 MW ISO rating.

M/s ABB-Alstom have also furnished an alternative offer of the latest Advance Class Gas Turbine model GT-26 (ISO rating 265 MW). These Gas Turbines fall in the category of Turbines with more than 200 MW ISO rating and generally known as Advance Class Gas Turbines. However, the offer was incomplete.

M/s. BHEL have offered the Advance Class Gas Turbines Model V-94. 3A of M/s Siemens, Germany (ISO rating 255 MW). However, the difference in the efficiency between quoted and published efficiency is about 4% to 5% (the quoted figure was lower).

Both ABB and BHEL had offered features of contemporary state-of-the-art technology for respective class of machines offered by them.

[English]

Manipulation of ISD Calls by MTNL Linemen

7452. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the linemen of MTNL are arranging calls abroad at cheap rates through manipulation; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to stop such racket causing huge loss to Government revenue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) If any such case is reported, the same is investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken with the help of CBI/Police, wherever required. To safeguard the interest of the Government, certain preventive measures have been taken as under:

- (i) The old technology exchanges are being phased out from the network by digital exchanges. The digital exchanges employ highly sophisticated signalling protocols which can not be simulated easily.
- (ii) New technology Trunk Automatic Exchanges (TAX) have been installed which check the calling line identification and knock down the TAX call if it is directly originated from the junction.
- (iii) As a preventive measure, night inspections of exchange rooms are being conducted by Senior Officers apart from officers of vigilance unit to check any abnormality.

Faulty Working of Computerised 196 Number

7453. SHRI RAMSAGAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the faulty working of computerised 196 complaint service; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to make them functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, the computerised 198 complaint service is working satisfactorily. However, some faults are observed when complaints are booked from a telephone having poor line conditions & instruments with decadic pulsing.

(b) The following steps are being taken to improve the computerized 198 service:

- (i) Instruments with tone pulses are being provided.
- (ii) Service is being tested by maintenance staff every morning to ensure its smooth functioning.

[*Translation*]

Targets for Telephone Facility in Rural Areas

7454. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:
SHRI RAMSHAKAL:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:
SHRI ARUN KUMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the targets fixed for providing telephone facility in the rural areas of the country during the last three years as on March 31, 2000;

(b) whether the said targets have been achieved;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government have increased the annual target of providing telephone facility in the villages of the country;

(e) if so, the target set for 2000-2001. State-wise;

(f) whether the private sector companies have also been entrusted with the responsibility of achieving the said targets; and

(g) if so, the ratio to be shared by the said companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No targets are fixed for provisioning of telephones in rural areas as telephones are provided based on demand. However, for VPTs targets were fixed as given below:

Year	Target
1997-98	83,000
1998-99	45,000
1999-2000	45,089

(b) In last three years, telephones provided and VPTs installed in the rural areas are as under:

Year	DELs provided	VPTs installed
1997-98	6,65,591	42,855
1998-99	6,63,031	37,040
1999-2000	11,89,484	33,965

(c) In case of VPTs targets could not be achieved due to the reasons of non-receipt of the equipment in time in most of the cases, law and order problems in some areas, difficult hilly terrain, poor road transport and non-availability of stable power supply in the villages etc.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The State-wise targets set for 2000-2001 for providing VPT facility are given in the enclosed Statement.

(f) and (g) Yes, Sir. The private sector companies are likely to provide about 24% of the total VPTs target for the period 2000-2002.

Statement

Targets for VPTs for 2000-2001

Sl.No.	Circle/State	VPTs
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0
2.	Andaman & Nicobar	8
3.	Assam	5000
4.	Bihar	24651
5.	Gujarat	0
6.	Haryana	4
7.	Himachal Pradesh	4000
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	2000

1	2	3
9.	Karnataka	1285
10.	Kerala	0
11.	Madhya Pradesh	5860
12.	Maharashtra (including Goa)	0
13.	NE (including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram)	5110
14.	Orissa	14000
15.	Punjab	0
16.	Rajasthan	0
17.	Tamil Nadu	55
18.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	18000
19.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	9000
20.	West Bengal (including Sikkim)	11047
Total:		100000

Works Undertaken by NTPC at Kahalgaon

7455. SHRI SUBODH ROY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Thermal Power Corporation spends a fixed amount on developmental and welfare activities within a circumference of 10 km;

(b) if so, whether a number of works undertaken by National Thermal Power Corporation at Kahalgaon are still lying pending and the fund for development has not been completely utilised; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken by the Government for speedy completion of developmental works in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has no policy to undertake development work and welfare activities within the circumference of 10 kms and to spend a fixed amount on it. NTPC has, however, adopted a Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) policy approved by the Government under which it undertakes various community development works such as construction of village road, community hall, Panchayat Bhavan, primary school, well and hand pumps, drains etc., in the affected villages/mauza for the

benefit of the land oustees. These community development works are decided in Village Development Advisory Committee (VDAC) meetings where elected representatives of land oustees participate. Where VDAC is not in existence, the community development works are decided in joint discussion with land oustees of the affected village.

(b) and (c) All the community development works as already undertaken by NTPC at Kahalgaon are under progress as per schedule. However, some works could not be taken up as villagers/land oustees of the affected village are yet to make the land available for construction purpose. The fund allocated for such purposes is being utilised fully. An expenditure of Rs. 462.82 lakhs had been incurred till March, 1999 on community development works in and around affected villages. During 1999-2000, against an approved outlay of Rs. 84 lakhs for community development and welfare activities, an expenditure of about Rs. 130 lakhs has been incurred.

[English]

Global Warming

7456. SHRI RAJESH VERMA:
SHRI RASHID ALVI:
SHRI JITENDRA PRASADA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action plan has been worked out to the threat of global warming;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to issue a white paper on global warming; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The existing legal and policy framework adequately addresses the concerns of global warming.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

*[Translation]***E.D. Post Offices**

7457. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to prepare any programme to improve the financial condition of E.D. post offices;

(b) the difference in the salaries and other facilities being provided to regular post master and postman and their counterparts in E.D. post offices;

(c) whether the postmasters of such post offices have to manage rent free office accommodation and the sanitation facilities on their own; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) There is no specific proposal as such.

(b) The information is given in the attached Statement.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Branch Postmaster is required to offer space to serve as agency premises for postal operation. This is a service condition.

Statement

Difference in the salaries and other facilities being provided to regular postmaster and Postman and their counterpart in E.D. Post Office

Scale of TRCA (EDDA)	Average pay Average cost pay	Scale of Postman	Average pay	Difference of Basic pay	DA 38%	Total Difference Basic+DA (Pay) employee
1375-25-2125	1625	3050-75-3950-80- 4500	3820	2195	834	3029
1740-30-2640	2040		3820	1780	676	2456
EDSPM 2125-50-3125	2625	PM (HSG-I) 6500-200-7500	8500	5875	2233	8108
EDBPM 1280-35-1980	1630	PM (LSG) 4500-125-7800	5750	4120	1566	5686
1600-40-2400	2000	PM (BCR) 5000-150-8000	6500	4500	1710	6210

*[English]***On-line Booths**

7458. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finalised a proposal to install and operate on-line booths (Kiosks) in all villages of the country; and

(b) if so, the details and the total costs thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b)

As per NTP '99, it has been decided to convert PCOs, wherever justified, into Public Tele Info Centres (PTICs) having multimedia capability, which would include Internet facility. Further, the Internet Dhavas are planned at the Block Head Quarters during the year 2000-2001. Each Internet Dhaba would require a computer with peripherals and depending on the configuration the cost per Dhaba is expected to be around Rs. 90,000/- only.

Telephone Connections in Haryana

7459. SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: *

(a) the number of new telephone connections provided in Haryana under the recently sponsored new scheme;

(b) the number of models of telephone equipment supplied to these new connections;

(c) whether a large number of new telephone connections are not working due to defects in the new telephone instruments; and

(d) if so, the manner in which complaints of defective equipments are being or proposed to be dealt with?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, the new scheme (with reduced registration fee) has not been introduced in Haryana. As such no telephone connection under the scheme was provided in Haryana.

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

Nomination of Directors in Peerless General Finance and Investment Ltd.

7460. SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Directors including Chairman and Wholetime Executive Directors on the Board of Directors

of the Peerless General Finance and Investment Limited;

(b) the date on which the Board was last constituted;

(c) whether the approval of the Company Law Board was sought and obtained prior to the constitution of the Board and induction of members thereto;

(d) if not, whether there is any pressure from the Government to nominate some Directors on the Board under section 308 of the Companies Act, 1956;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the action proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) As per records of the registrar of Companies, Calcutta, there are 10 directors including Chairman and Wholetime executive directors on the Board of Directors of Peerless General Finance and Investment Ltd.

(b) As per records of the company maintained by the registrar of Companies, Calcutta, the latest composition of the Board of directors of this company is as under:

Sl.No.	Name	Designation	Date of appointment
1.	Sh. Dhruva Narayan Ghosh	Chairman	12.8.1996
2.	Sh. Ajit Kumar Chatterjee	Vice-Chairman	16.11.1993
3.	Sh. Sunil Kanti Roy	Mg. Director	2.12.1993
4.	Sh. Susim Kukul Dote	Director	12.8.1996
5.	Sh. Dipankar Basu	Director	11.5.1998
6.	Sh. Amal Chandra Chakraborti	Director	29.8.1998
7.	Sh. J.B. Dadachanji	Director	12.8.1996
8.	Sh. S.G. Bose Mullick	Director	15.5.1987
9.	Sh. N.H. Thanawala	Director	7.3.1999
10.	Sh. Asia Kusum Chatterjee	Director	26.6.1998

(c) (i) M/s. Peerless General Finance & Investment Ltd. is a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956, having its registered office at Calcutta and is dealing in public money. It is

a residuary non-banking finance company and the provisions of residuary Non-Banking Companies (Reserve Bank of India) Amendment Act, 1997, are applicable to it.

(ii) The company Law Board (CLB) passed an order on 30.11.1987 u/s 408(1) directing that 4 Government Directors be appointed on the Board of the company for a period of 3 years from the date they assume charge of their office. The company filed an application under Article 226 of the Constitution of India in the Hon'ble Calcutta High Court against the said order of CLB. Hon'ble Calcutta High Court *vide* its order dated 1.7.1998 quashed the said order of CLB dated 30.11.1987. An appeal by Central Government before the Division Bench of the Calcutta High Court is still pending.

(iii) Sometime in 1997 Department of Company Affairs decided to examine *de novo* the whole issue of appointment of directors u/s 408 of the Companies Act, 1956 on the board of directors of M/s. PGFICL. For this purpose RBI forwarded a copy of the inspection report conducted u/s 45N of the RBI act, 1954 covering the financial position of the company upto 31.3.1995. On the basis of the said RBI inspection report, a reference was made to CLB by the Department of Company Affairs u/s 408 of the Companies Act, 1956, for appointment of Government directors on the Board of PGFICL. This reference u/s 408 was decided by CLB *vide* its order dated 4.12.1998 without passing any order because there has been substantial change in the circumstances from what was prevailing in 1995 on the basis of which the reference was made and also considering the active monitoring being done by RBI and various actions taken by the company consequent to the directions issued by RBI for toning up the conduct of affairs of the company including induction of 5 expert professional directors. CLB did not find any reasons to appoint Government directors.

(iv) In view of these circumstances it is not necessary for the company to obtain approval of the CLB for constitution of the Board of Directors and induction of members thereto.

(d) and (e) No Sir, there is no pressure from the Government to nominate some directors on the Board of the company u/s 408 (wrongly written as 308 in the question) of the Companies Act, 1956.

(f) No action is proposed to be taken in the matter since the matter is subjudice in the Hon'ble High Court of Calcutta.

New Power Projects

7461. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently reviewed the effect of various policy decisions on decentralisation of decision-making process on project approvals/streamlining the procedural reforms for speedy approval and effective implementation of new power projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of further reforms initiated/under consideration to ensure transparency and cut down red-tapism to zero point?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Ever since the power sector has been opened for private sector participation in 1991, a series of policy initiatives have been taken including measures to decentralise the decision making process. These policies are reviewed from time to time keeping in mind the changing scenario in the power sector. The overall response to the policy initiatives of the Government has been encouraging and at present 95 projects with an aggregate capacity of 54967 MW are being monitored.

(c) The Government is convinced on the need for power sector reforms to ensure its sustainability and would like to increase the pace along a definite route map. In this regard, the Government propose to introduce a new Bill in Parliament which would facilitate power sector reforms in the States. Steps so far taken include raising of ceiling under Section 29 of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 for concurrence of the Central Electricity Authority and allowing 100% automatic approval of foreign direct investment upto Rs. 1500 crore.

[Translation]

Cases against Drug Manufacturers in MRTPC

7462. DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that a number of cases against the drug manufacturers are being filed in Monopoly and Restricted Trade Practices Commission for charging arbitrary prices, involved in unfair trade and restrictive trade practices;

(b) if so, the details of such cases filed in MRTPC during each of the last three years; and

(c) the action taken by the MRTPC in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTP Commission) is a quasi-judicial body established under the MRTP Act, 1969. Under the scheme of the Act, the MRTP Commission has a major role in curbing monopolistic, restrictive and unfair trade practices. The Commission has reported that it is not maintaining industry-wise or product-wise information of cases falling under the Monopolistic/Restrictive/Unfair Trade Practices etc. dealt with by it.

Telephone Connections

7463. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken certain effective steps to speed up the installation of telephone connections in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of categories fixed for providing telephone connections and the category to which telephone connection to the consumer is provided at the earliest; and

(d) the maximum time limit under the O.Y.T. and non-O.Y.T. categories to provide telephone services to subscribers in Delhi by MTNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government have been constantly taking all possible steps to speed up the installation of telephone connections in the country. The number of new telephone connections provided in the country each year has been on the increase, the annual growth rate in the provision being more than 20%.

This has been possible with opening of new telephone exchanges and expansion of existing exchanges. Advance planning of the network also helps in this area.

(c) The following seven categories are fixed for providing telephone connections.

1. TATKAL
2. OYT-Special
3. OYT- General
4. Non-OYT -(SS)

5. Non-OYT-Special
6. Non-OYT-SWS/Non-OYT-G-SE-DoT
7. Non-OYT-General

Telephone connections under TATKAL category are provided at the earliest.

(d) In MTNL, Delhi, telephone connections are normally provided, in both the categories within 15 days in the technically feasible pockets. However, it may not be possible to adhere to this time period in technically non-feasible areas.

[English]

Reimbursement of Profit Earned

7464. SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was a proposal for reimbursement of half of the profit earned on distribution of electricity to the administration of Daman & Diu;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to extend any grant to the Power Finance Corporation to study this proposal; and

(c) if so, the present status of this proposal and the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The matter was discussed in a meeting held in Ministry of Home Affairs on 23.10.1998. The UT Administration of Daman & Diu was advised to submit a formal proposal for corporatisation of its Electricity Department. However, this has not yet been received from the UT of Daman & Diu.

Import of Used Lube Oil

7465. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to regulate waste oil and used oil activities to reduce the import bill of lube oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether notification to this effect has been finalised;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have moved its proposal to the Basel Convention to allow the import of the used lube oil; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the participating countries of the Convention?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Government have not yet decided to regulate waste oil and oil activities to reduce the import bill of lube oil.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. An application for a new entry in Annex IX (List B) of the Basel Convention of "used lube oil" has been tabled as an Information Paper. A formal application is yet to be moved for consideration of Technical Working Group of the Basel Convention.

[*Translation*]

Land Acquisition by Oil Companies in Rajasthan

7466. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of farmers and Gram Panchayats whose land have been acquired by GAIL in Ajmer district of Rajasthan alongwith the acreage of land and the dates on which the said land was acquired;

(b) the terms and conditions on which the said land has been acquired;

(c) the compensation paid to the affected farmers and Gram Panchayats;

(d) whether other terms and conditions have also been complied with;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) the policy adopted by the Government for the rehabilitation of the affected farmers;

(g) the number of farmers deprived of rehabilitation facility and the time by which these farmers are likely to be rehabilitated;

(h) whether the families of affected farmers have been provided reservation in jobs; and

(i) if so, the number of families provided job opportunities so far and the time by which the remaining farmers are likely to be provided the job opportunities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is in the process of acquiring only Right of User (RoU) in land, in public interest, under the provisions of the Petroleum and Minerals Pipelines (Acquisition of Right of User in Land) Act, 1962 [P&MP (ARUL) Act] in Ajmer district for laying the Jamnagar/Kandla-Loni Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) pipeline passing through Rajasthan for transport of LPG in bulk. GAIL has acquired RoU for 159.29 hectares of land belonging to 1420 farmers of 25 villages in the Tehsil of Kishanganj, Pisangan, Nasirabad, Masuda and Ajmer during May 17-24, 1999. After completion of the laying of pipeline, the RoU is terminated by Government notifications and the owner/occupier of the land becomes entitled to use the land for growing crops and cultivation. However, land owner/occupier is not entitled to erect a permanent structure or construct/excavate any tank, well, reservoir or dam and to plant any tree on that portion of land.

(c) As on May 08, 2000 a sum of Rs. 8,01,505/-, as determined by the Competent Authority, has been paid as compensation to the concerned land owners.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) to (i) As only RoU for land was obtained without actually acquiring of land, the question of rehabilitation of the farmers does not arise.

[*English*]

Shortage of Telephone Cables In M.P.

7467. SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any shortage of telephone cables in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which this shortage is likely to be made good?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Not applicable.

Golden Quadrilateral Project

7468. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of roads added to the National Highways till March, 2000;

(b) the details of major projects completed during 1999-2000; and

(c) the total amount spent towards Golden Quadrilateral Project during 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) A length of 17,712 kms. has been added to the NH network during the 9th Five Year Plan period. The total length of NH network, as of today, is 52,010 kms.

(b) A list of projects costing more than Rs. 5 crores completed during 1999-2000 is given in the attached Statement.

(c) The amount spent towards the Golden Quadrilateral project is Rs. 900.70 crores during 1999-2000.

Statement

Details of Road/Bridge Works Costing Rs. 5 Crores and above Completed During Financial Year 1999-2000

Sl.No.	Name of works	Sanction Amount original/Revised (in Rs. lakhs)
1	2	3
1.	Assam Improvement of existing 2 lane pavement in Km. 55.57 to 60 and 87 to 106	1037.35 1351.22
2.	Gujarat Widening to 4 lane of existing 2 lane C/W in Km. 249/4 to 259/4 of NH-8	1462.99
3.	Tamil Nadu Strengthening the existing 2 lane pavement in Km. 94/0 to 130/0 BSM Section	823.00
4.	Uttar Pradesh Construction of Varanasi Bypass from Km. 0.00 to 15.00 and Km. 17.47 to 29.65	1678.26 5899.00
5.	West Bengal Construction of Durgapur Expressway from km. 5—10 Calcutta-Paisit Section	2776.00 13751.00
6.	Delhi C/o 2nd Nizamuddin Bridge across river Yamuna on NH-24 in New Delhi Sh. Extn. of Eastern approach road upto Noida Link Road Junction	1017.00
7.	Gujarat Construction of additional 2 lane Bridge across river Sabarmati between km. 4/0 to 6/0 of Link Road joining NH-8 & NH-8A	429.90 843.00

1	2	3
8.	Construction of new 2 Lane Bridge across Hadkiya Creek Near Surajbari at Km. 280/080 on NH-8A (Approaches)	1200.00
9.	Haryana Strengthening of NH-1 from Km. 29.295 to 50.00 (2 Lane) new carriageway of 4 Lane Sec. (Kundli Border to Murthal)	598.00
10.	Kerala LA for Construction of Calicut Bypass from Ch. 0-11760 Phase-II	690.40
11.	4 laning of Always to Vytilla Aroor to Shertalai and Strengthening existing 2 lane from Vytilla to Aroor. ADBII	6058.88 14504.00
12.	Construction of Calicut Bypass Phase-I from Ch. 20870 to 28124 including Neeluthodu Bridge	1135.98 3019.30
13.	Construction of Link Road NH47-A Phase-II Connecting Wiltngton Island and Cochin Bypass	3019.30 5848.00
14.	Uttar Pradesh Strengthening of Weak 2 lane pavement in Km. 135 to 160.	759.00

[Translation]

**Shifting of Headquarters
of Oil India Limited**

7469. SHRI TARUN GOGOI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to shift the headquarters of the Oil India Limited from Delhi to Assam region;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in this regard; and

(c) The time by which the headquarters of the Oil India Limited is likely to be shifted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) There is no proposal to shift the Corporate Office of Oil India Limited from Delhi to Assam region. However the Registered Office of the Company is at Duliajan in Assam.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of the reply to (a) above.

Value Added Internet Services

7470. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a separate company has been constituted for value added internet services by the MTNL;

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

(c) the profit being earned by MTNL as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A new company "Millennium Telecom Ltd." has been incorporated on 17.2.2000 under the Company's Act 1956. The new company will plan, establish, develop, market, provide, operate and maintain various types of value added services to meet the demands of the customers.

(c) The company's operation is yet to be launched; hence this question does not arise.

**Scheme for Construction
of Important Roads**

7471. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE:
SHRI P.R. KHUNTE:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any proposal/scheme to construct other very important roads in addition to the National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh have sent any proposal regarding its important roads particularly in Chhattisgarh and Sarangarh regions;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has decided to establish a Central Road Fund to which accruals on account of cess of Re 1/- per litre on High Speed Diesel and Petrol would be credited. 50% of the cess levied on High Speed Diesel will be transferred to Ministry of Rural Development for developing rural roads. Out of the balance amount 57.5% would be utilized for development and maintenance of National Highways, 12.5% will be allocated to Ministry of Railways for railway over-bridge and railway safety work at unmanned railway crossings and 30% will be allocated for state sector roads.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Gas Based Power Project

7472. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up some gas based power projects in the country;

(b) if so, the States where these power projects were proposed to be set up;

(c) whether the tenders invited earlier were rejected and fresh bids have been invited by NTPC; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) The details of gas based power projects proposed to be set up in the States, are given in the attached Statement.

(c) and (d) National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd. (NTPC) had drawn up an expansion plan for four gas based projects, viz. Kawas CCGP-II, Jhanor-Gandhar CCGP-II, Anta CCGP-II and Auraiya CCGP-II of a capacity of 650 MW each aggregating to 2600 MW targeted for commissioning within the 9th Plan period. The bidding process for these projects were initiated by NTPC during 1998 and till date the bids could not be finalised due to various technical reasons and non-responsive bid. As the projects are of vital national importance; Government is anxious that no further time is lost in implementation of these projects. NTPC was accordingly advised by the Ministry in the public interest to finalise the bids by negotiating with bidders on the basis of a legal opinion taken from the Additional Solicitor General. However, NTPC, taking into account certain major deviations on various specifications and requirements, treated both the bids as non-responsive and decided to rebid. A review of bidding conditions has been undertaken by NTPC and rebidding is being done for Main Plant Packages of these Combined Cycle Projects on International Competitive Bidding (ICB) basis.

Statement

Sl.No.	Name of the Project	Name of the State
1	2	3
1.	Anta CCGP (650 MW) St-II, NTPC	Rajasthan
2.	Ramgarh CCGT (71 MW) - RSEB	Rajasthan
3.	Dholpur CCGT (702.7 MW) -M/s. RPG Dholpur Power Co. Ltd.	Rajasthan
4.	Auraiya CCGP (650 MW) St-II, NTPC	Uttar Pradesh
5.	Kawas CCGT (650 MW) St-II, NTPC	Gujarat

1	2	3
6.	Jhanor Gandhar CCGT St-II (650 MW), NTPC	Gujarat
7.	CCPP at Hazira (156 MW)—M/s. Gujarat State Energy Gen. Ltd.	Gujarat
8.	Dhuvran CCGT (100 MW)—M/s. Gujarat State Electricity Corpn. Ltd.	Gujarat
9.	Pragati CCPP (330 MW)—Delhi Vidyut Board	Delhi
10.	CCPP at Kovilkalappal (107.88 MW)— TNEB	Tamil Nadu
11.	Pillaiperummlanallur CCGT (330.5 MW)— M/s. PPN Power Gen. Co.	Tamil Nadu
12.	Vembar CCGT (1873 MW)—M/s. Indian Power projects Ltd.	Tamil Nadu
13.	Kattupalli CCPP (1000 MW)—M/s. Chennai Power Gen. Ltd.	Tamil Nadu
14.	Narsinghpur CCPP (166 MW)—M/s. GBL Power India Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh
15.	Guna CCGT (330 MW)—M/s. STI Power Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh
16.	Bhander CCGT (342 MW)—M/s. Bhandar Power Co. Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh
17.	Khandwa CCGT (171.17 MW)—M/s. Madhya Bharat Energy Corpn. Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh
18.	Rajgarh CCPP (343.48 MW)—M/s. Alpine Power Systems Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh
19.	Jhabua CCPP (360 MW)—M/s. Kedia Power Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh
20.	Dabhol CCGT (1444 MW) Ph. II— M/s. Dabhol Power Co. of M/s. Enron USA	Maharashtra
21.	Patalganga CCPP (447 MW)— M/s. Reliance Patalganga Pvt. Ltd.	Maharashtra
22.	Kondapalli CCGT (350 MW)— M/s. Kondapalli Power Corpn.	Andhra Pradesh
23.	Vemagiri CCPP (492 MW) in East Godavari—M/s. Ispat Industries Ltd.	Andhra Pradesh
24.	Kamnininke CCPP (107.6 MW)— M/s. Peenya Power Co.	Karnataka
25.	Nanjangud CCPP (96.7 MW)— M/s. IPS Power Company	Karnataka

1	2	3
26.	Hassan CAPP (189 MW)—M/s. Hassan Power Supply Co. Ltd.	Karnataka
27.	Mandya CAPP (164.37 MW)—M/s. Mandya Power Partners Pvt. Ltd.	Karnataka
28.	Vypeen CAPP (679.2 MW)—M/s. Siaseen Energy Pvt. Ltd.	Kerala
29.	Kannur CAPP (513 MW)—M/s. Kannur Power Projects Pvt. Ltd.	Kerala

Availability of Gas in A.P.

7473. SHRI D.V.G. SHANKAR RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Limited is taking any measures to increase the availability of gas at the offshore Ravva fields in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the gas supply would be doubled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir. Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is not involved in exploration/exploitation of the Ravva field.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Shrinkage Allowance to Petroleum Outlet Dealers

7474. Shri Ramesh Chennithala:
Shri George Eden:

Will the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited is giving any shrinkage allowances to the Petroleum outlet dealers in the country;

(b) if so, the total amount spent for the purpose during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited is keeping pending the shrinkage allowances to Petroleum outlet dealers of Kerala for the last so many years;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the total amount pending in the above head?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Shrinkage Allowance is permitted by the oil marketing companies including BPCL to the dealers of the approved markets and recovered through the seeling prices. The name of markets in Kerala where shrinkage allowance is applicable are given in the attached statement.

Statement

Markets in Kerala where Shrinkage Allowance is Applicable

Sl.No.	Market
1.	Chundale
2.	Kalpetta
3.	Manantavady
4.	Mopadi
5.	S. Battery
6.	Adimali
7.	Ellapara
8.	Idukki
9.	Kattapana
10.	Kumili
11.	Munnar
12.	Nedumkandam
13.	Pambanar
14.	Piramed
15.	Putpalay
16.	Vandiperiyar
17.	Vellathuval
18.	Panamaram
19.	Taruvana
20.	Ettumannur

Cess on Power Generation

7475. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to levy cess on power generation;
- (b) if so, whether the Bill has been passed; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Policy on Hydro Power Development announced by the Government in August, 1998 provides for the establishment of National Power Development Fund through levy of cess at 10 paise per Kwh of electricity consumed in the country. A proposal to levy cess at 5 paise per Kwh of electricity generated was subsequently put up for consideration of the Government but was deferred.

Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in Andhra Pradesh

7476. SHRI B. VENKATESHWARLU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of places in Andhra Pradesh where oil and Natural gas reserves have been found during the last three years; and
- (b) the steps taken to make further exploration in the State to achieve self-reliance in the field of oil and Natural gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) During the last three years *i.e.* 1997-98 to 1999-2000, oil and Natural gas have been found in five new prospects in the State of Andhra Pradesh, *viz.* Magatapalle, Gokarnapuram, Kesavadasupalem, Laxmaneswaram and Sirkattapalle.

(b) Major steps taken to increase the degree of self-reliance in oil and Natural gas through exploration efforts in the country; including the State of Andhra Pradesh, are as follows:

- (i) Implementation of the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). In the first round 25 blocks were awarded and Production Sharing Contracts for 22 blocks including 7 deep water blocks, were signed in a time bound manner.

- (ii) Intensification of efforts by National Oil Companies (NOCs) in the existing basins and also in unexplored areas, including deep waters of East and West Coast.
- (iii) Encouragement of the participation of private/joint venture companies in exploration activities.
- (iv) Targeting of alternate hydrocarbon resources, *i.e.* Coal Bed Methane (CBM) and Gas hydrates, through measures like recent award by Government of a block in Raniganj area in West Bengal to a private company for exploration and production of CBM.

[Translation]

Small Development Projects

7477. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether several small development projects of various States in the country have been affected for non-issue of the 'No-objection certificate' from his Ministry;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether any special provision has been made by the Government to implement small development projects;
- (d) if so, the time schedule fixed for the purpose; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests accords environment/forest clearance for projects as per provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and notifications issued under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

The environment clearance Notification is not applicable to industrial projects costing less than rupees one crore and coming under the purview of small-scale sector. Further, a number of developmental activities are exempted from obtaining environment clearance if their cost is less than rupees 50 crores. Mining projects except those in areas covered by the Aravalli Notification require environmental clearance only if mining lease exceeds five hectares.

In respect of forest clearance, if the forest area is less than five hectares and does not involve mining and regularisation of encroachments, the Regional Office of the Ministry has been empowered to take decision. Simplified proforma and procedure has been laid down for items such as laying of pipelines for drinking water supply and transmission lines.

(d) Under EIA Notification as well as the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 decisions on proposals are taken within 90 days from the date of receipt of complete information.

(e) Does not arise.

Telephone Connections

7478. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have issued any order to provide telephone connections at the time of booking itself;

(b) if so, whether this facility is provided in Gujarat also; and

(c) if so, the number of applications received so far in Gujarat alongwith the number out of them cleared till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, all out efforts are made to provide a telephone connection within 7 days from the date of registration in the exchanges wherever telephone is available on demand, subject to technical feasibility of the area.

Department of Telecom Services proposes to provide telephones on demand in all exchanges of Gujarat by the year 2002.

(c) A total of 4,01,024 applications were received during the year 1999-2000 in Gujarat Telecom Circle; 3,74,022 new telephone connections have been provided during 1999-2000.

[English]

Role of Ministry in PPAs

7479. DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the role of his ministry in Power Purchase Agreements;

(b) whether the States are free to enter into Power Purchase Agreements;

(c) if so, whether his ministry has a say in Power Purchase Agreements which the State Governments are entering into these agreements;

(d) the number of Power Purchase Agreements entered into by the State Governments during each of the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) the unit purchase rate in these Power Purchase Agreements by the respective State Governments during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is a contract between the State Electricity Board (SEB) and the Independent Power Producers (IPP) in which the modalities for purchase/sale of power and allocation of various risks are negotiated between the two parties. As such, the issue of monitoring of PPAs comes under the purview of the respective State Governments.

(b) Yes, Sir. States are free to enter into PPAs keeping in view their requirement of power, cost of power and their capacity to pay for it.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) As on date, CEA has accorded techno-economic clearance to 57 schemes for setting up of power projects aggregating to a capacity of 29362.3 MW. Of these, details of number of PPAs entered into by the State Governments during the last three years (i.e. 1.4.1997—31.3.2000) are given below:

Year	Name of the State	No. of PPAs
1997-98	Himachal Pradesh	1
	Madhya Pradesh	3
	Gujarat	2
	Orissa	1
	Bihar	1
	Andhra Pradesh	1
	Karnataka	1
1998-1999	Tamil Nadu	2
	Uttar Pradesh	2
	Maharashtra	1
	West Bengal	1
	Andhra Pradesh	1
1999-2000	Tamil Nadu	2
	Karnataka	2
	Tamil Nadu	1

(e) Government of India does not monitor the cost of generation in the PPAs entered into between the generating company and the States. Tariff for sale of power by all the private sector power projects is presently worked out in accordance with the factors laid down in Government of India's Notifications in this regard and other terms and conditions.

[Translation]

Formulation of Scheme for Road Development

7480. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for road development;

(b) if so, whether there is a proposal to make 45520 kilometre long double lanes and 8500 kilometre long single lanes from the National Highways by 2001; and

(c) If so, the additional length of the highway proposed to be declared for Madhya Pradesh and the length in Kilometres for which approval has been given during the Eighth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. However, a statement giving details of targets for the development of national highways during the 9th Five Year Plan is enclosed.

(c) No new national highway was approved for the State of Madhya Pradesh during the 8th Five Year Plan. However, during the 9th Plan so far, a length of 2228 Kms. of State roads has been declared as national highways in Madhya Pradesh.

Statement

Physical Targets for the Ninth Five Year Plan of MOST (Department of Road Transport & Highways)

(A) Through agencies other than NHAI:

Sl. No.	Scheme	Unit	Ninth Plan Target (1997-2002) Km/Nos.
Normal NH works			
1.	Widening to two lanes	Km.	1194
2.	Widening to four lanes	Km.	202
3.	Strengthening weak 2 lanes	Km.	2906
4.	Bypasses	No.	20
5.	Major Bridges	No.	40
6.	Minor Bridges including ROBs	No.	226
7.	Expressways	On very selective basis where traffic density is exceptionally high	

*The above Targets/Achievements excludes the NHAI programme. NHAI programme is separately enclosed.

(B) Through agency of NHAI

			Total length covered under the project	Length already four laned	On-going works/ under implementation	Length to be awarded during IXth Plan
1(a)	Golden Quadrilateral					
	Widening to four/six lanes	Km.	5952	.504	716	4732
(b)	North-South & East-West Corridors					
	Widening to four/six lanes	Km	7300	628	264	366
	Total		13252	1132	980	5118
2.	Other Works by NHAI	Km.	1000	0	214	784

Review of Thermal and Hydro Power Projects

7481. DR. SANJAY PASWAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to review and revive sick thermal and hydro power projects in the country particularly Mencon Rile Bank Thermal and Hydro Power Projects in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the funds allocated to these power projects during the last three years; and

(d) the amount spent out of it on each of the power project and the present status of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b)

The Government of India is seized of the need to rehabilitate old thermal and hydel stations by undertaking Renovation & Modernisation (R&M). The Government undertook the R&M of old thermal power stations to improve their performance, efficiency and availability way back in 1984. A Centrally Sponsored Programme called as Phase-I of R&M was launched in the year 1984-85 which covered 34 thermal power stations comprising 163 units with an estimated cost of Rs. 1165 crores. Phase-II R&M Programme covering 44 thermal power stations was also taken up for implementation in 1990-91 with an estimated cost of Rs. 2383 crores. Similarly, Hydel stations are also being taken up for Renovation, Modernisation and Upgrading. However, the power projects, namely, Mencon Rile Bank Thermal and Hydro Power stations in Bihar are not covered under the R&M programme. The following hydel schemes of DVC located in Bihar/West Bengal are in progress:

Schemes	Estimated cost (Rs. in crore)	Exp. MW	Benefits MU	Schedule of Completion
Maithon (3x20 MW)	17.34 (Rev. 39.00)	60	137	2002-03
Panchet (1x40 MW)	2.17	40	87	2001-02

(c) No Central fund allocation for R&M schemes is being made. However, Central Government is providing support to PFC to provide loan at concessional rate of interest to SEBs/Power Utilities for R&M schemes. In order to give a fillip to the R&M programme, the Government has announced a new scheme for providing assistance to the State Utilities. Under this scheme, additional Central Plan Assistance of Rs. 1,000 crores to State Governments

and Union Territories during 2000-2001 for undertaking investments on R&M of old and inefficient plants and for strengthening the distribution system, has been provided.

(d) The status of R&M Phase-II of Thermal Power Stations is given in the attached Statement-I and the status in respect of Hydro Power Stations is given in the attached Statements II and III.

Statement I

Details of Thermal Units Covered Under R&M Programme (Phase-II)

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Board/Utility	Station	Units	Total Units	Capacity (MW)	Sanctioned Estimated Cost	Expenditure till 3/2000	Physical Progress (%)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	NTPC	Badarpur	1-5 (3x95+2x210)	5	705.00	14018.00	0.00	0.00
2.	DVB	I.P.	1-5 (1x30+3x 62.5+1x60)	5	277.50	1744.00	1117.23	71
3.	HPGCL	Faridabad	1-3 (3x55)	3	165.00	1050.00	714.01	74
4.	HPGCL	Panipat	1-2 (2x110)	2	220.00	1658.00	2084.09	75
5.	PSEB	Ropar	1-2 (2x210)	2	420.00	2494.65	2276.51	100
6.	PSEB	Bhatinda	1-4 (4x110)	4	440.00	2340.84	661.81	65
7.	RSEB	Kota	1-2 (2x110)	2	220.00	3904.00	3057.88	100
8.	UPSEB	Obra	1-13 (5x50+ 3x100+5x200)	13	1550.00	14367.00	1662.99	16
9.	UPSEB	Panki	1-4 (2x32+2x110)	4	284.00	2570.00	1635.74	59
10.	UPSEB	Harduaganj	1-8 (1x30+2x40 +4x60+1x105)	8	455.00	3320.00	645.90	4
11.	UPSEB	Parichha	1-2 (2x110)	2	220.00	1734.00	894.00	40
12.	MPEB	Amarkantak	1-4 (1x30+1x20 + 2x120)	4	290.00	3674.00	2799.73	64
13.	MPEB	Korba (E)	1-6 (4x50+2x120)		440.00	771.00	4599.10	100
14.	MPEB	Korba (W)	1-2 (2x210)	2	420.00	940.00	786.98	100
15.	MPEB	Satpura	1-9 (5x62.5+ (3x200+1x210)	9	1142.50	17707.17	5131.85	88

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16.	GEB	Ukai	1-5 (2x120+ 2x200+1x210)	5	850.00	3090.00	2629.04	87
17.	GEB	Gandhinagar	1-2 (2x120)	2	240.00	346.00	344.89	78
18.	GEB	Dhuvaran	1-6 (4x83.5+ 2x140)	6	534.00	2724.00	1976.51	89
19.	GEB	Wanakbori	1-3 (3x210)	3	630.00	1544.00	1151.33	95
20.	MSEB	Koradi	1-7 (4x115+ 1x200+2x210)	7	1080.00	6785.00	4041.70	93
21.	MSEB	Nasik	1-5 (2x140+3x210)	5	910.00	12122.00	6397.40	86
22.	MSEB	Bhusawal	1-3 (1x58+2x210)	3	478.00	4179.00	1710.84	83
23.	MSEB	Chandrapur	1-4 (4x210)	4	840.00	4348.00	2665.95	100
24.	MSEB	Parli	1-5 (2x30+3x210)	5	690.00	5416.00	1458.67	100
25.	MSEB	Paras	2 (1x58)	1	58.00	998.00	1780.05	100
26.	TNEB	Ennore	1-5 (2x80+2x110)	5	450.00	6486.00	3317.67	76
27.	TNEB	Tuticorin	1-3 (3x210)	3	630.00	1043.00	842.76	100
28.	TNEB	Mettur	1-4 (4x210)	4	840.00	312.00	228.54	100
29.	APGENCO	Kothagudem 'A' (OECF*)	1-4 (4x80)	4	240.00	14171.00	13476.68	73
	APGENCO	Kothagudem (B&C)	1-4 (2x105+2x110)	4	430.00	2903.00	1382.73	100
30.	APGENCO	Neelore	1 (1x30)	1	30.00	1385.00	1107.96	67
31.	NLC	Neyveli	1-9 (6x50+3x110)	9	600.00	25000.00	23764.63	100
32.	WBPDC	Kolaghat	2-3 (2x210)	2	420.00	2000.00	728.94	63
33.	WBSEB	Santalidih	1-4 (4x120)	4	480.00	8490.00	4027.24	65
34.	DVC	Chandrapura	1-6 (3x120+3x140)	6	780.00	2722.00	2700.80	54
35.	DVC	Durgapur	1-4 (2x75+ 1x140+1x210)	4	500.00	36481.00	1807.09	92
36.	DVC	Bokaro	1-3 (3x50)	3	150.00	284.00	257.15	100
37.	BSEB	Patratu	1-10 (4x40+2x90+2x 105+2x110)	10	770.00	7583.00	4441.95	54

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
38.	BSEB	Barauni	1-4 (2x50+2x105)	4	310.00	1577.00	60.96	50
39.	BSEB	Muzaffarpur	1-2 (2x110)	2	220.00	292.00	67.50	100
40.	ASEB	Bongalgaon	1-4 (4x60)	4	240.00	880.00	762.43	84
41.	ASEB	Chandrapura	1 (1x30)	1	30.00	252.00	215.28	87
42.	ASEB	Kathalguri & Golkey	1-7 (3x2.705+ 4x2.705)	7	18.93	633.00	534.02	100
43.	ASEB	Lakwa	1-4 (4x15)	4	60.00	1777.00	210.30	55
44.	ASEB	Namrup	1-5 (3x23+ 1x12.5+1x30)	5	111.50	3268.00	3021.17	81
Total:				198	20969.43	238302.66	115251.14	

Statement II

As on 31.3.2000

Sl. No.	Name of the Sch.	Inst. Cap. MW	Est. Cost/ Actual Cost Rs. Crs.	Anticipated Benefits		Actual Benefits		Remarks
				MW	MU	MW	MU	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Upgrading & Prevention of Capacity Loss								
1.	Giri H.P.	2x30	9.85/7.90	6	28	—	—	Upgrading could not be achieved. Reason not known.
2.	Nagihari (U-2) Karnataka	6x135	11.97/11.32	15	—	15	—	Unit 2 was upgraded from 135 MW to 150 MW
3.	Ganguwal (U-2) BBMB	2x24.2+ 1x29.25	18.90/15*	3.43 24.20	27.98 217.50	27.63	—	Unit 2 has been upgraded from 24.2 MW to 27.63 MW and also life extended. *Exp. till 12/97
4.	Kofla (U-3) BBMB	2x24.2+ 1x29.25	18.90/16.90*	3.92 24.20	31.98 217.50	28.12	—	Unit 3 has been upgraded from 24.2 MW and 28.12 MW and also life extended. *Exp. till 8/98
5.	Sharavathy (U9 to 10) Karnataka	2x89.1	17.96/14.66*	47.9	—	47.9	—	Unit 9 was upgraded from 89.1 MW to 103.5 MW while Unit 10 was upgraded from 70 MW. *Exp. till 3/98.
6.	Sharavathy (U 1 to 8) Karnataka	8x89.1	65.00/63.49*	115.2 178.2	—	471.6	—	All the units have been upgraded from 89.1 MW to 103.5 MW.
7.	Beira Siul NHPC	3x60	25.90	18.00	85	18	—	Units were upgraded from 60 MW to 66 MW.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8.	Hirakud-I (U1&2) OHPC	2x37.5	90.26/92.32*	22.5 75.0	28.00 247.00	97.00	—	Both the units uprated from 37.5 MW to 49.7 MW. Life extended by 25 yrs. *Exp. till 2/2000
9.	Tikoth U.P.	3x30	8.02/5.513*	9	55	6	25	Each unit was uprated by 2 MW. *Exp. till 5/99.
10.	Koyana I&II Maharashtra	4x85+ 4x75	38.53/74.91*	280	1380	300	—	All the units were uprated by 5 MW. Life of all units extended by 25 yrs. *Exp. till 9/99.
Restoration								
11.	Ukal (Ukal (U1&3) Gujarat	4x75	20.17/24.99	75.00	43.00	75.00	—	Unit 1&3 restored & uprated by 9 MW each
12.	Chennai J&K	5x4.66	11.00	0.93	—	0.93	—	Restored
13.	UBDC-1 Punjab	3x15	11.00/8.00	11.00	146.26	11.00	—	Up-rating achieved.
14.	Kadamparai (U3&4) Tamil Nadu	4x100	23.17/33.69	200	61	200	—	Two units restored which were damaged due to fire accident
15.	Khandong (U1) NEEPCO	2x25	0.62/0.62	25.00	108.0	25.00	—	Unit 1 was restored.
16.	Dehar (U2, 3&4) BBMB	6x165	46/10.74	25.00	—	25.00	—	Unit 2 restored to its rated capacity. Work on Unit 3&4 will be taken in R&M Phase-2 as these are working satisfactorily
Prevention of Capacity Loss								
17.	Shivasamudram Karnataka	6x3+4x6	8.00	18.00	90.00	18.00	—	Life extended. System was put in parallel with existing grid.
18.	Moyar Tamil Nadu	3x12	1.62/1.3	36.00	115.00	36.00	—	Life extended
19.	Rihand Kerala	6x50	1.43	100.00	287.00	—	—	Due to financial constraints, work was limited to renovation of intake & draft tube gates which were inoperative.
Renovation								
20.	Sholayar Kerala	3x18	7.5/5.725	—	—	—	—	Reliability increased
21.	Kundah-III (U1&2) Tamil Nadu	3x60	5.45/3.2	—	8.12	—	—	Life of turbine increased. Efficiency increased by 3.5%.
22.	Sholayar-I Tamil Nadu	2x35	1.40/0.85	—	91.80	—	—	Life of generator increased.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
23.	Guruti Tripura	3x5	17.50/17.50	—	5.6	—	—	Water conductor system was augmented.
24.	Koyna-III (U10/12) Maharashtra	4x90	0.8/4.65	—	—	—	—	Renovated Exp. till 9/97
25.	Chilla U.P.	4x36	4.264/1136*	—	15	—	15	Reliability increased. Forced outages reduced. Exp. till 5/99.
Expected benefits from 25 schemes			= 1313 MW					
Actual Benefit from 25 schemes			= 1402.7 MW					
Schemes Closed								
1.	Khatima	3x13.8	1.64/0.44*	41.4	220	—	—	On a/c of fund constraint
2.	Obra	1.53/	—	—	—	—	—	UPJVNL closed these schemes
3.	Pathri (U3)	3.6/8	3.80/0.26*	20.40	40	—	—	(1 to 4) and these schemes are being revised to be taken up under Phase-II during Tenth Plan. *Exp. till 10/2000.
4.	Ranganga	3x66	1.60/0.08*	18	—	—	—	
5.	Nizam Sagar	2x5	8.00	10	32	—	—	APGENCO closed this scheme as units are running satisfactorily and R&M would be taken up under Phase-II during Tenth/Eleventh Plan.

Statement III**Ongoing RM&U Hydro Schemes**

As on 31.3.2000

Sl.No.	Name of Scheme	Inst. capacity (MW)	Est. Cost Rs. Cr.	Expenditure Incurred Rs. Cr.	Physical Progress	Completion Schedule	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Andhra Pradesh							
1.	Lower Sileru	4x115	13.35	5.49	50%	2000-2001	Out of Rs. 9.30 crs. sanctioned by PFC Rs. 5.67 Crs. disbursed till 31.3.2000 SEE System for units 2, 3 & 4 commissioned & pre-commissioning works on unit 1 is completed. 2 Nos. Pumps & motors for dewatering of U 3 & 4 replaced & commissioned. Governors stator air coolers, TGB oil coolers, SF6 breakers etc. received at site. Balance equipments/materials likely to be received shortly. Scope of supply is being revised.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2.	Srisailem	7x110	16.32	10.12	60%	2000-2001	Out of Rs. 11.40 crs. sanctioned by PFC Rs. 9.42 crs. disbursed till 31.2.2000. Most of the materials like spare runner, LBB protection for breakers, Neutral Grounding Transformers etc. received at site. Scope of supply is being revised.
Himachal Pradesh							
3	Basal	4x15	5.35	3.9145	60%	2000-2001	Out of Rs. 3.70 crs. sanctioned by PFC, Rs. 2.89 Crs. disbursed till 31.3.2000 Governor of Unit I, II & IV replaced. Spear and nozzle assembly of U-III replaced. Air cooler of U-IV replaced. Isolating seals of U-I, II & III replaced. 11 KV cables for unit II & III replaced. LT switchgear replaced.
Karnataka							
4.	Mahatma Gandhi	4x12+4x18	33.90	10.49	50%	2000-2001	Out of Rs. 23.50 crs. sanctioned by PFC, Rs. 20.81 crs. disbursed till 31.3.2000 Rewinding of Unit 1&2 was in progress. Order for electronic governors & New runners placed on M/s. Sulzer Flovel Switchyard Structures have been painted. Order for static excitation system for all 8 units awarded to M/s. BHEL material received and erected. 16 Nos. of air coolers installed. Material received for 110 KV, SF6 breakers, 110 KV CTs & C and R penal sets Material received for cooling Water System of Generator Coolers & Coolers of bearing oil system.
Kerala							
5.	Neriamangalam	3x15	31.92			Uncertain	Agreement with M/s. ABB Power General Switzerland yet to be finalised.
6.	Sabarigiri	6x50	163.34	5.188		Uncertain	Two units have been rewinded from BHEL. Three units have been rewinded from M/s. Yashnu Mumbai Financial tie up awaited.
7.	Porlangalkuthu	4x8	9.55	0.34		Uncertain	Stator & rotor poles of Unit 1 have been rewund with class F insulation. Scheme is being revised.
Orissa							
8.	Hirakud-I (U3&4)	2x24	54.3	0.175		2002-2003	Tied up for KFW German Assistance/ Loan routed through PFC. PFC sanctioned a loan of Rs. 88 crs. Tentatively decided to award the contract to M/s. Voith Siemens & M/s. ABB Sulzer. Order yet to be placed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9.	Hirakud-I (Switchyard Equipment)	9.85	3.03		30%	2000-2001	SF6 circuit breakers, CTs, PTs, Power & control cables, 1000 KVA 1010.4 KV Transformers procured internal telecommunication system installed.
10.	Hirakud-II	3x24	82.05	42.583	50%	2000-2001	PFC sanctioned & disbursed a loan of Rs. 26.68 crs. R&M of Unit 1 completed and spinned in July, 1998. Unit 3 stator has been replaced in July, 1992. On No. 132 KV/33KV 20 MVA transformer, one No. 132KV breaker and 6 Nos. 33 KV VCB have been commissioned. R&M of switchyard completed.
Tamil Nadu							
11.	Mettur Dam P.H.	4x10	41.50 Rev. 78.80	1.418	10%	2001-2002	Out of Rs. 44.2 crs. sanctioned by PFC till 31.3.2000. Rewinding of rotor and stator of Unit-3 completed. Protective relays procured.
12.	Pykara	3x6.65+ 2x11+2x14	17.06 Rev. 26.06	19.17	50%	2000-2001	Out of Rs. 9.25 crs. sanctioned by PFC, Rs. 9.25 Crs. disbursed till 31.3.2000. Erection of valve house crane, cooling water system & standby bearing oil pump has been completed. Erection of L.V. Aux. Board is completed. 11KV cable for two units erected. Protective relay panels, 600mm & 660mm penstock control valves, duplex strainers, AVR Governors & 110 KV SF6 Ckt. Breakers and 2 nos. 12 MVA transformers received at site. Erection work shall be taken up depending upon the availability of shut down based on grid condition.
13.	Papanasam	4x5.8	40.23 Rev. 59.06	0.82		2001-2002	Out of Rs. 32.7 crs. sanctioned, Rs. 4.91 crs. disbursed by PFC till 31.3.2000. Protective relays received at site. Action initiated for procurement of control cables.
SSMB							
14.	Bhakra PS	5x120	77.50	84.02	80%	2000-2001	Tied up with TPE erstwhile USSR, Loan Routed through PFC. PFC sanctioned a loan of Rs. 32.29 crs. Loan disbursed Rs. 32.29 crs. till

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							31.3.2000. Unit 9 commissioned on 26.2.98. Unit A commissioned on 22.6.97 and Unit-B commissioned on 5.4.98. All three units uprated by 37 MW each & their life extended by 20-25 years. Due to non-despatch of stator punching from Russia work held up for about 18 months. The schedule of completion is therefore, delayed. Work on Unit No. 10 is in progress and expected to be completed on 30.5.2000.
N.H.P.C.							
15.	Loktak, NHPC	3x35	24.4	—	—	Uncertain	As per NHPC, scheme is yet to be taken up. Uprating studies carried out.
J&K							
16.	Lower Jhelum	3x35	20	—	—	Uncertain	Scheme has been revised by PDC, J&K and posed to PFC for funding. Order for replacement of runner for Unit-2 placed on BHEL. Despatch of runner held up for want of funds.
17.	Sumbhal Singh	2x11.3	11	—	—	Uncertain	Scheme has been revised by PDC, J&K and posed to PFC for funding.
Meghalaya							
18.	Urniam St.-I & St. II	4x9+2x9	86.92 53.27	—	—	2002-2003 Uncertain	St.-I tied up for OECF loan. OECF sanctioned a loan of Yen 99,900,000 on 11.11.98. Signing of contract agreement and issue of letter of award is in final stage.
West Bengal							
19.	Jaldhaka-I	3x9	12.6	—	—	Uncertain	1 MOCB has been replaced departmentally. Budget provision has been kept for repairing of mechanical governors which are to be replaced by electronic governors. Awaiting financial tie up. earlier tie up with OECF could not be materialised.
DVC							
20.	Malthon	3x20	17.34 (Rev. 39.00)	—	—	2002-2003	DVC revised the scheme and expected to take up in 1999-2000.
21.	Panchet	1x40	2.17			2001-2002	L.O.I. for replacement of existing excitation system with static excitation system placed.

Exploration of New Reserves

7482. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI ARUN KUMAR:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the exploration of new oil reserves is continuously in the country;

(b) if so, the names of the institutions by which the said exploration is being done;

(c) the total number of new oil wells explored as on March, 2000;

(d) whether the assessment with regard to the quantity of oil likely to be made available from these oil reserves has been conducted;

(e) if so, the quantum of oil likely to be explored; and

(f) the scheme to extract oil from these reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Exploration of hydrocarbons is an on-going process, consisting of seismic data acquisition, processing, interpretation, prospect identification and drilling. Besides Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL), the two public sector companies; a number of private companies, both Indian and Foreign, are engaged in exploration of hydrocarbons in the country.

(c) During the year 1999-2000, ONGC and Oil have made three and four oil finds respectively and one discovery has been made by a private company.

(d) to (f) Initial estimates of inplace reserves of these finds is about 10.53 million Metric Tonne (MMT) and the ultimate reserves are estimated to be 1.7 MMT. While OIL has put these finds on production through EPS and QPS or by connecting it to nearby Oil Collecting Stations, in case of ONGC and the private company, these finds are to be evaluated/delineated and further exploration done prior to commencement of production.

[English]

Private Power Projects in Andhra Pradesh

7483. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether two power projects proposed to be set up in private sector at Rangareddy and Nalgonda districts of Andhra Pradesh are pending for clearance with the Union Government; and

(b) the time by which the said projects are likely to be accorded approval?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No proposal for establishment of power projects by private sector in these districts is pending for accord of Techno-Economic Clearance by the Central Electricity Authority.

(b) Does not arise.

Power Projects Causing Dust

7484. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any complaints have been received against the existing power projects in India both at State and NTPC level regarding serious environmental hazards due to thermal power plants operation causing coal ash dust penetration in the surroundings;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Out of 97 large and medium power plants, 21 plants do not have adequate pollution control facilities to comply with the prescribed standards. Complaints have been received for some of these power plants.

(c) The measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government include the following:

(i) Use of beneficiated coal containing ash not more than 34% with effect from 1.6.2001 has been made mandatory for the power plants located at 1000 Km or more from the pit head and also for those located in environmentally sensitive areas.

- (ii) provision/augmentation of Electro-Static Precipitators (ESPs) to control air pollution.
- (iii) Emission and effluent standards for power plants have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act.
- (iv) Development of green belts around power plants.

- (i) Installation of new telephone exchanges or expansion of existing ones.
- (ii) Laying of underground cables in technically non-feasible areas.
- (iii) Use of Pair Gain System.
- (iv) Use of Second Remote Switches.
- (v) Use of Digital Line Concentrators (DLC's) in place of copper based cables.

[Translation]

Telephone Connections in Delhi

7485. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether M.T.N.L. issue O.B. on the day of the booking itself with the telephone exchanges and in addition to it issue a letter that the area is not technically feasible and thus it takes 8 and 12 months time to install a connection;

(b) if so, whether MTNL is duping the applicants interest on the money deposited for the booking is not provided to the subscribers

(c) the number of such O.Bs. in Delhi which were issued six months back by the connections have not been provided; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, the OBs are issued on the day of registration for new telephone connections in MTNL Delhi on the availability of exchange capacity. Meanwhile, if the area is technically non-feasible the subscriber is being informed in writing about the time by which the telephone connection is likely to be energised. However issuance of OBs in technically non-feasible areas has been stopped temporarily from 1st May, 2000 onwards.

(b) No, Sir. Subscribers are being paid interest on the amount deposited for new telephone connection from the date of registration upto the date of installation of telephone connection.

(c) 2734 OBs issued six months back or prior thereto were pending as on 30.4.2000 in MTNL Delhi.

(d) The following steps are being taken to clear the pending OBs:

Allocation of Power to MP from Central Pool

7486. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Madhya Pradesh Government has requested for more share of Power from the Central Pool;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received any proposal to set up a new power project in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) No request has been received from Government of Madhya Pradesh for increase in share from the Central Pool.

(c) and (d) Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has accorded techno-economic clearance to sixteen power generating projects in the State of Madhya Pradesh with a total capacity of 7880 MW comprising 960 MW hydro and 6920 MW thermal capacity.

Besides the above projects, the Detailed Project Reports received by CEA in respect of two projects aggregating 703 MW capacity will be taken up for techno-economic appraisal by CEA after the inputs/linkages/clearances are tied up by the project promoters.

[English]

Responsibility of Ship Building and Ship Repair

7487. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to close down the technical division of the ship-building and ship-repair division (SBR);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to safeguard the interest of the employees of the organisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

CNG by GAIL and Indraprastha Gas Limited

7488. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether GAIL and its subsidiary Indraprastha Gas Limited have not been able to meet the demand for CNG;

(b) if so, the reasons for their inability to meet CNG demand;

(c) whether a thorough review is planned of the steps to be taken to make available CNG all over the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) CNG supply facilities can be set up only in the cities where pipeline supply of Natural gas is available and the techno-economic feasibility has been established. 56 CNG stations have already been commissioned so far to make CNG available for motor vehicles in the cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Vadodara, Surat and Anandeshwar.

Oil Reserves in Saurashtra, Gujarat

7489. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are oil reserves in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat including Kutch areas;

(b) if so, whether any survey has been conducted to assess the possible locations of oil reserves in the region together with the outcome of the surveys; and

(c) if so, the future plans of the Government with regard to conducting such surveys in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) To assess the possible location of oil reserves, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) carried out geological survey, gravity magnetic surveys and single fold 2D seismic surveys in Saurashtra region of Gujarat, including Kutch area. In the Kutch area, additional multi-fold 2D seismic survey has also been carried out. While five exploratory wells were drilled in Kutch area of Gujarat, two parametric wells were drilled in Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Oil India Ltd. Also carried out seismic surveys in its operational area in Saurashtra offshore. Two blocks in the onland part and three blocks in adjoining offshore areas of Kutch-Saurashtra have earlier been contracted to private/joint venture companies. 2D and 3D seismic data has been acquired also in some of these blocks by the private/JV companies. Additionally, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) and National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) have jointly carried out Aero-Magnetic reconnaissance survey in parts of onshore & offshore areas of Kutch. Presence of hydrocarbons reserves has not yet been established, however.

(c) Further plans for surveys in these areas include:

ONGC's plan of 2d and 3D seismic survey in Cambay basin in Gujarat; OIL's plan of 2D and 3D seismic survey in Cambay basin in Gujarat; OIL's plan for 3D seismic survey in Saurashtra offshore; DGH's proposal to carry out Magneto-Telluric (MT) surveys jointly with NGRI and ONGC in Cambay-Kutch; private/JV companies commitment of seismic surveys in the earlier awarded exploration blocks and additional 2D seismic survey in two offshore blocks for which the production sharing contracts were signed in April, 2000 with private/JV companies under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

Ganga Purification Plan

7490. SHRI JAI BHADRA SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ganga Action Plan launched in Varanasi has not brought any qualitative change;

(b) if so, the the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount so far granted by the Government in this regard since its commencement annually;

(d) whether the Government are considering to set up a Committee to review the working of Ganga Purification Programme; and

(e) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Phase-I of the Ganga Action Plan launched in Varanasi in 1985 has brought about a qualitative change in the river water quality in terms of measured parameters such as summer average values of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Dissolved Oxygen levels (DO). The increase in dissolved oxygen levels and reduction in biochemical oxygen demand levels are as follows:

(In milligram/litre)		1986	1999
Dissolved Oxygen	Varanasi Upstream	5.6	8.2
	Varanasi Downstream	5.9	8.4
Biochemical Oxygen Demand	Varanasi Upstream	10.1	2.2
	Varanasi Downstream	10.6	3.7

The technological design under Ganga Action Plan Phase-I provided only for an incidental reduction in the levels of microbial pollution.

(c) The details of the amounts granted annually by the Government for the creation and maintenance of assets under Ganga Action Plan in Varanasi are given in the Statement-I. Out of the total sum of Rs. 67.60 crores released so far, 42.92 crores have been released by the Government of India and Rs. 24.68 crores by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

(d) and (e) Ganga Action Plan and the National River Conservation Plan are reviewed regularly at various levels. There is a National River Conservation Authority under the Prime Minister which reviews the Programme. A Monitoring Committee under the Member, Planning Commission and a Steering Committee under Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests review the Programme quarterly. In addition, a mid-term evaluation of the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I was undertaken jointly by the Aligarh Muslim University, Roorkee University, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta. The evaluation report has concluded that with the reduction of discharge of organic matter, a necessary first step in restoring the water quality has been achieved to a fair level under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I. It is also mentioned that the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I as conceived and implemented is an appropriate programme for application to other river basins. Some shortcomings of the programme were also brought out in the evaluation

report and have been taken note of suitable modification in the subsequent river action plans. These include reduction of discharge of organic matter, local conditions to be given adequate consideration in the choice of sewage treatment technology, regular cleaning of sewage and interception structures constructed under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I, regular training for the staff posted at all levels, resource recovery options to be analysed etc.

A cost benefit analysis of the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I was also undertaken by a reputed expert from Harvard Institute of International Development in collaboration with local Indian Institutes viz. Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, Indian Toxicology Research Centre, Lucknow and All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta. The study broadly concluded that in spite of its many shortcomings the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I has delivered significant benefits to India. The polluted stretch of the river violating the bathing class standards would have been at least 740 kms. between Kannauj and Varanasi as compared to 437 kms. between the same towns with the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I. In terms of both cost and time taken, the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I compares favourably with those of the other major rivers of the world. The study has concluded that the internal rate of return of the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I is well above 10% required of public sector projects.

There is no proposal, at present, under the consideration of the Government for constitution a committee to review the working of the Ganga Purification Programme.

Statement**Details of Funds Released for Ganga Action Plan Works for Varanasi**

Year	Funds Released (Rs. in lakhs)
1985-86	29.300
1986-87	291.00
1987-88	521.285
1988-89	490.360
1989-90	1104.140
1990-91	811.075
1991-92	444.200
1992-93	352.840
1993-94	561.000
1994-95	426.620
1995-96	371.210
1996-97	353.000
1997-98	329.500
1998-99	271.200
1999-2000	403.000
Total:	6759.730

Out of the above, Rs. 4291.840 lakhs have been released by Government of India and rest by State Government.

Maintenance Allowance for Divorced Women

7491. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the maintenance allowance for vagrant women was fixed under Section 125 of Code of Criminal Procedure 27 years ago;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Law Commission has recommended to bring changes in the said Section and increase the maintenance allowance for the divorced women;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) As per Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (2 of 1974), the maximum monthly allowance for maintenance is rupees five hundred.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Law Commission of India in its 154th Report on "The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973" (Volume I) has, *inter alia*, recommended enhancement of the ceiling of maintenance allowance, which will be applicable to divorced women as well, to rupees five thousand per month. The recommendation is under examination of the Ministry of Home Affairs in consultation with the State Governments.

(e) In view of the depreciation of value of money, Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 has been proposed to be amended to enhance the maximum limit for payment of maintenance allowance from rupees five hundred per month to rupees one thousand five hundred per month *vide* Clause 17 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1994 which was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 9th May, 1994. The said Bill is pending.

[Translation]

Cellular Mobile Telecom Service in Bihar

7492. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide Mobile Cellular Telephone Service in Palamu and Hazaribagh districts of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said facility is likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Department of Telecom Services (DTS) is initially introducing cellular services in few selected cities in the form of a Pilot Project. The cities of Bihar State which are proposed to be covered under pilot project are given below.

1. Patna 2. Biharsharif 3. Hazipur 4. Arah 5. Rajgir
6. Badh.

The case for provision of cellular mobile service in other parts of the country is also under process in the department.

Regarding provision of cellular phone facility by Private Operators, licenses were granted for operation of Cellular Mobile Telephone Service to M/s. Reliance Telecom Private Ltd. (effective date 12.12.1995) and M/s. Koshika Telecom Private Limited (effective date 23.8.1996) in Bihar Telecom Circle which includes Palamu and Hazaribagh Districts of Bihar. As per information provided by Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), Cellular Mobile Telephone Service by M/s. Reliance in Bihar is available in Patna, Hazipur, Ranchi, Dhanbad, Jamshedpur, Jharia, Danapur and Chas cities. The licence of M/s. Koshika in Bihar is not operational since 22.5.1999.

As per the License Agreement to the private cellular operators, atleast 10% of the District Headquarters will be covered in the first year and 50% of the District Headquarters will be covered within three years of effective date of License. The licensees have also been permitted to cover any other town in a District in lieu of the District Headquarters. The choice of District Headquarters/towns to be covered and further expansion beyond 50% of District Headquarters/towns lies with the Licensee companies depending on their business decision.

Service of I.R.C.C.

7493. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the services of Indian Road Construction Corporation (IRCC) is not being utilized for the construction of roads/States Highways/Express Highways;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

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

(d) the details of the other undertakings of the Union Government likely to be closed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Government has decided to wind up IRCC in view of its accumulating losses.

(d) No other Undertaking of the Union Government under the administrative control of the Ministry of Surface Transport is proposed to be closed.

Telecom Facilities

7494. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any task has been undertaken in Banaskantha region of Gujarat to increase the capacity of telephone exchanges and provide modern communication facilities during 1999-2000;

(b) if so, the details of the development works undertaken there; and

(c) the number of officers found involved in corrupt practice in telecommunications and postal service sector during the said period alongwith the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Steps have been taken to increase the capacity and provide better Telecom Services in Secondary Switching Area (SSA) of Palanpur (Banaskantha District) of Gujarat Telecom Circle during 1999-2000.

(b) Details are as under:

new Telephone Exchanges opened	16
Capacity added	17574
New Telephone Connections provided	11787
Optical Fibre System Commissioned:	
8 MB	17 Nos.
34 MB	02 Nos.

(c) No officer was found involved in corrupt practice in Palanpur Secondary Switching Area (Banaskantha District) in Gujarat Telecom and Postal Circle during the said period.

[English]

Waiting List for Telephone Connections in Ranchi

7495. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of wait listed persons for telephone connections in various telephone exchanges under the Ranchi region of Bihar is very large;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to provide telephone connections immediately to the applicants on the waiting list and for the expansion of the telephone exchanges in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Due to reduced rate of registration, there have been large increase in number of applicants for new telephone connections in some areas under Ranchi region of Bihar such as Ranchi, Lohardegga, Dhurwa, Hinoo and Pandra.

(b) The exchange-wise details of wait listed persons for telephone connections under Ranchi region of Bihar as on 30.4.2000 are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) The steps taken by the Department to provide telephone connections immediately to the applicants on the waiting list and for the expansion of Telephone Exchanges under Ranchi region are given below:

1. New Telephone exchanges are being opened.
2. Capacity of existing exchanges are being increased.
3. New cables are being laid keeping in view of demands.
4. Existing media is being replaced by OFC/UHF media, wherever required.
5. Plans for clearance of waiting lists during current financial year progressively has been drawn.

Statement

Ranchi Telecom District

Sl.No.	Name of Exchange	. Waiting List as on 30.4.2000
1	2	3
1.	Ranchi	1116
2.	A. Nagar	105
3.	Bariatu	134

1	2	3
4.	Cmpdii	56
5.	Dhurwa	968
6.	Hinoo	410
7.	Kanke	24
8.	Mesra	16
9.	Nagri	0
10.	Namkum	195
11.	Nayasarai	0
12.	Ormanjhi	0
13.	Pandra	410
14.	Pithoria	0
15.	Tatisihwal	8
16.	Basia	22
17.	Kamdara	19
18.	Bolwa	0
19.	Bundu	0
20.	Tamar	0
21.	Rahe	68
22.	Sonahatu	7
23.	Ghaghra	34
24.	Bishunpur	0
25.	Neterhat	1
26.	Gumla	5
27.	Bharno	1
28.	Sisai	0
29.	Toto	10
30.	Itki	0
31.	Bero	0
32.	Khunti	0
33.	Karra	15
34.	Kolebira	8
35.	Lacharagarh	0

1	2	3
36.	Lohardaga	140
37.	Bhandra	7
38.	Kuru	45
39.	Kisko	13
40.	Senha	3
41.	Mandar	0
42.	Chanho	0
43.	Dakra	0
44.	Khelari	0
45.	MC. Ganj	0
46.	Piparwar	0
47.	Thakurgaon	0
48.	Burmu	0
49.	Dhamdhamia	12
50.	Muri	0
51.	Sikdri	0
52.	Jonha	3
53.	Angara	0
54.	Palkot	1
55.	Simdega	50
56.	Thethaitang	1
57.	Biru	17
58.	Torpa	0
59.	Murhu	0
60.	Tapkara	0
61.	Chainpur	14
Total		3937

LPG Connections in A.P.

7496. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the villages in Andhra Pradesh are provided with LPG connections;

(b) if so, the number of villages covered so far;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to cover all the villages with LPG facilities;

(d) the total quantum of LPG supplied to Andhra Pradesh as against the requirement of the State during the last three years; and

(e) the efforts made or proposed to be made by the Government to ensure supply of LPG to the State as per their requirements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) As per the extant directions, the existing LPG distributors of Public Sector Oil Companies are releasing the LPG connections in their authorised area of operation.

(d) The sale of LPG by the Public Sector Oil Companies in the State of Andhra Pradesh during the last three years are under:

(Figure in TMT)

Year	LPG Sale
1996-97	308.05
1997-98	331.88
1998-99	362.45

(e) At present, the demand of LPG customers enrolled with the Public Sector Oil Companies in the State of Andhra Pradesh is being met, by and large, in full.

Telecom Districts

7497. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to set up some new Telecom districts in Orissa during 2000-2001;

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

(c) the number of Telecom districts at present under Bhubaneswar circle?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Based on the workload as on 31.03.2000, there is a proposal for formation of an independent Telecom District for Phulbani S.S.A. (Secondary Switching Area) by separating it from Berhampur Telecom District in Orissa Telecom Circle. Phulbani SSA and Berhampur SSA are controlled by one Telecom District i.e. Berhampur at present.

(c) At present, eleven Telecom Districts are working in Orissa Telecom Circle.

Telephone Exchanges in Rajasthan

7498. DR. GIRIJA VYAS:
PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of Rajasthan in respect of telephone exchanges set up so far;

(b) the number of telephone exchanges set up in the urban and rural areas of the State during the last three years and as on date and the expenditure incurred on them;

(c) the number of telephone exchanges set up in Rajasthan particularly in Ajmer, Rajsamund, Nagaur districts during 1999-2000 and proposed to be set up during 2000-2001, location-wise;

(d) whether the Government have received representations for setting up telephone exchanges in the urban and rural areas of Rajasthan;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the above telephone exchanges are likely to be set up;

(f) whether a proposal for the upgradation and expansion of the telephone exchanges in the State is under consideration of the Government; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The percentage of Rajasthan in respect of Telephone exchange set up as on 31.3.2000 is 7.02.

(b) The details are given below:

Sl.No.	Year	No. of Exchanges		Total	Expenditure incurred (Rs. in thousand)	
		Rural	Urban		Rural	Urban
1.	1997-98	125	22	147	162949	3205096
2.	1998-99	141	12	153	560842	2586217
3.	1999-2000	169	12	181	1166877	3461979
4.	2000-01	—	—	—	—	—

(c) No. of exchanges set up during 1999-2000 and proposed to be set up during 2000-2001 are given below:

	Exchanges set up during 1999-2000	Exchanges proposed to be set up during 2000-2001
Rajasthan	181	250
Ajmer District	4	2
Rajsamund District	1	2
Nagaur District	11	12

Location-wise details are given in the Statement-I.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(f) Yes, Sir.

(e) Details are given in the Statement-II.

(g) Details are given in the Statement-III.

Statement-I

No. of Telephone Exchanges set up in Ajmer, Rajasamund and Nagaur districts during 1999-2000 and proposed to be set up during 2000-2001.

Sl. No.	District	Exchanges set up during 1999-2000	Exchanges proposed to be set up during 2000-01
I. Ajmer			
1.		Borada/Sarwar	Kirap/Beawar
2.		Bogla/Kekri	Birta/Sarwar
3.		Singhwal/Bhinay	
4.		Sarana/Beawar	
II. Rajasamund			
1.		Jilota/Amet	Jetgarh/Bheem
2.		—	Kuncholi/Kumbhalgarh
III. Nagaur			
1.		Bagor/Parbatsar	Bhadana/Nagaur
2.		Bamno/Degana	Jilot/Kuchamancity (Nawa)
3.		Bhakari/Parbatsar	Khwikala/Degana
4.		Bhakrod/Khinwarsar	Madpura/Khinwarsar
5.		Butala/Degana	Ranigao/Makrana
6.		Chapra/Ladnun	Sankhwas/Mundwa
7.		Dodiyaya/Degana	Soneli/Jayal
8.		Kairap/Deedwana	Rasal/Kuchamancity (Nawa)
9.		Ledi/Ladnun	Lalag/—do—
10.		Rota/Jayal	Kuchayada/Jayal
11.		Tankla/Khinwarsar	Chanrani/Nagaur Singhana/Deedwana

Statement-II

New Telephone Exchanges to be set up in Rural & Urban Areas

Sl. No.	Location	Year
1	2	3
1.	Jhalsar	2000-2001
2.	Bomadara	-do-

1	2	3
3.	Mandrayal	2000-2001
4.	Mahswa	-do-
5.	Palloo	-do-
6.	Prempura	-do-
7.	Gothariguru	-do-
8.	Parasan	2001-2002

*Statement-III**Proposal for Upgradation and Expansion of Telephone Exchanges during 2000-2001*

1	2	3
9.	Parlu	2000-2001
10.	Baidaraha	-do-
11.	Kailan	-do-
12.	Avitshwar	-do-
13.	Kanoota	-do-
14.	Philhisar	2000-2001
15.	Chatoli	-do-
16.	Beru	9th Plan
17.	Kharahera	9th Plan
18.	Narwa	2000-2002
19.	Sanwara	-do-
20.	Jaroda	2000-2001
21.	Khudikalan	-do-
22.	Pephta	2001-2002
23.	Seelanwad	9th Plan
24.	Surpariya	2000-2001
25.	Nandia	-do-
26.	Bhaliwala	-do-
27.	Jakhadwala	2000-2001
28.	Inderpura	-do-
29.	Nagrasi	-do-
30.	Jahankali	2001-2002
31.	Salwakalan	-do-
32.	Sankhawas	2000-2001
33.	Baduser	-do-
34.	Baidanavoo	2000-2001
35.	Alkahpura	-do-
36.	Daulatarwali	2001-2002
37.	Pethrasar	-do-
38.	Peench	2000-2001
39.	Suhagpura	2001-2002

Sl.No.	Name of District	No. of Exchanges to be upgraded	No. of Exchanges to be expanded
1	2	3	4
1.	Ajmer	9	22
2.	Ahwar	9	31
3.	Banswara	3	14
4.	Baran	5	12
5.	Barmer	0	25
6.	Bharatpur	10	24
7.	Bhilwara	6	23
8.	Bikaner	0	16
9.	Bundi	9	11
10.	Chittorgarh	6	22
11.	Churu	9	46
12.	Dausa	6	17
13.	Dholpur	5	4
14.	Dungarpur	6	10
15.	Hanumangarh	3	30
16.	Jaipur	47	47
17.	Jaisalmer	6	2
18.	Jalore	5	23
19.	Jhalawar	12	15
20.	Jodhpur	30	32
21.	Jhunjhunu	15	44
22.	Karauli	7	15
23.	Kota	4	27
24.	Nagaur	21	43
25.	Pali	38	40
26.	Rajsamund	—	15

1	2	3	4
27.	Sawai Madhopur	14	16
28.	Sikar	27	36
29.	Sirohi	4	18
30.	Sri Ganganagar	20	40
31.	Teak	—	22
32.	Udaipur	—	25
Total:		336	767

Plot and Design for Laying National Highways

7499. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any plans to plot and design the possible routes for laying National Highways connecting various places in the country and the Expressways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the alternate steps made by the Government to lay roads, in such of those places or localities where it is practically impossible or difficult to acquire the required land for laying and construction of roads;

(d) whether the Government have the possession of required maps for carrying out the construction works on the National Highways; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement giving details of criteria for declaration of new national highways is attached.

(c) Central Government is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of national highways only. It is to be appreciated that it is impossible to construct National Highways without adequate land width being available for this purpose.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Maps published by Survey of India are available with the Government. However, detailed survey and investigation are carried out for individual projects.

Statement

The criteria for the declaration of State road into National Highway is as under:

- (i) Roads which run through the length and breadth of the country.
- (ii) Roads connecting adjacent countries.
- (iii) Roads connecting the National Capital with State capital and roads connecting mutually the State capitals.
- (iv) Roads connecting major ports, large industrial centres or tourist centres.
- (v) Roads meeting very important strategic requirements.
- (vi) Arterial roads which enable sizeable reduction in travel distance and achieve substantial economic growth thereby.
- (vii) Roads which help opening up large tracts of backward area and hilly regions.
- (viii) National Highway grid of 100 Km is achieved.

Further the declaration of National Highways is considered based on the requirements of the country as a whole and not particularly with respect to any local requirements.

Loan Facilities to Transmission Schemes in Karnataka

7500. SHRI KOLUR BASAVANAGOUD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Power Finance Corporation has agreed to extend loan facilities for transmission and distribution of power schemes in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the amount of loan proposed to be provided for the purpose; and

(c) the details of schemes likely to be taken up with the said loan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) PFC extends loan facilities for Transmission and Distribution Scheme to all State utilities in the country including the State Utilities in Karnataka State within its operational policy.

(b) and (c) PFC provides upto 70% of Project Completion Costs for T&D systems and upto 80% of project completion costs for installation of capacitors/meters. Amount of loan to be provided is not pre-determined, but depends on the project Appraisal of each project/scheme. The details of financial assistance provided to M/s. Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) of Karnataka State, for transmission and distribution schemes as on 30.4.2000 is as under:

(Rs. in Crores)

Category of Schemes	No. of Loans	Amount Sanctioned	Amount Disbursed
Transmission	62	673.88	524.42
Urban Distribution	25	218.15	188.45
Capacitor	7	47.35	26.95
System Improvement	4	198.50	78.91
Total:	98	1137.88	818.74

According to the MOA entered into between Ministry of Power and Government of Karnataka, Power Finance Corporation would be prepared to finance investment in relaxation of normal conditionalities. The MOA has identified some specific schemes and projects for this purpose.

Upgradation of Panikoli to Rourkela State Road

7501. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to upgrade the State road from Panikoli to Rourkela as a National Highway;

(b) if so, whether the proposal has been accorded sanction during the financial year of 1999-2000;

(c) if so, whether the work has been started and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the estimated cost of the upgradation project; and

(e) the details of funds sanctioned for that project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Panikoli is already connected to Rourkela by NH-215 from Panikoli to Rajamunda and by NH-23 from Rajamunda to Rourkela.

(c) to (e) Development and upgradation of national highways is a continuous process. Allocation for development of national highways are made by this Ministry State-wise and not national highways-wise. A sum of Rs. 3850 lakhs was allocated to the State of Orissa for the development of national highways during the financial year 1999-2000.

Biosphere Reserve Projects in Orissa

7502. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of ongoing Biosphere Reserve Projects in Orissa;

(b) the amount spent thereon, so far; and

(c) the progress of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Simlipal is the only designated Biosphere Reserve in Orissa.

(b) The Government of Orissa has spent an amount of Rs. 38.09 lakhs in Simlipal Biosphere Reserve under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Biosphere Reserve during the period 1995 to March, 2000.

(c) State Government has undertaken various activities in 69 villages of the Biosphere Reserve. These include Eco-development programmes, Social Welfare activities, Environment Education, maintenance of Orchid Centres, and establishment of Medicinal Plants garden.

Telephone Network

7503. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have paid emphasis on providing telephone network in the rural areas of Orissa;

(b) if so, whether large number of telephones remain out of order because of poor service and inferior quality of telephone instruments especially in Bhadrak, Jajpur and Cuttack districts of Orissa;

(c) whether the Government propose to provide good quality of telephone instruments in the State;

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be done;

(e) the steps taken by the Government to improve telephone facilities in the State and the said district; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) No, Sir. The Department provides good quality of telephone instruments in the State, which have been duly tested and passed by the Quality Assurance Organisation of the Department. However, if the subscriber wishes, he can have his own telephone instrument and avail a rebate of Rs. 250/-.

(e) and (f) The following steps are being taken to improve telephone facilities in the State including the said districts:

- (i) All the exchanges in Bhadrak, Cuttack and Jaipur districts have been converted into digital electronic exchanges.
- (ii) External plants are being upgraded with advanced technology instruments/accessories and overhead lines are being replaced gradually by underground cables to minimise the fault liability.
- (iii) Transmission media are being upgraded in all exchanges in phased manner by OFC. All the exchanges are likely to be provided with the reliable transmission media by September, 2000.
- (iv) Advanced communication system like C-DOT PMP and WIL (Wireless in Local Loop) proposed for providing telephone facilities in the villages.

Department of Telecom Services

7504. SHRI ABDUL HAMID: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecom Services (DTS) is strongly resisting the Disinvestment Department's move to bring down Government equity in telecom public sector undertaking; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Government equity in both VSNL and MTNL has already been brought down to 53% and 56.25% respectively. The question of further disinvestment is being examined in consultation with concerned Departments.

Telecommunication Facilities in Karnataka

7505. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide telephone facility in all the villages in Chikkaballapur region of Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken so far to improve telecommunications facilities in the said region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Out of 973 villages in Chikkaballapur region 631 villages have been provided with telecom facility. Remaining 342 villages are proposed to be covered with telecom facilities progressively by March, 2001. New telephone exchanges have been opened and existing exchanges expanded. More new exchanges are planned to be opened. Reliable transmission media is planned to be provided by laying Optical Fibre Cables.

Foreign Direct Investment

7506. SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the foreign direct investment made by Indian companies abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the foreign equity upto which the Indian companies are permitted; and

(c) the details of observations made by Ministry of Industry and Ministry of Shipping in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*Translation*]

Deaths due to Air Pollution

7507. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT:
SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN:
SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the persons are dying due to air pollution in metropolitan cities of the country;

(b) if so, the number of deaths occurred in each of metropolitan cities during the last three years, metropolitan cities-wise; and

(c) the efforts made by the Government to avoid such deaths and prevent diseases being caused by the air pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The World Bank has estimated that about 40,000 premature deaths in 36 Indian cities have occurred in 1995 due to air pollution. However, there is no conclusive data available to confirm these figures. No mortality data attributable to air pollution is available.

(c) The efforts made by the Government to curb and control air pollution include the following:

- (1) The Government has formulated a comprehensive Policy Statement for Abatement of Pollution, which lays stress on prevention and control aspects of pollution.
- (2) The ambient air quality of various cities and towns is monitored regularly through a network of 290 monitoring stations under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme.
- (3) Ambient air quality standards and emission standards for industrial units have been notified.
- (4) Emissions from highly polluting industrial units and thermal power plants are regularly monitored and action is taken against the defaulting units.
- (5) Environment action plans for reducing pollution in Delhi and Mumbai have been prepared by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, which are under implementation.

(6) Low lead petrol had been introduced in the four metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai with effect from June 1994. Subsequently, unleaded petrol for catalytic converter fitted vehicles was introduced in the above mentioned cities with effect from 1.4.1995. Unleaded petrol is now being supplied to the entire country with effect from 1.2.2000. Sulphur is being progressively reduced in diesel. Fuel quality standards for petrol and diesel have been notified.

(7) Gross emission standards for on-road vehicles and mass emission standards for all categories of new vehicles have been notified under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

(8) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment.

Action Plan for Forest Cover

7508. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI ARUN KUMAR:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated an action plan to convert one third of the geographical area of the country into forests during the ensuing twenty year.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and whether the land area has been identified for planting trees; and

(c) if so, the names of the States alongwith the acreage of land available in each of the States for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Environment Forests have formulated National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP), a comprehensive strategic long term plan for the next twenty years to address the issues underlying the major problems of the forestry sector line with the National Forest Policy, 1988. The object of the NFAP is to bring one-third of the area of the country under forest/tree cover and to arrest de-forestation for achieving sustainable development of forests.

(b) and (c) The National Forestry Action Program has five main components:

1. *Protect Existing Forest Resources:* It has three main-sub programmes—(i) forest protection (ii) soil and water conservation, and (iii) protected areas and biodiversity conservation.

2. *Improve Forest Productivity:* It has four main sub-programmes—(i) rehabilitation of degraded forests, (ii) research and technology development, (iii) development of Non Wood Forest Products, and (iv) assisting private initiatives with community participation.
3. *Reduce Total Demand:* It has three main sub-programmes for the efficient uses of (i) fuelwood and fodder, (ii) timber, and (iii) Non Wood Forest products.

4. *Strengthen Policy and Institutional Framework:* It has three main sub-programmes—(i) Central forestry administration, (ii) Central forestry institutions, and (iii) State forestry administration and institutions.
5. *Expand Forest Area:* It has two main sub-programmes—(i) tree plantation on forest and non-forest lands, and (ii) people's participation in plantations and its protection.

The land earmarked for implementation of the programme in each State is given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Summary of State-wise Investment Estimates of NFAP (Rs. in million)

State/UT	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh	2618.82	2619.5	2620.1	2620.7	2621.3
Assam	706.2	873.3	1009.8	1129.9	1228.0
Bihar	2899.8	2952.2	3047.6	3083.2	3145.2
Goa	108.9	108.9	108.9	108.9	108.9
Gujarat	856.7	1032.1	1112.2	1161.3	1179.4
Haryana	716.0	716.2	716.3	716.5	718.3
Himachal Pradesh	1839.2	2134.3	2524.5	2970.8	3362.9
Jammu & Kashmir	2608.7	2608.9	2608.9	2608.9	2608.9
Karnataka	5400.85	5410.36	5420.85	5436.35	5446.85
Kerala	1544.6	1582.8	1566.7	1564.4	1530.1
Madhya Pradesh	6698.1	9723.2	10673.7	11074.3	11474.6
Maharashtra	1788.4	1787.7	1787.7	1789.6	1789.6
Manipur	966.3	1121.5	1185	1241.5	1296.4
Meghalaya	63.4	66.2	68.6	71.2	73.8
Mizoram	598.6	723.5	767.5	792.4	817.2
Nagaland	396.8	328.6	339.9	325.6	330.8
Orissa	332.78	1348.58	1348.58	1347.29	1344.75
Punjab	956.3	1154.7	1220.3	1342.9	1375.3
Rajasthan	5598.3	6194.8	6772.9	7351	7987.8

1	2	3	4	5	6
Sikkim	417	432.1	447.6	448	448.3
Tamil Nadu	1547.04	1547.04	1547.04	1547.04	1547.04
Tripura	396.8	328.6	339.9	325.6	339.8
Uttar Pradesh	681.6	1372.1	1539.2	1555.2	1658.7
West Bengal	1957	1957	1957	1957	1957
A&N Islands	292.4	319.6	293.3	211.8	293.1
Total States	43167.49	49181.47	51767.47	53615.68	55372.24
Central Sector	3520.5	3696.5	3881.4	4175.4	4279.2
Total for Country	46687.99	52877.97	55648.87	57791.08	59651.44

State	1st Five Year	2nd Five Year	3rd Five Year	4th Five year	Total for 20 Years	Area to be Regenerated/ planted (million ha)	II	V
	2	7	8	9	10	11		
Andhra Pradesh	13100.43	12964.73	12687.98	12580.98	51334.12	4.93	2.65	2.28
Arunachal Pradesh	4137.49	3578.36	3280.89	3136.85	14118.99	0.15	0.10	0.05
Assam	4947.25	5779.85	5088.15	4825.10	20720.35	1.10	0.92	0.18
Bihar	15107.84	15905.72	15700.01	15653.99	62067.66	4.21	1.50	2.71
Goa	544.52	277.12	283.16	279.17	1383.97	0.03	0.03	0.00
Gujarat	5340.74	6042.18	5962.52	5901.22	23246.66	2.62	0.74	1.86
Haryana	3583.3	3806.14	3824.18	4553.67	15767.29	0.87	0.17	0.70
Himachal Pradesh	12831.70	17190.00	29080.50	49412.50	108514.70	0.90	0.49	0.41
Jammu & Kashmir	13045.25	14333.58	14329.41	15488.95	57177.19	6.27	2.05	4.22
Karnataka	27117.25	27246.75	28995.75	30017.25	113377.00	3.21	3.00	0.12
Kerala	7786.64	6862.18	6235.12	5196.95	26082.89	0.26	0.14	0.12
Madhya Pradesh	49643.82	60195.07	60221.26	60229.29	230289.44	7.39	6.01	1.38
Maharashtra	89.43	16746.77	24565.78	34658.86	84914.21	3.26	2.68	0.88
Manipur	5812.71	5942.87	4871.13	3009.45	19436.16	1.08	0.77	0.31
Meghalaya	343.15	408.16	473.17	538.17	1762.65	—	—	0.00
Mizoram	3099.22	4473.12	5827.48	5221.08	19220.90	0.82	0.80	0.02

1	2	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Nagaland	1721.7	1270.4	894.7	736.7	4623.5	—	—	—
Orissa	5721.98	6391.45	7056.45	7982.45	27152.33	0.44	0.16	0.26
Punjab	6049.0	7292.62	4904.93	4365.64	22612.68	0.66	0.31	0.35
Rajasthan	33864.79	47416.27	52665.53	57197.89	191144.48	5.14	0.80	4.94
Sikkim	2193.05	2103.28	2095.53	2101.23	8493.07	0.28	0.20	0.08
Tamil Nadu	7735.20	7618.25	6006.10	5828.45	27188.00	0.71	0.33	0.38
Tripura	1721.70	1270.40	894.70	736.70	4623.50	0.08	0.04	0.04
Uttar Pradesh	6836.80	9018.94	8204.74	8147.70	32208.18	3.24	2.28	0.96
West Bengal	9785.05	12464.03	15849.79	19179.98	57278.85	0.61	0.30	0.31
A&N Islands	1490.22	1544.06	1973.86	2579.69	7587.83	0.07	0.07	0.00
Total States	253106.39	297842.28	321732.82	359639.71	1232321.20	48.23	26.43	21.80
Central Sector	19453.00	24149.00	27921.10	35183.50	106706.60	—	—	—
Total for Country	272559.39	321991.28	349653.92	394823.21	1339027.8	48.23	26.43	21.80

[English]

Draft Electricity Bill

7509. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
SHRI ANNASHEB M.K. PATIL:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Eastern Region States are opposing the Draft Electricity Bill, 2000 and suggested some amendments to it;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Draft Electricity Bill, 2000 as submitted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has been circulated to all concerned. From the Eastern Region, comments have been received from State of Orissa and the Eastern Regional Electricity Board (EREB), Calcutta. The Government of Orissa have made suggestions on matters relating to the powers to issue policy guidelines involving public interest, on provisions relating to subsidy to the utilities etc. The Eastern Regional Electricity Boards,

Calcutta have observed, *inter-alia*, that the Regional Electricity Boards in their present forms have been serving useful purpose and that they should be continued.

The draft submitted initially by the NCAER has undergone changes and refinement after taking in to account the various comments and views received.

[Translation]

Disinvestment of Oil Companies

7510. SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to complete the disinvestment plan to bolster the performance and to make commercially viable the oil companies in the Public Sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the percentage of share in disinvestment recommended for the Public Sector oil companies; and

(d) the time by which disinvestment plan is targeted to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Recommendations have been received for strategic alliance and integration of some oil companies in the public sector. No concrete plan and time schedule has been firmed up.

LPG Agencies in Uttar Pradesh

7511. SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies functioning in Uttar Pradesh as on date particularly in Mohanlalganj district;

(b) the number of LPG connections released to them for distribution;

(c) the number of additional connections made available to consumers during the last three years; and

(d) the number of new LPG connections and new LPG agencies likely to be allotted in each district in next few years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Presently, there are 715 LPG distributorships in operation in Uttar Pradesh with 5824171 customer strength including one LPG distributorship in Mohanlalganj market in district Lucknow with customer strength of 4074.

(c) During the last three years, 1836058 new LPG connections were released in Uttar Pradesh.

(d) 440 LPG distributorships have been included in the Marketing Plan 1996-98 for Uttar Pradesh. Instructions have been issued to Oil Companies to release 1 crore new connections during the current year for the country including for Uttar Pradesh and clear the waiting list upto 1.12.1999.

[English]

Protection of Endangered Animal Species

7512. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE:
SHRI P.D. ELANGOVA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to protect and save endangered animal species in the country;

(b) the number of projects implemented, amount allocated and the details of target and achievements made for the protection of the endangered animals so far;

(c) whether the Government have any plan to approach WWF or any other foreign sources to implement these projects to save fast vanishing animal species; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The Government of India has taken following steps to protect and save endangered animal species in the country:

- Providing legal protection against hunting and commercial exploitation of wild animals under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Setting up of Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment and Forests, Government of India, for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife. Similar Committees have been established at State level and District level in various States.
- Authorised Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to apprehend offenders and launch prosecution in wildlife offences.
- Providing assistance to State Government for strengthening the infrastructure through involvement of Armed Squads and Strike Forces drawn out of paramilitary forces and State Armed constabulary.
- Periodic meetings with State Government for effective monitoring of protection measures undertaken.
- Strengthening the infrastructure under the Central Government and to ensure its presence in all sensitive areas.

(b) The number of projects implemented and amount allocated is given in the enclosed Statement. The projects are implemented in the protected areas of the country with the objective of conserving the precious bio-diversity and in particular the endangered species of the country. As a consequence of the implementation of these projects, the population of rare and endangered animals have increased considerably. The achievements in respect of rare and endangered animals is given below:

- The population of tiger in India has increased from 1827 in 1969 to 3810 in 1997.

- The population of Rhinoceros has increased from 600 in 1966 to 1730 in 1997.
- The population of elephants has increased from 18960 (approx.) in 1985 to 29450 (approx.) in 1998.

- The population of Asiatic Lion in India has increased from 177 in 1968 to 304 in 1995.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has no immediate future plan to approach WWF or any other foreign sources to implement the project for the protection of endangered wild animal species.

Statement

Number of Projects and Amount Allocated

Sl.No.	Name of the Project/Scheme	Amount allocated (Rs. in crore)		
		7th Plan	8th Plan	9th Plan
1.	Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries	18.85	49.50	85.00
2.	Eco development in and around protected areas	—	29.96	175.00
3.	Project Elephant	—	23.00	40.00
4.	Project Tiger	14.75	40.00	75.00
5.	Beneficiary Oriented Scheme for Tribal Development	—	3.50	12.00

Telecom Network

7513. SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecom Services (DTS) has been investing their surpluses in the telecom network in rural and urban areas for a quite long time;

(b) if so, the cumulative investment made till 1998-99;

(c) whether there has been a fall in the number of long distance calls causing loss of revenues since enforcement of the Telecommunication Tariff Order, 1999;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the loss of revenue noticed during each of the last three years;

(e) the present position with regard to the establishment of a Universal Service Fund;

(f) the number of village public telephones provided so far by private operators; and

(g) the steps proposed for achieving the aim of providing one telephone connection to every village in the targeted time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 62,395.54 Crores.

(c) and (d) The assumption made in TRAI's Tariff Order of 1999 that there will be increase in the volume of tariff to compensate the operator for loss of revenue due to reduction in long distance rate has not come true. As a result, it is estimated that the Department of Telecom Services may suffer a revenue loss of nearly Rs. 2000 crores in the year 1999-2000 (accounts yet to be closed) as compared to the original Budget Estimate.

(e) The issue of setting up of Universal Service Fund is under examination.

(f) So far, only twelve (12) villages in Madhya Pradesh have been provided with VPTs by M/s. Bharti Telecom Ltd.

(g) Department of Telecom Services is trying out New technologies such as WLL, C-DOT-TDMA/PMP etc. Target is to provide VPT in each uncovered village by March, 2002.

[*Translation*]

Waiting List for LPG Connections

7514. MOHD. SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the plan of the Government for clearing the waiting list for LPG connections;

(b) whether the reasons behind wide gap between demand and supply of LPG in Bihar is attributed to less number of LPG distributors there;

(c) if so, the time by which the Government propose to allocate sufficient number of LPG distributorship;

(d) whether the Government propose to take any action to appoint some fresh distributors in Sewan district of Bihar; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The Government have a plan to release around 1 crore LPG connections during the year 2000 to clear all waiting list registered with the distributors of Public Sector Oil Companies as on 1.12.1999.

(b) At present, the demand of LPG customers enrolled with Public Sector Oil Companies in the State of Bihar, is being met by and large in full.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) 5 LPG distributorships have been included in the Marketing Plan 1996-98 for district Siwan, Bihar at the following locations:

- (i) Ziradi
- (ii) Mairwa
- (iii) Raghunathpur
- (iv) Chainpur
- (v) Jamobazar

[*English*]

Nathpa Jhakri Power Project

7515. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Irregularities in award of contracts" appearing in 'Tribune' dated April 3, 2000;

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

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The press report pertains to the observations relating to the audit conducted by Special Audit Team of Comptroller & Auditor General of India (CAG) in January, 2000. The audit observations related to the payment of escalation charges to the Contractors by the Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation (NJPC), award of contracts for strengthening of colony road and a Guest House as well as discrepancies in the settlement of certain LTC claims of Vigilance Officer of the Corporation. Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation (NJPC) have furnished the requisite clarifications to the office of CAG.

As regards the discrepancies relating to settlement of LTC claims of Vigilance Officer of the Corporation, NJPC will take appropriate action on the completion of ongoing investigations in the matter.

(d) All the six units of 250 MW each of Nathpa Jhakri Hydro-electric Project (1500 MW) are likely to be commissioned by March, 2002.

[*Translation*]

Demand of Diesel

7516. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the demand of diesel for agriculture, transport and industrial sectors at present; and

(b) the share of indigenous sources in meeting the demand of diesel at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF

STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The total requirement of diesel in the country including for agriculture, transport and industrial sectors is met fully from indigenous production at present.

[English]

Telecom Technology

7517. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any suggestions in regard to merger of separate regulatory voices for telecom, broadcasting and information technology into a single united authority; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, a group has been constituted under the chairmanship of Finance Minister with one of the mandates to suggest the new legislation to replace Indian Telegraph Act, 1985 taking into account the convergence between Telecom, Computers, Television & Electronics. The group will examine all the aspects including regulation of services.

Desulphurised Petrol and Diesel

7518. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have introduced another Euro-II eco-friendly desulphurised petrol and diesel in the country;

(b) if so, the cost difference per litre on desulphurised petrol and diesel as compared to that of the conventional products;

(c) whether the introduction of desulphurised eco-friendly petrol and diesel have any impact on the life of vehicles;

(d) if so, the extent thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to promote use of CNG in automobiles; and

(f) if so, the details of the decisions taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. With effect from 1.4.2000, petrol and diesel with 0.05% max. sulphur content by weight have been introduced in National Capital Region (NCR) for all petrol engine vehicles and non-commercial private diesel driven vehicles complying Euro-II norms, respectively.

(b) The current retail selling price of low sulphur (0.05% max.) petrol and diesel in Delhi are higher by 13 paise per litre and by 52 paise per litre respectively as compared to regular petrol and diesel.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The lower sulphur in petrol will increase the life of emission control devices like catalytic converters as well as on-board diagnostic system and oxygen sensors etc., which are fitted on new generation cars. In case of diesel, the lower sulphur besides reducing the particulate emissions, will reduce the engine corrosive wear thus increasing the engine life.

(e) and (f) CNG supply facilities can be set up only in cities where pipeline supply of Natural gas is made available and techno-economic feasibility has been established. 56 CNG stations have been commissioned so far to make CNG available for motor vehicles in the cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Vadodara, Surat and Ankladeshwar.

Telecom Facilities

7519. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI R.S. PATIL:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the States where telephone is made available on demand;

(b) whether the Government have announced recently that telephones would be made available on demand throughout the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof with the position as on date, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Government has envisaged to make telephone available on demand throughout the country by the end of 9th five year plan *i.e.* by March 2002 alongwith contribution from private sector complimenting the efforts of the Government.

(c) State-wise details of waiting list as on 31.3.2000 and target fixed for 2000-2001 are given in the attached Statement. The target fixed is much higher than the waiting list in most of the Circles. It is proposed to wipe out the waiting list and make telephone available on demand by suitably fixing the target for 2001-2002. Private sector contribution is also expected in some of the States towards meeting part of the demand.

Statement

Sl.No.	Name of State	Waiting List as on 31.3.2000	Target for New Telephone Connection 2000-2001
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	377058	575000
2.	Assam	5475	55000
3.	Bihar	106196	280000
4.	Gujarat	232624	330000
5.	Haryana	73262	150000
6.	Himachal Pradesh	24708	60000
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	31882	50000
8.	Karnataka	332189	425000
9.	Kerala	647165	450000
10.	Madhya Pradesh	40534	150000
11.	Maharashtra	287277	840000
12.	North East	28023	50000
13.	Orissa	42527	100000
14.	Punjab	176732	250000

1	2	3	4
15.	Rajasthan	95 72	210000
16.	Tamil Nadu	615096	700000
17.	Uttar Pradesh	325048	490000
18.	West Bengal	159876	445000
19.	Delhi	81871	200000
Total:		3680715	5790000

Note: Gujarat state includes Dedar, Dlu, Daman & Nagar Haveli (U.T.).
Kerala state includes Lakshadweep (U.T.).
Maharashtra state includes Goa and MTNL Mumbai.
North - East telecom circle includes Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura state.
Punjab state includes Chandigarh (U.T.).
Tamil Nadu state includes Chennai and Pondicherry (U.T.).
West Bengal state includes Calcutta and Sikkim, Andaman Nicobar state.

[Translation]

Pollution by Dust and Smoke

7520. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any research studies have been undertaken to assess the damage done by pollution caused by dust and smoke;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the efforts being made to reduce pollution caused by these elements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Studies have been conducted to assess the damage done by pollution caused by dust on human beings, laboratory animals and plants. The broad conclusion is that dust and smoke pollution causes adverse impact on human health particularly affecting the respiratory system. It also affects the plant productivity and vitality.

(c) Several measures are being taken to reduce dust and smoke pollution. Air (Prevention and Control of

Pollution) Act, 1981 lays down dust and smoke levels in residential and industrial areas. Under this Act, administrative machinery like State Pollution Control Boards and Central Pollution Control Board have been set up. To meet air quality standards, measures like adoption of clean technologies, intensive afforestation measures in urban and deforested/desert lands, raising of green belts of identified plant species around factories, regular ambient air quality monitoring programmes in identified areas particularly at traffic intersections in Delhi, are being taken. Research studies are progressing to develop slurry-based transport system for fly ash transport in place of dry transport system. Directions are also being issued to industries like Thermal Power Plants under Section 5 of Environment Protection Act, 1986 for installation of Electrostatic Precipitators. To improve urban air quality, particularly the vehicular pollution, this Ministry in collaboration with Ministry of Surface Transport, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Ministry of Industries is working on upgradation of automobile technology, improvement of fuel quality, alternative methods of transport, improvement in traffic management, etc.

[English]

**Petrol Pumps at Pudukottai
in Tamil Nadu**

7521. SHRI THIRUNAVUKARASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol outlets functioning in Pudukottai District of Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether there is any proposal to set up new petrol outlets in the near future;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Presently, there are 28 retail outlet dealerships functioning in Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu.

To meet the increased demand, 5 more locations, viz., Ponnamaravathy, Puddukottai, Kottalpattinam, Karambakudi and Memisal in this district have been advertised by the Oil Companies for setting up retail outlet dealerships.

[Translation]

Shortage of Power in Uttar Pradesh

7522. SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action plan has been formulated by the Union Government to improve the power situation in Poorvanchal area of Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be implemented and the assistance being provided to the State for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Area-wise power supply position within the State is monitored by the State Government concerned. However, details of overall power supply position in the State of Uttar Pradesh during 1999-2000 and in the month of April, 2000 are as under:

	Energy (MU)		Peak Demand (MW)	
	1999-2000	April, 2000	1999-2000	April, 2000
Requirement	44525	3720	6580	6488
Availability	38800	3222	5058	5735
Shortage	5725	498	1522	753
%	12.9	13.4	23.1	11.6

Besides Uttar Pradesh's allocation of 2372 MW as share in central stations of Northern Region, the State has also been allocated 14% (126 MW) out of unallocated

quota in central stations in Northern Region and 6.8% (60 MW) out of unallocated quota in NTPC stations in Eastern Region which is surplus in power.

[English]

Regularisation of Employees

7523. SHRI ANANT GUDHE:
SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE:
SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newletter captioned "Ram Rajya in Sanchar Bhavan" appearing in the 'Financial Express' dated April 5, 2000;

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

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Minister of Communications had mentioned in a Press Conference held on 4.4.2000 about the terms and conditions of engagement for ED Employees in general, and also the demands made by Staff Unions about the grant of status of regular employees and pension to ED Agents. As aspects of Extra-Departmental System Providing postal services in the rural areas of the country were also discussed in the recent meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Communications. Issues regarding ED Agents involve basic principles relating to terms and conditions of employment under the Central Govt. and hence, the matter calls for examination indepth and in Consultation with nodal Departments/ Ministries of the Govt. of India. In this context, the efforts of the Department of Posts to modernise the services with the new Technology and generate more revenue through premier services and products specifically tailored for the commercial/business sector are also relevant.

Bench of Income-Tax Appellate Tribunal in Tamil Nadu

7524. DR. V. SAROJA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have set up any bench of the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal in Tamil Nadu;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to set up a bench of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal in the said State?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) 4 Benches of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal have been set up and already functioning at Chennai in Tamil Nadu.

Expansion of Telephone Exchanges

7525. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges where capacity has been expanded in Tamil Nadu during the last three years, district-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to enhance the capacity of the existing telephone exchanges in the State during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002;

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

(d) the funds allocated for the purpose for the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The number of the telephone exchanges where capacity has been expanded in Tamil Nadu during the last three years, district-wise, is given in the attached Statement.

(b) and (c) Plan to enhance the capacity of existing exchanges in the country are drawn on year to year basis. Same is being done for the year 2000-2001 including Tamil Nadu. 5,50,000 telephone lines are to be added in Tamil Nadu Telecom Circle and that for Chennai Telephones District 1,50,000 telephone lines during the year 2000-2001. 21 Existing exchanges in Tamil Nadu will be expanded based on the requirement.

(d) The proposed fund allocation for the addition of new telephone lines including enhancing the capacity of existing telephone exchanges in Tamil Nadu Telecom Circle during 2000-2001 is Rs. 1091.58 crores and that for Chennai Telephones District 320.34 crores.

Statement

Details of the telephone exchanges where capacity has been added in Tamil Nadu during the last three years

(a) Tamil Nadu Telecom Circle

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
1. Coimbatore	55	73	64
2. Cuddalore	22	43	24
3. Dharmapuri	43	41	62
4. Dindigul	29	27	29
5. Erode	34	52	44
6. Kancheepuram	23	19	13
7. Kanniyakumari	18	24	21
8. Karur	15	24	20
9. Madurai	33	30	35
10. Nagapattinam	22	26	34
11. Namakkal	35	35	33
12. Perambalur	15	10	15
13. Pondicherry	8	13	16
14. Pudukottai	18	23	15
15. Ramanathapuram	26	13	29
16. Salem	52	44	51
17. Sivaganga	17	16	18
18. Thanjavur	42	47	39
19. The Nilgiris	19	15	39
20. Theni	13	15	11
21. Tirunelveli	42	63	57
22. Tiruvannamalai	16	30	18
23. Tiruvarur	12	21	20
24. Trichy	25	35	49
25. Tuticorin	35	37	35
26. Vellore	44	40	32
27. Villupuram	27	41	28
28. Virughunagar	10	25	21
29. Tiruvellore	35	17	11
(b) Chennai Telephone District	21	32	68

[Translation]**Cess on Petroleum Products**

7526. SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:
SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether revenue is earned by levying taxes and cess on petroleum products;

(b) if so, the average annual amount earned during the last three years;

(c) whether there are any arrangements to incur expenditure in the petroleum sector by setting up a fund out of this amount; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The average annual amount of revenue during the last three years from 1997-98 to 1999-2000 is Rs. 24,777 crore (provisional).

(c) and (d) The tax/cess proceeds are the resources for financing the expenditure as approved by the Parliament. Financing of any sector from the budget is not necessarily linked to the revenue raised from that sector.

[English]**Supply of Gas by ONGC/GAIL to TEC**

7527. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ONGC/GAIL has committed to supply 1.5 MMCMD gas to the Tata Electric Companies for power generation;

(b) if so, whether the gas supplied to TEC by ONGC/GAIL is as per the commitment;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the quantum of gas supplied to TEC during the last three years and till date, year-wise;

(e) whether the Government of Maharashtra has urged to provide clean fuel and also to increase the allocation of gas to TEC; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) has a gas supply contract with Tata Electric Companies (TEC) for supply of maximum of 1.5 million metric standard cubic metre per day (MMSCMD of Natural gas, subject to the availability from the ONGC fields ex-Uran. During the years 1995-96 to 1997-98, GAIL has supplied full contracted quantity of 1.5 MMSCMD of gas to TEC. However, due to considerable fall in availability of gas ex-Uran to around 12 MMSCMD during 1998-99 and around 10.5-11.0 MMSCMD during 1999-2000, against the total allocation of around 15 MMSCMD, the gas supplies to all consumers ex-Uran including TEC had to be curtailed pro-rata. GAIL has supplied Natural gas to TEC at an average of 1.5 MMSCMD in 1997-98; 1.4 MMSCMD in 1998-99 and around 1 MMSCMD during 1999-2000.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Complaints against LPG Agencies in Kerala

7528. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of complaints received and registered against the LPG agencies in Kerala for various irregularities during the last three years;

(b) the action taken by the Government against such dealers; and

(c) the details of the LPG agencies suspended so far in Kerala due to the various irregularities during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The total number of established complaints against LPG distributors in Kerala for various irregularities during the last three years, are as under:

Years	No. of Complaints
1997-98	8
1998-99	20
1999-2000	5

(b) and (c) Action was taken against such distributors for the established malpractices/irregularity, depending upon its nature as per the Distributorship agreement in vogue. However, Public Sector Oil Companies suspended 5 LPG distributors during the last three years in the State of Kerala.

Oil Exploration

7529. SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have identified new areas for oil exploration during 1998-99 and 1999-2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether drilling operations in these areas have since commenced;

(d) if so, the details thereof with outcome in each case, State-wise; and

(e) the amount spent on exploration and drilling process separately during the above period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Exploration of hydrocarbons is an on-going process, consisting of seismic data acquisition, processing, interpretation, prospect identification and drilling. The broad details of the areas identified by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 along with status of drilling is given in the statement enclosed. In addition, a total of

12 new deep water blocks off East Coast and 2 new blocks in shallow offshore areas off West Coast were identified for offer in 1999 under first round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and their production

sharing contracts have been signed.

(e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Sl.No.	State/Coast	Basin	Locations	Locations-drilling commenced /completed	Outcome
1998-99					
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Krishna-Godavari	7	4	One well is under testing, two wells abandoned.
2.	Tamil Nadu	Cauvery	1	1	—
3.	Assam	Assam-Arakan fold belt-Assam	1	—	—
4.	-do-	Upper Assam	5	2	One well under production.
5.	Gujarat	Cambay	2	2	One is observation well and other well showed indication of hydrocarbon and is taken up for further assessment.
6.	West Coast	Mumbai offshore	1	1	One well abandoned (casing not lowered)
1999-2000					
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Krishna-Godavari	8	1	Well under testing.
2.	East Coast	East coast offshore	1	—	—
3.	Tamil Nadu	Cauvery	6	2	One well dry.
4.	Madhya Pradesh	Vindhyan	1	—	—
5.	Himachal Pradesh	Himalayan foothill	—	—	—
6.	Jammu & Kashmir	-do-	1	—	—
7.	Assam	Assam-Arakan fold belt-Assam	3	1	—
8.	-do-	Upper Assam	11	1	—
9.	Tripura	Assam-Arakan fold belt-Tripura	1	—	—
10.	Gujarat	Cambay	5	—	—
1.	West Coast	Mumbai offshore	6	3	One well oil bearing, other proved dry.
2.	-do-	Kutch offshore	3 ^e	—	—

Delay in Completion of Power Projects

7530. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH DULLO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether shortage of infrastructure facilities and fuel have threatened to closure of some power projects in the country;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to save such power projects from closure in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Telephone Exchanges in North Eastern States

7531. SHRI BHIM DAHAL:
SHRI MADHAB RAJBANGSHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received proposal for opening of new telephone exchanges in the North Eastern States including Sikkim during 2000-2001;

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

(c) the time by which these are likely to be set up;

(d) whether the Government propose to install Electronic Telephone Exchanges in Managaldol, Sipajhar, Tanglam Khampetia and Udaiguri regions of Assam;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the funds earmarked for the purpose; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) State-wise details are given below:

Sl.No.	Name of the State	No. of Telephone Exchanges Planned to be opened during 2000-2001
1.	Assam	50
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	7
3.	Manipur	6
4.	Meghalaya	9
5.	Mizoram	6
6.	Nagaland	6
7.	Tripura	7
8.	Sikkim	6

(c) These exchanges are likely to be set up by March, 2001.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) New exchanges are planned to be opened at Bhatapara, Dumnichowki, Chamuapara, Pathorighat, Hatigarh and Dimakushi.

(f) Funds of Rs. 1.8 crores have been earmarked for the purpose.

(g) Steps taken/proposed to be taken are as follows:

1. The equipment is under procurement.
2. Buildings are being arranged.
3. Transmission media has been planned and is under procurement.

Transmission and Distribution Losses

7532. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the SEBs are incurring heavy losses every year due to transmission, distribution and generation of power;

(b) if so, the details of transmission and distribution losses till-date in the country, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to achieve the target on reduction of such losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) As per

annual statement of accounts for the year 1997-98, 14 State Electricity Boards had a negative rate of Return (without subsidy). The major factors for the losses of SEBs *inter alia* are theft and pilferage, high T&D losses and unsustainable cross subsidy leading to large gap between cost of supply and revenue collection. In some States the efficiency of thermal plants is also low.

(b) A statement showing T&D losses for the years 1993-97 is attached.

(c) In order to reduce the transmission and distribution losses, the Central Electricity Authority has issued comprehensive guidelines in July 1991, which, *inter-alia* provide for the following:

- Upgradation of operating voltages;
- Reduction of length of LT lines;
- Location of transformers near load centres;
- Adoption of low capacity transformers near consumers premises;
- Installation of shunt capacitors;
- Improvement in construction and operation techniques;

— Systematic and methodological approach for planning and design of distribution system on a long term basis; and

— Conducting energy audit and providing a methodology for segregating technical and commercial losses.

Necessary amendments have been made in the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, to make the theft of electricity a cognizable offence.

Under the Accelerated Power Development Programme (APDP) it is proposed to provide funds to the State Governments for implementing specific projects for improving the sub-transmission and distribution system including installation of state-of-the-art electronic metering system. The modalities for financing projects to be implemented under the APDP Scheme as being finalised by the Planning Commission.

In the Conference of Power Ministers' which was held on 26.2.2000, the State/UT Governments have resolved to undertake energy auditing at all levels and to install meters for all consumers by December, 2001. With the adoption of these measures, it will be possible to substantially reduce losses arising due to power thefts.

Statement

*Percentage Transformation, Transmission & Distribution Losses
(Including Commercial Losses such as Pilferage etc.) in SEBs/EDs.*

Region	SEBs/EDs	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Northern Region	1. Haryana	25.00	30.80	32.39	32.77	33.04#
	2. Himachal Pradesh	18.31	18.21	16.09	18.02	19.20
	3. Jammu & Kashmir	45.69	48.74	47.52	48.27	47.48\$
	4. Punjab	19.37	16.70	18.49	19.10	17.90
	5. Rajasthan	25.00	24.78	29.27	26.28	26.46
	6. Uttar Pradesh	24.08	21.69	21.84	24.84	25.00
	7. Chandigarh	27.27	28.44	33.72	21.88	14.95
	8. DVB (Delhi)	31.79 [†]	34.56	48.57	49.08	46.86#

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Western Region	1. Gujarat	20.34	20.02	20.08	17.14	19.66
	2. Madhya Pradesh	20.26	19.61	17.84	19.24	19.08
	3. Maharashtra	16.22	16.33	16.95	16.55	17.73
	4. D&N Haveli	12.64	11.35	9.31	8.80	NA
	5. Goa	24.50	26.87	26.06	23.50	23.39
	6. Daman & Diu	22.34	16.30	12.80	8.15	11.27
Southern Region	1. Andhra Pradesh	19.91	17.95	19.34	33.19	31.76
	2. Karnataka	19.55	19.41	19.06	16.73	18.56
	3. Kerala	20.00	20.05	21.12	20.59	17.67
	4. Tamil Nadu	17.18	17.11	16.19	17.66	17.00
	5. Lakshadweep	16.99	17.84	17.23	15.11	15.83
	6. Pondicherry	15.80	15.00	16.54	17.38	13.79
Eastern Region	1. Bihar	20.35	19.76	15.91	25.31	25.41
	2. Orissa (Gridco)	22.43	23.03	24.17	50.15	NA
	3. Sikkim	22.60	21.22	16.47	29.24	20.13
	4. West Bengal	20.82	21.51	19.26	18.01	20.34
	5. A&N Islands	23.71	22.38	19.25	19.15	20.51
North-Eastern Region	1. Assam	22.44	24.18	26.91	25.97	30.05
	2. Manipur	23.92	25.30	24.85	22.95	21.50\$
	3. Meghalaya	18.03	18.47	12.55	19.75	17.93
	4. Nagaland	33.45	36.12	35.17	26.81	29.50\$
	5. Tripura	30.53	31.96	30.86	30.11	29.75
	6. Arunachal Pradesh	42.04	45.30	37.12	32.62	30.99\$
	7. Mizoram	31.89	29.76	25.18	34.35	47.00\$
	All India Utilities	21.41	21.13	22.27	24.53	24.44

Source: DMLF Division, CEA. (General Review)

* Data is tentative as reported by SEBs/EDs.

Computed Figures.

\$ As reported in the Annual Plan Resources Paper submitted to Planning Commission.

NA Information not yet furnished by the SEB/ED

Economy Measures in PSUs

7533. SHRI AKBOR ALI KHANDOKER: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had issued instructions to all the Public Sector Undertakings under its control to effect economy in their operations;

(b) if so, the details of achievements made by the Public Sector Undertakings during the last two years;

(c) whether the Government are satisfied with the quantum of saving made by several major oil sector undertakings; and

(d) if not, the further steps taken to issue fresh guidelines/instructions to those PSUs stressing the need for more savings in non-plan expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The net savings achieved during the period from October, 1997 to September, 1999 have been Rs. 276.33 crores.

(c) and (d) The process of Cost Control measures to effect economy in operations of Public Sector

Undertakings is a continuous one. As a result of these measures, the savings have increased. As the Oil Public Sector Undertakings are looking for new opportunities for business developments after the opening up of the oil sector, the expenditure has increased on exploring new opportunities, enhancing existing opportunities and for creation of infrastructure and new facilities in order to increase the market share. The Government have, however, again advised all Public Sector Undertakings to maximise savings in order to be cost-competitive.

Demand and Production of Crude Oil and Natural Gas

7534. SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of demands and production of crude oil and Natural gas during the Ninth Plan period;

(b) whether targets have been achieved during the first three years of the Ninth Plan period; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and steps taken by the Government to achieve the target during the remaining period of the Ninth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The demand, target and production of crude oil and Natural Gas during the first three years of Ninth Five Year Plan are as below:

Year	Crude Oil (Million Metric Tonnes)			Natural Gas		
	Demand	Target**	Production	Production (Billion Cubic Metres)	Targets [⊙]	Allocation MMSCMD***
1997-98	65.166	34.01	33.859	26.401	—	93.68
1998-99	65.167	34.72	32.723	27.428	—	97.81
1999-00*	69.031	33.04	31.977 (Provisional)	28.434 (Provisional)	—	103.80

*Provisional; for Apr.—Jan. Only

**Include MOU Targets in respect of ONGC and OIL

***Million Standard Cubic Metres per day.

⊙Targets for production of Natural gas are not being fixed.

(c) Targets of production of crude oil could not be fully achieved due to the following reasons:—

- (i) The major oil fields including Bombay High, have entered the Natural declining phase with age.
- (ii) No significant or major oil field has been found for the last several years.
- (iii) Continued environment problems in ERBC and its cascading effect has resulted in less base potential due to subdued drilling and work over activities.
- (iv) Erratic power supply from State Electricity Board in WRBC (Gujarat) and ERBC (Assam) affects the artificial lift systems.

Steps taken to increase production of crude oil include the following:—

- (i) Optimizing production from existing fields through better reservoir management, 3-D seismic surveys, infill drilling, pressure maintenance, installation/optimisation of artificial lift system and use of advanced and cost effective technologies and improvement in recovery factor.
- (ii) Faster development of newly discovered oilfields.
- (iii) Finding new hydrocarbon reserves through intensified exploration activities such as:
 - Exploration at greater depths in existing fields.
 - Extending exploration activities to deep waters and frontier areas.
 - Increased private participation in exploration activities through implementation of New Exploration Licensing Policy.

PCO/STD/ISD Facility

7535. SHRI BABUBHAI K. KATARA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the villages of Jhalod and Dahod districts of Gujarat are having STD/ISD/PCOs facility at present;

(b) if so, the details of the villages in said districts where said facility has not been provided;

(c) the time by which the said facility is proposed to be provided in the remaining villages of said districts;

(d) the funds likely to be incurred thereon;

(e) whether the Government have received any representations in this regard;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. In Dahod district villages covered by 26 exchanges out of 30 exchanges are having STD/ISD/PCOs facility. Jhalod Taluka has 3 exchanges and villages covered by these 3 exchanges are also having STD/ISD/PCOs facility.

(b) In Dahod district out of 1078 villages, 562 villages and in Jhalod Taluka out of 151 villages, 62 villages have not been provided with telephone facility.

(c) The remaining villages are to be provided with VPTs progressively. The entire work will be completed by March, 2002.

(d) The funds required depend on the technology deployed at a given location and is determined after detailed survey.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) and (g) Does not arise.

Harassment of Pensioners

7536. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether pensioners are being harassed in the Jasidih Post Office, District B. Deoghar, Bihar by not releasing their pension's arrears and also not maintaining mandatory entries in their pass book;

(b) if so, the details of complaints received particularly of the year 1997; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken against those found guilty in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Mangalore Power Project in Karnataka

7537. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the China Light and Power Co. for the Mangalore Power Project is being set up for power generation on the west coast of Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details of the collaboration arrangements made therein;

(c) whether fresh approval from the Foreign Investment Promotion Board is required; and

(d) if so, the time by which the work on the project is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The 1013.2 MW Mangalore Power Project is proposed to be developed by Mangalore Power Company (MPC). With the approval of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) and the Cabinet Committee on Foreign Investment, foreign collaboration approval was issued by the Government of India, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DoIP&P) on 11.5.1993 to M/s Cogentrix Energy Inc., USA in regard to their said power project. M/s. Cogentrix Energy Inc., have since transferred their interests in the MPC and the project to their equity partners, M/s. China Light and Power Company, Mauritius Limited on 11.2.2000. Accordingly, approval has been given *vide* amendment letter dated 5.4.2000 of the DoIP&P, for 100% foreign equity participation amounting to Rs. 157,677,800/- in the paid up capital of the company to be subscribed as under:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (i) M/s. China Light & Power Company Mauritius Limited | 1,576,777 shares of Rs. 100/- each. |
| (ii) Malconna Company Limited | 1 share of Rs. 100/- each. |

Recently, M/s. CLP Power International have proposed to implement the project with M/s. Tatas, who have agreed to be one of the partners in the company along with M/s. CLP Power International for implementing the Mangalore Power Project. The Government of Karnataka has yet to convey their approval to the Government of India for the proposal of M/s. CLP Power International to implement the Mangalore Power Project with M/s. Tatas as their partners.

(d) Construction work on the project could start only after all the pending inputs/clearances are tied up and financial closure is achieved.

Tax Collected by MTNL

7538. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that crores of rupees collected from telephone subscribers by MTNL as Sales Tax have not deposited with the Government; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to recover the same and the action taken against MTNL officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, No amount is collected from Telephone subscribers by MTNL as Sales Tax.

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

National Telecom Policy

7539. SHRI SAHIB SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the National Telecom Policy alongwith its physical and financial components;

(b) the number of Telecom Circles in the country at present;

(c) whether the cellular telephone service has been introduced;

(d) if so, the total number of cellular customers in each of the Telecom Circles in the country;

(e) whether Department of Telecommunications has any proposal to start its own cellular mobile service in all the Telecom Circles; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The salient features of New Telecom Policy, 1999 *inter-alia*, are:

- Provision of affordable and effective communications.
- Creation of modern telecom infrastructure taking into account the convergence of IT, media, telecom and consumer electronics.

- Convert telecom sector into competitive environment.
- Provision of universal service to all uncovered areas including the rural areas.
- Provision of high level service capable of meeting the needs of country's economy.
- Encourage development of telecommunications facilities in remote, hilly and tribal areas of the country.
- Achieve a tele-density of 7 by 2005 and 15 by 2010.
- Increase rural tele-density from the current level of 0.4 to 4 by 2010.
- Provide telecommunication facilities to all villages by 2002.
- Internet access to be provided to all District Headquarters by 2000. Reliable media to all exchanges by 2002. NTP' 99 also envisages shifting from fixed license fee regime to revenue sharing for different services like Cellular Mobile, Basic & Radio Paging etc.

Statement

Number of Cellular Mobile Telephone Service Subscribers in the country, Licensed Service Area-wise

(As furnished by COAI)

Sl.No.	Licensed service area (Metro City/ Telecom Circles)	No. of subscribers (March '2000)
1.	Delhi	3,32,330
2.	Mumbai	3,19,309
3.	Calcutta	90,036
4.	Chennai	54,256
5.	Maharashtra	1,15,066
6.	Gujarat	1,46,175
7.	Andhra Pradesh	1,05,469
8.	Karnataka	1,27,967
9.	Tamil Nadu	90,956
10.	Kerala	1,06,560
11.	Punjab	94,403
12.	Haryana	25,047
13.	UP-Weat	55,950
14.	UP-East	1,13,587
15.	Rajasthan	20,026
16.	Madhya Pradesh	40,544
17.	West Bengal	3,978
18.	Himachal Pradesh	5,048
19.	Bihar	21,901
20.	Orissa	9,139
21.	Assam	5,823
22.	North East	722

(b) The number of Telecom circles in the country

20

Metro Telecom Districts

4 (MTNL Delhi, MTNL, Mumbai, Chennai Telephones & Calcutta Telephones)

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per available information, the total number of Cellular Customers in each of the Telecom Circles in the country is given in the enclosed Statement.

(e) and (f) Department of Telecom Services (DTS) is initially introducing Cellular Services in a few selected circles of four States as a Pilot Project. The case for provisioning Cellular Mobile Service in other parts of the country is also under process.

Metros: 7,95,931
Circles: 10,88,380
All India Total: 18,84,311

Waiting List for LPG Connections in AP

7540. SHRI KRISHNAMRAJU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons on the waiting list for LPG connections in Andhra Pradesh, at present district-wise;

(b) the strategy adopted by the Government to clear the backlog;

(c) the number of LPG agencies functioning in the State at present, district-wise and quota of LPG connections with each one of them; and

(d) the time by which the Government propose to provide LPG connections to all the waitlisted persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The total number of persons on the waiting list registered with the LPG distributors of the Public Sector Oil Companies in the State of Andhra Pradesh as on 1.1.2000, was about 8.87 lakhs.

(b) Whenever LPG backlog develops, PSU Oil Companies take various measures including maximising imports, operating the bottling plants on extended hours/ Sundays and holidays, etc., to meet the demand in the affected markets.

(c) The total number of LPG distributors operating in the State of Andhra Pradesh at present are 531. The distributor-wise quota of LPG connections is not fixed by the Oil Companies.

(d) New LPG connections are released in a phased manner throughout the country depending on the LPG availability, waiting list, slack available with the distributors and their viability. However, the Government has a plan to release around 1 crore LPG connections during the year 2000 to clear all waiting list registered with the LPG distributors of Public Sector Oil Companies as on 1.12.1999.

LPG through Pipeline

7541. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of States/Union Territories where the scheme of supplying LPG through pipeline has since been started to domestic consumers;

(b) whether the Government have assessed the performance of this scheme;

(c) if so, whether any encouraging results have been noticed in this way;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to cover more States and domestic consumers under this scheme;

(e) if so, the target fixed for the next three years;

(f) whether any leakage accident was reported since its inception; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (g) At present Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies are not implementing any such scheme.

Increasing of Fleet Strength by SCI

7542. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) has drawn up a plan to increase its fleet strength;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the new tankers/vessels are likely to be available to SCI; and

(d) the steps taken to bid for the contracts for carrying the import of LNG that are to be made by the Petronet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The SCI has proposed to acquire 21 vessels aggregating 16.85 lakh DWT during the remaining period of 9th Plan period.

(c) It is estimated that these vessels would be available to SCI between 2001-2004 in a phased manner.

(d) Petronet LNG Limited had invited applications globally for pre-qualification of shipowners and operators for transportation of LNG. However, none of the Indian shipping companies appeared to be satisfying the conditions stipulated therein. SCI in consortium with MOL and NYKK Line have submitted the pre-qualification bid to Petronet LNG.

Diversion of Forest Land

7543. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some proposals for diversion of forests land for use in public interest are pending for approval with the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State & Union Territory-wise;

(c) whether decision on these proposals has since been taken;

(d) if so, the details thereof, proposal-wise; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. 18 proposals for diversion of forest land for use in public interest, which have been received during the last 3 years i.e. 1997, 1998 & 1999, are pending with the Central Government for decision/processing for forest clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The details of these 18 proposals is given in the enclosed Statement. This statement does not include proposals that are not in general public interest including proposals for mining and the proposals that are pending for want of additional information that has been sought from the respective State Governments/Union Territories.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name	State	Status
1	2	3	4
1.	Atain Duhangan HEP, Kullu	Himachal Pradesh	Site Inspection Report from Regional Office is awaited.
2.	Laying of 66 KV transmission line in Kinnaur distt.	Himachal Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
3.	132 KVT/line Rewa-Sidhi	Madhya Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
4.	BORL oil pipeline Jhabua-Vidisha	Madhya Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
5.	Rahbeda dam by MPEB	Madhya Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
6.	Const. of Power Plant, Chandrapur	Maharashtra	Under submission for decision.
7.	Malsej ghat pumped storage scheme in Thane	Maharashtra	Under submission for decision.
8.	Amravati-Narkhed BG line	Maharashtra	Under submission for decision.
9.	Panvel-Karjat Railway line	Maharashtra	Under submission for decision.
10.	233 KV Etappali-Dhamregad line	Maharashtra	Under process.
11.	Construction of Jhansinagar lift irrigation scheme in Bhandara	Maharashtra	Additional information received from State Government and under process.

1	2	3	4
12.	Ukai left bank canal	Gujarat	Under submission for decision.
13.	Const. of Nimmavagu Project, Khammam	Andhra Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
14.	220 KV line from IB Thermal-Budhipadar, Sambalpur	Orissa	Under process. To be discussed in next SAG meeting.
15.	Siyatigad-Ram Mandir Chakbora Road	Uttar Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
16.	Kalsi-Kahanahra Road	Uttar Pradesh	Under process. To be discussed in next SAG meeting.
17.	Qwasi Damta Road	Uttar Pradesh	Under submission for decision.
18.	Tulvai Hydro Electric Project	Mizoram	Under submission for decision.

[Translation]

**LPG Agencies to Unemployed Youth,
SCs/STs in Bihar**

7544. SHRIMATI SUSHILA SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies and petrol/diesel retail outlets allotted to the educated unemployed persons and the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes during the last three years in Bihar;

(b) the number of distributorships and the names of the districts in which it is proposed to be allotted in the current year;

(c) whether the Government propose to open LPG gas agency in Darbhanga, Madhubani, Sitamarhi, Samastipur, Benipur, Biraui, Ghanshyampur and Baheri;

(d) if so, the time by which LPG agencies are likely to be opened; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) During the last three years 16 retail outlet dealerships and 13 LPG distributorships were allotted under SC/ST category in Bihar. As per the existing policy, there is no

separate reservation for unemployed persons and other backward classes.

(b) to (e) As per the existing policy, LPG distributorships are set up at the locations meeting Oil Industry's viability norms. Accordingly, 105 LPG distributorships have been included in the Marketing Plan 1996-98 for Bihar. It generally takes 6-12 months for commissioning of dealerships/distributorships from the date of interview.

At present, there is no proposal pending for setting up LPG distributorships in Benipur, Biraui, Ghanshyampur and Baheri. Proposals for 3 LPG distributorships in district Darbhanga, 5 in district Madhubani, 6 in district Sitamarhi and 4 in district Samastipur are pending for selection/commissioning.

Work on National Highways in Bihar

7545. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of works undertaken on all the National Highways in Bihar;

(b) the amount allocated for carrying out these works;

(c) whether the Government propose to increase the existing allocation to expedite completion of these works; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Several works for development and maintenance of National Highways in Bihar are presently in progress. A list of developmental works costing more than Rs. 5 crores presently in progress is enclosed as Statement.

(b) The amount allocated for development and maintenance during the previous three financial years are as follows

Financial Year	Development works (Rs. in crores)	Maintenance works (Rs. in crores)
1999-2000	118.09	119.08
1998-1999	81.05	33.37
1997-1998	63.42	34.10

(c) and (d) It will depend upon the availability of funds and the pace of progress.

Statement

List of works costing more than Rs. 5.00 crores

Sl.No.	Name of Work	Sanctioned Cost (Rs. in Crores)	Executing Agency
1.	Widening to Four-Lane from Barwadda (km 398.75) to Barakar (km 441.4) of NH-2	127.00	NHAI
2.	Four-Laning of km 410.00 to km 419.00 and km 470.00 to km 476.150 of Purnia-Gayakota section of NH-31 in the State of Bihar under North-South, East-West Corridor	62.98	NHAI
3.	Construction of Road Over Bridge (ROB) and its approaches in replacement of level crossing No. 70-A/Spl. class at km 530/16-17 on main line between Delhi Howrah at Didarganj in km 196 of NH-30 near Patna	14.7726	Railway

[English]

Fraud in Recurring Deposit Scheme

7546. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have detected any fraud in recurring deposits schemes of Bhitwandi post office of Thane district in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir. There is no Post Office by name Bhitwandi in Thane District of Maharashtra. However, there is an office by the name of Bhitwandi Post Office in Thane District. There

has been no fraud detected in Recurring Deposits schemes in this office.

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

(c) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Marine and Nautical Engineering Colleges

7547. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Marine and Nautical Engineering Colleges and training institutes functioning in the country;

(b) the details of such colleges/institutes located in Maharashtra both private and Government, location-wise;

(c) the criteria and eligibility for admission in both type of colleges/institutes;

(d) whether priority is being given to the local candidates seeking admission in those colleges/institutes;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) the specific provision for local candidates to get the admission formulated by the Government;

(g) whether sufficient staff (both technical and non-technical) is available in the Government colleges;

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

(i) the steps being taken to provide sufficient staff (both technical and non-technical) in these colleges/institutes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) There are four Government-run maritime training institutes and Eighty five Government approved private training institutes imparting Nautical and Engineering training.

(b) Details of colleges/institutes located in Maharashtra both private and Government, location-wise are given in the attached Statement.

(c) Criteria/eligibility depends upon the requirement of different types of courses relating to nautical and engineering streams being run by Government/private institutes.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. The selection for degree courses is done on the basis of all India merit of Joint Entrance Examination conducted by Indian Institute of Technology (I.I.T.) for officers' courses by Government institute. The selection for pre-sea deck and engineering cadet course is done through sponsorship by shipping companies. The private institutes follow their own selection process in line with the eligibility requirement as stipulated by the Directorate General of Shipping and requirement of the Shipping Companies.

(f) No specific provision for local candidates to get admission has been made. Admission in the training institutes depends upon the suitability of candidates, required educational qualification, etc. and does not depend upon the specific area.

(g) and (h) Yes, Sir. From the details given below it may be seen that any shortage of staff at any given point of time is met by the staff provided by the Mercantile Marine Education & Research Trust (MMERT):

	Posts sanctioned	Posts filled through Government	Posts filled through Mercantile Marine Education & Research Trust (MMERT)
Technical	105	51	54
Non-Technical	189	179	10

(i) Does not arise.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of Institute	Location
1	2	3
Government-Run Institutes		
1.	Lal Bahadur Shastri College of Advanced Maritime Studies & Research	Mumbai
2.	Marine Engineering and Research Institute	Mumbai
3.	Training Ship Chanakya	Navi Mumbai

1	2	3
<i>Private Institutes</i>		
1.	T.S. Raheman	Mumbai
2.	T.S. Jawahar	Mumbai
3.	Maritime Training Institute	Mumbai
4.	Marine Medical Academy	Mumbai
5.	St. Xaviers Technical Institute	Mumbai
6.	MBPT-FOSMA Seafarers Training Centre	Mumbai
7.	The Institute of Marine Engineers	Mumbai
8.	Vankri Marine Academy	Mumbai
9.	B.P. Marine Academy	Navi Mumbai
10.	Wallem Shipmanagement Ltd.	Mumbai
11.	Indian Maritime Training Centre	Mumbai
12.	International Institute of Maritime Studies	Mumbai
13.	Bombay Marine Academy	Mumbai
14.	M/s. Tolani Maritime Institute	Pune
15.	Ace Maritime Institute	Mumbai
16.	Don Bosco Normar Marine Academy	Mumbai
17.	Dr. P.C. Ahluwalia	Mumbai
18.	School of Synergic Studies	Mumbai
19.	Anglo-Eastern Ship Management Ltd.	Mumbai
20.	Ocean Education & Research Centre Pvt. Ltd.	Mumbai
21.	SCMS Maritime Training Institute	Mumbai
22.	Marine Medical Clinic	Mumbai
23.	Varun Shipping Co. Ltd.	Mumbai
24.	United Maritime Academy	Navi Mumbai
25.	M/s. Zephyr Shipping Pvt. Ltd.	Mumbai
26.	M/s. Naval Maritime Academy	Mumbai
27.	Mumbai Maritime Training Institute	Mumbai
28.	National Marine Academy	Mumbai
29.	Pacific Ship Management	Mumbai
30.	Sagargyan Academy	Navi Mumbai
31.	Kushte Nursing Home	Pune

1	2	3
32.	Aditya Training & Maritime Services	Mumbai
33.	Maritime Association of Shipowners' Shipmanagers & Agents (MASSA)	Mumbai
34.	Pelican Shipping Co.	Mumbai
35.	Chowgule Steamships Ltd.	Mumbai
36.	Seafarers Maritime Institute	Mumbai
37.	M/s. Yak Maritime Academy	Navi Mumbai
38.	M/s. Mariner's Academy	Mumbai
39.	Suraksha Marine	Mumbai
40.	Ocean Prima Marine Institute	Mumbai
41.	Pelican Marine Academy	Navi Mumbai
42.	Season Marine Services	Mumbai

Ninth Plan Outlay

7548. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI:
Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ninth Plan Outlay for the ministry has been finalised;

(b) if so, the details thereof with Sector-wise outlay decided;

(c) whether the allocation of the Ninth Plan is better when compared to previous five year plans;

(d) whether his ministry has prepared some framework asking corporate boards to enter into joint ventures on the port trust to port trust basis; and

(e) if so, the details thereof with special reference to Bombay Port Trust?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details are as under:

	(Rs. in crores)
(I) Gross Budgetary support	12069.82
(i) Net Budgetary support	7193.03
(ii) External Aid	4876.79
(II) Internal & Extra Budgetary Resources	13195.00
Total Outlay (I+II)	25264.82

The Sector-wise break-up is given in the Statement attached.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) It has been decided to first corporatise new Port at Ennore followed by Jawaharlal Nehru Port and Haldia Port. For enabling the Major Port Trust to form joint ventures, a Bill to amend the Major Port Trust Act, 1963 has been introduced in the Parliament.

Statement**Ministry of Surface Transport
9th Plan (1997-2002) Outlay**

(Rs. in crores)

Sl.No.	Sector	Budgetary Resources			IEBRs I.Rs.	ICL/ECB	Ore	Total
		NBS	EA	GBS				
1.	Roads	5285.23	3576.79	8862.02	—	—	—	8862.02
2.	Road Transport	60.00	—	60.00	—	—	—	60.00
3.	IWT	408.00	—	408.00	—	—	—	408.00
4.	Shipping	145.00	100.00	245.00	2033.00	3634.00	—	5912.00
	(a) SCI	85.00	—	85.00	2033.00	3634.00	—	5752.00
	(b) Sailing Vessels	0.05	—	0.05	—	—	—	0.05
	(c) DGS	59.95	100.00	159.95	—	—	—	159.95
5.	Shipping	209.80	—	209.80	—	—	—	209.80
	(a) HSL	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	(b) CSL	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	(c) HDPE	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	(d) Central Sector	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6.	(a) Ports	700.00	1200.00	1900.00	5934.00	1529.00	65.00	9428.00
	(b) Others	262.00	—	262.00	—	—	—	262.00
7.	Light houses	123.00	—	123.00	—	—	—	123.00
Grand Total		7193.03	4876.79	12069.82	7967.00	5163.00	65.00	25264.82

*[Translation]***Installation of Computers at
Fault Control Centres**

7549. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether computers have been installed by MTNL at various fault control centres in Delhi to get immediate information about faults;

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

(c) whether the computers have been installed at the fault control centres functioning in Sena Bhavan and Rajpath Telephone exchanges;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Computer terminals have been provided at section fault controls as per following details:

Kidwai Bhavan	11
Janpath	5
Rajpath	6
Jor Bagh	6
CGO Complex	3
Sena Bhavan	As per para (c)

(c) and (d) In Sena Bhavan area, all the SDOs have been provided with computer terminals and they are directly controlling the faults, being a VIP area. In case of Rajpath, computers have been provided at the fault control centres.

(e) Question does not arise in view of (c) and (d) above.

[English]

Construction of Hospital Under Dehra-Panipat Line

7550. SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY:
Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times the Bhakra Beas Management Board team visited Nalagarh in Himachal Pradesh to inquire into the construction of Government hospital under the 400 KV Dehra-Panipat line;

(b) the status report submitted each time including the status of construction and the steps taken to stop the ongoing construction after the first visit; and

(c) the details of the instructions issued to the Central Electricity Authority to review the position with a view to ascertain the demolition of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) The team of Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) is reported to have visited District Nalagarh in Himachal

Pradesh four times for inspection of 400 KV Dehra-Panipat line where the construction activities in respect of Government hospital building were going on near the above transmission line. The team, have reported each time that the said building was not being constructed directly under the above transmission line but was approximately 35 feet horizontally away from the line and thus maintaining the electrical clearance as per the provisions of Indian Electricity Rules 1956, as amended from time to time. As no violation of the rules was observed during the four inspection visits of BBMB, there was no occasion for the team to recommend stoppage of construction activities of the hospital building.

(c) In view of the concerns expressed, Central Electricity Authority has been advised to review the position in the light of international norms.

Microwave Link

7551. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADODA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of satellite and microwave link based telephones functioning in the country particularly in Maharashtra, State-wise;

(b) the details of the plan for expanding the telephone network in the country through microwaves link; and

(c) the funds allocated for the purpose during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Information is enclosed herewith in the attached Statement.

(b) About 10,000 route Km of MW links are planned during the year 2000-2001.

(c) The funds allocated for Microwave links are:

During 1999-2000	Rs. 246 crores
During 2000-2001	Rs. 175 crores

Statement

The State-wise Satellite/Microwave Links based telephones functioning in the Country as on 31.3.2000

Sl. No.	State	Satellite based Telephones			Radio Based Telephones				
		In MAR SAT	LDST	Fly away	Total	MARR	WLL	TDMA/PMP	Total
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	—	—	1	1	148	—	—	148
2.	Andhra Pradesh	—	—	1	1	12399	—	—	12399
3.	Assam	—	—	1	1	9293	—	—	9293
4.	Bihar	—	—	1	1	14281	—	—	14281
5.	Gujarat	—	—	1	1	7413	—	—	7413
6.	Haryana	—	—	1	1	3634	—	—	3634
7.	Himachal Pradesh	—	—	1	1	2842	—	8	2860
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	14	7	1	22	2901	—	—	2901
9.	Karnataka	1	—	1	2	14692	—	—	14692
10.	Kerala+Lakshadweep	—	—	1	1	32	—	—	32
11.	Madhya Pradesh	—	3	1	4	25553	—	22	25575
12.	Maharashtra	—	1	1	2	18848	—	—	18848
13.	North East	—	—	1	1	3622	—	—	3622
14.	Orissa	—	—	1	1	11542	—	5	11547
15.	Punjab	—	—	1	1	6195	—	—	6195
16.	Rajasthan	—	4	1	5	17703	—	—	17703
17.	Tamil Nadu	—	—	1	1	7229	—	—	7229
18.	Uttar Pradesh	—	4	1	5	41103	75	—	41178
19.	West Bengal+Sikkim	—	—	1	1	12185	—	—	12185
20.	Delhi	—	—	1	1	0	—	—	0
Total:		15	19	20	54	211313	75	35	211423

Telephone Advisory Committee

7552. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telephone Advisory Committee has been constituted in Bathinda, Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which it is likely to be constituted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Telephone Advisory Committee for Bathinda has already been constituted in June, 1998 for a period

of two years upto 30.6.2000. At present there are thirty-four members in the TAC besides Shri Bhan Singh Bhaura, Hon'ble Member of Parliament who represents the Member of Parliament category.

(c) Does not arise.

Ship Channel In Cochin Port

7553. SHRI GEORGE EDEN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for deepening of Ship-channel for the entry of big ships in the Cochin Port;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is a proposal to deepen the channel from the present depth of 12.8 metres to 13.8 metres during the 9th Plan Period for which a provision of Rs. 50.00 crores has been made in the 9th Plan

outlay. An outlay of Rs. 5.00 crores has been provided in the Annual Plan 2000-2001 for the proposal.

(c) Does not arise.

Import of Petroleum Products

7554. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of petroleum products imported in the last three years, year-wise; and

(b) the names of the companies which imported these items alongwith its value thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Import of controlled products are made by Indian Oil Corporation as canalising agency, keeping the demand and supply position as also the economics of import in view. Import and export of decontrolled products is made on market considerations by public sector and private companies. The quantity and value of the petroleum products imported by Public Sector Undertakings during the last three years are as under:

Gross Imports*

(Qty: 000' Tonnes)
(Value: Rs. Crores)

Sl.No.	Item	1997-98		1998-1999*		1999-2000 (Apr.-Feb.)**	
		Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
1.	LPG	1087	902.57	1525	1130.35	1311	1457.97
2.	ATF	55	34.23	000	0.00	1	3.60
3.	SKO	3812	2528.77	5823	3244.11	4987	4253.92
4.	HSD	14075	8586.97	10485	4959.80	4958	3499.62
5.	Furnace Oil	141	55.31	514	182.85	453	289.82
6.	Lubes	25	64.05	11	35.68	60	92.40
	Others	335	260.02	422	283.73	218	222.06
	Total:	19530	12431.92	18780	9836.52	11988	9819.39

*Does not include private imports.

**Provisional.

Environment Control

7555. SHRI JITENDRA PRASADA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme while dealing with problem of environment control in India has felt that Indian society needs stimulates like the Green Peace Movement in Europe for catalysing environmental concerns improving the early warning mechanisms, addressing the link between the environment and urbanisation and strengthening monitoring and assessment capabilities; and

(b) whether the Executive Director of UNEP also identified major issues for the country land degradation, bio-diversity, air pollution, fresh water resources and hazardous waste management?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The Government have not received any suggestion, through appropriate channel, from the Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in this regard.

Reserves of Coal Bed Methane Gas

7556. SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gas called as "Coal Bed Methane" (CBM) proven reservation are placed at about 850 billion cubic metres which is about 40 percent more than the proven reserves of Natural gas (petro);

(b) if so, whether foreign companies propose to make a major investment to develop CBM; and

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The policy approved by Government for exploration and exploitation of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) provides for global competitive bidding in which Indian as well as foreign companies can bid. The preparation for invitation of bids in accordance with CBM policy has not been completed.

The preliminary studies and R&D activities have indicated availability of CBM reserves in the States of

West Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The CBM reserve base can be known only after exploration and the commercial viability of such reserves can be established thereafter.

Apart from this, the Government has also approved the exploration and exploitation of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) by M/s. Great Eastern Energy Corporation Ltd. in South Raniganj of West Bengal against a FIPB approval. As per the FIPB approval foreign investment of about US \$ 4 million was envisaged in this block.

Global Tender for Cellular Telephones by MTNL

7557. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Companies/Corporations who filed their tenders in response to MTNP's Global Tender for Cellular Telephones;

(b) the total asset and experience of the companies in the field of cellular telephone connections and their quoted price for execution of the job;

(c) whether the tender was awarded to the most suitable company by MTNL; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The following vendors submitted their tenders in response to MTNL's Global Tender enquiry for Turnkey Project of GSM Cellular Mobile Service:

1. M/s. Ericsson Radio System, AB
2. M/s. Nokia Networks OY
3. M/s. Siemens A.G. on behalf of consortium comprising of M/s. Siemens A.G., M/s. Siemens Public Communication Networks Ltd. (SPCNL) and M/s. ITALTEL.
4. M/s. Lucent Technologies World Services Inc., on behalf of consortium comprising of M/s. Lucent Technologies World Services Inc. and M/s. Tata Lucent Technologies Ltd.
5. M/s. ITI Ltd. on behalf of consortium comprising of M/s. ITI Ltd. and M/s. Lucent Technologies World Services Inc.

6. M/s. Motorola Inc. on behalf of consortium comprising of M/s. Motorola Inc., M/s. TCIL and M/s. Motorola India Ltd.

8. M/s. Alcatel CIT, on behalf of consortium comprising of M/s. Alcatel CIT, M/s. Alcatel Networks Systems India (ANSI).

7. M/s. Nortel Networks Pvt. Ltd.

(b) The details are given as under:

Sl. No.	Name of the Bidder	Experience (in lines)	Assets	ELI (Delhi) (in Rs.)	ELI (Mumbai) (in Rs.)
1.	M/s. ITI	105.8 lacs GSM	Rs. 1117.42 crores (ITI) (1998-99) US \$ 267020 lacs (Lucent 1998)	3666	3709
2.	M/s. Lucent Technologies	105.8 lacs GSM	US \$ 26720 lacs (LTWS) & Rs. 887.5 lacs (TLTL)	3669	3711
3.	M/s. Ericsson Radio System	873.7 lacs GSM	765340 lacs Sweden Krona (1\$=8 Krone)	3971	4008
4.	M/s. Motorola Inc.	337 lacs (Cellulca)	US \$ 16561 lacs	4253	4780
5.	M/s. Siemens A.G.	390.5 lacs	736970 lacs Deutsche Mark (1998)	4641	4810
6.	M/s. Nokia Net Works OY	90.9 lacs (GSM)	596600 lacs FIM (1998) 1 \$=5.6 FIM	5221	5224
7.	M/s. Nortel Networks	225.6 lacs (GSM)	US \$ 197320 lacs	6464	6596
8.	M/s. Alcatel CIT	330 lacs subscribers	171389 French Franc (1998) Alcatel CIT	6682	6838

(c) and (d) yes, Sir. However, on receipt of some complaints, Government has constituted a Committee to enquire into various aspects of issues involved.

Dealers Selection Boards

7558. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Dealers Selection Boards in the country;

(b) the number of members nominated to each Board;

(c) whether the present system of selection by Dealers Selection Boards are to be reformed;

(d) if so, whether any new guidelines have been formulated by the Government to guide Dealers Selection Boards; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) The Dealer Selection Boards have been dissolved recently. The reconstitution of Dealer Selection Boards is under process.

[*Translation*]

Death of Birds and Animals in Zoo

7559. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether many animals and birds of rare species in Delhi have died during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the total number of birds and animals died during said period, year-wise;

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to make this zoo more attractive and for the protection of rare species and to increase the number of birds and animals of new species; and

(d) the amount allocated and the heads on which it was used and the way in which it was utilised during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The rate of death of animals and

birds in National Zoological Park, New Delhi has been in the normal range during the last three years.

The total number of birds and animals died in National Zoological Park, New Delhi during the last three years is as given below:

Year	Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Total
1996-97	21	0	0	21
1997-98	31	121	9	161
1998-99	48	54	3	105
Total:	100	175	12	287

The major causes of death of the animals are enteritis, pneumonia, tuberculosis, injury due to infighting etc.

(c) Steps proposed to make the zoo more attractive are:

1. Naturalistic and large enclosures for animals.
2. Improved Signage and interpretation.
3. Organising guide services for visitors.
4. Enriching the environment of zoo through plantations etc.

(d) The brief break up of the budget allocation/ utilisation in National Zoological Park, New Delhi is as follows:

(Rs. in crore)

Item of work	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99	
	Allocation	Utilisation	Allocation	Utilisation	Allocation	Utilisation
Salaries & Establishment cost	1.51	1.68	2.10	2.02	2.05	2.16
Upkeep and management of Animals	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.66	0.66	0.71
Development activities including procurement of equipment	0.10	0.07	0.20	0.21	0.20	0.35
Total:	2.21	2.40	2.95	2.89	2.91	3.22

Remarks: It does not include cost of civil construction works.

[English]

Pricing of Petroleum Products

7560. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to frame guidelines for the pricing of petroleum products to protect the interest of consumers in the fully decontrolled environment;

(b) if so, whether these moves, to safeguard the interest of consumers are in keeping with the approach to undertake petroleum reforms with a human face enunciated by the Ministry;

(c) if so, whether this proposal to constitute RANGDPS through an act of Parliament is also being considered; and

(d) if so, the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) The Government in November, 1997, while deciding the details of phasing of dismantling programme of Administered Pricing Mechanism, had also decided to establish a regulatory framework of oversee the functioning of and enforcing a competitive framework in the Hydrocarbon Sector. The programme is to be implemented by March, 2002.

Exploration of Natural Gas in Rajasthan

7561. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to seek assistance from Asian Development Bank for the exploration of Natural Gas in Barmer and Jaisalmer Districts of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the work of exploration of Natural gas in these districts is likely to be started; and

(d) the likely time schedule for completion of works on this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) At present, there is no proposal to seek assistance from Asian Development Bank for the exploration of Natural gas in Barmer and Jaisalmer Districts of Rajasthan. However, as a continuous process, exploration, and production activities, as necessary, are undertaken by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ld. (OIL) in these districts of Rajasthan.

Rural Electrification

7562. SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in tribal/hill/desert areas that have been electrified so far;

(b) the number of villages in such areas yet to be electrified; and

(c) the time by which these villages are likely to be electrified?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) According to Central Electricity Authority (CEA), out of the total number of 115088 tribal villages in the country, 81437 (Provisional) tribal villages have been electrified by the end of February, 2000, leaving 33651 number of tribal villages to be electrified.

(c) Many of the tribal villages remaining to be electrified are in remote and inaccessible areas. The time frame for complete electrification of the tribal villages in the country would largely depend upon the availability of financial resources for creating required infrastructure and availability of power in the States. Recently, Government have approved an Interest Subsidy Scheme for electrification of Tribal Villages and Dalit Bastis.

Interest subsidy amounting to Rs. 16.67 crores shall be given on loans given by REC to SEBs for electrification of 415 Tribal Villages and 2440 Dalit Bastis during 2000-2001. In addition, a Group of Ministers has also been set up to examine various issues relating to electrification of tribal villages, dalit bastis and other weaker sections.

[*Translation*]

Rural Electrification in J&K

7563. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the villages Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir have been electrified;

(b) if not, the number of villages in this district are yet to be electrified; and

(c) the time by which these villages are expected to be electrified?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Out of the total number of 646 inhabited villages (1981 Census) to Baramulla in Jammu & Kashmir, 626 villages are reported to be declared electrified by the State as on 31.3.2000 (Provisional), leaving 20 villages yet to be electrified.

(c) The identification of villages and priorities for their electrification is determined and decided by the State Electricity Boards/State Power Utilities as per the policy and directions of the State Governments. Further, the progress of rural electrification and the time frame for complete electrification of villages would largely depend upon the availability of financial resources for creating required infrastructure systems, availability of Power in the State and demand from the consumers.

[*English*]

Thermal Power Unit at Farrukhabad

7564. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending with the National Thermal Power Corporation to set up a Thermal Power Plant at Farrukhabad in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal and the time by which the said Thermal Power Plant is likely to be set up and commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Feasibility Report for setting up of a combined cycle gas power project of 800 MW capacity at Farrukhabad in Uttar Pradesh was submitted by National Thermal Power Corporation to Central Electricity

Authority and Ministry of Power in December, 1990. Natural gas, as primary fuel, of about 4 MCMD from HBJ pipeline was required for operation of the project on base load. However, the project had to be abandoned due to non-availability of gas.

National Long Distance Operators

7565. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received requests from various telecom operators and companies for setting up joint venture operations with Power Grid as National Long Distance Operators (NLDO);

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and the modus operandi thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[*Translation*]

LPG Agencies in Uttar Pradesh

7566. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up new LPG agencies in Ghazipur and Jaunpur districts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the number of existing LPG agencies are less considering the population of the above mentioned districts; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) LPG distributorships are opened in different parts of

the country meeting Oil Industry's viability norms. At present there is one LPG distributorship in district Ghazipur and four LPG distributorships in district Jaunpur, U.P. meeting the LPG requirement. To meet the increased demand, 6 LPG distributorships in district Ghazipur and 8 LPG distributorships in district Jaunpur have been included in the Marketing Plans. Further, LOI for 1 LPG distributorship under the Special Scheme for widows/next of kin of the Kargil martyrs has been issued in district Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh.

[English]

Revenue Sharing Regime

7567. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the percentage of revenue to be shared between the Government and cellular companies under Revenue Sharing Agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): Sir, the Government will take a final decision about the quantum of revenue share to be charged as licence fee from cellular companies under the revenue sharing arrangement after obtaining recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI); recommendations of TRAI in the matter have been sought and are awaited. In the meanwhile Government have decided to fix 15% of the gross revenue of the Licensee as provisional licence fee.

[Translation]

Construction of LPG Terminal at Loni by GAIL

7568. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction work of LPG Terminal at Loni by the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is continuing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of persons likely to be benefited by it;

(d) whether the Government propose to construct any L.P.G. terminal for other backward areas of the country particularly in the Sarangarh District of Madhya Pradesh; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is constructing an LPG Despatch Terminal at Loni in U.P. as part of the Jamnagar/Kandla-Loni LPG Pipeline Project. This terminal will supply approximately 724 Thousand Metric Tonnes Per Annum (TMTPA) of LPG to oil marketing companies, namely; India Oil Corporation Ltd., Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. for filling the cylinders, which will benefit approximately 50 lakh families.

(d) and (e) Presently, there is no such proposal.

[English]

Cochin Refinery

7569. SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any additional funds have been sanctioned for the development and modernisation of Cochin Refinery Limited during the year 1999-2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Government of Cochin Shipyard has submitted any proposal for the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Self-Reliance in Petroleum Sector

7570. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any efforts have been made to make the country self-reliant in regard to the petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount allocated to achieve self-sufficiency in refining capacity for production of petroleum products during the last three years; and

(d) the amount actually spent for the purpose during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government has taken the following measures to increase the refining capacity in the country:

- (i) Permitting refining capacity additions by way of expansion of existing refineries and setting up of new refineries in public sector, joint sector and private sector.
- (ii) Delicensing of refining sector; and
- (iii) Giving duty protection to domestic refineries.

The refining capacity as on 1.4.2000 was about 112 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) versus the projected demand for the year 2000-2001 of about 105 MMTPA. Commissioning of the following refinery capacity addition projects have been done in the last three years:

New Refinery	MMTPA
IOCL, Panipat	6.0
RPL Jamnagar	27.0
NRL, Numaligarh	3.0
Expansion of existing refineries	
MRPL, Mangalore	6.0
IOCL, Koyali	3.0
HPCL, Visakh	3.0

(c) and (d) The details of the amount allocated and actually spent for increase in refining capacity for the last three years for the PSU Oil Companies is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

	Amount Allocated	Amount actually spent
IOCL, Panipat	930	931
NRL, Numaligarh	2019	1679
IOCL, Koyali	550	557
HPCL, Visakh	792	831

[Translation]

Use of Global Information System

7571. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to use INSAT based Global Information System and computers to conserve forests;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There is no proposal to use global information system. However, Forest Survey of India is using satellite data, Geographic Information System, Global Positioning System and computers for assessment of forest cover of the country biennially.

Public Call Offices

7572. SHRI MANSINH PATEL:
SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:
SHRI TARUN GOGOI:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of P.C.Os. functioning in each of the North Eastern States, West Bengal, Mandavi region of Gujarat and Ranchi region of Bihar at present, separately;

(b) the number of applications lying pending for the installation of PCOs in the said regions during the last three years and till date;

(c) the time by which all these applications are likely to be cleared;

(d) whether these PCOs, are not functioning properly and satisfactorily in the said States and the regions;

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

(f) the steps taken by the Government for smooth functioning of PCOs in the said States and the regions;

(g) the number of PCOs closed in West Bengal during the last three years;

(h) the reasons therefor;

(i) whether the Government propose to increase the number of PCOs for the Sunderban areas in W.B.; and

(j) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The information is given in the attached Statement.

(b) 15127 applications are lying pending for allotment of PCOs in those regions.

(c) All the pending applications are to be cleared progressively by March, 2001 subject to technical feasibility and the applicants fulfilling other conditions.

(d) and (e) Sir, most of the PCOs are functioning properly. As and when some fault is reported the same is attended promptly.

(f) Steps taken for proper functioning of PCOs include upgradation of external plant and provisioning of reliable media.

(g) Nil.

(h) Does not arise.

(i) and (j) Sir, at present 25 PCOs are working in Sunderban areas. 91 applications are pending for allotment of PCOs which are to be cleared progressively by June, 2000 subject to technical feasibility of the applicants fulfilling other conditions.

Statement

Name of the State	No. of PCOs Functioning
1. Assam	6679
2. Arunachal Pradesh	842
3. Manipur	875
4. Meghalaya	742
5. Mizoram	481
6. Nagaland	1029
7. Tripura	832
8. West Bengal	38530
9. Gujarat (Mandavi region)	395
10. Bihar (Ranchi region)	1371

[English]

Internet Gateways

7573. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and names of Private parties which have established Internet gateways in the country at present;

(b) whether private Satellite companies are offering, Satellite Internet connectivity (bandwidth) to Indian Internet Service Providers (ISP);

(c) if so, the details of the Satellite covering India;

(d) whether the New Satellite INSAT-1C launched by India is ready for commercial operations to provide Internet Bandwidth to Internet Service Providers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) At present, no private parties have established internet gateway in the country. However, in principle approval for setting up of internet gateway has been given for Eighteen Internet Service Providers (ISPs) for setting up sixty six Internet gateways. The list is placed in the Statement.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Government has permitted ISPs to obtain bandwidth from foreign satellites which are co-ordinated over India.

(c) The following satellites provide C-band coverage co-ordinated over India;

JCSAT-3A, Palapa, ST1-A, NSS 703, PAS-4, Thaicom-3 and Intelsat.

The following Satellites provide Ku-band coverage co-ordinated over India:

NSS 703, PAS-4 and PAS-7

(d) and (e) The new satellite INSAT 3B launched by India is ready for commercial operation for business Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) services. It will not support ISP gateways.

Statement

List of ISPs who have been given in Principle clearance for setting up of International Gateways

Sl. No.	Name of ISP	Location
1	2	3
1.	M/s. Data Access (India) Pvt. Ltd.	Delhi
2.	M/s. Internet Promoters India Ltd.	Delhi
3.	M/s. Sigma Input Output Tech. India Ltd.	Hyderabad Ahmedabad Delhi Chennai Bangalore Pune Mumbai Calcutta
4.	M/s. STPI	Bangalore Noida Bhubaneswar Hyderabad Gandhi Nagar Thiruvananthapuram Navi Mumbai Jaipur Mohali Mysore Manipal Coimbatore
5.	M/s. Jain Studios Ltd.	Noida
6.	M/s. In Tech. Net Ltd.	Hyderabad
7.	M/s. Direct Internet Ltd.	Delhi
8.	M/s. Satyam Infoways Ltd.	Mumbai Ahmedabad Hyderabad Pune Cochin
9.	M/s. Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	New Delhi

1	2	3
10.	M/s. Global Electronic Commerce Pvt. Ltd.	Mumbai Bangalore New Delhi Pune Hyderabad Calcutta Ahmedabad Chennai
11.	M/s. Eclipse Network Pvt. Ltd.	Ahmedabad
12.	M/s. Dishnet DSL Ltd.	Chennai Calcutta Cochin Pune Bangalore Hyderabad New Delhi Mumbai
13.	M/s. Macronet	Chennai-C Chennai-Ku Calcutta-C Calcutta-Ku Gandhinagar-C Gandhinagar-Ku Patalganga-C Patalganga-Ku Mumbai-Ku
14.	M/s. GNFC	Barauch
15.	M/s. Southern Online Services Ltd.	Hyderabad
16.	M/s. MTNL	Mumbai
17.	M/s. Comsat Max Ltd.	Delhi Bangalore Chennai Hyderabad Calcutta
18.	M/s. Wellfield Mnemonika Info-network Pvt. Ltd.	Pune.

*[Translation]***Power Generation through Chachai Fall**

7574. SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the power in mega watt targeted to be achieved from TAMAS Hydro-electric Power Project in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the annual target of power generation in mega watt through Chachai Water Fall under the Bansagar Inter-state Irrigation project in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh;

(c) the expenditure incurred on this project so far and the details of amount proposed to be spent thereon; and

(d) the time by which the said hydro-electric power projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The targeted capacity of Bansagar Tons H.E. Project (TAMAS) in Satna District of Madhya Pradesh is 425 MW (3x105 + 2x15 + 3x20 + 2x10 MW).

(b) The annual target of power generation from the commissioned Power House-I near Chachai Fall under the Bansagar Inter-state Irrigation Project is 315 MW.

(c) The total estimated cost of the project at 1996 price level is Rs. 976.37 crores, out of which an amount of Rs. 735.01 crores has been incurred on this project.

(d) The work on Power Houses II, III and IV are in progress and are scheduled to be commissioned in 2001-2002.

*[English]***Contract for Dredging Work**

7575. SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of foreign dredging companies are awarded the contract of dredging work in the country;

(b) if so, the number of dredging work given to foreign companies during the last three years, location-wise and amount-wise;

(c) the reasons for not awarding these jobs to Dredging Corporation of India; and

(d) the steps proposed by the Government for expansion of Dredging Corporation of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) The following dredging works have been awarded to the foreign dredging companies during the last three years:

Sl. No.	Name of the Port	Name of the Foreign Company	Contract Value (Rs. in crore)
1.	Calcutta Port Trust	M/s. HAM Dredging and Marine Contractor, Netherlands	28.45
2.	Chennai Port Trust	M/s. JAN DE NUL, N.V., Belgium	84.79
3.	Visakhapatnam Port Trust	M/s. Dredging International, NV, Belgium	10.21
4.	Cochin Port Trust	M/s. VAN OORD ACZ	108.80
5.	Mumbai Port Trust	M/s. HAM Dredging and Marine Contractor, Netherlands	62.29
6.	Tuticorin Port Trust	M/s. JAN DE NUL, N.V., Belgium	170.38

(c) The Dredging Corporation of India Ltd. does not have adequate capacity to take up all the dredging works at the Major Ports. In view of this the Major Ports have been permitted to invite competitive bids.

(d) The Dredging Corporation of India Ltd. has placed orders for two more Trailer Suction Dredgers of 7400 cu.m. capacity each and with the addition of these two dredgers, DCI's installed capacity (Insitu) would go up to about 58 million cu.m. per annum from the 41.5 million cu.m. at present.

NTPC Power Projects on LPG

7576. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the name of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Power projects running on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG);

(b) the name of NTPC power projects which are at present running on Naphtha;

(c) the name of the projects for which ultimate fuel LNG is envisaged;

(d) the reasons for use of this particular fuel; and

(e) the reasons for running some of the NTPC projects behind schedule?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Presently none of the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) gas power plants are running on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

(b) Of NTPC's power plants only Kayamkulam CCPP Stage-I in Kerala is operating with Naphtha as the primary fuel. However, NTPC is using Naphtha as an alternate fuel for its gas based power plants at Kawas, Anta and Auraiya also.

(c) The expansion stages of Combined Cycle Power Plants (CCPP) at Kawas and Jhanor-Gandhar in Gujarat, Anta in Rajasthan and Auraiya in Uttar Pradesh are planned based on LNG as the ultimate fuel with Naphtha to be used as the bridge fuel during the initial period of operation till such time LNG is made available. Even Kayamkulam CCPP will have LNG as the ultimate fuel.

(d) Natural gas is cleaner fuel for power generation and gas based power plants have short gestation period as compared to coal based or hydro power plants. LNG

is nothing but Natural gas which is liquified to facilitate its transportation and has been considered as ultimate fuel for NTPC's expansion units.

(e) None of the NTPC's on going projects are presently running behind schedule.

[Translation]

Assistance from C.R.F. for Maharashtra

7577. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any representation regarding the release of insufficient amount from the Central Road Fund for the National Highways in Maharashtra during 1988-89; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The erstwhile Central Road Fund is not used for National Highway works.

[English]

LPG Requirement for Bettiah, Bihar

7578. DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated monthly requirement of LPG for Bettiah District of Bihar at present and the supply position thereof;

(b) the steps the Government have taken to meet the full requirement of LPG in the district;

(c) whether the rural areas of the district are being neglected in supplying LPG; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the remedial measures the Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) At present, the demand of LPG customers enrolled with the Public Sector Oil Companies in the State of Bihar including Bettiah District is being met by and large in full. Whenever LPG backlog develops, PSU Oil

Companies take various measures including maximising imports, operating the bottling plants on extended hours/Sundays and holidays, etc. to meet the demand in the affected markets.

Promotion of Eco-Tourism

7579. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have prepared any strategy to promote eco-tourism to curb poaching and to maintain the protected area of sanctuaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have decided to develop Kanha near Nagpur as eco-tourist place;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the amount sanctioned for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has evolved guidelines for wildlife tourism as per the directions of Standing Committee of Indian Board for Wildlife. These guidelines primarily aim at encouraging participation of local people in the tourism management with the objective of bio-diversity conservation on one hand and improving the socio-economic status of local people on the other hand. Involvement of local people in wildlife tourism will help in curbing poaching and illegal trade and will improve the bio-diversity potential of the area.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Reserves of Oil and Gas in Rajasthan

7580. SHRI MANIBAHU RAMJIBAHU CHAUDHRI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether reserves of oil and gas have been identified in Rajasthan recently;

(b) if so, the estimated quantum of oil and Natural gas likely to be explored from these reserves;

(c) whether the Government have undertaken the task of exploring oil and gas therefrom; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) During 1999-2000, crude oil has been discovered in Bikaner district of Rajasthan by a private company, viz. M/s. Shell India Production Development B.V. (SIPD), with an estimated oil in place of 1.3 Million Standard Stock Tank Barrel (MMSTB). The quantum of crude oil to be exploited from this reserve will depend upon the result of further appraisal and exploration work, to be undertaken by the contractor.

[English]

Standard of Legal Education

7581. SHRI P. KUMARASAMY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that there has been a considerable fall in the standard of legal education;

(b) if so, whether there is an urgent need to avert this trend and to improve the quality of law education in the country;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to improve the standard of legal education in country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (d) As per the information received from the Bar Council of India, there has been steep deterioration in the standards of legal education imparted in the Country and this has been engaging the attention of the concerned authorities especially the Bar Council of India in the past few years. The sharp decline in the standards of legal education was discussed at two Conferences held at Bhubaneswar and Hyderabad in the year 1995. The Bar Council of India felt urgent necessity to improve the standards of legal education and in this regard, the Council has been taking several steps including revision of curriculum and decision to close down the evening law colleges which are not following the norms prescribed by the Bar Council

of India for imparting legal education. The Bar Council of India has also been visiting and inspecting various law colleges in the country and disapproving affiliation of those colleges which are not following the rules laid down by it and asking the colleges to improve themselves by giving them appropriate directions.

Infrastructure Status to Shipping Industry

7582. DR. SHRIMATI C. SUGUNA KUMARI:
SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:
SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have decided to set up a special group to go into the question of granting infrastructure status to the Shipping Industry;

(b) if so, the composition of the said group alongwith its terms and reference;

(c) the details of other points to be studied; and

(d) the time by which the report of the study group is likely to be submitted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Shipping Policy Committee, in its report, has recommended that the shipping industry must be recognised as an export industry at par with other industries. Government have initiated action on the above recommendation and also for the following fiscal and financial incentives to help the shipping industry:

- (i) Enhancement of depreciation from 20% to 40%.
- (ii) Tax relief to Indian seafarers.
- (iii) Coastal shipping to be declared as an infrastructure industry.

Satpura Thermal Power Stations

7583. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the payment is not being regularly made by the Rajasthan State Electricity Board for the maintenance of its share in the Satpura Thermal Power Station No. 1 in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the outstanding dues of Madhya Pradesh against Rajasthan State Electricity Board at present alongwith the action being taken to recover such dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) Satpura Thermal Power Station No. 1 in Madhya Pradesh is a joint venture of Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board (MPEB) and Rajasthan State Electricity Board (RSEB) sharing benefit/cost in the ratio of 60% and 40% respectively between the two Boards. As MPEB is consuming the RSEB's share of energy generated in Satpura station, RSEB is making adjustment of the cost of energy consumed by MPEB from RSEB's share in O&M expenditure of Satpura station. As per RSEB account, Rs. 49.71 crores (upto 31.3.2000) is recoverable from MPEB on this account.

[Translation]

Replacement of MARR System

7584. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:
SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI R.S. PATIL:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to replace the highly fault prone Multi Access Rural Radio (MARR) system with Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) system for Village Public Telephone (VPT);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the financial implications involved therein;

(d) whether the private sector companies are proposed to be involved therein;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, while every possible attempt is being made to maintain MARR systems at a reasonable level of dependability, those which are found difficult to maintain due to lack of servicing and repair support from original manufacturers or for any other reasons, will be progressively replaced. Some of the new technologies for rural Telephony are Wireless in Local Loop, TDMA/PMP of C-DOT, Satellite based telephone etc. Financial implications shall be worked out at the time of replacement depending upon the technology used.

(d) to (f) No Sir, the private sector Companies are to meet their own obligations of providing Village Public Telephones as per their licence agreements. In all 6 licencees have to provide VPTs within the first three years of their operation. Meetings have been held with the licencees to make them comply with their commitments.

[English]

CNG Filling Stations in Delhi

7585. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) filling stations working at present in Delhi.

(b) whether after the decision of the Supreme Court verdict regarding running of CNG buses in Delhi, there is need for more such CNG filling stations; and

(c) if so, the number of CNG filling stations likely to be set up in Delhi in the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) 31 CNG outlets have been commissioned in Delhi as on date.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. As per the Supreme Court directive dated 28.7.1998 GAIL is required to expedite and expand from 9 to 80 CNG supply outlets in Delhi by 31.3.2000.

[Translation]

Telephone Facility

7586. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the various techniques have been used for providing telephone facility in rural and urban areas of the country during the last few years;

(b) if so, the details of such techniques alongwith the manner in which these were different in terms of application;

(c) the basis on which these techniques were selected for urban and rural areas;

(d) whether these techniques have proved successful for these areas; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Various techniques have been used in subscriber access, switching and transmission network during last few years.

(b) Subscriber Access Network—Under ground cable and overhead lines are being used to provide telephones in rural and urban areas. In addition MARR technology was used to provide Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in rural areas.

Transmission Network—Various techniques like microwave, Optical Fibre and Satellite have been used for providing reliable connectivity to the exchanges in rural and urban areas.

Switching Network - Digital Electronic Exchanges are being used in urban and rural areas.

(c) The techniques are selected on the basis of traffic requirement and specific locations and terrain of the area.

(d) and (e) All these techniques have proved successful except MARR system. Performance of MARR systems has not proved to be reliable.

*[English]***Post Offices**

7587. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the ratio of post offices as against population in each State, State-wise;

(b) the names of the States where the post offices is less as compared to other States particularly in Madhya Pradesh;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remove this disparity; and

(d) the details of the development works undertaken in the Post and Telegraph Sector in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Tripura?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The information is given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(b) The information is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(c) New Post Offices are opened as per Plan projections. This is subject to availability of funds and Sanctioning of required posts by Ministry of Finance.

(d) The details of the Post Offices opened during 1999-2000 are given in enclosed Statement-III. With the expansion of Telephone Network, the telegraph traffic is steadily declining. Therefore, no specific targets have been fixed for opening of telegraph offices in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Tripura. As per the policy of Department each village is to be provided with Public Telephone facility by March, 2002. Public telephones opened in post offices are used to provide telegraph facility on phonocom. The modernisation of Telegraph Services has been done by induction of micro-processor based technology. Store and Forward Message Switching Systems (SFMSSs), Electronics Key Board

Concentrators (EKBCs) have been provided in the Telegraph Network as per details below:

State	SFMSS	EKBCs
West Bengal	1	28
Bihar	2	03
Orissa	2	02
Madhya Pradesh	4	04
Kerala	3	18
Tripura	Nil	Nil

Statement-I

Sl.No.	Name of Circle	Population Served Per Post Office
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4099
2.	Assam	5737
3.	Bihar	7247
4.	Delhi	18487
5.	Gujarat	4822
	Dadra N. Haveli	3049
	Daman & Diu	5975
6.	Haryana	6189
7.	Himachal Pradesh	1849
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	4711
9.	Karnataka	4548
10.	Kerala	5757
	Lakshadweep	5173
11.	Madhya Pradesh	5834
12.	Maharashtra	6337
	Goa	4624
13.	North East	
	Arunachal Pradesh	2925
	Manipur	2656
	Meghalaya	3643
	Mizoram	1738

1	2	3
	Nagaland	3812
	Tripura	3853
14.	Orissa	3080
15.	Punjab	5370
	Chandigarh	12818
16.	Rajasthan	4231
17.	Tamil Nadu	4615
	Pondicherry	8526
18.	Uttar Pradesh	6875
19.	West Bengal	7884
	Sikkim	2009
	A&N Islands	2886
National Average		5477

Statement-II

SI.No.	Name of Circle	Total Number of Post Offices
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16186
2.	Assam	3885
3.	Bihar	11914
4.	Delhi	569
5.	Gujarat	8960
	Dadra N. Haveli	34
	Daman & Diu	17
6.	Haryana	2837
7.	Himachal Pradesh	2764
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	1639
9.	Karnataka	9853
10.	Kerala	5051
	Lakshadweep	14
11.	Madhya Pradesh	11335

1	2	3
12.	Maharashtra	12426
	Goa	253
13.	North East	
	Arunachal Pradesh	294
	Manipur	689
	Meghalaya	483
	Mizoram	397
	Nagaland	320
	Tripura	711
14.	Orissa	8120
15.	Punjab	3879
	Chandigarh	52
16.	Rajasthan	10371
17.	Tamil Nadu	12055
	Pondicherry	95
18.	Uttar Pradesh	20223
19.	West Bengal	8622
	Sikkim	204
	A&N Islands	97
Total:		154149

Statement-III*Details of Post Offices Opened During 1999-2000.*

	Targets		Achievements	
	EBOs	DSOs	EBOs	DSOs
West Bengal	43	9	41	9
Bihar	50	3	51	—
Orissa	14	2	14	2
Madhya Pradesh	40	4	40	4
Kerala	4	2	4	2
Tripura	4	—	4	—

[*Translation*]

Use of Small Gas Cylinders

7588. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the public sector oil companies propose to introduce small size gas cylinders in the wake of the permission to use LPG in cars; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies have not finalised the size of cylinders to be used in automobiles.

[*English*]

Internet

7589. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United States has evinced interest to arrest Internet growth in India;

(b) whether United States President during his recent visit, has announced an aid package of \$ million to promote Internet access in rural areas;

(c) if so, whether the five-year assistance programme would help promote a policy and regulatory environment to accelerate growth of India's information and communication technology; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No such proposal, Sir.

(b) No.

(c) and (d) Not applicable.

Availability of Gas and Oil in East Godavari Distt., A.P.

7590. SHRI MUDRAGADA PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any availability of Natural Gas and Crude Oil in East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, supported by scientific information;

(b) if so, the names of the areas where these resources have been identified;

(c) whether there are any proposals to explore oil and Natural gas from these areas; and

(d) if so, the steps taken so far and the time schedule for exploration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The following twenty crude oil and Natural gas finds have been made in East Godavari district of the State of Andhra Pradesh by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) upto 1.4.2000;

Mori, Kesanapalli, Kesanapalli-West, Bhimanapalle, Tatipaka-Kadali, Pasarlapudi, Chintalapalle, Mandapeta, Manepalle, Endamuru, Bandamurlanka-North, Mummudivaram, Ponnamanda, Mullikipalle, Advivipalem, Enugapalli, Rangapuram, Magatapalli, Kesavadasapalem, Sirkattapalle.

(c) Further exploration is planned by ONGC in nine of the above twenty areas.

(d) (i) The following exploratory inputs have been expended by ONGC in East Godavari district during the period 1997-2000.

Seismic Survey:

2D : About 430 Line Kilometre

3D : About 3300 Line Kilometre

Exploratory Wells: 47

(ii) ONGC plans to acquire 450 Line Kilometre of 2D and 2200 Line Kilometre of 3D seismic data, and to drill 28 exploratory wells during the period 2000-2002 in the district.

Equipment and Vessels for Augmentation of Port Capacity

7591. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Port Association was entrusted by the Government to standardise the equipment and vessels required by the major ports and to short-list the vendors thereof so as to reduce the time required for award of contracts *vis-a-vis* faster augmentation of port capacity;

(b) if so, the present status thereof;

(c) whether similar/same equipment/vessels are being procured by various major ports;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to take similar action for centralised system of tendering/procurement, as has been done for short-listing of vendors; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The short-listing of vendors for major equipment/flotilla required by the ports have since been completed and ports have also been advised to invite the bids for their future requirements from the short-listed vendors.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The same/similar equipment/vessels being procured by the ports are Rail Mounted Quay Cranes (RMQC), Rubber Tyred Gantry Crane (RTG), Wharf Cranes, Reach Stacker, etc. and also the flotilla *viz* Tugs, Launches and other small floating crafts.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. The merits *vis-a-vis* demerits of the centralised system of tendering/procurement through consolidation of requirement of all the major ports needs detailed examination. However, action has already been initiated for streamlining and bringing a uniformity with regard to terms & conditions of tender/bid documents of all the major ports.

Policy for Forest Dependent Communities

7592. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representations to evolve a policy for forest-dependent people and communities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the manner in which the Government are going to work out a policy to ensure that traditional and forest dependent communities are not pushed to a situation where their survival itself becomes difficult because of denial of access to forests; and

(d) the steps proposed by the Government to interact with such communities and evolve a policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) The Government have not received any representation to evolve a policy for forest-dependent people and communities. However, the Government have enunciated the new National Forest Policy in 1988 with the principal aim to ensure environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance by creating a massive people's movement with the involvement of women. The Government have no proposal to change the present policy. For the forest-dependent people, policy envisages that:

(i) Minor forest produce provides sustenance to tribal population and to the other communities residing in and around the forests. Such produce should be protected, improved and their production enhanced with due regard to generation of employment and income.

(ii) The programme of afforestation should be intensified with special emphasis on augmenting fuelwood production to meet the requirement of the rural people.

(iii) The holders of customary rights and concessions in forest areas should be motivated to identify themselves with the protection and development of forests from which they derive benefits. The rights and concessions from forests should primarily be for the bonafide use of the communities living within and around forest areas, specially the tribals.

(iv) The life of tribals and other poor living within and near forests revolves around forests. The rights and concessions enjoyed by them should be fully protected. Their domestic requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce and construction timber should be the first charge on forest produce. These and substitute materials should be made available through conveniently located depots at reasonable prices.

(v) Similar consideration should be given to scheduled castes and other poor living near forests. However, the area, which such consideration should cover would be determined by the carrying capacity of the forests.

(vi) Having regard to the symbiotic relationship between the tribal people and forests, a primary task of all agencies responsible for forest management, including the forest development corporations should be to associate the tribal people closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests as well as to provide gainful employment to people living in and around the forests.

(d) The involvement of forest-dependent people in protection and development of forests on usufruct sharing basis has become the main strategy of management of forests. Such people constitute village forest protection committees (VFPC) for joint management of forests. At present 36130 village forest protection committees are managing around 10.25 million hectare of degraded forests. In the joint forest management, the VFPCs are involved from the stage of planning. These committees have rehabilitated forests as permanent resource base for their sustenance.

Production of Crude Oil and Gas in Gujarat

7593, SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of total production of crude oil and gas from various wells located in Gujarat State;

(b) whether there is any increase in production of crude oil and gas in comparison to the last two years;

(c) if not, the steps taken by the Government to increase the production;

(d) whether any study has been undertaken to locate the new area of oil and gas production in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The production of crude oil and Natural gas in the

State of Gujarat during the last three years was as under:

Year	Crude Oil (MMT)	NATURAL Gas (BCM)
1997-98	5.978	3.175
1998-99	5.880	3.279
1999-2000*	5.704	3.273

MMT: Million Metric Tonnes

BCM: Billion Cubic Metres

*Provisional

(c) Various steps have been taken for augmenting crude oil production in the State of Gujarat. These are:

(i) Implementation of enhanced oil recovery schemes at Balol and Santhal.

(ii) Installation of gas lift scheme.

(iii) Implementation of pilot Insitu-combustion project at Lanwa.

(iv) Drilling of new infill wells, redistribution of water injection, hydrofracturing and long distance side tracking.

(v) Implementation of development schemes for South Kadi fields and Wasna field.

(d) and (e) Constant efforts have been made to find oil and gas in new areas through following measures:

(i) Acquisition, processing and interpretation of seismic data.

(ii) Aero-Magnetic reconnaissance survey covering an area of 48000 sq. km. in the Rann of Kutch area.

(iii) Drilling of exploratory wells.

Restructuring of Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India

7594. SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to restructure the functioning of the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India (ICWAI) in order to refurbish the image of the institute;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government have set up any study group in this regard;
- (d) if so, the main recommendations thereof and the basis on which these recommendations were made;
- (e) whether the view points of the professional and expert bodies would be elicited before taking a final action;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) No, Sir.
- (d) to (g) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Accounts of NTPC

7595. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the budgetary allocation made to the National Thermal Power Corporation during the last three years;
- (b) whether the Government have reviewed the functioning of the NTPC;
- (c) if so, whether the National Thermal Power Corporation has generated the power as per its targets for the year 1999-2000; and
- (d) if not, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) is not getting any net budgetary support. It has, however, been getting Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) only for capital expenditure *i.e.* multilateral/bilateral loans are routed through Government of India budget and no net budgetary support has been

allocated to NTPC in last 10 years. The GBS to NTPC during last 3 years is as under:

Year	Rs. in Crores
1997-98	172.75
1998-99	166.77
1999-2000	262.36

(b) Yes, Sir. Apart from regular interactions between NTPC and Ministry of Power at the highest level, the performance of NTPC is being reviewed quarterly by the Secretary of its Administrative Ministry (MoP). Representatives of various concerned Ministries of Government of India and Planning Commission are also invited during the review.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. As against MoU 'Excellent' target of 107000 Million Unit (MU) NTPC's power plants have generated 118677 MU of power in 1999-2000 *i.e.* 11677 MU more than the target.

Reservation for SCs/STs in Judiciary

7596. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:
SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN:
SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Supreme Court has held that the Government could not encroach upon the constitutional provisions relating to appointments of Judicial officers by enacting a law providing additional reservation to the backward classes;
- (b) if so, whether the majority 3:2 Judgement was delivered in March, 2000.
- (c) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard; and

(d) whether the Government propose to make any provision in the present rule for providing quota for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes in Judiciary also?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Supreme Court in *State of Bihar & Another Vs. Balmukund Shah & Others* (JT 2000 (3) 221) pronounced

its judgement on March 14, 2000 in which the majority of Judges (3:2) held that Section 4 of Bihar Reservation of Vacancies in Posts and Services (for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes) Act, 1991 which provides 50% reservation in posts for direct recruitment including judicial services in the State is ultra vires to the extent it applies to judicial services since it curtails the power of the High Court and is in direct conflict with articles 233 to 235 of the Constitution because the State Legislature by totally by-passing the constitutional mandate of articles 233 to 234 and without being required to consult the High Court cannot lay down statutory scheme of reservation for judicial services. According to the Court, Section 4 would not apply to district judiciary/subordinate judiciary as under these articles interference by State Legislature is totally excluded and the same, accordingly, has to be read down.

(c) and (d) Since the judgement relates to the subordinate judiciary of the State of Bihar, it is for the State Government of Bihar to examine its implications.

[English]

Compulsory Registration of Properties

7597. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to bring a legislation to make it compulsory for registration of properties; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) The provisions of the Transfer of Property Act, 1882 read with the Registration Act, 1908 provide for compulsory registration of documents of properties in case of its transfer by means of sale, mortgage, lease and gift.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Supply of Gas to NTPC Power Plants

7598. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NTPC plant located in Gujarat is unable to utilise its optimum capacity due to non-supply of Natural gas to them;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the efforts made by the Government to ensure sufficient supply of Natural gas to the said power plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has two power projects located in Gujarat namely Kawas Gas Power Project of 645 MW capacity and Gandhar Gas Power Project of 648 MW capacity. While gas linkage for Kawas Project is 2.25 Million Cubic Metre Per Day (MCMD) against the requirement of 2.5 MCMD, the linkage for Gandhar Project is 1.50 MCMD against the requirement of 2.5 MCMD. However, during the year 1999-2000, the availability of gas for Kawas and Gandhar Projects was only 2.07 MCMD and 1.26 MCMD respectively. The resultant loss in generation in Kawas and Gandhar projects was 92 million units and 2741 million units respectively. Thus, while Kawas project was generally able to utilise its capacity, Gandhar project was unable to do so because of inadequate gas linkage/supply.

(c) Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is supplying gas to these two power projects. As far as Kawas project is concerned, gas supply is almost matching the linkage. However, gas supply to Gandhar project is much less than the linkage because of limited availability of gas from Gandhar (South Gujarat) gasfields. Efforts are being made by the Government for increasing the availability of gas by optimising production from existing fields through better reservoir management, infill drilling, pressure maintenance, installation/optimisation of artificial lift system, improvement in recovery factor, use of advanced and cost effective technology, faster development of new discoveries, exploration at greater depths in existing fields, extending exploration activities to deep waters and frontier areas, increased private participation in exploration activities etc.

[English]

Capacities of Oil Refineries

7599. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the installed capacity of the various oil refineries are not being utilised due to non-availability of raw material;

(b) if so, the time by which the required raw material is likely to be made available;

(c) the quantum of Petrol and LPG produced by these refineries monthly;

(d) the name of by-products manufactured by these refineries and the manner in which these are being used; and

(e) the measures taken to prevent pollution caused by these refineries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) The production of LPG and Petrol from refineries during March, 2000 was 311 and 665 Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT) respectively.

(d) Sulphur is one of the by-products produced by the refineries, which is being sold to fertilizer & chemical manufacturing units.

(e) Refineries are meeting the statutory requirements for liquid effluents as well as gaseous emissions as specified by State Pollution Control Boards and Central Pollution Control Board. Several environment protection projects have been implemented by refineries over the years.

Upgradation of Minor Ports

7600. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal for upgrading of some minor ports in the country particularly in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals received in this regard during the last three years;

(c) whether the Dhamara and Gopalpur minor ports are included in the proposal;

(d) if so, the details of the other ports proposed to be upgraded as major ports; and

(e) the allocation made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) As per the provisions of Indian ports Act, 1908, the responsibility for development of minor ports lies entirely with the State Government concerned, which have administrative control on such ports. The funds for the development of minor ports are allocated by the Planning Commission in the Budget Head of respective State Government.

Telecom Facilities

7601. DR. GIRIJA VYAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Gram Panchayats in Rajasthan connected with telephone connections alongwith the Fax and STD/ISD facilities as on March 31,2000, district-wise; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to provide said facilities in all the Gram Panchayats of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 7922 Gram Panchayats out of total 9181 Gram Panchayats in Rajasthan are provided with the infrastructure for STD provisioning. District-wise details are given in enclosed Statement. As there is no licence fee for Fax facility, subscribers/PCOs use Fax machines as per their requirement.

(b) The Government propose to provide telecom facilities in every village of the State including Gram Panchayats by March, 2002 with the joint efforts of Private Fixed Service Providers.

Statement**District-wise Details of Gram Panchayats having infrastructure for STD provisioning**

Sl.No.	Name of Revenue District	Total Gram Panchayats	Gram Panchayats having infrastructure for STD provisioning
1	2	3	4
1	Ajmer	276	266
2	Alwar	477	477
3	Banswara	325	282
4	Baran	215	182
5	Barmer	380	350
6	Bharatpur	372	341
7	Bhilwara	378	276
8	Bikaner	191	153
9	Bundi	181	134
10	Chittorgarh	391	363
11	Churu	279	245
12	Dausa	174	77
13	Dholpur	153	153
14	Dungarpur	236	209
15	Hanumangarh	246	240
16	Jaipur	537	431
17	Jaisalmer	126	60
18	Jalore	264	242
19	Jhalawar	251	245
20	Jhunjhunu	290	290
21	Jodhpur	338	147
22	Karauli	224	196
23	Kota	161	149
24	Nagaur	461	411
25	Pali	321	291

1	2	3	4
26.	Rajsamand	205	175
27.	Sawai Madhopur	199	190
28.	Sikar	328	303
29.	Sirohi	148	136
30.	Sri Ganganagar	326	319
31.	Tonk	230	179
32.	Udaipur	496	410
Total:		9181	7922

Cellular Telephone Instruments

7602. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the demand and supply of cellular telephone instruments in the country;

(b) whether the Government are aware that large quantity of cellular telephone instruments batteries have been smuggled in the country during the last two years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) As per information given by Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), the new cellular connections provided during the last two financial years were respectively 317289 for the year 1998-99 and 684733 for the year 1999-2000. The demand of the Cellular Telephone Instruments can be taken as of about the same order.

The cellular telephone instruments are not manufactured in the country and are freely importable as per export-import policy.

(b) and (c) Smuggling being a clandestine activity, it is not possible to quantify the exact quantum of Cellular Telephone Instruments and Batteries smuggled into the country. Details of Cellular Telephone Instruments and Batteries attempted to be smuggled which have been seized by the various Custom field formations & Directorate of Revenue Intelligence during the last 2

financial years are as under:

No. of Cellular Phone & Batteries Seized	Value (Rs. in lakhs)
1998-99	6982
1999-2000	24721

(d) All the filed formations of the Customs Department including Directorate of Revenue Intelligence are ever vigilant and alert to detect and prevent smuggling of contraband goods including cellular telephones.

Loan for Electrification in Karnataka

7603. SHRI KOLUR BASAVANAGOUD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rural Electrification Corporation has agreed to extend loans for the electrification of remote villages and hamlets in Karnataka; and

(b) if so, the amount of loan proposed to be extended and the number of villages and hamlets likely to be covered during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has been providing loan assistance to the schemes sponsored by the State Electricity Boards/State Power Utilities provided they are technically feasible and financially viable. Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) had not received any specific proposal for this purpose from Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) of Government of Karnataka during the current year.

(b) In view of above, question does not arise.

Degradation of Forests in Orissa

7604. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing degradation of forests in Orissa;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken for the proper conservation and development of forests in Orissa and other States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) There is no information with

Government of India regarding degradation of forests in Orissa. However as per State of Forest Report, 1997 published by Forest Survey of India, a decrease of 166 sq. km. of forest cover has been reported as compared to 1995 assessment.

(c) Major steps are being taken by the Government for the conservation and development of forests are as under:

1. Afforestation programme are being undertaken.
2. Guidelines have been issued to involve village communities in protection and regeneration of forests through Joint Forest Management.
3. Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to regulate diversion of forest land.
4. A centrally sponsored scheme "Modern Forest Fire Control Methods" is being implemented to protect and conserve the forests from fire.
5. Special measures for protection and conservation of tigers and elephants and their habitat are being implemented.

Mangrove Forests in Gujarat and Orissa

7605. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing destruction of mangrove forests in Gujarat and Orissa;

(b) if so, the reasons of the growing destruction of mangrove forests in these two States; and

(c) the steps taken to undertake new mangrove plantation in the sea coast of Orissa and Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Destruction of mangroves in Gujarat is due to grazing and their use as fodder and fuel. In Orissa it is due to encroachment of mangrove areas for aquaculture, agricultural activities and house construction as well as their exploitation for fodder and fuel.

(c) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Conservation and Management of Mangroves and Coral

Reefs, Government of India have identified Gulf of Kutch and Gulf of Khambhat in Gujarat and Bhitarkanika, Mahanadi, Subemrekha, Dhamra and Devi estuaries in Orissa for afforestation, regeneration and protection of mangroves.

Plantation Programme in Orissa

7606. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of funds allocated by the Government for the plantation programme for Orissa during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government have approached to any foreign country for the development of forests along the coast of Orissa; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The central assistance allocated to Orissa during the last three years (1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000) under the centrally sponsored/central sector plantation schemes of the Ministry of Environment and Forests was Rs. 1,611.14 lakhs.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Telephone Exchange

7607. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up telephone exchange in Chakai division of Jamui district in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the said exchange is likely to be set up; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) A MILT-64 type electronic exchange with capacity of 56 lines, and 32 DELs is already working at Chakai in Jamui district.

Review of Postal System

7608. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the present postal system;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the action taken, by the Government on the basis of outcome of the said review?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A Committee for Excellence in Postal Services was set up in 1988 to review the working of the postal system. It recommended adaptation of various technologies to the needs of the Post in the following broad areas:

- (i) Computerisation of counter Functions, the major point of interface with the customer, with a view to providing a single window for all transactions.
- (ii) Use of satellite based technology for transmission of money orders.
- (iii) Automating the mail processing system in major metropolitan cities.

A total of 6257 computer based multipurpose counter machines have been set upto 31.3.2000 on which about 12 crore transactions per annum are being performed. 77 Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT) have been established on which 1.25 crore money orders are being transmitted annually. This network is being further extended to the installation of 62 more high speed VSATs. Automatic Mail Processing Centres have been established at Mumbai and Chennai which are processing 12 lakh letters per day. Automatic mail processing centres are proposed to be state set up in Calcutta and Delhi upto the end of 9th Five Year Plan.

[English]

India-Eco-Development Project

7609. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have approved a World Bank aided project known as India-Eco-Development project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of States for which this project has been approved;

(d) whether any such scheme is being worked out for the remaining States; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India Eco-development Project is being implemented in seven Protected Areas at a total cost of US\$ 67 millions (Rs. 294.93 crores) since October, 1997 with the following objectives:

- (i) To improve the capacity of Protected Areas Management to conserve biodiversity and gain support of the local people for conservation by improving opportunities for local participation in protected Areas Management;
- (ii) To reduce negative impact of the local people on biodiversity; and
- (iii) Education and awareness, monitoring and research for furthering the cause of conservation in the identified Tiger Reserves and National Parks.

(c) The Project is being implemented in the States of Bihar, West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

(d) and (e) A concept paper for the 2nd phase of India Eco-Development Project has been finalized. The concept paper suggests inclusion of 10 more Protected Areas under the project.

[Translation]

Power Projects in Bihar

7610. SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a Hydro-electric Power Project in view of availability of abundance water in the eastern Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) Koel Karo HE Project (710 MW) in Bihar is one of the projects identified as a Mega Power Project for multistate benefits.

The Government of Bihar is conducting a fresh survey of Project Affected Persons in order to enable National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) to formulate the environmental Management Plan in accordance with the guidelines of the Supreme Court. It is necessary to have firm commitment from buyers for the power from Central Sector Power Projects before execution. Orissa and West Bengal have declined to purchase power from the Project since the tentative tariff amount to Rs. 7.13 per unit is considered too expensive by them.

Bihar has committed to purchase power from the project to the extent it will require to draw power at the prevalent tariff rate. NHPC has been asked to seek the willingness/consent of States outside the region for purchase of power from Koel Karo HE project.

North Koel (2x12 MW) and Chandil (2x4 MW) hydroelectric projects under construction in the State sector in Bihar are scheduled to be commissioned in 2001-2002.

The Detailed Project Reports of the following hydroelectric projects proposed to be set up in Bihar have been returned to the Project Authorities for re-submission after compliance with comments of Central Electricity Authority and Central Water Commission:

Sl.No.	Name of the Project	Date of Receipt	Date of Return
1.	Sankh Stage-II HEP (186 MW) (Gumla District)	December, 1997/ December, 1999	December, 1998/ January, 2000
2.	Kadhwan HEP (450 MW) (Garhwa and Rohtas Districts)	February, 1995	March, 1995
3.	Kanhar PSS (300 MW) (Palamu District)	January, 1990/ May, 1999	July, 1990/ July, 1999

*[English]***Expenditure and Income from Forests**

7611. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the comparative annual expenditure and income from forests of the country;

(b) whether the forest area of the country is decreasing; and

(c) if so, the manner in which the Government would consider on alternative investment policy with regard to forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The details of annual expenditure and income from forests are not compiled in this Ministry and these are maintained by the respective State Governments.

(b) The Forest Survey of India, Dehradun has been assessing the forest resources of the country on a periodical basis since 1987. The recorded forest area of the country as per the State of Forest Report, 1987 was 751,846 sq. km. whereas it is 765,210 sq. km. as per State of Forest Report, 1997. However, the forest cover of the country has decreased from 640,819 sq. km. as per the 1987 assessment to 633,379 sq.km. compared to 1997 assessment.

(c) The Ministry has formulated National Forestry Action Programme for sustainable development of forests

and bringing one-third area of the country under forest/ tree cover for the next 20 years. The current investment in forestry sector is Rs. 1615 crores from all sources as against the average annual requirement of Rs. 4669 crores per annum as per the National Forestry Action Programme. The programme calls for alternative means and mechanism of fund mobilisation.

*[Translation]***Telephone Facility in Mohanlalgarh**

7612. SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the villages having telephone facility in Mohanlalgarh district in Uttar Pradesh at present block-wise;

(b) whether the Government have received any representations to provide telephone facilities in some villages of the district;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the time by which the telephone facility is likely to be available in the said villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SHUKLA): (a) Block-wise names of the villages having telephone facility at present in Mohanlalgarh Tehsil is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) to (e) Yes, Sir. Details of the representations received and present status of their representation is given as under:

Name	Representation	Status
Smt. Reena Choudhary, MP from Mohanlalgarh	To provide telephone exchange in village Lonha under Lucknow Tehsil	Telephone exchange has been planned and will be commissioned by October 2000
Smt. Raj Kumari Ratna Singh, MP from Partapgarh	Upgradation of the Sysendi Exchange by installation of Microwave or OFC	Sysendi Telephone Exchange has been upgraded by installation of Optical Fibre during March 2000
Shri Bachcha Pathak	Provision of Telephone connection in Kirti Khara	Telephone connection has been provided on 21.12.99 with Indicator No. 826211.

Statement**Names of Villages having Telecom Facility in Gossain Ganj Development Block of Mohanlalganj Tehsil**

Sl.No.	Name of Village
1	2
1.	Bagauli
2.	Dakhina Sekhpur
3.	Rasulpur Ashiq Ali
4.	Fatehpur
5.	Bajgiha
6.	Sahajade Pur
7.	Bastauli
8.	Karsanda
9.	Sarai Gudauli
10.	Chamar Tolla
11.	Kapera Madarpur
12.	Solhoo Mau
13.	Mitauli Adampur
14.	Hasna Pur
15.	Dhaurabara
16.	Bhaura Khurd
17.	Panch Sara
18.	Asti
19.	Harral
20.	Sadra Raipur
21.	Keoli
22.	Khavas Khera
23.	Sirauna
24.	Naubasta
25.	Bhatwara
26.	Ahmedpur Ahsan Ali
27.	Jahangir Pur
28.	Alai Mau
29.	Dular Mau
30.	Siddh Pura
31.	Bakkas

1	2
32.	Rehmat Nagar
33.	Adampur Naubasta
34.	Behrauli
35.	Barauna
36.	Ghuskar
37.	Jaukhandi
38.	Hardola
39.	Noorpur Behta
40.	Churahiya
41.	Sevai
42.	Karorva
43.	Ichvaliya
44.	Kabeer Pur
45.	Kazi Khera
46.	Kasim Pur
47.	Chand Sarai
48.	Bastia
49.	Basrahiya
50.	Bigariya Mau
51.	Maghuva
52.	Malauli
53.	Ratiya Mau
54.	Jamal Nagar Puriyana
55.	Rasoolpur Tikaniya Mau
56.	Dohra Mau
57.	Shivlar
58.	Sadarpur Karora
59.	Sathwara
60.	Salempur
61.	Shekhna Pur
62.	Koryani
63.	Amethi
64.	Beli Kalan

*Names of Villages having Telecom Facility in
Mohantalgaanj Development Block of
Mohantalgaanj Tehsil*

Sl.No.	Name of Village
1	2
1.	Baddhi Barkat Nagar
2.	Kotra Raipur
3.	Pooram Pur
4.	Dhanua Saad
5.	Bhaudari
6.	Neevan
7.	Partheta
8.	Madarpur
9.	Jaiti Khera
10.	Ghaura Kala
11.	Rakibabad
12.	Mahura Khurd
13.	Kankaha
14.	Kush Maush
15.	Raghunath Khera
16.	Sethauli Kalan
17.	Bhllam Pur
18.	Karora
19.	Achali Khera
20.	Kurha
21.	Akar Haddu
22.	Jamal Pur Dadurl
23.	Mahura Kalan
24.	Devati
25.	Gauriya Khurd
26.	Kuberaha
27.	Meena Pur
28.	Meeran Pur
29.	Kamal Pur Vichrika

1	2
30.	Ghursara
31.	Laloomar
32.	Mehndauli
33.	Bhaghu Khera
34.	Gautam Khera
35.	Mohammda Bad
36.	Paras Pur Phattha
37.	Tikra Jugraj
38.	Blura
39.	Sarthua
40.	Utrawan
41.	Bahadesua
42.	Seeraa
43.	Parvar Paschim
44.	Dayal Pur
45.	Uttar Gaon
46.	Deoria Bharosva
47.	Rati
48.	Ramchur Garhi
49.	Lal Pur
50.	Harthar Pur Patsa
51.	Semra Peer Pur
52.	Dehi Teeker
53.	Atrauli
54.	Khujehtha
55.	Khujauli
56.	Govind Pur
57.	Gaura
58.	Jabrauli
59.	Dehva
60.	Pursaini
61.	Barvalia

1	2
62.	Raibhan Khera
63.	Dharmavat Khera
64.	Holas Khera
65.	Kalli Paschim
66.	Kalli Purab
67.	Parwar Paschim
68.	Kharika
69.	Mohari Kalan
70.	Mohari Khurd
71.	Indrajit Khera
72.	Bindauva
73.	Bhasandha
74.	Mau
75.	Mangtaiya
76.	Anaiya Kharagapur
77.	Ismail Nagar
78.	Kaneri
79.	Hassan Pur
80.	Kanta Karaundi
81.	Abbas Nagar
82.	Chhatauni
83.	Meerakh Nagar
84.	Nagram
85.	Shah Mohd. Pur
86.	Sameel
87.	Salem Pur Achaka
88.	Karan Pur
89.	Natauli
90.	Nigohan
91.	Patauna
92.	Purahiya
93.	Beer Singh Pur

1	2
94.	Berisal Pur
95.	Bhatpura
96.	Bhava Khera
97.	Masti Pur
98.	Ramdas Pur
99.	Dighari
100.	Serapur Laval

[English]

**Telephone Connection to
Freedom Fighters**

7613. KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the freedom fighters are entitled for a telephone connection;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The freedom fighters are entitled for provision of a telephone connection on priority under Non-OYT-SWS Category, without payment of registration charges and installation charges. Besides this, they are to pay only half of the normal rental charges.

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

G.I. Wires

7614. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision was taken to get G.I. Wires insulated to certain specifications but that decision is not being implemented till date;

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

(c) the total loss suffered as a result thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A decision to get G.I. Wires insulated, wherever needed, was taken by the Department.

This was implemented to draft specifications issued by T&D Circle in 1979 with modifications from time to time and final specifications in 1994 by JEC.

(c) and (d) There has been no direct loss to department as G.I. Wires are insulated only as a protective measure. However, some alleged irregularities are under investigation.

[Translation]

Ranthambore Tiger Project

7615. SHRIMATI JAS KAUR MEENA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages affected due to implementation of the Ranthambore Tiger Project alongwith details thereof;

(b) whether the Government have provided employment to the farmers whose land was acquired for the purpose;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which these farmers are likely to be rehabilitated and provided employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) 12 Villages have been relocated from Ranthambore Tiger Reserve. The relocation involved shifting of 100 families who were given compensation of Rs. 4.53 lakhs, and 2681 Bighas of land, in lieu of 1812 Bighas of land acquired.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The villagers were paid cash compensation. Each family relocated was allotted land equivalent to the land holding plus additional 5 Bighas of land.

(d) Rehabilitation works in respect of the 12 villages has been completed.

[English]

Review of Power Generation

7616. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the position of power generation/distribution/transmission in private and public sectors in Maharashtra during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Power generation on all India basis is monitored by the Central Electricity Authority on daily basis. Details of power generation in private and public sectors in Maharashtra for the last three years is given below:

Sector	Generation in Million Units		
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
State Sector:			
(a) Thermal	37932	40839	41530
(b) Hydro	3491	3704	3819
Total State Sector:	41423	44543	45349
Private Sector:			
(a) Thermal	11194	10953	15141
(b) Hydro	1263	1307	1623
Central Sector:			
(a) Nuclear	2117	2294	2171

Supply and distribution of power in a State is within the purview of the concerned State Government/State Electricity Board which undertake the review of distribution and transmission from time to time. CEA has not received any Project Report for transmission Projects from Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) for appraisal to be implemented in private/public sector. However, MSEB is taking up transmission projects for implementation after sanction under its own power.

Power supply and related issues in a region are reviewed from time to time at Regional Electricity Boards. In the instant case, this is reviewed at the level of Western Regional Electricity Board (WREB) of which Maharashtra is a constituent.

**Offer of New Blocks for
Exploration Under NELP**

7617. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI RAMESHETH THAKUR:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR:
SHRI G.J. JAVIYA:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:
SHRI DILIP KUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI:
KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI:
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:
SHRI JAI PRAKASH:
SHRI ARUN KUMAR:
SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently finalised the production sharing contracts for the 25 oil blocks awarded to various national and international oil companies under the New Exploration Licensing Policy;

(b) if so, the details and terms and conditions of the production sharing contracts;

(c) the extent to which it will help in enhancing the production of oil;

(d) the amount the Government propose to spend during the first phase of oil exploration;

(e) the time by which exploration work is likely to start;

(f) whether bids were invited for awarding such oil blocks;

(g) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(h) the details of new modifications made under the NELP and the time by which the remaining oil blocks are likely to be offered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (h) (i) Out of 25 exploration blocks awarded under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP)-99, on the basis of global competitive bidding, production sharing contracts (PSCs) for 22 blocks have been signed on 12.4.2000. The broad terms of NELP are given in the attached Statement.

- (ii) The extent of production can be estimated only after commercial discovery of hydrocarbons is made in these blocks.
- (iii) In the exploration of these blocks, no investment from Government is required. However, based on the work programme committed by awardee companies in phase-I of exploration, the expenditure by these companies is estimated to be about US \$ 246 million.
- (iv) The exploration work in these blocks can be started after the Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) is issued.
- (v) The exploration activities in the country involving acquisition of new data, reprocessing/ reinterpretation of the existing data and offer of blocks is a continuous & an ongoing process.

Statement

The broad terms of NELP are as under:

- No signature, discovery or production bonus.
- No mandatory state participation.
- No carried interest by National Oil Companies (NOCs).
- Income Tax Holiday for seven years from start to commercial production.
- No custom duty on imports required for petroleum operations.
- Biddable cost recovery limit upto 100%.

- Option to amortise exploration and drilling expenditures over a period of 10 years from first commercial production.
- Riddable sharing of profit petroleum based on pre-tax investment multiple achieved by the contractor.
- Royalty for onland areas is payable at the rate of 12.5% for crude oil and 10% for Natural gas. For offshore areas, it is payable at the rate of 10% for oil and Natural gas. Royalty for discoveries in deep water areas beyond 400 m iso-bath will be chargeable at half the applicable rate for offshore areas for the first seven years of commercial production.
- Fiscal stability provision in the contract.
- Freedom to the contractor for marketing of oil and gas in the domestic market.
- Provision for assignment.
- Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1996 will be applicable.

Manufacturing of Ships in Shipyards

7618. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of ships built by each shipyard of the country during the last three years;

(b) the actual cost incurred thereon;

(c) the details of profit and loss in regard to each ship, shipyard-wise;

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to reduce the manufacturing cost of these ships, modernization of shipyards and to make them commercially viable during the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(e) the number of ships targeted to be manufactured by the year 2000-2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) to (c) and (e) The number of ships built, actual cost

and profit/loss made by the Public Sector Shipyards under the administrative control of this Ministry during last three years and number and type of ships targeted to be manufactured during the year 2000-2001 may be seen in the statement attached.

(d) Following steps have been taken by the Union Government to reduce the cost of production and modernise the public sector shipyards and to make them commercially viable during the Ninth Five Year Plan:

- (i) provision of 30% Subsidy on Shipbuilding for ocean-going vessels for domestic and export orders;
- (ii) Plan assistance is being given to Public Sector Shipyards under the administrative control of Ministry of Surface Transport for upgradation and modernisation and augmentation of Shipbuilding and Shiprepair facilities.
- (iii) Voluntary Retirement Scheme is under implementation in the Public Sector Shipyards to reduce excessive manpower thereby optimising staff strength.
- (iv) Capital Restructuring of Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam, Cochin Shipyard Limited, Cochin have been carried out. Short Term Revival Plan for Hooghly Dock & Port Engineers Ltd., Calcutta is under implementation. Long Term Revival Plan of HDPE is under consideration.
- (v) Ship components can be imported by Shipyards under OGL as per liberalised export-import policy.

Further, Shipyards are also taking the following measures for reducing the cost of production and modernisation of the yards.

- (i) optimum utilisation of existing facilities;
- (ii) improved inventory control system;
- (iii) quality control systems;
- (iv) induction of new technology/techniques, such as—
 - (a) modular construction of ships;
 - (b) computer aided design facilities.
- (v) restructuring of organisational set up.

Statement

Actual Production Cost and Profit (Loss) on each Vessel built by Public Sector Shipyards during the last three years & number and type of Ships targeted to be manufactured by the year 2000-2001

Sl. No.	Name of Shipyard	No. and (type) of ships built during the last 3 years	Actual cost of production (Rs. in crores)	Profit+ Loss(—) (Rs. in crores)	No. and type of ships targeted to be manufactured by the year 2000-2001
1.	Cochin Shipyard Ltd., Cochin	1 No. Oil Tanker (93400 DWT) 4 Nos. Tugs Tug BY28 Tug BY29 Tug BY30 Tug BY31 2 Nos. Docking Pontoon BY32 BY 33	231.07 17.31 10.70 9.97 9.72 2.77 3.50	-37.85 +1.03 +0.345 +1.03 +0.76 -0.31 -0.27	3 Nos. of tugs 2 Nos. of 150 passenger vessels 1 No. of Double Hull Tanker (99000 DWT)
2.	Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., Visakhapatnam	1 No. Bulk carrier (42750 DWT) 1 No. 1200 Passenger Vessel 1 No. Tug (50 Ton Bollard Pull Tug)	167.00 239.87 29.25	-102.77 -33.22 -8.73	1 No. Bulk Carrier (42750 DWT) 4 Nos. 100 Passenger vessels 3 Nos. Tugs
3.	Rajabagan Dockyard of Central Inland Water Transport Corporation, Calcutta	1 No. Dumb Barge 1 No. Pollution Control Vessel	3.44 4.60	-0.28 -3.05	1 No. Tug
4.	Hooghly Dock & Port Engineers Ltd., Calcutta	7 Nos. taken up for production but none delivered yet	Actual cost yet to be computed	Not applicable since no vessel delivered	1 No. Lighthouse Tender vessel 2 Nos. Surface dredgers 1 No. Survey Launch 1 No. Tug

Photo Identity Cards

7619. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large scale bungling worth crores of rupees has come to the notice of the Government in issuing photo identity cards to voters in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the plan of the Government to issue photo identity cards to voters has proved a failure;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has made certain observations, about underutilization of funds allotted for implementation of the scheme of Electors' Photo Identity Cards, excess/avoidable expenditure by some States due to non-observance of instructions issued by the Election Commission (*vide* para 4 of Chapter IV of its report for the year 1997, March, Vol. III).

(c) to (e) No, Sir. According to the Election Commission, the move to require production of these Photo Identity Cards or any other specified proof of identity in the recently held Assembly elections in Haryana has largely been welcomed. In that State, about 88% of electors have been issued these Cards and the data received from CEO, Haryana indicates that nearly 80 per cent of the electors produced them at the time of voting. The Commission has been continuously monitoring the progress of the scheme of issuance of Electors' Photo Identity Cards to ensure that all citizens registered as electors are issued defect free Identity Cards. About thirty-eight crore electors representing 62% of the eligible electors of the country have so far been provided Identity Cards.

**Power Grid Corporation to
enter into Telecom Sector**

7620. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA:
PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Power Grid to enter telecom business" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated April 8, 2000;

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

(c) the extent to which it is likely to help financially the Power Grid Corporation of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Opening of long distance telecommunication sector by Government and successful experience of power utilities world wide in the telecommunication sector have paved the way for Power Grid to enter into telecommunication business. The power transmission lines owned by Power Grid provide excellent connectivity throughout the country, which would enable setting up an optic fibre network on all India basis for broad band communication.

In view of the complexities involved, Power Grid had appointed reputed consultants to advise in its diversification plan. After detailed analysis of the scenario in telecommunication sector, the consultants have observed that Power Grid's venture into telecom business is a viable proposition.

Based on the report of the consultants, Power Grid is contemplating to build and provide infrastructure to the National Long Distance (NLD) business and also take an equity stake in the NLD business. The NLD operator would provide switched long distance wires and data services. The preliminary estimate of the network for the NLD Operations by Power Grid calls for installation of about 42000 km of optical fibre cable at an estimated capital expenditure of more than Rs. 5,000 crores. Power Grid is planning to install around 14,000 kms of optical fibre cable connecting 35 major cities. This will require an estimated outlay of about Rs. 1,300 crores. Power Grid has issued a global invitation for selection of Joint Venture Partner to facilitate establishment of the NLD Operations and have applied for NLD license from Department of Telecommunications.

[*Translation*]

Committee of Competition Laws

7621. SHRI THIRUNAVUKARASU: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether S.V.S. Raghavan Committee on the Competition Laws has sought an extension of time in submitting its report;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have extended the time for submission of the said report;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the report is likely to be submitted?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The High Level Committee on Competition Policy and Law headed by Shri S.V.S. Raghavan has been given extension of time till 31.05.2000 to submit its Report to the Government. The extension was given as the Committee had felt that the time limit set by the Government to it for submission of its Report was rather short. The Report of the Committee is now expected to be available by 31.05.2000.

Law Commission on C.P.C. and Criminal Procedure Code

7622. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT:
SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI:
SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA:
SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government intend to bring changes in all the Civil Procedure Code and Criminal Procedure Code as per the requirement of time in order to provide inexpensive, speedy and proper justice to the common people;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to set up a Law Commission in this regard;

(d) if so, the time by which this commission is likely to be set up and the jurisdiction thereof; and

(e) the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) In order to provide inexpensive, speedy and proper justice to the

common people the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 has been amended by the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1999 (46 of 1999) on the basis of recommendations made by Justice Malimath Committee, Law Commission's Reports and the Report of the Committee on subordinate legislation (11th Lok Sabha). Section 7,8 and 27 of the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1999 relate to providing inexpensive and speedy trial. The amended provisions have not yet been enforced.

In the interest of prompt disposal of cases, the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1994 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on May 9, 1994 in order to amend the relevant provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 on the basis of recommendations made by the Law Commission and the National Police Commission. Clauses 26, 27 and 28 of the Bill provide for speedy trial of the cases. The Bill was examined by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs which submitted its report. The report was examined in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Government intends to move necessary official amendments to the Bill on the basis of suggestions made by Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs as early as possible.

(c) No Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Panna Mukta Project of Reliance

7623. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Panna Mukta Project of Reliance has been abandoned;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any proposals are under consideration of the Government to disinvest more BPCL and other petroleum company equities to Reliance industry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The consortium consisting of ONGC (40%), Enron Oil & Gas Company (30%) and Reliance Industries (30%) which have

been awarded Panna Mukta Oil and Gas fields under Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) is continuing its activities in these fields.

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) No, Sir.
- (d) Does not arise.

Full Capacity Production

7624. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications has been procuring equipments and stores about Rs. 7000 crores every year out of which it is purchasing equipments and stores worth Rs. 230 crore approximately annually from its own factories;

(b) if so, the reasons for not making full purchases from DoT factories; and

(c) the capacity of the DoT factories and the reasons for not attaining full capacity production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir, Total production of Telecom Factories worth Rs. 271.62 crore has been purchased by the Department during 1999-2000.

(b) Out of the total procurement by the Department, the total production of Telecom Factories is only Rs. 271.62 crores. Telecom Factories are making low cost items like DP Boxes, CT Boxes, Line Jack Units etc. Though their production has been increasing year after year, they cannot meet the total requirement of the Department.

(c) Capacity of the Telecom Factories and utilization during 1999-2000 is indicated in the enclosed Statement. It may be seen that for most of the items full capacity utilization has been done.

Statement

Capacity Utilisation of Telecom Factories During 1999-2000

Sl.No.	Item	Production 1998-99	Target 1999-2000	Production 1999-2000	% Capacity Utilisation	Reasons for reduced production
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Bkt.Ch. Lr 4W	1283000	1200000	1322736	110	
2.	Buttenski Telephone	4500	10000	14327	143	
3.	CBT-95	6383	15000	12069	81	Due to delay in production qualification test.
4.	C.D. Cabinets	17204	17000	20006	118	
5.	C.T. Boxes 100 pair	137020	150000	161014	107	
6.	D.P. Boxes	389472	450000	577674	128	
7.	Line Jack Unit	2046285	2200000	2625812	119	
8.	MDFs	3674	5225	5195	98	
9.	Modems	550	1500	3096	206	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Microwave Towers (in MT)	6968	7600	10442	137	
11.	Masts S.S. 15M (Nos.)	9872	1500	5212	347	
12.	Saddle A&B	37275	800000	485000	61] Reduced production was due to frequent power failure
13.	Socket B	37500	30000	27500	92	
14.	Sole Plate B&C	85	125000	60000	48	
15.	Stalks	682000	600000	547650	91	
16.	Support Bracket	1071000	1800000	1326350	74	Corrective action was taken due to reduction in field requirement
17.	Tube of sorts	679427	785000	1030120	131	.
18.	U-Back	1168000	900000	1100322	122	
19.	Mast S.S. 40M (WB) (Nos.)	160	150	81	54	Corrective action was taken due to reduction in field requirement.

[Translation]

Rule for Opening of Telephone Exchange

7625. DF. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the existing norms for opening of telephone exchange in a district;

(b) whether the said norms are being violated in many regions of the country;

(c) if so, the number of such cases noticed during the last three years, State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to check such tendencies of the Department in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The minimum registered demand required for opening of a Telephone Exchange is 10 provided the demand of the telephones at the place cannot be met from an existing exchange within the SDCA (short distance charging area) due to technical/economical reasons.

(b) This condition is not being violated anywhere in the country.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of reply to para (b) above.

[English]

**Construction of Express Highway between
Bangalore and Mysore**

7626. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under consideration of the Government to construct an Express Highway between Bangalore and Mysore;

(b) if so, the estimated cost of the project;

(c) the likely date of the commencement of the project; and

(d) the time by which the said project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) No, Sir. Central Government is not concerned. It is a State Government Project.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Construction of Ring Road in Tamil Nadu

7627. DR. V. SAROJA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to construct a ring road around Namakkal to ease traffic congestion thereon;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if, not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The construction of ring road around Namakkal town to ease traffic congestion within the town is primarily the responsibility of the State Government/Municipal Corporation.

Environment Fund

7628. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI:
SHRI SAHIB SINGH.

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering to create a fund titled National Environment Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the break up of 'National Environment Fund' in terms of Public Sector and Private Sector Fund;

(d) whether the Government propose to collect cess on forest products; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by the Government to meet the total financial requirement for replanting and regeneration of forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) The concept of an environment fund at the national level is at a nascent stage.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Funds for Wildlife Sanctuaries

7629. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of wildlife sanctuaries in the country;

(b) the amount of money allocated to these sanctuaries during the last three years;

(c) whether review has been made/proposed to be made for the proper utilisation of funds being given to the wildlife sanctuaries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) As per the information last compiled by the Ministry there are 86 National Parks and 448 Sanctuaries in the country.

(b) Central assistance provided for National Parks and Sanctuaries under various centrally sponsored schemes is as follows:

		(Rs. in lakhs)		
Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
1.	Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries	1212.533	934.863	1298.00
2.	Project Tiger	807.965	1680.875	1749.162

(c) and (d) The scheme 'Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries' was got evaluated from five organisations at the end of 8th Five Year Plan and was found to be very useful and hence it is continued during the 9th Plan also.

[English]

Status Report from RBF Nidhi Limited

7630. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI G.J. JAVIYA:
SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI
CHIKHALIA:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Company Law Board (CLB) has ordered the suppression of the Board of Directors of RBF Nidhi Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether CLB has also directed the new Board to file a status report on the affairs of the company and time bound scheme for repayment of deposits collected by the company;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether CLB has taken such decision in other Nidhi Companies which are defaulters; and

(f) if so, the details of such Companies thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) Yes,

Sir. The Company Law Board has appointed seven new directors including Chairman *vide* its order dated 12.01.2000 as indicated below:

- (1) Shri A.M. Swaminathan, Retd. Secy. Government of Tamil Nadu.
- (2) Shri N.R. Sridharan, Retd. Director, Government of India.
- (3) Shri K.J. Pappachen, President, RBF Nidhi Investors Association.
- (4) Shri R. Deekan, Consumer Activist.
- (5) Shri Arvind Datar, Advocate, Madras High Court.
- (6) Shri R. Rudrakumar, Chartered Accountant.
- (7) Shri A.R. Rao, Special Officer appointed by the Central Government has been appointed the Chairman of the Board.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. The Company Law Board has directed the new Board of Directors to file a status report on the affairs of the company and also a time bound scheme for repayment of deposits by 31.03.2000. The Company Law Board *vide* its order dated 11.04.2000 has given directions for repayment of deposit as under:

- (i) All deposits of Rs. 2000 and less will be paid in full so that largest segment of the deposits accounting to a mere Rs. 6 crores will go out of the scheme, thus reducing the workload in the company.
- (ii) In respect of all other deposits, 10% of the deposits subject to a minimum of Rs. 2000 will be paid. Further repayment of these deposits will be subject to the condition that not more than 50% of these deposits are paid by 31.03.2002.
- (iii) Interest on deposits will be frozen as on 01.11.1999.
- (iv) At the time of making of first payment, the company will also enclose a statement of the amount due to each depositor as on 30.11.1999 and also a summary of the CLB order.
- (v) Since interest has been paid in respect of many fixed deposits for the month of November 1999, to ensure that there is uniformity, interest for the month of November, 1999 be paid to those

fixed deposits against which interest could not be paid for the month of November 1999. This payment should be done within 15 days from the date of receipt of the CLB order.

- (vi) With a view to provide some comforts to old age depositors, CLB directed that deposits made by those of the age of over 75/80 years, as may be decided by the Board, be paid in full subject to a maximum of Rs. 50,000. Balance, if any, will be subject to the same terms of repayment as applicable to other depositors. Similar will be the case in respect of deceased depositors.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. In the case of M/s. Alwarpet Benefit Fund Limited, a Nidhi company which is a defaulter in repayment of deposits on maturity, the Company Law Board has given direction to the Department of Company Affairs for appointment of three directors on the Board of this company. As such the Central Government *vide* order dated 06.09.1999 has appointed 3 directors namely:

- (1) Shri V.R. Lakshminarayanan,
- (2) Shri H. Venkataraman, and
- (3) Shri S. Radhakrishnan.

Production Level of Crude Oil

7631. SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the existing production level of crude oil in the country;

(b) whether such production level has been meeting the requirement of all oil refineries in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps taken to enhance this level;

(d) whether the Government propose to import crude oil to meet the requirement of existing refineries of country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The

crude oil production during 1999-2000 has been about 32 MMT.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

The shortfall in indigenous crude oil supplies has to be met from imports. The following steps have been taken to enhance the production level of crude oil in the country:

- (i) Optimizing production from existing fields through better reservoir management, 3-D seismic surveys, infill drilling, pressure maintenance, installation/optimisation of artificial lift system and use of advanced and cost effective technologies and improvement in recovery factor.
- (ii) Faster development of newly discovered oilfields.
- (iii) Finding new hydrocarbon reserves through intensified exploration activities such as—
 - Exploration at greater depths in existing fields.
 - Extending exploration activities to deep waters and frontier areas.
 - Increased private participation in exploration activities through implementation of New Exploration Licensing Policy.

(d) and (e) The imports of crude oil for meeting the requirements of public sector oil refineries are estimated to be about 46.957 MMT during 2000-2001.

Exploration of Crude Oil in Kerala

7632. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to take any steps for crude oil exploration in Kerala High; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has identified one prospect in the Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) held by it in the Kerala-Konkan offshore area. At present, 3D seismic survey is being carried out and based on its results further programme, including exploratory drilling, will be decided.

Additionally, four exploration blocks belonging to Kerala-Konkan offshore area were offered in the first round of bidding in 1999 under the New Exploration Licensing Policy. Two of these blocks have been awarded, one each to private joint venture and to ONGC, and the production sharing contracts have been signed for both on 12.4.2000.

Share in Power Projects

7633. SHRI P. MOHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of contribution of the Union Government in power projects set up in the States, State-wise; and

(b) the share of States in Central Power Projects, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Prices of Gas and Other Petroleum Products

7634. SHRI RAJESH VERMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed prices for gas and other petroleum products on the basis of cost of production etc. within the country;

(b) if so, the factual, audited break up of these costs;

(c) the actual costs and actual sale price of these products exclusive of taxes;

(d) whether the Government have asked CAG to go into this matter; and

(e) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The consumer price of Natural gas is not fixed based on the cost of production. With effect from 1.10.97, the consumer prices of Natural gas at the landfall point have been linked to the international price of a basket of fuel oils with the linkage increasing from 55% in 1997-98, 65% in 1998-99 and 75% in 1999-2000. The current consumer price of Natural gas is also linked to 75% of

the international price of fuel oil. The price of Natural gas is under review for the period 2000-2002. As regards petroleum products, Government, in November, 1997, decided the details of phased programme of dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism. The said decision, *inter-alia*, includes the following:

(i) That system of retention pricing would be abolished in all (existing and new) refineries, and pricing of petroleum products at the refinery gate level would move towards import parity. However, Refinery Gate prices of controlled products viz. MS, HSD, SKO, LPG and ATF would be fixed at "adjusted import parity" prices.

(ii) That consumer prices of major petroleum products would be moved to market prices and prices of other major products, viz. LPG, ATF, SKO and MFO would be moved towards principle of import parity in a phased manner and pricing of Paraffin-Wax, Bitumen, Naphtha, FO and LSHS would be decontrolled.

(iii) That, the price of diesel would continue to be fixed on the principle of import parity as per Cabinet decision of 01.09.1997.

The phased programme of reforms has been initiated with effect from 1.4.98.

(d) and (e) Accounts of public sector oil companies and the Oil Coordination Committee are audited by CAG.

Insurance Fee Charged by LPG Dealers

7635. SHRIMATI D.M. VIJAYA KUMARI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain LPG agencies in the capital particularly in Rohini Zone are charging Rs. 200/- as insurance fee per connection from the consumers without issuing receipt in respect thereof;

(b) if so, whether some connections have been cancelled due to non-payment of the said fee by the consumers;

(c) if so, the number of such cases detected so far;

(d) whether the LPG dealers are authorised to cancel the connection without permission of the Department;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and if not, the action proposed to be taken against such dealers;

(f) whether some complaints against the dealers are pending in regard to delivery of low weight filled cylinders to the consumers and misbehave with consumers; and

(g) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies have not received any case of charging Rs. 200/-, as insurance fee by their LPG distributors for connection from the consumers in the Capital particularly in Rohini Zone.

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

(d) No, Sir.

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

(f) and (g) Public Sector Oil Companies have not received any complaints in the recent past against their LPG distributor in Rohini Zone.

ATNs on Findings of CAG

7636. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry and departments under it have not submitted Action Taken Notes (ATNs) on various findings of CAG on irregularities during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof and the time by which the same will be replied; and

(c) the number of action taken notes (ATNs) pending as on date in his Ministry, department-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Ministry of Power has been regularly submitting Action Taken Notes on various findings of C&AG. As regards the latest C&AG's Report of 1999, the ATNs are being processed and shall be submitted in due course.

(c) 5 ATNs pertaining to NTPC have been sent to the C&AG for vetting. 8 audit observations which appeared in the latest C&AG report of 1999 are being processed. Of these, 2 pertained to NJPC, 1 THDC, 2 NHPC, 2 NTPC and 1 PGCIL.

Terminal Charges to Reliance Petroleum

7637. SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether various oil companies are paying terminal charges to the Reliance petroleum; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Oil Offer to Shiv Vani Company

7638. MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil India Limited has given an offer to M/s. Shiv Vani Company (SVUL Rig) for drilling at Simen Chapori site in Assam State at the rate of about Rs. 9.00 lakhs per day;

(b) if so, whether other drilling companies are doing the same job in the same region at the lower rate;

(c) if so, the reasons for offering such high rate to M/s. Shivani Company (SVUL Rig);

(d) whether any tender was invited for this drilling site and if so, the names of the companies participated in the tender;

(e) whether no tender was invited for this drilling site and if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard; and

(f) the persons responsible for this excess payment to the said company and how much loss the Government is likely to suffer by this drilling operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Oil India Limited has a contract with M/s. Shiv Vani Universal Limited (SVUL) to drill six exploratory wells. SVUL is drilling an exploratory well in the 'wildcat' area of Simen Chapori in Dhemaji District of Assam, located

In the logistically difficult terrain in the north bank of the river Brahmaputra, at an existing operating day rate comprising of Rs. 6 lakhs and US \$ 6,600/-.

So far no exploratory drilling operations, except with M/s. SVUL's rig, have been carried out either by OIL or by any other agency in this virgin area of the north bank of the river Brahmaputra in Assam.

(d) to (f) Oil India Limited decided to continue with the existing contract with SVUL for drilling the well at Simen Chapori and did not go in for a fresh tender for this one well alone for the following reasons:

- (i) High Priority attached to exploratory drilling in the north bank of river Brahmaputra.
- (ii) Subsisting contract with M/s. SVUL for drilling of six exploratory wells, out of which two wells remain to be drilled.
- (iii) Simen Chapori well is located in the Murkongselek Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) area which is contiguous to Lakhimpur PEL area, where six exploratory wells were originally proposed to be drilled, and both these PELs are on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra.
- (iv) Anticipated delays in finalisation of a new contract in such a remote area with difficult terrain in Assam, that too for one well only.
- (v) Commercial and operational aspects favour continuation of the existing contract in comparison to other available options.

The rig of M/s. SVUL has already been mobilised to Simen Chapori well location and drilling work will commence shortly.

Fake LPG Cylinders

7639. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newitem captioned "Danger ignored as trade in fake gas cylinders flourishes" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated March 6, 2000;

(b) if so, the number of fake LPG cylinders seized in the country during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise; and

(c) the action taken against the persons involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of LPG-cylinders seized in the country during the last three years are as under:

Year	No. of seized cylinders
1997	10960
1998	9795
1999	10250

(c) Oil Industry technical teams make surprise visits to the enlisted suppliers to check manufacturing activity/quality as per the Indian Standard specifications and in case technical deficiencies are observed during the visit, the placement of orders on such units is suspended by industry.

Kayamkulam Thermal Power Plant of NTPC

7640. DR. C. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantum of power generated since commissioning by the Kayamkulam Thermal Power Plant, till-date;

(b) the plant load factor during the said period;

(c) the quantum of power drawn and consumed by KSEB out of the total power generated;

(d) the per unit tariff rate paid by KSEB to NTPC;

(e) the outstanding dues of NTPC against KSEB, till-date; and

(f) the steps proposed to be taken by NTPC to recover such dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Since commissioning of the Gas Turbine Unit-I and Unit-II at Kayamkulam CCPP in 1998-99 and Steam Turbine-I in 1999-2000 the plant generated about 1722 MUe till 8th May, 2000.

(b) The gas based power stations are run as per their requirement and commercial viability. However, the PLF of the units under commercial operation at Kayamkulam CGPP as reported by NTPC are as under:

Year	PFL (%)
1998-99	71.46%
1999-2000	55.84%
April, 2000	77.26%

(c) Presently, the entire power generated from Kayamkulam gas power project is being drawn and consumed by Kerala State Electricity Board in terms of PPA signed between KSEB and NTPC.

(d) The tariff for Kayamkulam CGPP is to be determined by Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) as per the provisions of ERC Act, 1998. The issue of tariff fixation is pending with CERC.

(e) According to NTPC, the outstanding dues against KSEB, as on 31.3.2000 stand at Rs. 182.25 crores (including a surcharge of Rs. 38.16 crores) based on ad-hoc tariff. In addition, KSEB will have to pay differential amount based on Tariff to be decided by CERC.

(f) The matter has been recently discussed by NTPC with Government of Kerala and KSEB wherein KSEB has agreed to issue State Government Guarantee Bonds to liquidate the outstanding dues.

MoU Signed by Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited

7641. DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited has signed any Memorandum of Understanding with the Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The MoU for the year 2000-2001 has fixed targets in various activities like physical operations, financial

performance, human resources development project implementation, safety and environment.

Fixed Deposits by GAIL

7642. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the fixed deposits made by Gas Authority of India Limited to various nationalised banks in the capital; and

(b) the details of loans taken by GAIL from public sector banks in the capital during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The details of the fixed deposits made by Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) to various nationalised banks in the capital, as on March 31, 2000 are as under:

Name of the Bank	Amount (Rupees in crore)
ICICI	50
United Bank of India	25
Oriental Bank of Commerce	120
UTI Bank	50
State Bank of Indore	20

(b) GAIL has drawn a loan of Rs. 540 crore from the Bank of Baroda and Rs. 150 crore from the Bank of India, during the years 1997-98 to 1999-2000.

12.01 hrs.

RE: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the Information Technology Bill, 1999 is listed in today's List of Business for consideration and passing. The Bill, after its introduction on the 16th December, 1999, was referred to the Standing Committee on Science and Technology on the 17th January, 2000. The Report of the Committee was laid on the Table of the House on the 12th May, 2000.

[Mr. Speaker]

I have received notices of amendments to the Bill from some hon. Members today.

Hon. Members are entitled to give notices of amendments to a Bill any time after the introduction of the Bill. Rule 79, however, provides that notice of an amendment to a Bill has to be given not later than one day before the day on which the Bill is to be considered. As such, under normal circumstances, the notices of amendments to the Bill received on the day the Bill is listed for consideration are treated as time-barred.

However, it is a fact that hon. Members came to know only on the 13th May, 2000 that the Bill would be listed for consideration on the 15th May, 2000; and 13th and 14th May, 2000 being holidays, I feel that hon. Members have not got sufficient time to give notices of amendments.

I have, therefore, decided to allow hon. Members to give notices of amendments to the Bill till 1300 hours today. Notices received thereafter shall be treated as time-barred.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): It is a fact that it was discussed and decided in the Business Advisory Committee that if the Report of the Standing Committee came up by Friday, the Bill would be listed today.

This Bill, no doubt, shows the good intention of the Government, which we welcome. But the Bill has been circulated after being scrutinised by the Standing Committee to hon. Members only on Friday evening or this morning. There are exhaustive clauses with legal implications pertaining to the Criminal Procedure Code, the Indian Penal Code and many other matters relating to criminal justice. It is the desire of most of the Members—including Members from the Ruling Party—that we should go into it in depth clause by clause and understand the objective. So, let us not be in a hurry to pass it. We can discuss it and bring it again in the Monsoon Session. But if you ask us to give amendments before one O'clock, without going into the clauses and their merits, it would be disastrous. I would appeal to the hon. Minister to consider these points though we welcome the good intentions of this Bill.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA (Guna): I would also like to join my colleague. Obviously, we support the intentions of this particular Bill but the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs or the Government should not make this a matter of prestige. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: We have already discussed this in the Business Advisory Committee.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: This Bill deals with the laws that would regulate the new era of information technology. This is not really information technology but this is the law. There are a lot of legal aspects. There are of a lot of lacunae. These are pioneering areas. Even the legal community is still exploring what really the laws pertaining to the new technology in the world should be. Therefore, we have to go into the depth of it so that we do not make any mistake or leave any lacuna. So, I would request the hon. Minister and the Government to look into this in depth. Let us not rush through this. Otherwise, we may make errors, for which we would feel responsible later on.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I have given a notice in writing on this matter. I may be permitted to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Government is going to clarify the position. Please understand.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, at the outset, let me make it very clear that we are not standing on any prestige or ego on this Bill. This is not some kind of a political discussion. This is a Bill, which will usher the 21st century in this country. So, we do realise the importance of this Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Minister complete.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: The first thing is that the Government took almost one year to draft this Bill. This Bill was modified 150 times during the formulation stage of this Bill because we do understand the importance of this Bill.

This Bill was introduced in the Parliament, I think, on the 16th of December last year. So, it was available for the last five months, with the Members of Parliament to form their opinions about the Bill. This Bill was publicly made available, after its introduction, on the Internet to all the people concerned and the opinions, which my Ministry got, were given to the Standing Committee which scrutinised the Bill. Personally, I have written to one thousand people in this country, who matter in IT and related affairs and got their opinions. We communicated those opinions to the Standing Committee.

This was referred to the Standing Committee on Science and Technology. The Standing Committee on

Science and Technology unanimously—I repeat, unanimously—recommended a few amendments.

So, there can be one legitimate grievance that the Members are not able to form their opinions about the amendments given by the Standing Committee. But as far as the whole Bill is concerned, it was available for five months with the Members to formulate their views on whether a particular clause is right or wrong. ...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): So, in future, all the Bills will be circulated two months before and thus, there would be no discussion in the House. Is that the basis? I do not expect such an observation from the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, this is unfair to me. He is not even allowing me to complete. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: They cannot ask us to give amendments within one hour. He wants to say that the Bill has been introduced or in circulation for two or three months and so, there can be no discussion on the floor of the House. ...*(Interruptions)* Very patiently I am hearing you. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I do not think so.

As far as the amendments are concerned, barring one amendment, the Government has accepted all the unanimous amendments suggested by the Standing Committee.

I am not going into the technicalities. We discussed this in the meeting of the BAC. At that time, I have not hidden from the Members that the Report of the Committee is going to come on the 12th. Everybody in the BAC knew this fact that the Report was going to come on the 12th and the Bill was going to come before this House on the 15th. The intention was made very clear on the 10th, when the BAC met, that the Report is likely to come on the 12th and that if the Report comes on the 12th, only then it will come before the House on the 15th.

After the Report had come on the 12th, the Government had a Cabinet meeting, where we discussed the amendments and where they have been approved. Necessary permission from the hon. President was taken; and at the first opportunity, the amendments were also circulated to the Members. If you see the time that the Members are entitled for, to give their amendments—even if it is to be discussed tomorrow—it is upto 3.15 p.m. today. That is the normal procedure. If the hon. Members think that 1 O'clock is too short a time to give amendments, then they can take two more hours.

We are having discussion even at an informal level from 11 O'clock when we came to know that hon. Members of Congress Party want a discussion on this Bill. Whoever had objections about this Bill are having discussions with the officers concerned. So, what I am saying is that, let us start the discussion and during the discussion if we find that some more improvement is needed, then we can decide it. But please do not postpone it. It is because postponing by three months, in IT language, is postponing by a year. It is a much awaited Bill. We can start the discussion and during the discussion if we come to a conclusion that there are some lacunae, then we can correct it or amend it.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, the 'I Love You' virus that was introduced from South-East Asia has killed many computers and created problems all over the world. Do you understand the complexities of this issue? That is what I am asking. It is because I do not think that this Bill is going to take adequate safeguards towards these issues. Even the legal community is not yet certain what exactly the ground is. What we are saying is that let us discuss this Bill in a detailed manner. Maybe even a Select Committee can go into it.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I am very sorry that the Bill of this nature should raise a controversy like this. It is because, generally the objective of this Bill is good. Though we have reservations over certain clauses, we are supporting this Bill. This is not a matter of Party politics. I do not know why that impression should be created. Since it is such an important sector of life and economy, we want as fool-proof a Bill as possible.

A model law was prepared in 1997 by the United Nations. It was circulated to all the countries of the world. Every country is trying to pass legislation and adjust itself to its own requirements and new situations. We are very keen that we should pass a law as perfect as possible. While going through the Bill, hardly one understands what is it all about unless he gets expert advice. Of course, expert opinion must have been made available to the Standing Committee. I am happy that the Government has taken note of the recommendations of the Standing Committee as far as this Bill is concerned. Generally, we do not find that attitude. The hon. Prime Minister is present here. Certain clauses have raised controversies. Everyday, newspapers are writing about the police powers, theft, entering a cyber cafe etc. I find in the newspapers that there is a controversy even regarding 'hacking'. Are these matters which you can go on finalising as you go on discussing the Bill? It is not our fault. It has come just on the eve of closure of this Session.

[Shri Somnath Chatterjee]

I am sorry that I interrupted the Minister. I interrupted because an impression was created that since this Bill has already been in circulation for five months what is more to be discussed and that the Members should have been ready. This is not the approach we expect from the Government at least, as long as Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee is sitting there. Let us not adopt an attitude of confrontation. I would appeal to the hon. Prime Minister that let us pass a law as perfect as possible. All these difficulties may be avoided in future. We want a first class law because India has got the biggest potential in this sector. Let our young boys and girls who have shown tremendous potential in this sector, not face any problem because we are passing a law in hurry. This is my submission.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Mulayam Singhji, you want to speak on this issue, or it is a separate issue.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): It is a separate issue. You had given the permission. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: First let this be completed, you can speak later on.

[English]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: (Latur): Sir, this law is intended to facilitate electronic governance, electronic commerce and trade. I think we should have a law of this nature.

There is no divided opinion on this point. You have heard the hon. Member saying that we would like to have this kind of a provision on the statute book but it should be done in a manner which is free from any defect. This is not a law of an ordinary nature. It deals with a number of other legislations like the Indian Penal Code, the Evidence Act, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Civil Procedure Code, the Banking Regulations Act and so on. All these laws are proposed to be amended if we pass this law. So, it is a very complicated law. Moreover, it is provided in the Bill itself that after this Bill is passed, a number of rules and regulations will have to be made, presented to the House and then Members will be allowed to examine them for 30 days. The Government can enforce this law only after the Members have examined these rules and regulations and have approved them also. Simply, by passing this law the Government

will not be able to take any action. They shall have to come before the House with the rules and regulations which will be approved by the Members and then only these can be implemented.

There are some objectionable things in this law. I am not going to deal with all the objections. I would like to bring to the notice of the House only one point.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Patil, not at this stage.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: This is a very important issue and that is why I would like to bring this to the notice of the hon. Minister as also the Prime Minister. We are not just objecting it. We will not object it unless there is something glaring which shall have to be taken cognizance of. We are objecting to it because we are trying to pass this law without giving sufficient time to the Members to express their views. We are only asking for some more time to express our views. The most important point that I wanted to bring to the notice of the House is:

"No penalty imposed or confiscation made under this Act shall prevent imposition of any other punishment in which the person affected thereby is liable under any other law for the time being enforced."

Shri Somnath Chatterjee is sitting here. This is affecting the principle of double jeopardy. For the same act, you can punish a person under two laws. This is against the principle of double jeopardy. We shall have to see whether this principle of double jeopardy will apply to this or not. We are, therefore, requesting the hon. Chair and the Government that this is a very important legislation. Let it not be passed in a hurry. Let us not put ourselves in difficulty. Even if the Government is able to pass it in this Session, it will not be able to enforce it because a number of rules and regulations will have to be made. There is not just one rule or regulation but there is a list of rules and regulations which shall have to be made. So, it is necessary, let it be discussed on the floor of the House. In the process of discussion we can find out the areas where it is objectionable. Let it be examined by the experts very carefully. Let us pass it in the next examination after careful examination and enacted also. We are not objecting to the intention or the law but we are objecting to other provisions which can create complications for the Government as also for the country.

* SHRI SHARAD PAWAR (Baramati): I totally support what hon. Shivraj Patil has said. In principle, we are not

opposed to this. This type of a legislation is very much required for a country like India. The only question is, we are not experts on this subject, and certain serious issues have been raised on this by a number of experts. For instance, in the today's newspaper there is a statement by the Chairman NASSCOM, Shri Debang Mehta. He has said that in these four areas there are serious problems. They are the known experts in this particular area. We would like to discuss it with some of the organisations and give our views. Our earnest request is, not to hurry it. We are totally for it but we are not in a mood to support it in a hurry.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Pandiyan, this is not a debate. I have heard the views of the Members.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN (Tirunelveli): Sir, I want to raise a legal point.

MR. SPEAKER: At this stage, you can raise a procedural point and not the legal point. You can raise legal points at the time of discussion. Now, you can talk only about the procedure.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Sir, a Bill can be introduced only constitutionally. It is the invasion of fundamental right and right to privacy. There is a provision here which says that if a person is found meddling with computer network, he shall be liable for three years imprisonment. I would say that if a software engineer assists us, only then we can debate on this Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, I am on a matter of procedure. I gave you a notice on this. Sir, I may be permitted to speak about the procedure. It is my right.

Sir, our Rules of Procedure do not permit a matter to be circulated on Sunday. It was circulated on Sunday and the amendments of the Government were printed on Sunday. Were the Government sleeping? They could have circulated the amendments even on Saturday or on Friday. They did not do that. It is against the procedure.

Secondly, a motion was also circulated on Sunday under Rule 388 for suspension of Rule 80 of Rules of Procedure. You have asked to suspend a rule which is available here. The motion was moved on Sunday. What prompted them to suspend Rule 80? I strongly oppose it. The hon. Speaker should not be a party to such irregularity procedure.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, information technology is the need of the hour and it has been recognised by the Union Government as well as the State Governments.

Sir, this Bill was introduced in the month of December and it was referred to the Standing Committee. The Committee has taken five months and elaborate discussions took place. As this Bill is being introduced with some fresh amendments, all the Opposition Parties are requesting for more time.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: The Committee took one week only.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: Sir, my request is that the Information Technology Bill should be passed as early as possible. If there is a need, we could extend the sitting of the House for three-four days. We have no problem. We could also pass this Bill in a special Session. If it is postponed till September, it will take more time. Sir, even without the Information Technology Bill, the information industry is working. That is why, I am requesting the hon. Prime Minister to pass this Bill in a special Session.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not know anything about this Bill, therefore, I acknowledge my weakness. I want to say why is it necessary to pass this Bill today only to take the country into 21st century?...*(Interruptions)* Sir, it has been said just now that anybody could be arrested without warrant anybody's house could be searched, anybody's computer could be checked, all these things do not conform to our accepted norms. Keep it pending until it is discussed. Mr. Prime Minister, sometimes you should give directions to your friends. Today you have got a chance to tell them to please bring this Bill in the next Session.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Chandra Shekharji has said something about this Bill and has given a hint about his knowledge upto some extent, I also associate myself with him. But this Bill is very important and complicated, and there is a need to go through every clause of it and then only approval should be given. The discussion should be started on it, and you can take as much time as you want.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let us start the business. Let us see later on.

12.26 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): Sir, I beg to lay:—

A copy of the Statement (Hindi and English versions) of Action taken or proposed to be taken on the Convention, the Protocol and the Recommendations adopted at the 84th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference in October, 1996.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1933/2000]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): Sir, on behalf of Shri Ram Jethmalani, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Judicial Academy, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Judicial Academy, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1934/2000]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) under article 151(1) of the Constitution:

- (i) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India—Union Government (Civil) (No. 1 of 2000) Accounts of the Union Government for the year ended the March, 1999.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1935/2000]

- (ii) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India—Union Government (Defence Services) (No. 7 of 2000)—Army and Ordnance Factories for the year ended the March, 1999.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1936/2000]

- (iii) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India—Union Government (Defence Services) (No. 8 of 2000)—Air Force and Navy for the year ended the March, 1999.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1937/2000]

- (2) A copy of the Appropriation Accounts (Union Government) of the Defence Services for the year 1998-99 (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1938/2000]

- (3) A copy of the Appropriation Accounts (Union Government)—(Civil) for the year 1998-99 (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1939/2000]

- (4) A copy of the Finance Accounts (Union Government) for the year 1998-99 (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1940/2000]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Energy Management Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1997-98 alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy to the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Energy Management Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1997-98.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1941/2000]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Energy Management Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Energy Management Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1942/2000]

- (5) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Rural Electrification Corporation, and the Ministry of Power, for the year 2000-01.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1943/2000]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):
I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (4) of section 124 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963:
- (i) G.S.R. 342(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 20th April, 2000 approving the Murmugao Port Employees' (Educational Assistance) Regulations, 2000.
- (ii) G.S.R. 343(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 20th April, 2000 approving the Visakhapatnam Port Employees (Recruitment, Seniority and Promotion) Amendment Regulations, 2000.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1944/2000]

- (2) A copy of the National Highways (Collection of Fees by any person for the use of Section of National Highways/permanent bridge/temporary bridge on National Highways) Amendment Rules, 2000 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 336(E) in Gazette of India dated the 13th April, 2000 under sub-section (3) of section 9 of the National Highways Act, 1956.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1945/2000]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Paradeep Port Trust for the year 1998-99, together with Audit Report thereon, under sub-section (2) of Section 103 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) on the Audited Accounts of the Paradeep Port Trust for the year 1998-99.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1946/2000]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Coimbatore for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Coimbatore, for the year 1998-99.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1947/2000]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal, for the year 1998-99 alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal, for the year 1998-99.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-1948/2000]

12.27 hrs.

LEAVE OF ASBSENCE FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House in their second Report presented to the House on 12th May, 2000 have recommended that leave of absence from the sittings of the House be granted to five Members for the period as indicated in the Report.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Shri Sunil Dutt | 17 April, 2000 to
17 May, 2000 |
| 2. Shri Simranjit Singh Mann | 17 April, 2000 to
11 May, 2000 |
| 3. Shri S.D.N.R. Wadiyar | 24 April, 2000 to
17 May, 2000 |
| 4. Shri Rajesh Ranjan | 24 February, 2000
to 16 March, 2000
17 April, 2000 to
17 May, 2000 |
| 5. Shrimati Nisha A. Choudhary | 17 April, 2000 to
17 May, 2000 |

Is it the pleasure of the House that leave as recommended by the Committee be granted?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Leave is granted. The Members will be informed accordingly.

12.28 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS

Twelfth Report

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): I beg to present the Twelfth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Communications on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Eleventh Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Communications on "Recommendations of Disinvestment

Commission in relation to ITI and HTL Ltd." relating to Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications).

12.28 1/2 hrs.

MOTION RE: REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE ON CENTRAL VIGILANCE COMMISSION BILL—EXTENSION OF TIME

[English]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR (Baramati): I beg to move:

"That this House do further extend the time for the presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on Central Vigilance Commission Bill, 1999 upto the last day of the Monsoon Session, 2000."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do further extend the time for the presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on Central Vigilance Commission Bill, 1999 upto the last day of the Monsoon Session, 2000."

The motion was adopted.

12.29 hrs.

PRESENTATION OF PETITION

[Translation]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): I beg to present a petition signed by Shri Kail Sankar Dhar and others of Pandu, Guwahati regarding grant of lease of land and sanction of a rehabilitation package for the people living on unused and vacant lands of Northeast Frontier Railway in different areas of Greater Guwahati (Assam).

12.29 1/2 hrs.

MOTION RE: NINTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 12th May, 2000."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 12th May, 2000."

The motion was adopted.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now take up the 'Zero Hour' submissions.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not feeling happy to raise this issue. The atrocities committed on the Sikh community in the year 1984 have been proved by many commissions and investigations. Also, this question has been raised in the House and among the people repeatedly. The attitude and intention of the Uttar Pradesh Government and Central Government has compelled us to raise this issue in Legislative Assembly and here also.

I would like to present before you two-three points in brief. A commission was set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Rangnath Mishra to probe into the atrocities committed on Sikhs in 1984. That commission has submitted its report and recommendations also. I do not want to waste your time by going into details of that report. The report was presented and the main feature of that report was to set up a high level Committee. This has been mentioned in the report also that financial assistance may be provided to the families of the victims for the marriages of their daughters, for their education etc. monthly expenses for their livelihood and the members of families of the deceased persons may be provided shops and Rs. 15 thousand per month and a lumpsum amount of Rs. 50 thousand may be provided to the widows for their maintenance. These were the recommendations of Rangnath Mishra Commission. This report was adopted during the period of my Chief Ministership and a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary. This was also revealed in the report that some officers are directly responsible for it. A judge was appointed to conduct a probe against those officials but it is a matter of grief that unfortunately our Government was out of power and BJP and BSP Government immediately annulled the whole process. Then keeping in view the interests of the people and under compelling reasons, this matter was sent to Allahabad High Court for having justice in this matter. I

will not take much of your time by going into details of the matter. I am going to read the judgement given by the High Court in English for the first time so that Mr. Speaker you could easily understand this and also the seriousness of the issue. It has been written in the judgement given on 11th May:

[English]

"It is really unfortunate that the State Government had flouted the orders passed by this Court. It is expected that the State will respect the rule of law. But in the present case, it acted contrary to the rule of law. The matter is serious. But in view of the persistent requests made by the learned Chief Standing Counsel, we order the case to come up on Monday, 15th May - today.

In case on that date the order cannot be complied, the Court will take serious view of the matter.

[Translation]

On 11th May, Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court has given this verdict. I have come to know that Uttar Pradesh Government has not yet taken any decision in this regard. I am saying all this because a second commission was set up on 14th December. In this connection, Uttar Pradesh Government has stated that it has no funds to spend on this commission whereas the initial expenditure was only of Rs. 13000-15000. Government is not having Rs. 13000-15000 to spend on it. On the other hand Central Government has also stated for setting up a commission in this regard. How long the Government will keep pending this issue? Unfortunately, once this incident was occurred, it was not an ordinary incident, it was a case of tyranny, atrocities, murder, arsoning and looting. It is harmful for the integrity of the country to remind those incidents. It increases bitterness among several communities. On this occasion, I want to appeal that what is the attitude of the Government in this regard. Uttar Pradesh Government is unable to spend rupees 15 thousand whereas 91 to 93 ministers are there in its cabinet. Recently news has been published that one month's pocket money of Cabinet Ministers of Uttar Pradesh is about Rs. 3 crores.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): How much expenditure is incurred on refreshment?

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The expenditure incurred on refreshment and other expenses are apart from it... (Interruptions) They have other expenses also in addition to refreshment. Four crore rupees can be spent but the State Government of Uttar Pradesh is not having 13 to 15 thousand rupees. Uttar Pradesh Government is

[Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav]

spending lavishly but no facility is being provided to the affected Sikh families. Now, we would like to know the opinion of the Central Government that when the new commission will be set up when the Government is not having 15-20 thousand rupees. Neither the office has been allotted, nor the judge has been appointed till now. 16 years have been passed, how long matter will be kept pending. Moreover, the Government is not agree to accept the decision of the court and its approach for which we condemn the Government. Central Government is deliberately ignoring the matter due to politics of Sikh vote. You are playing politics of votes with Sikhs but at the same time this Government is against those Sikhs. Till now we were of the opinion that this Government is against Muslims and Christians people. This Government is with Akali Dal but is acting against the Sikh community also. They are only playing politics of vote. They are spreading hatred all over the country which resulted that there is no internal unity in our country and neighbouring countries take advantage of it. We should rise above our infighting and should face the dangers posing before the country. We condemn the Government for not paying attention towards this matter and demand that the Central Government should consider it seriously and decide the matter.

[English]

SHRI J.S. BRAR (Faridkot): Sir, this is an important matter, the Government should respond to it...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Shri Chandra Shekhar also wants to speak...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue raised by Shri Mulayam Singh is a very sensitive one. I have seen the agony of the affected people at that time where such incidents occurred in Uttar Pradesh. People still has painful memories of those incidents. The situation in Punjab is also deteriorating. One of my friends has raised a question in this regard a few days back. Terrorism is rising in all parts. If the verdict given by the High Court is not complied as Shri Mulayam Singh has read the verdict before you, Central Government should direct the Government of Uttar Pradesh so that at least that decision is complied with otherwise a feeling of distrust will prevail among the people which would be detrimental for the country. People all over the country are losing confidence in the Government. It would be better to take immediate steps to prevent it.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, I also endorse this.

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajanj, U.P.): It is a very serious matter. Government should respond to it...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Since, this is an important matter; is there any response from the Government side?

...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): Sir, normally the responsibility would fall on the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER: You are also a former Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I can see that the hon. Speaker was looking at me very determinedly, therefore, I would like to respond to that. Sir, I wish to assure both the senior Members that I would communicate their feelings to the hon. Minister of Home Affairs and I am sure he will revert back to them.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha): Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the night of 11th May, damage was caused to the three churches of Indore city of Madhya Pradesh. It is a condemnable act and our party condemn it...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, some innocent persons have been caught on these charges. Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, among arrested persons 5 are women out of which 2 are teachers. They have nothing to do with these incidents but have been caught.

Mr. Speaker Sir, allegations have been levelled on Bajrang Dal, Sanskriti Raksha Manch. These allegations are totally wrong and baseless. In fact Congress has been divided into two groups in Madhya Pradesh.

Because of political groupism one faction of the Congress was not in favour of the visit of Congress President to Indore on 12.5.2000, while the other faction was in favour, the successful completion of visits. Because of such political groupism Congress workers itself organised such incidents...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam): Sir, I take strong objection to this...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on records except what Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan says.

...*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, an institution bearing the name 'Shardha' is functioning since 1995 whose functions were being looked out by Children Protection Home was not registered till 1999. Such an institution was granted Rs. 32,56,766 by Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. This institution is involved in cases of conversion of religion of the people. It is improper on the part of Rajiv Gandhi Foundation to grant funds to such an unregistered institution which is involved in the cases of conversion of religion of the people...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, you have raised this matter number of times in this House. Please take your seat. Now, Shri P.R. Dasmuni.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Soniaji also went there during her visit to Indore. Workers of Bajrang Dal were protesting there. They were arrested and allegation of church burning were levelled upon them. Mr. Speaker Sir, through you, I demand the Union Government to conduct a probe through CBI so that the real culprit could be caught and the truth be revealed. I also demand that an inquiry should also be conducted about Rajiv Gandhi foundation for providing money to which type of institutions. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chouhan, please take your seat. Everyday you are creating the same kind of a situation in the Zero Hour. What is this?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Shri Chouhan, the Speaker is asking you to sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chouhan, I have allowed you to raise the matter. Please take your seat. This is not the way. You have raised this matter on many occasions. Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH KURUP: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should be allowed to speak to set the record straight. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suresh Kurup, you cannot compel the Chair to allow you to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except what Shri P.R. Dasmuni says.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the last six months or so, throughout India, there is a widespread concern on the issue of the prices of the essential drugs, life-saving drugs, and the management of health care.

Sir, we got a report from a voluntary organisation that in most of the States, the special care health hazards relating to kidney, lung, brain, and chest cannot be taken care of in the State hospitals, resulting to the patients go to Vellore, Bangalore, and also to various parts of India. The cost of each operation and treatment ranges from Rs. 1.5 lakh to Rs. 3 lakh. There is no monitoring by the State or the Union administration to negotiate with the institution to bring down the prices.

Secondly, for the last six months, the cost of the anti-biotic capsules of all kinds of diseases prescribed by the doctors has gone up between 20 per cent and 45 per cent. It was also found that for the last one month or so, in and around Delhi and up to Uttar Pradesh, the cost of some of these capsules has gone up by 65 per

* Not recorded.

* Not recorded.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

cent or 70 per cent. Even the cost of the band aid, which is normally put for a minor cut, has gone up by 30 per cent. The cost of the raw materials has not even gone up by five per cent. With the result, there is a total loot in the country by the pharmaceutical industry.

I, therefore, through you, draw the attention of the Government because the people who are otherwise poor or lower middle-class cannot afford to the quantum jump of the price of the medicine every fortnight. Therefore, the Government of India which has got a responsibility in this regard, should make a statement thereon as to how they are trying to control and monitor the price rise of these life saving drugs.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there any response from the Government side?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, will the Government react on this?

MR. SPEAKER: Is there any reaction from the Government side? The concerned Minister is not here.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I gave a notice 48 hours before. This is such an important matter that the Government should react. I gave this copy to the Health Minister and the Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers. It is a very serious matter. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Is there anything from the Government side? It comes under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Actually, it is regarding availability of antibiotics in hospitals and also availability in terms of production. It will be the responsibility of the respective Ministers. I should bring it to their notice. I appreciate the hon. Member's point of view for mainly bringing it to the notice of the House because it is a very important matter.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: There is a 65 per cent increase. What is this?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, everyday I am getting frantic telephone calls from the workers of a number of Public Sector Undertakings.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (Parbhani): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have also given the notice. ...(Interruptions) You do not call us to speak...(Interruptions) What we can do...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will call all the Members today because these are the last days. I want to finish all the names today. Please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The salaries are not paid to the workers for months together. The workers of Hindustan Steel Corporation Limited have not been paid their salaries for more than 10 months. You may have seen it in the newspapers that the HSCL workers went to Calcutta and occupied the office of Hindustan Steel Corporation Limited. They demanded that the salary which is due for 10 months should be immediately paid to them. Otherwise, they will not vacate the headquarters.

Then, Sir, the National Project Construction Corporation have to undertake the projects in far-flung areas in Tripura and in the North-East. These workers are not paid for more than 16 months. I have received representation from a number of workers. They have died of starvation. The workers of Rehabilitation Industries Corporation have not yet received their salary for more than four months. The Government has decided to wind up the Tea Trading Corporation of India but the Government has not paid salary to the employees and workers for more than one year. At least, five workers of Tea Trading Corporation of India have died of starvation. There are more than 17 Public Sector Undertakings where the due is more than Rs. 10 crore. Then there are IDPL, ECL, BCCL, Burns Standard, Cement Corporation of India, HMT, HEC, Hindustan Cables Limited, IL, Kota, Jee soap, MAMC, Triveni Structures, all the units of NTC, Hindustan Copper, NPCC and Central Inland Water Transport Corporation. The total due is Rs. 1,684 crore.

A Group of Ministers was formed in the month of February this year to examine this problem of non-payment of salary and statutory dues. A large number of workers who have retired are yet to receive their gratuity and pension, for months and years together. The Group of Ministers was formed on 9th February.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister is here to give reply. I think he is going to give reply.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: After formation of this Group of Ministers, the first meeting was held only on 10th of April. This Group of Ministers met only for once. This situation is alarming. The workers are dying of starvation. The retired workers and employees are not getting their statutory dues. There is a Payment of Wages Act passed by Parliament and as per that the employees should be paid their salaries every month. The Government of India is violating that Act.

MR. SPEAKER: What do you want?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I demand that the amounts due, the Salary and the statutory dues, gratuity and pension should immediately be paid to the workers. I demand a statement from the Minister.

[Translation]

The Minister of Labour is present in the House. He should take up the matter with the Ministry and inform the House that by when their salaries will be paid to them.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: This is not a party matter or a political matter. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir. We are not allowed to speak...*(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suresh Jadhav, please take your seat.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: This is reflection on the Chair. I do not wish to enter into that.

I am requesting that this is such a serious matter that the hon. Minister may please see that no political issue is made out of it. The hon. Minister of Labour is doing everything else than looking after the Ministry because he has no power. We will be with him in his fight; he should carry on and see that the workers, who are human beings and citizens of India, are also employees of the Government of India undertakings. Something has to be done. The hon. Minister should take up his fight with the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister to help the employees of the Government of India undertakings.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are present in the House since 9 O'clock in the morning. We are not allowed to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now the Minister please. Nothing should go on record except the Minister's remarks.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Chhapra): No body is concern about the incidents of murders taken place in Bihar...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: who has stated this...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Nobody has mentioned about the 15 people killed in Bihar. I have given notice in this regard but nobody is concern about that. Everybody keep silent when Bihar issue is raised here...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): The issue raised regarding the statutory dues of public undertakings is definitely a matter of concern for all of us. The payments which accumulated slowly, have to be made are more than you have mentioned. As per my information the amount of the outstanding payments as on 31st December, 1999 comes to Rs. 1824 crores. But you must be aware of the fact that all the sick units have been referred to the B.I.F.R. You are also aware that under section 22 a resolution is imposed on the payment of statutory dues. Under these circumstances a group of Council of Ministers discussed this issue on 10th April. A group of Cabinet Ministers constituted for this purpose will also discuss the issue of repayment of dues this month. I hope the Government will come out with good results in this regard. Government will also come out with some solution regarding the repayment of statutory dues...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY (Andaman and Nicobar Islands): Mr. Speaker, Sir, 429 Anganwari centres are being run in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands by I.C.D.S. In these centres totalling 429 Anganwadi workers and assistants are working. It is a matter of grief that the amount they got as honorarium is too small. Where a matric pass worker gets Rs. 563/- and a non-matric gets Rs. 438 per month. The condition of Anganwadi helpers

[Shri Bishnu Pada Ray]

is even more worst, they get merely Rs. 260 per month. After the Fifth Pay Commission, the prices of everything especially in far flung areas of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, have increased. The job of Anganwadi workers is related to the aspect of making the career of children in the society. So, this is my demand to the Government that the honorarium of each Anganwadi worker may be increased atleast to Rs. 2200/- p.m. and with this the helpers should be given minimum Rs. 2000/- per month.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am elected from the Parbhani district of Maharashtra. This is a very important issue of this area. There is an old Radio station located in my area, but no action has been initiated to convert it into an independent Radio station as yet. I wrote a letter to Government in this regard and the Government gave directions in this regard and as a result Parbhani Radio station was declared as an independent Radio Station. The Independent Radio Station was going to set up on May 1st but people got a stay order for it.

So, I request you to kindly ask the Government for declaring Radio station of Parbhani district as a fullfledged independent radio station. All the Radio Stations of Maharashtra viz. Mumbai, Pune, Sholapur, have got an independent status after segregation, but our Parbhani Radio Station has not got an independent status as yet.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suresh Ramrao Jadhav, we have already passed the finance Bill and the Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Through you, I would like to make a request to the Government that our Parbhani Radio Station may be given in independent status...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will call everyone today.

SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a large scale theft of petroleum products that are produced in Mathura Refinery. There is a village called Farah near Mathura and nine kilometres away from this village, there is a village called Beri. Naphtha is a petroleum product which is highly inflammable substance. The people mix Naphtha in Kerosene oil alongwith a chemical and then sell this mixture as petrol. On May, 3rd an incident took place. A dalit person was having a licence for selling Diesel, but some other persons were doing such thing on his behalf. He had a licence for 400

litres, but when an explosion took place, there was 3800 litre of oil containing 6 drums of Naphtha. 50 people have died due to explosion of Naphtha and 150 people have been admitted in the hospitals of Agra, Mathura and Delhi. Petroleum products are being stolen at a large scale from the refinery. The people of ruling parties of Uttar Pradesh are doing bungling by mixing Naphtha with Kerosene oil. This is being done under Government protection. The Government of Uttar Pradesh had commitment for their help and the Ministers of Uttar Pradesh State reached there but yet neither proper Medical arrangements for the people, were made nor any compensation was given to the affected persons. In some cases Rs. 25,000/- and Rs. 50,000/- have been given to the people as compensation four to six people belonging to one family have been killed. One person should get atleast 2 lakh rupees as compensation, it is a serious matter and there should be investigation by CBI in order to find out as to who is involved in such bungling...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not make a speech in the Zero Hour.

DR. SANJAY PASWAN (Nawada): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the death of 15 dalit labourers on 12th near Hasanpur Balughat in Lakhisarai district is a matter of great concern and is also a matter of shame.

13.00 hrs.

It was the period when Rashtriya Janata Dal's leader Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav was released from the jail. Infact, whenever he is released from the jail, the dalit labourers are killed. It is highly condemnable and a matter of concern. ...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): He has got bail.

DR. SANJAY PASWAN: It is matter which concern the court when he comes out of jail, the killing of Dalit took place why this has happened. ...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: This is a State subject. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except what Shri Sanjay Paswan is saying.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. SANJAY PASWAN: For the last three months, since Mrs. Rabri Devi has become the Chief Minister there, the dalit labours are insecure over there, more than hundred persons have been killed. It is a grave matter and it should be noted that why so many killings are taking place. The society is feeling absolute insecurity. Not only this, the incident that happened. *...(Interruptions)* It is their Government in Bihar, the S.P. is their man, collector is their man.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Paswan, these are State matters. Everyday you are discussing them in the House. How can you always discuss the State matters here? Now Dr. V. Saroja.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. SANJAY PASWAN: FIR has been lodged there. A local MLA and his brother have been involved in this. We demand there should be discussion on this serious matter and the anti-poor Government ruling there should be dismissed. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I urge upon the Government of India. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should go on record except what Dr. V. Saroja says.

*...(Interruptions)**

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Please allow me also, Sir. This is a very important matter.

MR. SPEAKER: You can also associate yourself.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: How can you always discuss the State matters in the House? You are obstructing the other Members. This is not proper.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rudy, even though it is a State matter, I have allowed Dr. Paswan. You are disturbing the House.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing, except what Dr. V. Saroja says, will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

DR. V. SAROJA: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I urge upon the Government of India, through you, to sanction a four-lane road from Salem to Karur via Namakkal and Mohanur. During the year 1990, 1,250 road accidents took place in which 300 people lost their lives. Taking into consideration this sensitive issue, the Government of India also came up with a proposal to set up a full-fledged Blood Bank with an Accident-cum-Emergency Ward during the current year. I urge upon the Government of India to sanction this Rs. 360 crore project which is pending with the Ministry of Surface Transport. I also request to set up that hospital also in the Mohanur-Rasipuram-Namakkal belt. Thank you, Sir.

DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI (Poddapalli): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a matter of national importance regarding defrauding Doordarshan by millions of dollars.

I draw your attention to the murky deal on the telecast rights of the ICC knock-out tournament held in Dhaka wherein Doordarshan was put to a loss of \$4 millions.

I demand that the report submitted by Shri Arun Agarwal to the Prasar Bharati Board on the working of the Sports Consortium should be studied and action taken. The International Cricket Council President, Shri Jagmohan Dalmiya and the World Tef's Mark Mascarenhas were instrumental to scale down the original agreement and thus the country was put to a loss of \$ 4 millions.

Probably this is the tip of an iceberg. I request the Government, through you, to order a thorough investigation and that all the culprits be booked and necessary checks and balances should be fixed to avoid such a flagrant recurrence.

[Translation]

SHRI RASHID ALVI (Amroha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government on a very important matter. Recently the Government had released some extremists in Kashmir

* Not recorded.

* Not recorded.

[Shri Rashid Alvi]

without stating any reason thereof and the very first statement of the terrorists after coming out from the jail was that neither we had made any request to the Government for our release, nor we are going to have dialogue regarding Kashmir without involving Pakistan. It has been published in all the newspapers and one of their leaders has said:

[English]

"I have read Shri Advani's statement. It is the same thing. They want talks to be held within the framework of the Constitution. We cannot agree to this condition. No talks can be held if the Government insists on this condition."

[Translation]

Alongwith this he told that Pakistan will have to do tripartite talk. I want to ask as well as demand the Government that how the Government of such a party which always claimed to abolish section 370 for the last fifty years, is inviting Pakistan for holding talks but if the Government do so we will vehemently oppose it. Kashmir is the integral part of this country and the present Government cannot be allowed to mislead the entire nation. I demand that Government should clarify in this House and tell the whole country as to what is the policy of the Government. Why extremists were released? They are giving their statements daily. Replies are not being given to those statements. I want that the Government should immediately tell the House about the policy of the Government...(Interruptions) Let me conclude first...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Alvi, there are other Members also. Please understand it. You see the anxiety of other Members also.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The zero hour is meant only to mention the importance of the issue.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RASHID ALVI: It is a question of security of the entire nation. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is sitting here so please tell him to reply in this House as to what is the policy of the Government...(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: When situation begins improving, then they become restless. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RASHID ALVI: I feel distress. We will not allow Kashmir to become an issue. ...(Interruptions) Kashmir is the integral part of this country...(Interruptions) Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should be asked to reply the question...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Saikhan Murmu to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing except what Shri Murmu speaks will go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SALKHAN MURMU (Mayurbhanj): Sir, through you, I want to attract the attention of the House that the tribals, SCs/STs who have come in Delhi from the various parts of the country are not provided with any facility by the Government in Delhi. The facilities that should have been provided to them as STs are completely lacking in Delhi. Now the other conspiracy that is going to happen and which has come to my notice is that in the process of the coming census, the enumerators are being instructed during the training to show the tribals and the STs residing in Delhi under 'any other column' and not under 'STs column' resulting in there will be no STs in Delhi's list. It is a serious matter. It is a matter of right of the SCs and STs and it is a matter of constitutional right. No facility is provided to the tribals who have come

* Not recorded.

here from various States and if the number of tribals population is shown negligible under this conspiracy, then it is objectionable...

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, the Fertilisers and Chemicals Travancore Limited in Kerala is facing a crisis. It is the oldest public sector undertaking in the country. It was running at a loss till the last year. Now, the Government has decided to privatise this public sector undertaking. It was producing the largest amount of fertilisers in India. There are about 8,000 workers employed in this undertaking. All of them are on strike, and the entire functioning of the public sector undertaking has come to a standstill. Therefore, I request the Central Government to intervene in the matter and see that the institution runs at a profit as it was doing before.

Recently, they have built up a new ammonia plant, which is the root cause of this loss. If the Government intervenes at a proper time, the matter could be set right and the public sector undertaking would start working on profitable basis. I strongly urge upon the Government to intervene in the matter and see that the FACT runs on profitable basis.

[Translation]

SHRI ALI MOHD. NAIK (Anantnag): Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Government of India towards continuous firing by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir. For the last ten days, Pakistan is continuously shelling in Kupwara and Baramulla districts of Kashmir. As a result of this, ten civilians have been killed and property has been damaged. People of dozens of villages have migrated and they are going to various other places. Besides, Pakistani Rangers are constantly firing on unarmed urban people and resulting in neither they are able to harvest their crops nor they can sow new crops. It has been published in today's newspapers that Pakistan has established some camps in the hilly region of Bargaon and military personnel have been sent by helicopters. Eight militants have been killed there. I would like to know from the Government as to what arrangements are being made to save the civilians property and civilians and also to maintain the integrity of Jammu and Kashmir State.

Secondly, there are certain elements in security forces who are doing fake encounters and committing rape and kidnappings. The Government should check it and the Government should give top priority to this matter.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Sir, it is the law of the land that only iodised salt may be purchased. While the price of the iodised salt is Rs. 6 per kg. and plain salt is Rs. 1 per kg. Hence, a poor man has to pay five rupees more to buy iodised salt in place of plain salt. He is forced to use iodised salt though it is not required for him and as such the excess iodine harms his health. In this regard the Sarvodaya workers had met the hon'ble Prime Minister. The hon'ble Prime Minister had assured them that within three months this law will be abolished and efforts will be made to make available plain salt as well as iodised salt so that people may purchase and use salt of their choice. In the presence of existing law, people are forced to purchase the iodised salt and as a result of it a burden of Rs. 25 billion is passed on the poor people of the country. In spite of the orders passed by the hon'ble Prime Minister, this law has not been abolished in 3 months. From this, it is apparent that the iodised salt producing lobby is a very strong lobby. Money is mighty. The orders of the honourable Prime Minister are not being implemented due to the money power. I demand that this law should be abolished and both plain salt as well as iodised salt should be available in the market so that poor people may get relief from the burden.

SHRI VIJAY GOEL (Chandni Chowk): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to raise a very important issue. Few days back CBI officials raided a senior officers of Delhi and which revealed property worth more than Rs. 2 crore which includes flats, houses and ornaments.

13.15 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *In the Chair*]

I am sorry to say that today leaders have bad names but whenever bureaucrats have been raided, property worth rupees lakhs and crores have been seized. ...*(Interruptions)* My submission is that all the bureaucrats who are on the higher post or whosoever join these posts should be asked to declare their property at the time of posting. Hon'ble Mr. Vittal has given a list. I find

that senior officers are holding high posts and they have committed big bunglings and investigation is going on against them. In spite of that they are in office. But when anything is found against the elected persons, public do not elect him next time. I would like to submit to the House that the Government should bring a Bill with provisions to investigate the corruption prevailing amongst the bureaucrats in various Government departments so that corruption could be prevented. This is the feelings of the entire House. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Sir, I may also be given an opportunity to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. I will call every Member and none will be left.

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon): Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is a girls hostel in Tehsil Kalwan in Nasik district which is run by Christians. A fair was organised here on 9th of this month. The Bajrang Dal activists attacked the people in the fair. They damaged two-three vehicles and injured two persons and the police intervened in the matter. At one place a film show was going on and these people resorted to sabotage there also.

Sir, through you, I request the Government that there should not be any altercation in the name of religion...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Sir, this a serious matter...*(Interruptions)* The Bajrang Dal should be banned. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Athawaleji you will also get an opportunity to speak.

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machlishahar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the question which I am raising here is related to all the Members of this House. There are several schemes of the Government of India under which funds are released to district administrations for the developmental works but the Members of the Parliament are not being consulted in this regard and their opinion is not being sought. A directive was issued by the Union Government with regard

to Employment Guarantee Scheme but neither any Member of the Lok Sabha nor any Member of the Rajya Sabha is being consulted in this regard and the funds meant for developmental works are being handed over to the district Panchayats or the local Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Sir, the Union Government are releasing funds for providing drinking water under the State Mission Programme. The Uttar Pradesh Government have allotted fifty handpumps each to the Member of the Legislative Assembly and the Member of the Legislative Council but even not a single handpump has been allotted to the Members of either the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha. Sir, through you, I demand from the Government that the funds being provided by the Union Government for providing drinking water. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, I have not finished my point yet and this is a very important point. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. You may make the demand.

SHRI C.N. SINGH: Sir, I may please be allowed to complete my point, this is a very important point. I am not repeating. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have raised the question regarding drinking water.

SHRI C.N. SINGH: Sir, I am going to complete my point within a minute. My colleagues hon'ble Shri Chinmayanandji and Shri Bhushan Singhji are also sitting here. Till two years back the Funds meant for 'Purvanchal' were being spent with the consent of the Member of the Parliament but the Government of Uttar Pradesh have nominated 23 Members of the State Legislative Assembly for this purpose in place of us and we have no say in this matter now. Any Member of Parliament from Uttar Pradesh irrespective of party affiliation cannot sanction money out of the Purvanchal Fund...*(Interruptions)* Therefore, through you I would like to request the Government that there should be a say of the Member of Parliament from Uttar Pradesh in granting money from this fund.

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN (Tirunelveli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I raise this matter of public importance and urge upon the Government to sanction the pending railway projects in Tamil Nadu. An article was published in a Tamil daily called *Dinamalar* last week wherein it was stated that Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu had not raised their voice on the floor of the House to demand the sanction of pending railway projects in Tamil Nadu. We the Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu have been raising our grievances on the floor of the House regularly. However, this vernacular daily has depicted as if we have not voiced our concerns on the floor of the House. It was also stated in the article that when the Members of Parliament from Kerala met the Railway Minister they were able to get their projects cleared.

The Government of India have stopped manufacturing metre-gauge coaches and engines as a result of which they are not able to cater to the needs of the metre-gauge lines. Conversion is imminent and it is the need of the hour. Similarly, double lines are required on many routes. From Chennai to Tambaram the distance is only 27 kilometres. From Tiruchendur to Nelli the distance is 65 kilometres. The distance between Nelli to Tanjai is only 73 kilometres. Tanjai to Nagore the distance is 88 kilometres. The total distance that needs to be covered is only 251 kilometres. Then from Tanjai to Kollam the distance is only 225 kilometres. This whole route has to be converted. This is only to illustrate the point.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you may permit me to mark this paper also as a part of this record* so that the matter can be taken up with the vernacular daily. The prestige from Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu is at stake. This daily is circulated in the whole of Tamil Nadu and it says that the Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu had not voiced their concern.

I urge upon the Government to sanction the pending projects in Tamil Nadu. When the projects were not announced by the Government, the General Secretary of All India Anna DMK protested it.

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE (Jorhat): Sir, the recent happenings in Dibrugarh, a major city in Assam, are ghastly and shocking. On 4th May, one Shivdhar Lal Paswan and his ten-year-old son were kidnapped by unidentified gunmen. On 7th May, their headless dead bodies were unearthed from the sands of river Brahmaputra. On the same day, the citizens of Dibrugarh took out a funeral procession demonstrating against the brutal killings and the Government's callous attitude and inaction. Surprisingly, this procession was disrupted by police. They lathi-charged and fired upon the peaceful crowd killing two and injuring ten people. Such occurrences of innocent people being kidnapped and killed by unidentified gunmen have become common in Assam. If such rampant human rights violations continue unabated, we are afraid it will be difficult to get the support of the people in resolving the issue of terrorism. I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Home Minister to take immediate and appropriate action taking in view the breakdown of law and order machinery in Assam where Government has failed to protect the lives of the citizens.

Sir, through you I appeal to the hon. Speaker to send a fact-finding panel from Parliament to assess the law and order situation not only in Dibrugarh but in the entire State.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Sir, I associate myself with the hon. Member on this issue.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR (Dibrugarh): Sir, I associate myself with the hon. Member and demand that the Home Minister should inquire into the matter through appropriate agencies.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. You are also endorsing him.

SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY (Girdih): Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, through you I am raising a question about the Central Coalfields Limited which is a subsidiary of the Coal India Limited which is a Government of India undertaking company. Bungalow is taking place there in the coal and the officers there are well aware of it. Bungalow is being done by selling the coking coal by

*Not treated as paper laid on the Table.

[Shri Ravindra Kumar Pandey]

showing it as non-coking coal. I demand that this should be got investigated by the C.B.I.

[English]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to raise an issue relating to railway hawkers. More than a million poor people and *garib* hawkers are maintaining their livelihood by hawking. But unfortunately, as they have not been provided with any Identity Cards, they are becoming the victims of the police harassment. Atrocities are being inflicted on them. So, they are bound to suffer from their livelihood.

Sir, not only that, there are thousands and thousands of contract labours under the railway authorities who are not getting the minimum wages and other facilities as per the Contract Labour Act. So, whenever any vacancy arises there in the Railways, I think, they should be given some priorities because they are working since long, and they are not getting their wages. They are getting scanty wages. The facilities are not provided to them.

So, I request, through you, to the hon. Minister of Railways to provide Identity Cards to the railway hawkers and also give some other concessions so that they can maintain their livelihood, and not put to harassment and atrocities of police. The contract labours should be given priorities by the railway authorities in the matter of employment. They should be given wages and other benefits as per the Contract Labour Act. Thank you.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Khammam): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman for giving me the opportunity. I want to raise a matter of urgent importance which is of national shame.

[Translation]

In Pottapally village of Nalgonda district in Andhra Pradesh, parents of an eight year old girl sold their daughter. I have an evidence of this.

[English]

I have got a video tape with me in which the entire sale and transaction of this shameful sale which has taken place, can be seen.

[Translation]

The Members of this House who are willing to see that tape can take it from me. I am going to show that tape to the press also. I want to say that today in the Parliament.

[English]

We are still discussing about passing the Bill on Women's Reservation.

[Translation]

Even today this is the plight of the Women in our country. Even today parents are compelled to sell their daughters. A girl can be bought for Rs. 19,000/-. This is shameful for our country. I think the entire House will agree with me.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (Adoor): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the B.Ed. colleges in Kerala are facing major crises due to withdrawal of recognition to them by the National Council for Teachers Education. Apart from that, the National Council for Teachers Education has reduced the number of seats in so many colleges. I feel that such a kind of act of National Council for Teachers Education has taken place because of the pressure from the outside lobbies.

I, therefore, sincerely request the Government of India, the Ministry of Human Resources Development, through this hon. House to kindly look into this matter and do the needful at the earliest to save the future of thousands of students from Kerala.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have a submission. In Jaipur city, traffic scenario is deteriorating day by day. To streamline the traffic in the city, the Government had formulated the scheme of Ring railway and lakhs of rupees have been incurred on preparing the design for this purpose. It should be decided as to what will be its line of allotment. If the Ring Railway scheme is not implemented, the people will encroach on the land through which this line is proposed to be laid and it will be very difficult to construct the said rail line. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want that Ring Railway in Jaipur be completed immediately.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: I submit that the Ring Railway should be introduced in Jaipur.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon'ble Member is strongly raising the demand.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government have decided to create Utrakhnad but no provision has been made regarding seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assembly from that region. I submit that the Government intend to create Utrakhnad, and hence a provision of reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be made there. You please direct the Government in this regard.

SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI (Jaunpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today an unfortunate incident took place at Ayodhya. A well known saint of Vaishnav Society Shri Paramhansdas who is 90 years old was attacked. He was admitted in a hospital. A bomb was planted on a bicycle out side the hospital. When he stepped out of the hospital the bomb was exploded. It is not known as to whether the bomb was exploded by remote or it was a time bomb? It is a very serious matter. As he is the Chairman of the Ram Janama Bhoomi Nyas and is associated with activities of the said trust, so it appears that there is some foreign agency behind the attack on him. Therefore, I want that this should be got investigated through some Central Agency.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, the continuous and dangerous proportion of erosion of Ganges is creating great concern for the States of West Bengal and Bihar. During the UF Government, an expert Committee was formed and they recommended Rs. 932 crore project for the protection of Ganges and its embankment. Ganga and Padma are international rivers and the Central Government should take the responsibility.

In West Bengal eight districts are in serious trouble. In my Constituency, it is also subsiding. On one side it drying up and on the Bangladesh side it is forming land. So, Central Government should take necessary action. Raising of embankment work is not taken up properly. It should be done regularly.

Finally, the Central Government and State Government should give funds at 75 and 25 proportionately respectively. Only then can the Government of India implement the Ganga Action Plan properly Bengal and Bihar States can be saved.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): It is with a very heavy heart that I am raising the issue of attacks against Christians in various parts of this country. The other day when a similar issue was raised in the House, the hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister dismissed it with contempt that non-issues are being raised periodically.

Today, I am shocked to hear an honourable BJP Member deliberately presenting a false picture in this august House.

In Indore, a Christian Lady Hostel was attacked by a group of Bajrangdal activists. These people were arrested and they had the temerity to organise a bandh in Indore against the arrest of the culprits. This country has become a safe haven for Christian baiters and there is a cosy nexus between this Government and these culprits.

All these crimes are committed because there is a benevolent Government at the Centre. We will be constrained to raise these issues repeatedly till this Government rein in these culprits. This country should not be seen as a place where minorities are repeatedly attacked.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards such a matter, perhaps about which nobody is worried and that is why I have been given an opportunity to speak in the last.

The population of the country is increasing very fast and on last 11 May, 2000 the population of the country crossed the figures of one billion. If we overview the plans, programmes and policies of last 50 years, we do not find positive outcome anywhere. From 1971 to 1996, the population of India had increased by 38 crore 60 lakh. This is a population explosion. In view of national interest, if the Government and all political parties do not pay attention to this issue on priority basis, then what will be the future of the country. The condition of human beings in our country will not be better than beast. It will further lead to the problem of drinking water, food and clothing etc. Therefore, through you I would like to request the Government and the House that taking into account gravity of the problem, the steps to achieve the targets of family planning programme, in national interest, Simultaneously, the reasons behind failure of this plan and suitable measures required to control the increasing population should also be discussed.

VAIDYA VISHNU DATT SHARMA (Jammu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a very important question. Pakistan has forced us in guerrilla warfare in Kashmir. But our security forces have done very good job in Kashmir. The Village Security Committees set up with the objectives with the objectives to cooperate with the security forces have proved to be very useful. Therefore, I want to say that more Village Security Committees should be set up. They should be equipped with modern weapons particularly in Doda, Bhadrawah, Poonch and Rajouri sectors so that they may be able to counter terrorist attacks. In addition to it, it is very essential to set up large number of Village Security Committees at the national borders so that infiltration and smuggling of arms and narcotic drugs could be checked. Besides that, Village Security Committees should also be set up in the villages alongside the railway lines, and they should be assigned the responsibility of protecting the railway tracks.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Sir, the Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited, Travancore (FACT) is a very large public undertaking which is producing fertilisers and a lot of farmers in India, especially in the South have been benefiting out of this great organisation for fifty years.

We now find that the Government is going to privatise FACT. This is a large-scale public undertaking that is working well and earning profits. There are assets worth more than Rs. 10,000 crore. If this is going to be sold for tuppence or whatever it is, I think, that would be dooming the nation. We strongly object to the privatisation move. The management, the workers and the officers of FACT are going on a full day strike tomorrow, that is, the 16th. So, I urge upon the Government, through you, that immediate action may be taken to withdraw the privatisation move.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, I associate myself with the sentiments expressed by Shri P.C. Thomas.

13.37 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till thirty-five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.40 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Forty Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for conservation of Biological Diversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of biological resources and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for conservation of Biological Diversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of biological resources and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I introduce the Bill.

14.43 hrs.

IRON AND STEEL COMPANIES (AMALGAMATION AND TAKEOVER LAWS) REPEAL BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to repeal the Iron and Steel Companies Amalgamation Act, 1952 and the Indian Iron and Steel Company (Taking Over of Management) Act, 1972.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Iron and Steel Companies Amalgamation Act, 1952 and the Indian Iron and Steel Company (Taking Over of Management) Act, 1972."

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I rise to oppose the introduction of Iron and Steel Companies (Amalgamation and Takeover Laws) Repeal Bill, 2000. The Indian Iron and Steel Company was taken over by the Government of India in 1972 as there was steady deterioration in its production. Subsequently, under the provision of Public Sector Iron and Steel Company

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2 dated 15.5.2000.

Restructuring Provision Act, 1978, this Company was made one of the subsidiaries of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. Even after the Government took over this Company, this Act remained in the statute book for the last 28 years. So, what is the necessity to repeal this existing Act now? We feel that it is a step towards privatising this Company. The Government of India has already floated tenders. We had raised this issue on the floor of the House already that a Company like Indian Iron and Steel Company which has its own coal mines, iron ore and washeries, is being sold out at a throwaway price. The property worth more than Rs. 6,000 crore is now being sold at a throw away prices. The motive behind bringing this Bill is to repeal the existing law which was enacted in 1972.

MR. SPEAKER: You have to justify your stand as to why you are opposing it.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I think there is no necessity now to bring this amendment because the Act is still there in the statute book. Even after 1978, when the Indian Iron and Steel Company was nationalised, the Act continued. Why does the Government now think that this Act should be repealed? The motive behind this is to privatise an important steel industry of our country.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): I would like to oppose the introduction of this Bill to repeal the Act. We all know, the very debate which started throughout the country from 1969 to 1971 related to the abolition of Privy Purses, Nationalisation of the banks and also whether the right to property should always be treated as a Fundamental Right. I would not like to go back to the history. People's mandate, people's wisdom leads the country to move in a particular direction. This very Act does not concern West Bengal only. It is exposing the hidden agenda of the Government, that is to destabilise, privatise and denationalise all public sectors, beginning with this. One day, it will lead to Vizag in your State. It is aiming at Salem, Durgapur and finally everywhere. This is just a beginning, a tip of the iceberg. The whole House is not seriously thinking today the impact of this.

In the Indian Iron and Steel's Annual Report 1999-2000 — this is not my report but the report of the very Minister who is introducing this Bill—it has been mentioned that against the actual Plan of 725 metric tonnes of production in hot metal — this unit produced 737.9 metric tonne. This comes to about 102 per cent. Similarly, against the production target of crude steel 325 metric tonne, it produced 301 metric tonne which is 93 per cent. Against the Pig Iron target of 342 metric tonne, it

produced 375 metric tonne which is more than 110 per cent. This is the performance report of the unit as per the plan target of the Ministry itself. This is the only Iron and Steel unit under the Government's control throughout the country, if not the countries throughout the world, which is having precious coal mines and washeries to the tune of the property more than Rs. 20,000 crore. In spite of all these things. ...*(Interruptions)* I am concluding in one minute. Even in 1993 the Congress Government tried to ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI (Deoria): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no need to speak all these things at this stage. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: This issue is not related to any party, try to understand. Please listen, you do not know. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. If there is anything, the Minister is there to reply.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: In the whole world this is the only public sector unit having this kind of property. On 22nd August, 1972, the then Minister Shri Mohan Kumaramangalam in this very House while replying to a question put by Shri Indrajit Gupta and Shri Samar Guha, made it abundantly clear that this will not be returned back to either the old management, any group or to any individual. This was the commitment made on this very floor by the Government of the day. In 1993 when Shri Narasimha Rao Government planned to bring such a Bill, the entire trade union opposed it and the Government said that it was wrong. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi, at this stage, you are supposed to give only a brief statement.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I oppose its introduction because they cannot change the solemn commitment given on the floor of the House by a Government by this measure. Secondly, you cannot throw away the property which was taken through the decision of a Parliament in the interest of public. You cannot denationalise and privatise it to throw it to the people who are paying less price than this property is worth. This Parliament cannot endorse it. This is a draconian thing. This is anti-Parliament. This is anti-purpose of the Constitution. Therefore, I oppose it tooth and nail...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Sir, I rise to oppose it...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Your notice is time barred. You had given notice after 10 o'clock. I am not allowing.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the procedure. Now, the Minister will reply.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): Sir, this was enacted with a sole purpose to amalgamate ISCO with the Steel Corporation of India...*(Interruptions)*. Sir, the Commission set up by the Central Government under the Chairmanship of Shri P.C. Dev in 1998 identified certain laws which are no longer relevant. They recommended repeal of those Acts. Sir, I can assure you that there is no hidden agenda in it. So, no motive should be attributed to it...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, the Standing Committee opposed it...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Dasmunsi have given notices before 10 o'clock. How can I allow you?

...*(Interruptions)*

14.52 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Sunil Khan came and stood on the floor near the Table.

MR. SPEAKER: Please go back to your seat. You cannot stop the proceedings of the House.

...*(Interruptions)*

14.53 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Sunil Khan went back to his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please understand. The position is clear. Rule 72 of Rules of Procedure says:

"If a motion for leave to introduce a Bill is opposed, the Speaker, after permitting, if he things fit, brief statements from the member who opposes the motion and the member who moved the motion, may, without further debate, put the question:"

Therefore, now I am putting the question as per the procedure.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I crave your indulgence. You are the custodian of the House.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi, I am doing it as per the procedure only.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: There is a procedure and I am doing it according to that.

That question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Iron and Steel Companies Amalgamation Act, 1952 and the Indian Iron and Steel Company (Taking Over of Management) Act, 1972."

Those in favour will please say 'Aye'.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: 'Aye'.

MR. SPEAKER: Those against will please say 'No'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: 'No'.

MR. SPEAKER: I think, the 'Ayes' have it. The 'Ayes' have it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: The 'Noes' have it.

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Lobbies be cleared.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the lobbies have been cleared.

Kind attention of the Members is invited to the following points in the operation of the Automatic Vote Recording System:

1. Before a Division starts, every Member should occupy his or her own seat and operate the system from that seat only.
2. As may kindly be seen, the "Red bulbs above display boards" on either side of my chair are already glowing. This means the voting system has been activated.

3. For voting, press the following two buttons simultaneously immediately after sounding of first gong, viz.

(i) One "Red" button in front of the Member on the head phone plate; and

(ii) Any one of the following buttons fixed on the top of desk of seats:

'Ayes' — Green colour

'Noes' — Red colour

'Abstain' — Yellow colour

4. It is essential to keep both the buttons pressed till the second gong sound is heard and the red bulbs are "off".

The hon. Members may please note that the vote will not be registered if both buttons are not kept pressed simultaneously till the sounding of the second gong.

5. Do not press the amber button (p) during Division.

6. Members can actually "see" their vote on display boards and on their desk unit. In case vote is not registered, they may call for voting through slips.

15.00 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Iron and Steel Companies Amalgamation Act, 1952 and the Indian Iron and Steel Company (Taking Over of Management) Act, 1972."

The Lok Sabha divided:

DIVISION NO-9

15.01. hrs.

AYES

Atkinson, Shri Denzil B.

Badnore, Shri V.P. Singh*

Bairda, Shri Ramchander

Bhagat, Prof. Dukha

Bhargava, Shri Giridhari Lal

C. Suguna Kumari, Dr. (Shrimati)

Chaudhary, Shri Ram Tahal

Chaudhri, Shri Manibhai Ramjibhai

Chauhan, Shri Bal Krishna

Chauhan, Shri Shriram

Choudhry, Shri Padam Sen

Chouhan, Shri Nihal Chand

Dhikale, Shri Uttamrao

Gadhavi, Shri P.S.

Gangwar, Shri Santosh Kumar

Gavit, Shri Ramdas Rupela

Hussain, Shri Syed Shahnawaz

Jagannath, Dr. Manda

Jaiswal, Shri Shankar Prasad

Jatiya, Dr. Satyanarayan

Jha, Shri Raghunath

Katara, Shri Babubhai K*

Kataria, Shri Rattan Lal

Kriplani, Shri Shrichand

Krishnaswamy, Shri A.

Kusmaria, Dr. Ramkrishna

Mahajan, Shri Y.G.

Maharia, Shri Subhash

Majhi, Shri Parsuram

Meena, Shrimati Jas Kuar

Mehta, Shrimati Jayawanti

Mohite, Shri Subodh

Murmu, Shri Salkhan

Murthi, Shri M.V.V.S.

*Voted through slip.

*Voted through slip.

Naik, Shri Ali Mohd.
 Naik, Shri Ram
 Palanimanickam, Shri S.S.
 Parste, Shri Dalpat Singh
 Paswan, Dr. Sanjay
 Patel, Shri Deepak
 Ponnuswamy, Shri E.
 Ramalah, Dr. B.B.
 Rawat, Prof. Rasa Singh
 Ray, Shri Bishnu Pada
 Sahu, Shri Anadi
 Sangwan, Shri Kishan Singh
 Shah, Shri Manabendra
 Sharma, Vaidya Vishnu Datt
 Singh Deo, Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari
 Singh, Ch. Tejveer
 Singh, Shri Brij Bhushan Sharan
 Singh, Shri Chandra Pratap
 Singh, Shri Radha Mohan
 Singh, Shri Sahib
 Srikantappa, Shri D.C.
 Swain, Shri Kharabela
 Thakkar, Shrimati Jayaben B.
 Tomar, Dr. Ramesh Chand
 Tripathi, Shri Prakash Mani
 Vasava, Shri Mansukhbhai D.
 Venkataswamy, Dr. N.
 Abdullakutty, Shri A.P.
 Acharia, Shri Basu Deb
 Alva, Shrimati Margaret
 Alvi, Shri Rashid
 Bhadana, Shri Avtar Singh
 Bhagora, Shri Tarachand
 Bhatia, Shri R.L.
 Bhuria, Shri Kantilal
 Brar, Shri J.S.

Chatterjee, Shri Somnath
 Chaturvedi, Shri Satyavrat
 Choudhary, Shrimati Reena
 Dasmunsi, Shri Priya Ranjan
 Haneda, Shri Thomas
 Jaiswal, Shri Shriprakash
 Khan, Shri Sunil
 Lahiri, Shri Samik
 Malaisamy, Shri K.
 Muttemwar, Shri Vilas
 Pal, Shri Rupchand
 Pandiyan, Shri P.H.
 Patel, Shri Dahyabhai Vallabhbai
 Patil, Shri Shivraj V.*
 Patil, Shri Uttamrao
 Radhkrishnan, Shri Varkala
 Rashtrapal, Shri Pravin
 Saiduzzama, Shri
 Scindia, Shri Madhevroa
 Shakya, Shri Raghuraj Singh
 Singh Deo, Shri K.P.
 Singh, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad
 Sorake, Shri Vinay Kumar
 Thomas, Shri P.C.
 Yadav, Shri Bhal Chandra

MR. SPEAKER: Subject to correction, the result* of the division is:

Ayes: 59

Noes: 33

The motion was adopted.

SHRI DILIP RAY: I introduce the Bill.

*Voted through slip.

**The following Members also recorded their votes through slip:
 AYES: 59+Sh. V.P. Singh Bednore and Shri Babubhai K. Katara-61

NOES: 33+ Shri Shivraj V. Patil = 34

15.02 hrs.

**LEADERS AND CHIEF WHIPS OF RECOGNISED
PARTIES AND GROUPS IN PARLIAMENT
(FACILITIES) AMENDMENT BILL***

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): I beg to move for leave to
introduce a Bill to amend the Leaders and Chief Whips
of Recognised Parties and Groups in Parliament (Facilities)
Act, 1998.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend
the Leaders and Chief Whips of Recognised Parties
and Groups in Parliament (Facilities) Act, 1998."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I introduce the Bill.

15.03 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up the
matters under Rule 377.

- (I) Need to run Gorakhpur-Awadh Express via
Narkatiaganj-Motihari-Muzaffarpur in Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (Motihari): Mr.
Speaker, Sir, 21 pair trains ply from Muzaffarpur junction
to Delhi and other places through Gorakhpur-junction via
Hazipur-Chhapra-Siwan rail line. The rail line from
Muzaffarpur junction to Gorakhpur-Motihari-Betiah-
Narkatiaganj-Baghha was converted to broad gauge many
years ago but no pair of trains has been introduced on
this line. The Gorakhpur-Awadh Express which halts at
Gorakhpur for 23 hours should be run via Narkatiaganj,
Betiah, Motihari line to Muzaffarpur.

Taking into account the gravity of the problem of
this area, I request the hon'ble Union Minister of Railways

*Published in Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2,
dated 15.5.2000.

to take prompt decision in this regard so that the
passengers of this area could be benefited. I hope the
Government will take immediate action in this regard.

- (II) Need to implement 'Dikshit Award' with a
view to settle Border dispute between
Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

[English]

SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN (Sonapat): Sir, I
want to draw the attention of the Central Government
towards the growing tension among the people belonging
to border towns of States of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.
The issue relating to settlement of border dispute as well
as of Yamuna Canal is pending since long. Its non-
settlement has given rise to the incessant quarrels
between the farmers of both the States such as village
Khurrampur of Sonapat district of Haryana and its
adjoining villages in Uttar Pradesh. Dikshit Award, which
aimed at resolving the dispute, has not been implemented
yet nor do the entries in revenue records of both the
States updated resulting thereby in some sort of insecurity
among the people. I, therefore, urge upon the Government
to implement the Dikshit Award *in toto* and without any
further delay in the interests of both the States.

- (III) Need for early completion of gauge
conversion from Tirupati to Katpadi and
doubling of rail line between Guduru and
Renigunta

DR. N. VENKATASWAMY (Tirupati): Sir, Tirupati, an
abode of Lord Venkateswara, popularly known as Balaji
in the North, is one of the most sacred pilgrim centres
in India. Every day lakhs of devotees from four corners
of India visit this temple town. But unfortunately, such an
important pilgrim centre is not having adequate
communication facilities.

To meet this demand, the scheme of gauge
conversion from Tirupati to Katpadi was sanctioned in
the year 1992-93. But the work is progressing at a snail's
pace. Similar schemes sanctioned after 1993, namely,
Hoopet-Gadag-Hubli-Londa, Nandyal-Dronachalam-
Guntakal, Trichi to Kanchivaram, etc. have been
completed long back. The allocation of Rs. 12 crore made
in 2000-2001 Budget is not at all sufficient. Hence,
additional funds are required for completion of work before
March, 2001.

Regarding conversion of gauge between
Dharmavaram and Pakala, the allotment of rupees ten
lakhs shown in 2000-2001 Budget appears to be nominal
to keep the scheme alive. When these projects are

[Dr. N. Venkateswamy]

completed, it will enable people from Kerala, Mysore and Bangalore to reach Tirupati directly instead of roundabout way and also help the development of the backward area.

Another proposal, pending with the Railway department, is laying of double line from Guduru to Renigunta. The budget allocation of Rs. 17 crore shown in the 2000-2001 Budget is not at all adequate. This should be taken up and completed early. This double line will help devotees coming from West Bengal, Orissa and North-Eastern States to reach Tirupati directly without waiting at Guduru for hours.

(iv) Need to set up proposed Economic Zone of U.P. at Kanpur

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): Sir, Kanpur city which was once called Manchester of India, is now a days in a miserable condition due to closure of major industries. Unemployment is on the rise there. The law and order situation is deteriorating day by day. There has been constant rise in the problems of the city for the last few year due to lackadaisical approach of the State Government as well as the Central Government. The main problems in the city are housing, electricity, water, air, employment increasing population and also the characteristics of the city is being ruined. Appropriate steps are not being taken to redress these problems. If immediate attention is not paid to these problems, then the situation will go out of control.

Therefore, it is very essential to pay attention to the economic development alongwith other things to handle the difficult situation prevailing there. I have come to know that the Ministry of Commerce of the Union Government is going to set up some economic zones in the country. Uttar Pradesh is also among the places/States where economic zones are proposed to be set up.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to set up proposed economic zone at Kanpur itself as infrastructure facilities and other circumstances are most favourable there.

(v) Need to accord environmental clearance to Varahi Lift Irrigation Project in Udupi, Karnataka

[English]

SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (Udupi): Dependence on erratic rainfall has often proved calamitous to farmers in Udupi and Kundapur Talukas of Udupi District of

Dakshin Kannada region. It is in this backdrop an irrigation scheme of much utility was envisaged years back to irrigate 15,700 hectares of land in Udupi and Kundapur taluka areas. For this purpose, a scheme for constructing a pick-up dam at Horibe near Siddapur village was drawn up to harness 1100 cusecs of tail race water coming out of Varahi Hydel Project Upstream. Christened Varahi Lift Irrigation Scheme this project has so far failed to see the light of the day, despite expenditure incurred amounting to more than Rs. 20 crore. In 1992, the Centre had accorded its approval for the scheme with an initial outlay of Rs. 14.50 crore.

The matter is stuck up in procedural wrangles concerning accord of environmental clearance, as approximately 275 hectares of forest land is likely to be submerged in the dam area. This is too small and insignificant a factor weighed against the vast irrigation potential the scheme is expected to hold.

I would, therefore, strongly urge the Central Government to accord environmental clearance to the scheme in the larger interest of the farmers in Udupi and Kundapur who stand to benefit enormously from Varahi Lift Irrigation Scheme when commissioned.

(vi) Need for early clearance of Integrated Dairy Development Projects of Maharashtra Government

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Nagpur): The Union Government has sanctioned for implementation of Integrated Dairy Development Project-I, Phase-I in non-operation flood hilly and backward areas in Maharashtra State (100 per cent Centrally-sponsored) on 27th February, 1996 for the districts Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Yeotamal, Chandrapur, and Gadchiroli for the years 1996-1999.

The Maharashtra Government submitted a separate proposal on 11th February, 1997 to the Union Government for implementing the I.D.D.P. Project-I, Phase-II for the same district. The total cost of the Project is rs. 1,995.22 lakh. This proposal is still pending with the Union Government.

Again, Maharashtra Government submitted a project proposal on 28th December, 1998 for implementing Integrated Dairy Development Project-III in non-operation flood hilly and backward areas in Maharashtra State for the districts Amravati, Buldhana, Bhandara, Nanded, Latur, and Nandurbar. The proposal is still pending with the Union Government.

The main objects of these projects are:

1. To Strengthen and revitalise the existing Dairy Co-operative Societies and organise new DCS;

2. To encourage farmers to adopt dairy as a business for increasing milk production and income of the farmers in the area;
3. To build up milk processing and storage capacity in urban areas;
4. To improve the delivery of services provided to the milk producers by the Animal Husbandry, Department and Cooperatives;
5. To encourage fodder cultivation by farmers and awareness through extension services.

As the projects are still pending with the Union Government, I request the Government to kindly clear these projects immediately.

- (vii) **Need to take necessary steps to check spread of coconut mite disease in Kerala**

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, the immediate measures be taken against spread of coconut mite in Kerala, which is causing huge loss to the Coconut farmers. I request the Union Agriculture Minister to take up urgent measures to help the Kerala Government in the fight against this disease.

- (viii) **Need for a long term perspective plan to combat drought and desertification of Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh**

SHRI KALAVA SRINIVASULU (Anantapur): Anantapur district is the second lowest rainfall district in the whole country with 522 mm annual average rainfall. It is the second worst drought-hit district in the country and it is notified by the Government of India as desert-prone. The National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) has confirmed through Remote Sensing that signs of desertification have been noticed in the satellite imageries. For the past 50 years, since Independence, many piece-meal programmes have been contemplated and implemented under DPAP, DRDA, DDP, etc. But no visible signs of any permanent solution to reduce the drought proneness or desertification is seen in spite of numerous programmes.

Almost every year, drought relief measures are demanded and implemented and a long-term solution is not available. The people of Anantapur strongly feel that there is a need for long-term action perspective plan to mitigate the drought-proneness and desertification. So, we request the Government of India to set up a Commission to study and prepare a long-term action perspective plan for combating drought and desertification of Anantapur district and once for all the problem of drought and desertification is addressed to the extent possible.

- (ix) **Need to set up food processing industries in North Bihar particularly in Sitamarhi District**

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi): Sir, Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Khagaria, Vaishali, Sitamarhi etc. districts of North Bihar etc. every year inflicted with floods from Boodhi Gandak and Sikarhara rivers. In order to mitigate their misery, the farmers of this area resorted to cultivating seasoned fruits. They started growing 'Lichi' and Mangoes with their meagre residual capital and also got success to some extent. This area produced one lakh tonne of 'Lichi'. But 60-70 percent of Lichi crop get rotton due to lack of proper cold storage facility. Lichi and Mangoes can survive only for 20-25 days, after that it starts rotting and the fruit growers have to incur heavy losses amounting to lacs of rupees. Therefore, setting up of Food processing industries needs to be promoted but neither the private sector nor the public sector have taken initiative so far. Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to formulate a national policy to promote food processing industry in this area.

- (x) **Need for construction of a Coastal Express Highway from Kanyakumari to Mumbai via Trivandrum, Cochi, Calicut, Mangalore and Goa**

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): There should be a Coastal Express Highway from Kanyakumari to Mumbai via Trivandrum, Cochin, Calicut, Mangalore and Goa. This will connect important ports and major cities. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Surface Transport has also made this recommendation. This will be a major development for India. The Golden Quadrilateral should have included this scheme. However, this highway should be treated at par with golden quadrilateral and should be taken up without delay. I request the Government to take immediate positive action in this regard.

15.18 hrs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now the House will take up Item No. 17, Information Technology Bill, 1999. The time recommended by the BAC is four hours.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange and other means of electronic communications, commonly referred to as "electronic commerce", which involve the use of alternatives to paper-based methods of communication and storage of information, to facilitate electronic filing of documents with the Government agencies and further to amend the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Banker's Book Evidence Act, 1891 and the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

Sir, the Information Technology Bill, 1999 was introduced with a view to facilitate transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange. Transactions carried out using the media of electronic communication are known as "electronic commerce" which is now used by organisations, business consumers, both in private and public sector. It is, thus, necessary that this alternative to paper-based method of communication receives a legal sanction. This Bill also provides for legal recognition to the digital signatures and documents filed electronically. The enactment of this Bill would enable finalisation of contracts and creation of rights and obligations through electronic media.

The Bill also provides for the appointment of a controller to supervise the certifying authorities, which would issue digital signature certificates. To prevent misuse of transactions in the electronic medium the proposed legislation envisages appropriate punishment for the contravention of the provisions.

Further, the Bill has suitable clauses to deal with tampering of computer source documents, publishing information which is obscene in nature and issues relating to damage to computers, computer systems through a system of appropriate penalties and punishment. The Bill also facilitates electronic governance and enable the user acceptance of electronic records and digital signatures in Government offices. The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on the 16th of December. It was referred to the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests. I am grateful to the Chairman and Members of the Standing Committee because, they had several sittings, and they examined the Bill and gave us very valuable suggestions. We have accepted almost all the suggestions of the Standing Committee barring

two and I will take only a minute or two to explain about the suggestions which we did not accept.

The Standing Committee suggested that a Website or a portal should have a registration. We thought that having a Website and a portal is done even by a ten year old kid these days and the number goes into lakhs; the registering authority for that will unnecessarily create a hurdle for the public at large. So, we did not accept this suggestion.

The second suggestion was that in an ordinary computer cyber cafe, a crime could be committed through cyber cafe. So, any visitor who goes through the cyber cafe should be registered or what he does should be registered. We thought that the intention was very right to stop this crime. But even criminals can use an STD booth. But we do not have people going through a register whether he has made a call what he did, and so on. Similarly, there are many places where such crimes against people are committed. But we do not keep a register. So, we thought we should trace out the crimes. But such an action of keeping a register will create problems for the people. Because this cyber cafe is a place where a person who cannot own a personal computer wants to take advantage of this information technology; he should be able to use it.

These are the two areas where respectfully we disagreed with the Standing Committee's recommendations and the rest of all the suggestions have been incorporated in the form of amendments.

Lastly, I would like to say only one thing. Information Technology for some people is some kind of a scientific revolution. Information Technology for some is a means to get money which is very easy to earn. Information Technology for India is a way to become a super power in the next 10 years. But if you ask me as a lay man to define what is Information Technology, I can only say that Information Technology is the fourth generation of human communication. When the human society came on the earth the first way of communication between people was through gestures. When somebody smiled we thought that he was happy. Second, the human race had brought up a spoken language. Then we come to written language. Now we have reached towards digital language which is the fourth generation of human communication. It is the faster one. The fastest fifth generation of human communication is mind to mind communication and its intellectual property rights are with the Almighty God; and nobody else has this communication. So, digital communication is the fourth generation. So, when we moved from a spoken language to a written language, thousands of text-books were written. We re-wrote everything. Similarly when we are moving from a written language to a digital language we

will have to re-write almost every piece of legislation in this country.

I would like to recall, if you remember, on the very first day of the Budget session, the Government wanted to submit the Subrahmanyam Committee Report on a CD-Rom.

It is because we did not have 2,000 pages copied into 800. But the Secretariat rightly so refused because in Lok Sabha, we can only lay papers on the Table of the House and not electronically we can lay things. So, accepting the electronic mail, everything, I do not want to go into all details, but this being the fourth generation of communication, we have brought up the Information Technology Bill. It is not that we have brought it up in a hurry. We have tried for one year. As I said in the morning, we have redrafted it for 150 times. Then, we gave it to Parliament; we gave it to the people. There was a debate in the public. Every debate was submitted to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee thought about it. Now, I think, it has become really very late, if we do not pass it. The whole world is waiting for India to become a super power. That needs a legal framework.

I will request the House to discuss it fully as long as they want, but pass it and make the cyber laws true after this Session.

Sir, with these few words, I would request the House to pass this Bill unanimously.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange and other means of electronic communication, commonly referred to as "electronic commerce", which involve the use of alternatives to paper-based methods of communication and storage of information, to facilitate electronic filing of documents with the Government agencies and further to amend the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Banker's Book Evidence Act, 1891, and the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur): Sir, the present century is going to be dominated by electronics, genetics and informatics. We are all trying to have offices which need not use papers and communication which would not have the instruments having chords or wires. Wireless communication and paperless offices is the objective which

the 21st century has fixed for itself. In order to achieve these objectives, two things are needed to be done. One is the development of the technology itself. But it is not sufficient to develop the technology. As is said by the hon. Minister, we need a legal framework to use the technology, especially for governance, commerce and trade and industry and in other areas also, we need a legal framework. Without legal framework, it may not be possible for us to use the technology available.

The Government is trying to create the legal framework. This is the first step in that direction. In this Act itself, they are touching the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, to some extent, the Civil Procedure Code, Criminal Procedure Code and laws relating to banking and other areas. They have also provided that many rules will be framed and many regulations will be made. They will be used to see that this modern technology can be used in the Government offices and in E-Commerce.

I would like to submit that nobody can have objection to this kind of move. It has to be welcomed. We have seen the Members speaking from different benches in the House and supporting the move of the Government. But what they were saying was that this is a very important law and it should not be passed in a hurry. If you wait for one or two months, it is not going to affect our entry into the 21st Century with this modern technology. Anything done in a hurry may create problems rather than facilitate using the new technology. That is the kind of argument the Members were advancing from this side and from the other side also.

It is true that the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee and the Standing Committee has given the report. My understanding is that the reports of the Standing Committee are not brushed aside, they are respectfully accepted and, to the extent possible, Government tries to implement the recommendations made by the Standing Committee. In this case also, the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee and it has come back from the Standing Committee to the Parliament and is available to the Members. But the law is so complicated and is going to have long term implications. The desire of the Members is to have a law which is without any defects or with as few defects as is possible for human ingenuity to have a kind of law. That is why this suggestion was made here.

I know when the Delhi Rent Control Bill was passed in this House, what happened. At that time, I had said, sitting in that Chair where you are sitting, Sir, that do not

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

pass that law in a hurry, and it was said on the floor of the House by the leaders of all parties, without any exception, that the law could be passed because there was understanding between the parties and that Bill was acceptable to all the parties. Then the Delhi Rent Control Bill was passed. It was passed in Rajya Sabha, it was assented to by the President and upto this time, that law is not implemented. They have not issued the notification to implement the law, to enforce the law. And why was it not done? Because there are some provisions in the law to which certain sections of the society objected later or they demonstrated. To my surprise, in one Session that law was passed within fifteen minutes in this august House and in the second Session itself, on the first day, a proposal came that the law should be scrapped and a new law should be made. That happened with respect to the Delhi Rent Control Act. The Delhi Rent Control Act is applicable only to the city of Delhi. It is applicable to the owners of the land and tenants of the land. It is not applicable to the citizens living in other parts of the country or to the citizens or persons living outside the country. Here is a law which we are going to pass which is going to be applicable to the entire country as such. Here is something which is being done for the first time. There was the Rent Control Act in Delhi but we do not have any law of this nature and yet we are trying to expedite it. I appreciate the enthusiasm and the desire of the hon. Minister and the Government and of those who have faith and confidence in science and technology to see that this is done without any loss of time. I appreciate it. For that, they should be respected. But then we shall have to be visionary enough to pause for a minute and see what kind of implications we are going to have with respect to this Bill. There are articles appearing in the newspapers supporting this Bill and opposing this Bill. There are people in the country and outside the country also who say that if you have a law of this kind, it is going to facilitate your using the electronic media for governance and for commerce in the country and outside the country. But there are people who are cautioning but they say that it is the most sophisticated technology and it can be used. Anything which is very powerful can be used and misused. The use can be very beneficial and misuse can be very dangerous also. That is why they are cautioning not to have a law which will create problems.

Do not have a law which will limit the liberty available to the citizens in the country. These are two contrary suggestions given and then we have to strike a balance between these two suggestions. On the one hand it should be a facilitative law and on the other hand it should be a law which will provide security to the transactions entered into by the Government and others

outside. There is a responsibility cast on the Members of this august House to look at it very carefully, in detail, in a balance manner and pass a law which can really help us for the next century to come.

Now, this is the kind of thing which is there and that is why we shall have to look at this law in a careful manner. That is why a suggestion was made. I am repeating that. I understand, I appreciate and I congratulate those who are responsible for trying to bring this kind of law here. At the same time I want to caution that in hurry, you may not commit a mistake. If you commit a mistake, it cannot be easily corrected. For the Government of India to wait for two days, two months or even for two years is not dangerous; but to commit a mistake is dangerous because once you commit a mistake, you cannot easily remove the impact of this mistake on the entire country as such. That is why delay is acceptable in formulating a policy of this nature rather than committing a mistake while formulating a policy for this kind of a thing. That is exactly why the Members have been saying that: 'Wait, pause and consider and apply your mind and then come to the House.'

This Bill is very important. The hon. Minister has, very rightly, said that the Government wanted to lay the CD-ROM on Kargil Report on the Table of the House and it could not be done. This Bill is going to be relevant for the Parliament also. Is there anything in the Bill which will facilitate Parliament's using the electronic equipment for facilitating the working in the Parliament? I am sorry to say that I do not find anything in it. You shall have to do something more, probably you shall have to write some rules if not the legal provision in consultation with the Parliament to provide this kind of a facility. This is going to be applicable to the Judiciary. Many of the documents will be produced in the courts of law and they have to attach legal importance to those documents. This is certainly going to be useful to the Executive. This is a law which is relevant for the working of the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

We have to understand the ambit of this law. It is relevant to the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. It is not only relevant to the Government but it is also relevant to the people outside also. It is going to be relevant to those in commerce, in trade, in industry and in many other areas. That is exactly why we shall have to see that this law is made in a proper manner.

The hon. Minister has explained as to what this law is intending to do. Firstly, they have given the definition of the words and then they have created the law which can recognise the digital signature. They have created the offences for which those—who tinker with the electronic transactions, signature, contents and all those

things—can be penalised. They have provided the machinery to take cognizance, to investigate and to penalise those persons who are responsible for that. There is a provision for adjudication also.

Now, look at the ambit of the law. Is it relevant to the Indian Penal Code, the Evidence Act, the Criminal Procedure Code etc.? Is it relevant to the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary? Is it relevant to commerce, trade or science? This is going to have an impact in all these areas also. That is why we shall have to be very careful in framing this law.

Sir, Now I come to the Bill itself. My first objection is to the Title of the Bill itself. What does the Title say? It says 'The Information Technology Bill'. What is the Information Technology Bill? Is it relevant to the development of the technology? Is it relevant to the distribution of the technology? Is it relevant to using the technology or information technology? In fact, this Bill is relevant to using the information technology in governance and commerce, but it has nothing to do with the development of the technology as such. They are not providing the funds. They are not giving the responsibility for development. They are not giving responsibility for distribution of this technology to the users and things like that. But the Title gives a wrong connotation and I am misled when I read the Title 'The Information Technology Bill.' It could have been a different Title. It could have conveyed that this Bill is trying to facilitate using the information technology. The Title itself of the Bill is giving a wrong impression. Should we not have a different kind of Title? Should we stand on prestige on the question of Title because this Bill is going to be there maybe for one hundred or more than one hundred years? If the Title itself is conveying a wrong meaning to the reader of the Bill, then, well, we shall have to look into it.

Sir, this Bill, in my opinion, is not comprehensive. My first objection to this Bill is that it is not comprehensive because as is explained by the Minister and by myself also, it is not going to facilitate, as it stands, in using this Bill for legislative purposes. It is not comprehensive. It is not covering the Legislature. If it covers the Executive and the Judiciary, it could have covered the Legislature also. It is not comprehensive and it has many lacunae. As far as private transactions are concerned, it is not comprehensive. I am reading from page number 2. The relevant portion of Clause 4 reads:

"Nothing in this Act shall apply to,....

- (e) to any contract for the sale or conveyance of immovable property or any interest in such property."

Now, you are allowing the moveable property to be covered by this Bill. This Bill will be relevant to the transaction with respect to the moveable property, but it is not relevant to the immovable property. You can have the electronic agreement in the computer about a car costing say Rs. 50,000 or, if it is a Mercedes car, Rs. 30 lakh, and that agreement can be made on the computer, but you are not allowing the contract for the sale or conveyance of immovable property or any interest in such property. It is applicable to the moveable property, but it is not applicable to the immovable property. Why should it not cover immovable property? Supposing certain more provisions have to be provided in the Act to cover the immovable property also, it could not have been beyond the intelligence of all of us here to provide some provisions in the Act for this purpose also. But it is not. That is why, I have said that it does not cover the Legislature, it does not cover the private activity and so, it is not comprehensive. We are going with the impression that this Bill itself is not going to be sufficient and we shall have to have many other laws made for this purpose. I do agree. I am not disputing this fact. It is not possible to cover everything in one Bill, but, at least, the Bill should be such that it covers the most important areas and then, it becomes as comprehensive as is possible, but this Bill is not comprehensive.

I have shown as to how it is relevant to movable property, and as to how it is not relevant to immovable property.

My second objection to this is that this Bill has some redundant provisions. There is an apprehension in the minds of those who have framed this Bill 'that it is necessary to provide certain things in the Bill. Without providing those things in the Bill, there would be confusion and, that is why, let us have those provisions in the Bill. Even though they look redundant, unnecessary, and yet, you should have those things in the Bill.' Now, this is a wrong kind of drafting and a wrong kind of making the laws also. If there are accepted principles in the jurisprudence followed by India, if there are certain decisions taken by the courts in India, it is not necessary for us always to have those kinds of things. So, there are some redundancies, unnecessary things here. You can provide redundancies to meet the accidents, but you cannot provide the redundancies in order to have a usual working also. That kind of a thing is not necessary. Where are all those redundancies? I will just read out only one Clause, which will indicate that it is redundant. Clause 57 (2) says:

"No appeal shall lie to the Cyber Appellate Tribunal from an order made by an adjudicating officer with the consent of the parties."

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

Is it necessary to have this kind of a provision in the law? This is an established principle. If there is a decision given by the judge of a court on the agreement between the parties, now there is no scope for going against that kind of a decision unless a fraud is pleaded or something of that nature is pleaded. But here, the law provides this thing. I do not know as to why this has been provided in this Bill.

Then there are some confusing provisions in the Bill, and you have to clear those confusions. Which are those confusing provisions? I will read Clause 58(1). It says:

"The Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down by the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 but shall be guided by the principles of natural justice..."

It seems as if the Code of Civil Procedure is not based on the principles of natural justice. In fact, it provides a bigger area, and yet it is said here:

"...and, subject to the other provisions of this Act and of any rules, the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall have powers to regulate its own procedure including the place at which it shall have its sittings."

Now, there are three things, that is, Code of Civil Procedure, then principles of natural justice, and then the tribunals are allowed to have their own procedure.

I think, this is not happily worded; this is not a good enactment; this is not a good law. Then, Clause 58 (2) says:

"The Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall have, for the purposes of discharging their functions under this Act, the same powers as are vested in a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908..."

At one place, it is not applicable; at another place, it is applicable. Then it says the same thing here again.

"...while trying a suit, in respect of the following matters, namely:—"

I am not going to those details. Then, the Limitation Act provides the limitation, and it says:

"The provisions of the Limitation Act, 1963, shall, as far as may be, apply to an appeal made to the Cyber Appellate Tribunal."

These are the provisions that are likely to create confusion. The law should simplify rather than complicate the proceedings in the courts and practice outside the courts also. However, it appears that this would be creating confusion. Using the words and phrases contrary to each other in one section is likely to create confusion in the minds of people.

The intention of the Government appears to be that since we are in the 21st century things should move faster; we should not waste even one day or even one month in decision-making; and if decisions have to be given they should be given without any delay. However, the levels of authority that have been created for adjudicating matters and giving decisions are likely to create delays. On the one hand there is an authority to give the certificate; then there is a tribunal which can sit in appeal against that decision; and that decision can then go to the High Court and to the Supreme Court also. There are three appeals provided in total. Generally two appeals are provided, but here three appeals are provided. If you provide three appeals, naturally there would be some people in the society who would be interested in making use of this provision for delaying the implementation of decisions taken by the authorities. I think it was not necessary to have these many levies. Well, I can understand that the Government is trying to see that adjudication is done in a proper manner. But this difficulty is there and we cannot overlook it also.

This Bill has one or two provisions that really go against the accepted principles of criminal jurisprudence in the country. I am not a practising lawyer, Shri Jaitley is there and probably he would be able to shed better light on this provision. I say this on the basis of what I have studied and understood. I am not saying that my friend is wrong and I am correct. But I do feel in my bones that what I am thinking is not far off the mark principle-wise, practically and from the viewpoint of criminal jurisprudence also. What is it to which I am objecting? It is Clause 76. On page 21, Clause 76 reads, "No penalty imposed, or confiscation made under this Act shall prevent the imposition of any other punishment to which the person affected thereby is liable under any other law for the time being in force." A person committing an offence will anyway be penalised under this law. This section says that he can be penalised under some other law also. Is this not double jeopardy? Is this allowed under the Constitution? A person can be punished only once for one offence. He cannot be punished two times under this Act as well as under any other Act. This is my understanding of this provision. Some friends have tried to explain to me that the Government may probably be correct. I am not taking a very rigid stand on this. They have tried to tell me that if action 'one' is there and if

there is a law providing for a case against that action, action can be taken under some other law also. Under the Indian Penal Code also action can be taken. If that is so, if that is the principle, why should we have this kind of a provision? I do feel that for one action a person cannot be punished twice. If he has to be punished under two laws, he can be punished in one court under the two laws. It is not necessary that a case should be filed against him under another law and he should be punished a second time.

15.54 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

Why should he be punished a second time? Even if technically this can be done, it should not be done. Let a man who has to be punished be punished under all current laws in one go. He need not undergo the whole process two times. He need not be asked to face two cases or more cases under different laws at different times. If there are four or five different laws under which cases can be filed against a man, should we file one case under one law, a second case under a second law later, and a third case under a third law after that, and so on?

I have the strongest objection to this kind of provision. It is not facilitating but it is complicating. It is not providing the liberty to the users of this new technology but they are going to create some scare in the minds of the users of this technology. If they have committed the offence, let them be punished once. Whatever punishment you want to impose, you impose that punishment but you cannot impose the punishment in different courts under different laws at different times. Now, this should not be done.

I have my objection to this. But let it be examined by the legal experts and let them come to the conclusion.

Some people have criticised this law. They have said that 'this is draconian'. Some people have given the interview on television. Some people have written articles and all those things. Sir, I would not go to the extent of saying that 'it is draconian.' But certain provisions of this law appear to be more severe than they need be. And, if it is possible for us, on the one hand, our duty is to see that this new technology is not misused and on the other hand, our duty is to see that new technology utilisation is facilitated by this law rather than differences created.

I am referring to Clause 84 on page 22. This is an omnibus provision. It says:

'Where a person committing a contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or of any rule, direction or order made thereunder is a company, every person who, at the time the contravention was committed, was in charge of, and was responsible to, the company for the conduct of business of the company as well as the company, shall be (for conduct of the business of the company and as well as the company) guilty of the contravention and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.'

And, the provision says:

'Provided that nothing contained in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to punishment if he proves that the contravention took place without his knowledge or that he exercised all due diligence to prevent such contravention.'

Now, you are allowing the net to be spread so wide that anybody who is working in the company can be covered. If the company has its head office here and the sub-offices at Bombay, Calcutta and Bangalore and they are working, and if it is supposed that they are working under the guidance and the supervision of the person sitting in Delhi and if any offence is committed there, you would be easily able to catch that person who is sitting here and hold him responsible and proceed against him. This provision says:

'But he has a right to prove that he was not in the know of what is happening there and it was not done with his consent.'

The onus is shifted from the prosecution to the guilty person.

Now, in my opinion, this is not happily worded. You can achieve the objective of not allowing a person sitting at a distance and yet guiding this kind of activities are being too negligent in this respect and yet you cannot have a provision of the law which can easily allow the investigator, the police officer or any other offices for that matter, to catch hold of him and proceed against him and prosecute him.

Now, this is going to create difficulties. Those who are in the business have already started saying 'Why are you doing this?' I saw one interview on television. Shri Arun Jaitley was there. He said: 'Well, this provision is there in the Criminal Procedure Code. If it is here, why

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

do you bother about it?' Well, if the Criminal Procedure Code is there, then why do you have it here? One sentence saying that the Criminal Procedure Code will apply to it, it is enough. But you are doing it, 'every person responsible for the company, for the conduct of the business of the company as well as company.' Now, these are the words which create some apprehensions in the minds of those who are in the business.

16.00 hrs.

Rather than facilitating, they are going to create scare in the minds of the people, again utilising this kind of provision.

I would simply request that let it be carefully examined and if you think it could be there, you can take a decision. But in my understanding, it is a little more severe even than what is required to be in the law and it need not be there. We can dispense with it or you can word in such a fashion that the severity of this law is removed.

There are many provisions here which go to indicate that because this is a new area, and because the Government is entering into the area and taking the country also into a new area and they feel that there are many uncharted areas where caution is required, they have retained the discretion to change the laws as and when it is necessary or to give interpretation of the law. That is provided in Clause 85:

"If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by order published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty."

Probably by having this provision, the executive is trying to take the authority to change what is legislative. It is an enabling provision. In some laws, this kind of provision is there. Even in the Constitution, sometimes this kind of provision is there. But what does it indicate? It indicates that it is a new area. It indicates that there are likely to be situations in which it would be necessary for the Government to issue notifications to give explanations as to how this law can be implemented. That is what we find in other provisions also. The rule-making provision, Clause 87(3) reads as follows:

"Every notification by the Central Government under Clause (f) of sub-Section (4) of Section 1 and every rule shall be placed a soon as it may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament,

while it is in Session, for a total period of 30 days which may be comprised in one Session or in two or more successive Sessions and if before the expiry of the Session, immediately following the Session or the successive Sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the regulation or both the Houses agree that the regulation should not be made, the regulation shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that regulation."

The same kind of provision is given in Clause 88(3) also. There are three places where the framers of the Bill are indicating that there are areas in which they shall have to keep on looking at these provisions and interpret the law in a different fashion. This caution is good because this is new area, but at the same time, if you are so cautious with respect to the rule, should we not to be cautious with respect to the legislation or the statute itself? Naturally the details are given in the rules and probably there is scope for changing the details given in the rules. But the law is more important and any rule which goes against the law itself cannot mend that situation.

That is why we shall have to be very careful with respect to this.

I am one of those persons who had the good fortune of being in the company of the scientists and being in the Ministry of Science and Technology for the longest period of time, they say. I appreciate the efforts done to modernise in every respect—administration, production, creation of knowledge and coping up with the futuristic things. We appreciate that. But at the same time when we are dealing with these kinds of areas, it would be better to delay rather than commit a mistake. The Indian Penal Code and the Indian Evidence Act are there. They are the products of the thinking of centuries. They are drafted in such a fashion. Even the Constitution of India is very happily drafted and very clearly drafted that there is very little ambiguity in reading the provisions of the Constitution. The Indian Penal Code and the Indian Evidence Act and even the Civil Procedure Code and the Criminal Procedure Code are all happily drafted. My objection is — and it should not be taken amiss — to the shape and to the lack of elegance. The law is not elegant. The law is not happily worded. The law is creating confusion. It is not comprehensive. It is at places ambiguous. That is why I am requesting that though this

should be done, it should be done in an elegant manner. Let it be done but let it be done in a manner that this would continue for years to come, at least in substance if not in all the great details. At least in substance, it should remain there and it is not going to be removed from the statute book very easily. Let it be done in a manner that would show that we are entering a new century and a new area of activity in an elegant manner. My objection is to that and not to the substance.

My objection is not to the motive or the intention with which this Bill has been brought. My objection is to the form in which it has been brought than to the substance. That is why, if you are doing such a big thing, to which when everybody is agreeing and if it has very wide implications that would be valid for years, why do you not do it a little more carefully, a little more slowly and a little more correctly? That is my submission.

[Translation]

DR. S. N. JAY PASWAN (Nawada): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Bill has been introduced in the House after inordinate delay and I rise to speak in favour of this Bill. Today, a lot of awareness is there about the cyber and a lot of information is also available in this field in the whole world. The cyber inverse and Indian Experts of Computer software are also playing an important role in this field. We are devoid of information available about E-Commerce and E-business due to which we are suffering loss of crores of rupees. Today, crime is being committed at a large scale but the machinery which we have is not appropriate to detect the criminals. The police personnel, the people and the agencies do not know as to how crime is committed and what are its components, all these things are contained in the provisions of this Bill. How to improve the image of India in the field of Information and Technology is a question which has to be considered. We are lagging behind in enacting Patent Bill. The companies of USA and France are putting forward their claims for patenting those things which are a legacy of our past. We have lost those things from our hands which have been owned and produced by our forefathers due to the delay in the framing a law. We have already appealed in the appellate body of the International Court of Justice and I fear that if we delay it further then we are certainly going to bear the loss. I have got the information that foreign banks whatever they do during day time, are sending their information in India and getting the work done by Indian professionals as labour is cheap in India. The software experts are sending all their documents here and after writing and furnishing them sending back to their country due to which we are suffering losses. Our country is suffering economic losses on account of their hackers. The Delhi Police has

apprehended the 'love bug'. I congratulate the Delhi Police for holding a workshop in this regard. Nothing is known as how to tackle this problem as there is no written rule about it. Already there has been much delay. We should have brought this Bill much earlier. I would like to say that no rule exists forever.

[English]

It is liable to change and it is liable to get amended.

[Translation]

Therefore, in the application part of this Bill, many things will come forward. It seems to me that many amendments will be made in that part. The progressive step taken by the Government should be welcomed by each party in the interest of society, trade and commerce. The role of knowledgeable society is becoming more and more important and we can check the brain drain of experts who are playing an important role in this field. This Bill will help to prevent mass exodus. Certainly this is a comprehensive legislation which is complete in itself and we can amend it if necessity arises. We would like that this Bill should be in the interest of society, intellectuals and trade and therefore we welcome this Bill introduced by hon'ble Minister. This Bill will help us in tackling the impediments, constraints and bottlenecks in cyber laws in future. This Bill will help us in completing the work which were earlier held up. This Bill will be helpful for national growth. We want that this Bill should be passed by voice vote. The apprehensions being expressed about this Bill, are baseless and after passing of the Bill, the country will certainly progress. Three main things, are coming before us regarding Infotech, i.e. Biodiversity, patents and cyber laws. Now the Government have also realized its importance and the people of country have welcomed it. It will be good for country if this Bill is passed as early as possible.

Concluding with these words, I hope that the House will pass this Bill by voice vote.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Sir, this long overdue Bill has come before us. While supporting this Bill, I cannot but make two observations even at the outset. Why is this Government in a hurry to bring this legal framework which has far-reaching consequences for our country in several areas? It would have consequences in every activity of the Indian society. I wonder what could be the reason for this hurry. More time could have been given to go into the nitty-gritty of the Bill. This Bill would ultimately make many of our existing laws like

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

Indian Evidence Act, RBI Act, Banking Regulations Act etc. cyber oriented. Till today, if I am not wrong, only ten countries have come out with IT laws. Of them, only three have come out with comprehensive legislation. The current Bill is based on the Malaysian model. Countries like, the US, Canada and the European Union have brought out necessary amendments in the existing laws. Some countries have prepared a core legal framework which will go on adjusting itself with the development of the technology. This is because Information Technology is radically different from other technologies. There is a race between the development of legislative process and the Information Technology. On many an occasion, we found that Information Technology has out paced the legislative process. The pace is so fast and radical that it is becoming difficult for many countries to cope with the situation.

Many provisions are there. For example, the digital signatures. It is one of the key elements in the Bill that will radically change the overall situation in all business, banking and commercial transactions for all time to come. The digital technology is a technology based on applied mathematics. To put things simply, it is an Asymmetric Encryption system with a Private key and a Public key. The Private key will be known to the owner only. It will be his or her own secret and the Public key will be known to others so that by the public key, they can authenticate the original signatures. Here, a point has come, and that is being practised the world over. We are today using the digital technology for the identification, authentication and verification of the signatures and to ensure security to the signatures. It may be that with the development of technology, the countries concerned will have to redefine the definition of digital signatures. This is a suggestion which I think has been made by NASSCOM also that we can have a core Legal Framework and let it be left there so that it can go on adjusting itself with the development of the technology.

I am coming to the other part of Net use. In E-Commerce, the major concern is the security concern. I find that there are people in India who till today do not have enough faith in the security of the system. The world over, there are systems which can intrude at their will into any communication system. Let me refer to one such system by which it is said that the fixing of matches and the identification of cell phone call was done. This is an old technology. Editorials have come in the background of *Sankhya vahini*. The technology is called as the Echelon technology. The emerging material on interception capability of the United States makes it clear what the future might hold. The recently exposed project Echelon for example allows the US to copy almost every

piece of electronic communication — FAX transmission, E-mail message, Mobile phone call or other kind of telephone conversation-world wide. It so happened that the United States targeted France to have some commercial secret in their own interest. The subject of growing controversy reveals that Echelon was used by the US for commercial espionage directed at its North Atlantic Treaty Organisation allies, notably France. What did they do? They collected all information and picked up through the Echelon system whatever they required. So, there is nothing foolproof in E-Commerce in the Internet system. That is the paradox of the situation. It has come out after the Love Bug. Philippines have identified some lady teacher who has submitted the thesis, alongwith student they had put certain things. Since these students and these people could not afford to have enough hours in the Internet because of financial constraints, they wanted to enter into other Internet account and inadvertently, unintentionally they had been damaging the system. The latest damage might have caused—in different systems in different ways—taken together to the tune of 10 billion dollars. So, there is nothing like anti-virus system, fire-walling, whatever you call it, which can ensure complete security in any transaction worth the name.

A suggestion has come about the certifying authority in the digital signatures.

Who will certify the certifier? It has happened that the certifier's authority has also been impersonified. The identity of the certifier itself has been camouflaged. There is a provision here but I do not think it is adequate. If you go into different Clauses, Sections, the inadequacies, the infirmities can be noticed in the proposed law. Let me tell you about the issue of convergence.

Today, in the post-PC era—the computer, the Internet, the Broadcasting system, the Telecom system—the convergence of technology is the most noticeable feature. But, here in our Government, you will find one Minister for Information and Technology, another Minister for Information and Broadcasting and yet another for Communications, having their own areas of operation.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): But all are on the same bench.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Yes, on one bench but not with one mind.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Yes, we are.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I will talk about that later on.

Even at Delhi, in a Cell phone with wireless application protocol, the individual can act through his own computer. Convergence is such that, cable TVs which are larger in number than PCs in the country, can provide more Internet connections; from basic to cell phone, mobile to basic and so on telephone connections are available. In such a way, there is one authority in view of convergence of technologies in the developed countries of the world. Federal Commission in the United States and OFTEL in UK. In our country, even after this fast convergence of technology, we have miserably failed to take into account this element of convergence. I know, the Minister will reply saying that a Sub-group has been set up which will go into the details of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and also the proposed Broadcasting Bill.

I know, the Minister will say that DTH aspect or the DTH potential will be taken care of by the Broadcasting Bill. I know it will be said that the Indian Telegraphs Act, 1885 will be appropriately amended to take cognizance of this particular situation. But my query is, when this unique feature of IT is contributing to every aspect of human development, human society, why are you failing to have a comprehensive view of the whole situation?

Why are you failing to have a comprehensive view of the situation? Of course even then it will be tentative legislation. There is nothing like finality in the fast emerging situation. So, many developed countries of the world are building up a Core Legal Framework and adjusting the developments as and when situations are arising like that.

May I ask the hon. Minister about the definition of information? Does it contain 'voice'? Sound is included. I know the Minister will say that it will take care of the element of 'voice' as information as a part of the definition. A Committee has been set up under the leadership of the eminent jurist Shri Nariman who is looking into it. It may be true. But questions are being asked. I am not asking this question. You are so liberal in many things. why internet telephones are not being allowed? You know about the Echelon Technology. You know what harm the *Sankhya Vahini* can cause to our security. You know in the Kargil war how we had to behave, how Pakistan intercepted our signals, how we had to change our language and tackle the coding-decoding problem.

Even in the Harshad Mehta's case what happened? Sir, you also have raised this issue. The decoding the Harshad Mehta's floppy discs took several months. It

happened long back. Now things have changed. Even in India cases are coming and we are not in a position to control the situation. Even after we set up the Officer Controller, even after we set up the authority to authenticate and certify Digital signatures, even after we set up the infrastructure proposed to take care of the security concerns, I do not think this particular Bill is providing adequate safeguards to what may happen.

Moreover, the Government is in a hurry. Now our E-Commerce is earning to the tune of Rs. 300 crore. Maybe, after a rough calculation we may go up to Rs. 10,000 crores by 2002. We are waxing eloquent about E-Commerce and new economy. But our hon. Finance Minister himself is saying that in the Indian situation do not talk too much about Mouse-click. The Brick and Mortar is equally important. Rather, the Plough and Bull in the Indian situation are more important than Mouse-Click. We have seen that. The latest Report of the Group set up by the Prime Minister led by the great friends of the Finance Minister and the Government, Shri Rahul Bajaj and Shri Sanjeev Goenka have come up with a Report about the importance of the manufacturing sector in the Indian situation. The Information Technology by itself cannot contribute to the growth of our Economy and the uncertainties involved in this New Economy is being witnessed by everyone. Can we mark what is happening? What goes by the name of Infotech, Communication and Entertainment—the latest coinage by the journalists is ICE in the Share market?

It is being said that when Nasdaq catches cold, Bombay Stock Exchange sneezes. We have become so dependent. American President Bill Clinton is giving us a certificate that 40 per cent of the Silicon Valley is accounted for by the Indians. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh is very happy that he has got a certificate from the American President and that the American President can be given a driving licence from the internet. What is not possible? What is the position of India in the internet use index in the world? It is miserable. Sweden is number-one. We are just one step above Pakistan. This is very natural in a country with so much of poverty and with so much of illiteracy. It is not possible that we bring in internet and people will rush for it. Only some upper-class people, upper middle-class people and the elite will have access to internet facilities.

Technology can build a nation and contribute to the human development where we are miserably lacking. we are distressed to know that Pakistan is boasting that it is above us in human development and our External Affairs Ministry has to admit it. Are you not ashamed of it? In terms of literacy figure, infant mortality figure, food availability figure, per capita income figure and GNP figure,

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

Pakistan is boasting that it has surpassed us. Sri Lanka is boasting that in many areas it has surpassed us.

Computer can be used for the welfare to the Indian society and for human development. This was the recommendation made by the Information Technology Action Plan.

What does it say? It says that computer network will *ipso facto* include networks such as careers in distance learning—satellite based, optical fibre cable based and other mechanism based—or Education-To-Home, instead of Direct-To-Home. I am just addressing Shri Arun Jaitley. Instead of showing so much enthusiasm about Direct-To-Home, why not show enthusiasm about your own recommendation about ETH service or Education-To-Community-Centres, ETCC? You are ignoring it. You are more concerned about digital signature. I do not say that it is not necessary. I do not say this in the days of globalisation—technological globalisation, commercial globalisation and globalisation of trade. But how much do we account for in global trade? It is less than half a per cent.

They say they are pressurising that in E-Commerce you should not impose any duty. It is not just pressure from the strong partners of WTO. This is the claim being made by the Indian entrepreneurs also. Even the CVC Chairman Shri N. Vittal has advocated that no tax should be imposed on E-Commerce for ten years. In this age of digital revolution, everyday the technology is breaking the barriers to a borderless State and a paperless society. The IT has become the chief determinant to economic, social and educational progress. The society is coming to be known as knowledge-based. We have to think seriously as to how India can use this technology in its favour.

Someone has said that we can become an IT power. Someone else has said that we do have the skill to dominate the world information technology. That is true. At the same time, we shall have to take care as to how this information technology can be integrated to the human development and to our existing manufacturing sector. How can we contribute to the overall growth of the economy by this unique instrument of information technology? We are lagging behind there.

There are certain provisions of the Bill which are of a very very serious nature.

I am making a mention of only a few of them. For example, there is a provision that the Police can search any house, any person or any household without a warrant.

You know from the history of several Acts in this country how the Police has misused not only in the case of TADA and MISA, but also in several such cases under the Code of Criminal Procedure or the IPC. I think that Clause 79 is a serious clause. It is a disturbing one and agitating the mind of every peace-loving citizen, every Indian who is interested in the growth and development of this country, and in the progress of this country. This is what is written there:

"A Police officer may enter any public place and search and arrest without warrant any person found therein who is reasonably suspect."

It is on the basis of suspicion only. This should be changed. I have given an amendment.

About Clause 78, there is a serious reservation of the performing artists of several music bodies and others that under Clause 78, the Network Service Providers will not be liable in certain cases. If it is within his knowledge, the NSP will be liable. If it is outside his knowledge, then what happens in other parts of the world?

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, I am grateful to Shri Rupchand Pal that he has yielded. There is much talk about Clause 79 that this law has become draconian and that you are giving a Police officer some right which was never given in this country under any law. So, I would like to draw the attention to Clause 165 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 — search by a Police officer. I do not want to read the entire Clause. I can only say that Clauses 165 and 79 are almost identical. So, today, the law exists in this country to go into anybody's house. We are objecting it under this law. The difference between the two is that under Clause 165, even a constable can enter into anybody's house in this country. But under Clause 79, we have raised the level because we think that this is a cyber crime. When somebody has to search something like a cyber crime, it cannot be at a lower level of a constable or a Police Officer.

Actually, the Police Department which represented before the Standing Committee insisted that they should be given the right because in every law they have given this kind of a right to search if they suspect some kind of a crime is likely to happen.

I am grateful to the Standing committee. They rejected this demand of policing the people and harassing them. It is a unanimous recommendation. They have said that there is nothing wrong in Clause 79. On the contrary, in Clause 79, we have raised the level of a search officer to the level of a Deputy Superintendent of Police. If you

see the FERA, it has a similar provision to the extent of hundred per cent. So, for an ordinary citizen a constable can go into a house and create a problem. That is the law of the country. Now, these people have computers. So, we have put them at a higher pedestal of a DSP. Still if they are not satisfied with the DSP, I really do not know whether they mean that an Inspector-General should go to their home and make a search. So, we think that it is a cyber crime. In the next century, the crimes are likely to be committed at a very high level. I think, there is nothing draconian in what we have provided for.

I cannot even describe what the criminal procedure is. I do not want to score a political point, otherwise, I would have said that the West Bengal Government can amend the Criminal Procedure Code and ban the police officers from going and searching the houses. But we never do this. This is a canard which is spread by the Press that we are bringing something draconian. It is not true. On the contrary, we have raised the level of a search officer to that of a DSP, because we thought that a Constable, with a *Danda*, may not understand what Cyber crime is. We hope that a DSP level officer must be a computer-savvy person and I do not think, there is anything wrong or harassing in this column as far as this is concerned.

SHRI J.S. BRAR (Faridkot): Sir, the point is that a person should be properly trained. It is not a question of a DSP or SP, is the question of training. Even if a Sub-Inspector is trained and if he has knowledge of a computer, then he can also do that job. What is important is training and not the level of an officer.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I totally agree. I think, Shri Shivraj Patil has already said about the elegance of drafting. If I draft that 'a police officer who knows computers will search', then everybody would say what kind of drafting it is? So, we presume that a DSP level officer will be computer savvy and the Standing Committee has already recommended that the officers in police should be trained, but I cannot put a precondition that a person who knows computer will go, because it will create more problems than solving it. But I entirely agree with the sentiments that the hon. Member has expressed.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, here lies the problem. This is the very reason for which we had said that this important Bill needs further and deep consideration and some more time is required. So, heavens will not fall if this Bill is taken up in the Monsoon Session. Sir, here the very nature of the crimes is different, without a warrant, one can enter into someone's house. What is

the nature of the crime? I am not going into what happened in the 'Chernobyl Virus' and the latest 'I Love You' Virus and all these things. Will a police officer be able to identify the tampering of computer source documents by entering the premises? Will he use his own computer at his home for committing electronic forgery? And what will you do? You will seize that hardware physically along with that person. Sir, there lies the difficulty.

Sir, there is a miserable failure to understand the nature of the crime, the technology and how these are being taken care of by even the developed countries of the world. I am not going into the issue of hacking. I could have raised that. Even the most powerful countries of the world are posing that they are helpless in such situations.

So, this tampering, breach of confidentiality, publishing forged digitally produced certificates, incidence of forged electronic records, alteration of records, frauds, forgery, falsification, etc. are various prevalent crimes. I can go on naming them. Sir, Trojan Horse, Trap Doors, Logic Bombs, Data Diddling, Scavenging Impersonation, Wire Tapping, Data Leakage, Salami Techniques, I.P. Pooling, Simulation, Modelling, etc. are the names of some such crimes which have been detected. These crimes are of such nature and we know from our experience that this is not, at all, going to control or contain the Cyber Crime. It will only be another draconian handle at the hands of the Police.

So, my demand is that, as I have given the amendment, it should be rewritten and 'Without warrant' should be removed because of the nature of technology and some sub-Clause should be added. This was a suggestion given by very important quarters, as far as I could understand, before the Standing Committee.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: The Cyber crime is the fastest crime a person can commit than a normal crime. It takes little time to stab somebody, but it takes a second to create cyber crime which will not be traced in thirty countries where it will fly.

If you go to the court and ask for a warrant, by that time everything will be over, and the crime will be passed on to 125 countries, which will never be able to deal with them. That is why, actually we need it in other countries.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: One Clause can be added. This is not my suggestion. This was the suggestion given by an important person before the Standing Committee. The suggestion was that because of the very nature of this technology, in case of its misuse, there should be a suitable punishment to the offending officer.

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

I am coming to Clause 78. Clause 78 says that the network service provider will not be liable if some offence is not committed within his knowledge. There lies the difference. In the US, there is one Clause, suitably amended clause, that is DMCA. In the European Union, there is a directive that the offensive materials should be instantly removed even before, whether it is within his knowledge or without his knowledge, as soon as it comes to his knowledge.

Now, Sir, here there is a very important thing. Suppose someone has committed an offence under violation of Section 51 of the Copyright Act or the Intellectual Property Right, and if that offender takes shelter under this particular Clause 78, then what will happen? So, there is a demand that this Clause should be suitably changed, amended, and re-drafted to ensure protection of the performing artists and their products.

Sir, I have some more suggestions to make. One is about the Tribunal. The Tribunal is proposed to be set up. There is no time-frame. They take their own time and go on discussing things taking their own time. My suggestion is that in the case of the Tribunal, there should be a time-frame by which time they must give their opinion or judgement or whatever you call it. The qualifications, experience, and Terms and Conditions of the Service of the Controller, Deputy-Controller, and Assistant Controller are given under Section 17. Now, there are suggestions made by the Standing Committee. Some of them have been accepted by the hon. Minister, which can be seen. I believe that the Appellate Tribunal is being made a single member body on the lines of SEBI. It is stated that he should be a judge of the High Court, he should be a member of the Indian Legal Service but there must be a provision that he should be such a person with knowledge of information technology — that should be mentioned here — so that the Presiding Officer can take care of it.

Sir, this Bill is inadequate and suffers from a large number of infirmities. It is not comprehensive. It is not going to help us in a big way. In a developing situation, the information technology could be used by us and our interest should be protected by a comprehensive measure, which has not been done. So many issues have not all been addressed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, I am concluding. My last point is that this Ministry should be merged. There should be one authority. There should be one body to take care of it.

That is the suggestion given by a very important leader of the ruling NDA which is being practised elsewhere and that too to just accommodate some individuals. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you not concluding?

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, I am concluding.

I am supporting the Bill. I am supporting the Bill with serious reservation that this should go to the Select Committee for further discussion and for enriching several provisions of the Bill.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Information Technology Bill is a Bill of speed. It is a Bill for high wire transfer of business.

SHRI ALI MOHD. NAIK (Anantnag): Do you want to take the speed out of it?

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: The Information Technology Bill, 1999 was introduced in December, 1999. Is this time not sufficient to go through the Bill and suggest certain things which are needed, if need be, in this Act? It is not right or proper to say that heavens are not going to fall if this Bill is not made into an Act in this Session. It is not true. The world is moving at a very high speed. As far back as in 1996, the United Nations had recommended to its member States that the model law that has been suggested is to be passed by all the member countries at the earliest. Four years have gone. India has not moved. We look as if we are moving. Still, in certain ways we are putting a brake. It is not that everybody is not interested. Everybody in this House is interested in the passing of this Bill at the earliest so as to catch up with the rest of the world. It is not that the Bill has been only partially accepted as Shri Rupchand Pal has said that the developed nations only have incorporated this. A country like Ghana has also moved in this direction and passed the Bill. Malaysia and Ghana are also developing nations. They are passing these laws in the best interests of their countries, and they are looking forward to merge with other countries' trade and commerce.

Our country, at the earliest, also has to make electronic arrangement to do E-Commerce with World Trade Organization which is creating multi-trade deals. Unless we move at the earliest to move with the other countries of the World Trade Organization, we will be failing in our deals. It is our duty to pass this Information

Technology Bill at the earliest, make it into an Act, and recognise the laws of electronic records and digital signatures.

17.00 hrs.

Unless you also move with these electronic transactions you will be left behind. Our country has contributed so many electronic experts, E-commerce experts, and there are many people who constitute many experts around the world now; there are many Indian electronic graduates. You take out any electronic graduate working in any country, one in two is an Indian and one in four is from Andhra Pradesh. Among those who are going from this country, Andhra Pradesh is also moving forward in this direction to put up a network or to organise all the villages in the developmental work in the digital records. So, unless this Bill is passed we cannot officialise. In our country we cannot recognise any transaction through a computer unless this Bill is passed. We will be left behind if another three months time is taken.

And somebody has stated that there are certain inaccuracies, inconsistencies in this Bill. But they are not of a very major nature, if at all there may be. We can amend the act, if need be. So many Acts we are amending. We have passed the Ninetieth Amendment to our Constitution recently. Why is not any amendment in this Act, if required? We can take action in the next Session or the next one because it is a developing business. The rest of the world should not think that India is lagging behind. We can boast that our scientists and scientific personnel are the best in the world, next to the USA, there are sufficient people to handle the whole system. In other countries Indians are handling this. Why should we be afraid of? Absolutely, there is no fear that it is going to punish very harshly.

In other cases as rightly said, even a Police constable can take you to the Police station and question. But any officer not less than the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police can question you. This is a sufficient safeguard. He is a responsible man. In the society also he is a responsible Police Officer. A Dy. S.P. has power under Section 79. This is a conservative law, I should say, when compared to the other laws. Several leading advocates are also here.

SHRI ALI MOHD. NAIK: The Policeman can take one away.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: There are punitive laws as I can see, laws of reasonable nature and reasonable protections are there. Those who are using these computer systems, have E-Commerce and digital signatures.

Andhra Pradesh today has moved ahead in getting all the villages, the schools and the transfer of technology to various markets. These things we have to incorporate with other systems in other countries. Unless we pass this Bill we cannot incorporate. The others will not be in a position to supply the required information. So, this is a very urgent matter of a developing nature for development-oriented Governments.

We should pass this Bill without hesitation so that our country also can move along with other countries and prosper in the field of E-Commerce. Otherwise, we will be left behind and we will be rated as not progressive and our country may not be in a position to participate in the world trade.

Sir, with these few words, I support this Bill. This Bill should be passed in this Session.

17.05 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 Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout-Design Bill, 2000 which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha as its sitting held on the 15th May, 2000."

Sir, I lay on the Table the Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout-Design Bill, 2000 as passed by Rajya Sabha on the 15th May, 2000.

17.06 hrs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL—Contd.

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN (Tirunelveli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to express my views on the Information Technology Bill, 1999.

Sir, I heard the suggestions of my colleagues here. By these cyber laws you have manufactured many crimes. Crime is the product of law. Shri Arun Jaitely may know about it. If there are more laws, more crimes will be there; if there are fewer laws, less crimes will be there. Here Sections 167, 172, 173, 175, 192, 204, 463, 464, 466, 468, 469, 470, 476, 477(a) of the Criminal Procedure Code up to falsification of records are important. The different classes of persons who are adapted to these clauses or are likely to be adapted to these cyber laws are going to be entangled in these crimes.

Clause 79 says:

"The police also may enter into a public place and search and arrest without warrant any person found therein who is reasonably suspected or having committed or of committing or of being about to commit any offence under this Act."

When an attempt is also made an offence, without specifying it is an offence, Section 511 of the Indian Penal Code is already there to cover it. Then, I divide it into two parts — crimes and trial. You have defined crimes under so many sections. Cyber Law Tribunal, the Appellate Tribunal where you have stated, 'a person shall not be qualified for an appointment as a Presiding Officer of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal unless he has been qualified to be a High Court Judge. It goes 180 degrees opposite to clause 62. Any aggrieved person of any decision or order of Cyber Appellate Tribunal might file an appeal to the High Court. If you appoint the High Court Judge, he has to file an appeal to another High Court judge. It may be that in a recent judgment in the State Administrative Tribunal wherein the High Court has jurisdiction was recently pronounced. Prior to that, High Court judge was appointed to preside over the Special Administrative Tribunal where an appeal lies to the Supreme Court. Now, by virtue of judicial pronouncements, an appeal is lying to the local High Court, but here clause 50 is diametrically opposite to clause 62.

Then, they have taken away the Civil Court jurisdiction where they have said that the Civil Procedure

Code shall apply. By incorporating Clause 61, they cannot take away the jurisdiction. Article 226 is already there. Even if they take away the jurisdiction by an Act of Parliament, article 226 cannot be stopped. Article 226 is a basic feature. They cannot tie it up. The Minister should know it. In every Act, there will be a provision for the jurisdiction of the Civil Court. Do they mean to say that we cannot approach the court druing a writ petition?

Then I come to offences. Clause 65 says:

"Whoever knowingly or intentionally conceals, or destroys or alters intentionally or knowingly causes another to conceal, destroy or alter any computer source code"— this computer source code is available to everybody—"used for a computer, computer programme, computer system, or computer network, when the computer source code is required to be kept or maintained by law for the time being in force, shall be punishable with imprisonment up to three years."

Where did you get this? This is not under Clauses 161, 165 or 171. This is a new innovation. We, the Members of Parliament, have been given computers. If it is attached to a website and if somebody interferes, they have said "knowingly or intentionally". We have to prove that we have no intention of tampering with the computer programme and network. So, why should there be this provision of clause 65? Is it not incriminatory? Will anybody follow the Cyber law then?

Then, I come to Clause 45 which talks about Cyber Tribunal. Clause 45 says:

"Whoever contravenes any rules or regulations made under this Act, for the contravention of which no penalty has been separately provided, shall be liable to pay a compensation not exceeding twenty-five thousand rupees to the person affected by such contravention."

This Clause 45 should be read along with Clause 76, which says:

"No penalty imposed or confiscation made under this Act shall prevent the imposition of any other punishment which the person affected thereby is liable under any other law for the time being in force."

Are these two Clauses 45 and 76, not contradictory?

Then, I would reiterate Clause 76. As far as my legal knowledge goes, anybody can be prosecuted under

various provisions of law on the same subject matter. Suppose a person accumulates wealth disproportionate to his known sources of income, he may be charged with the violation of Income-tax Act and, at the same time, under the Prevention of Corruption Act. So, this Clause 76 is all right, but what about Clause 45? Will it not be counter to Clause 76?

Clause 47 says:

"While adjudging the quantum of compensation under this Chapter, the adjudicating officer shall have due regard to the following factors:

- (a) the amount of gain of unfair advantage, wherever quantifiable, made as a result of the default;
- (b) the amount of loss caused to any person as a result of the default."

How will you estimate that? It is a computer crime. It is a Computer Network Cyber law violation. How will you estimate the quantum of compensation, what is the methodology you are going to adopt, what is the guideline you are going to supply to the Tribunal members? The High Court Judge is not going to be well-versed with Computer Science. Maybe, as a High Court Judge, he can read law. If a Software Engineer or an expert in software is sitting over the judgement in this Appellate Tribunal, he can decide the case. It is not a criminal case to be decided by a Judge. So, the composition of the Appellate Tribunal needs revision by this Government.

Then comes the procedure of the cyber law and the Appellate Tribunal and the recovery of penalty. At one point of time you said that the Civil Procedure Code would apply on the question of natural justice and at some other point you have said that the Criminal Procedure Code will apply. You said both in the same law. Is the constitution of this Cyber Law Tribunal under a separate law or under the Civil Court Tribunal?

You have the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal to look into the question of compensation. You have the criminal court to look into or to find out whether the driver was rash and negligent. The two cases cannot be clubbed and tried by the same judge. How did you incorporate the Sections 345 and 346 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 here?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is too technical a thing and that is why I am reading it line by line. Either the Civil Procedure Code may apply or the Criminal Procedure Code may apply but both the Codes cannot apply. You

cannot be a civil court and at the same time you cannot be a criminal court. You say that under provision that you can award compensation. In another provision you say that they are going to impose punishment. It needs a lot of revision.

I appeal to the Government to reconsider it again on the question of jurisdiction. The Civil court's jurisdiction is different and the Criminal court's jurisdiction is different. If there is a civil injury, there will be compensation and if there is a criminal offence, there will be punishment. A single judge cannot be vested with the powers of the civil court and at the same time those of the criminal court.

Then comes the offences by companies. Clause 84 of the Bill says:

"Where a person committing a contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or of any rule, direction or order made thereunder is a company, every person who, at the time the contravention was committed, was in charge of, and was responsible to, the company for conduct of business of the company as well as the company, shall be guilty of the contravention and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly."

It is not well-defined. It is not self-explanatory. The offences by the companies should be arranged *seriatim*. The law is not arranged in *seriatim*. The judge has to see one page to find out whether there is an offence and he has to see another page whether there is a claim for compensation and he has to see another page to see whether he can impose punishment. It is a blanket law. We are in a computer age. There is no doubt about it. We read this Bill. But, at the same time, it should be properly done now.

Young children, officers, adolescent children and the womenfolk at home are playing with computers. They also operate the websites. If it is an offence, if it is treated a criminal thing at first, then nobody will buy these computers and nobody will operate the websites. I do not want Parliament's computer or the website. I do not want it. We have not yet started. In the beginning itself you are threatening with punishment. Then, how will the people try to understand the website or the computer science or the computer network?

So, I would say that this Bill needs a revision. Let there be another study. The Standing Committee has studied it in detail. We now have doubts. There are doubts in the minds of Parliamentarians. A doubt has arisen in our minds.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): It always happens when it is a new Act.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Yes, it is a new Act. It should stand the test of law later. It can be challenged in the court of law after it is passed. So, a fresh Committee may look afresh into the Information Technology Bill and protect the interests and rights of the people. It is an invasion of Fundamental Rights of individuals dealing with computer network. Public place is a different thing. The private buildings also include, at certain places, the public place.

Mr. Chairman Sir, this Bill is too technical. It is very difficult to understand. There were debates in the Press. There were debates in the television. Yesterday, our Minister in charge of Department of Disinvestment, Shri Arun Jaitley said on television that entry into the premises by the police is a common thing. It cannot be. If a police officer arrests an ordinary man, that is different. This cyber law is not going to be handled ordinarily by ordinary individuals; people of high pedestal and people with high qualifications will handle it. So, I think, the hon. Minister, Shri Pramod Mahajan will understand it. Otherwise, we are afraid of handling these websites. Supposing, somebody comes in and knocks, I cannot just lock it. It may so happen in quarters allotted by Lok Sabha also. Nobody should come and charge us. So, I would say that the Government should revise this Bill.

I support the contents of the Bill, but I do not support the way in which it is drafted, the way in which it is going to be handled by the Government and the way in which it is going to be executed. I say, the law must bend to the needs of the society; otherwise the society will break the law. It is not so easy to make society bend to the law. With these words, I support the contents of the Bill. *..(Interruptions)* I support the intention and contention of the Bill and also appeal to the Government to revise it and have a fresh look at the Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA (Ambala): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak in favour of Information and Technology Bill introduced by Hon. Pramod Mahajan. While initiating discussion on the Bill, hon. Patilji had said that we should not make any haste in passing this Bill. Similarly, Palji has said that heavens won't fall if this Bill is not passed. I am not agree with their observations. I want that this Bill should be passed at the earliest in the interest of the country and the people because the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had said in this House that earlier we used to raise the slogan of "Jai Jawan and Jai Kisan" in the country but today there is a need to raise the slogan of "Jai Vigyan".

Mr. Chairman, Sir, 10 years ago our country was earning very less income through information and technology and during these ten years we are continuously earning more than 4 billion dollar and we expect we will earn 87 billion dollar by 2008.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is essential for a progressive society to March ahead. Today, it is the need of the hour that we should remove all those hurdles coming in the way of making our country a great power and should take all necessary steps in the interest of country for making India a glorious country.

Today, it is being said about this Bill that police can search any house and any person. A number of countries in the world have adopted this Bill in their respective countries and they have been able to check cyber crime through their system. We cannot delay in passing this Bill. Today for a country like India whose length is 4000 miles and breadth is also 4000 miles, there is a need to set up information network through Information and Technology. Through this, there is a need to set up such educational structure by which our future generation could bring laurel to the country through information and technology.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the entry of this technique will help remove poverty and unemployment in the country. Prior to us, no Government paid attention towards this and its result was that scientist like Hargovind Khurana did not get a job of professor here but after going abroad he received noble prize through his feat of wisdom. Similarly, Amartya Sen also did not get chance to show his wisdom here but after going abroad he received noble prize. Today brain drain from India is taking place because of non-availability of right chances in this country. We all know that today our Engineers, and doctors all are working in USA or Britain with fanfare. Today, it is the need of the hour that if all means and opportunities, be it in the field of computer, medicine or engineering are made available to our children in the country itself, they would not look towards USA and Britain and use their skill for the progress of India.

This technique will also save time because it will be a result oriented one. We will be able to collect all kinds of data which will help the Parliament evolve its policies at the earliest because all up-to-date data would be available with it. Today, how our country is being engulfed by population explosion. How our schemes have been implemented so far and to what extent we are able to get results by their implementation, all these data can be obtained within a fraction of seconds through this technology. We can also achieve our goals in the field of public health. Members of Leftist party are opposing it.

You take the example of China. How they have progressed in the field of Software. China has earned a lot by exporting its toys and ornaments to USA and in this field they have earned 18 billion from USA. When a Communist country like China can open its doors for information technology what are the hurdles coming in the way in a democratic country like India. We want to make India a great nation through this technology.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please take your seat. You may continue your speech later on. Now, the half-an-hour discussion will start.

17.32 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

Non-alignment

[*English*]

SHRI R.L. BHATIA (Amritsar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had put a question with regard to non-alignment and the reply given by the Minister on 15th March was unsatisfactory. As a result of that, I have called for a discussion on this point.

Shri Brajesh Mishra, Security Advisor and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, made a statement in Munich on 8th February that the doctrine of non-alignment was a shibboleth. He stated further that India today is ready to question shibboleths. He even dared to say that after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, non-alignment became a *mantra*.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the father of India's foreign policy. On the basis of that foreign policy India achieved great heights. India played a very important role in the world as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement and as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. As a result of this movement about 100 countries became free. Not only 100 countries became free, but India became the leader of the non-aligned world.

I was further amazed that my colleague Shri Ajit Panja also made a statement that non-alignment has become irrelevant. While this policy of non-alignment played an important role in the last fifty years, today this new Government finds fault with it and says that it has become irrelevant and it is only a *mantra*. This is the tribute this Government is paying to the great leader of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. World over, people are praising India's foreign policy as enunciated by Pandit

Jawaharlal Nehru. He is quoted in UNO; he is quoted in NAM; and in all the world forums India is praised because of the vision of the great man Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Here, the new people, the new Government are finding fault with it. They say that it is a shibboleth, it is a *Mantra*. I am surprised. I have seen speeches of Shri Jaswant Singh in the United Nations and also in Categarabia where he went to have meeting with the Foreign Ministers. Even there I did not find something like this.

But who has given this authority to a retired bureaucrat, to whom you have made your Security Advisor, to contradict your policies and say that 'Non-Alignment is a *Mantra*, it is a shibboleth?

Sir, why has this Security Advisor been given that power to contradict their Minister and the Prime Minister? I would like to know it from the hon. Minister. All the previous Governments, whether it was the Government headed by Shri Charan Singh, Shri V.P. Singh, Shri Chandrashekher, Shri Devegowda or Shri Gujaral, continued that policy and appreciated that foreign policy. But here is a new Government, and they are finding fault with that policy which continued all these years in the world.

Sir, to speak about the Non-Aligned Policy as a shibboleth, and as a *Mantra*, a policy which has helped hundreds of countries to become free, is a rather strange thing which I am hearing from the mouths of these leaders. I wish that India under the new dispensation would have played a leading role like all our previous Foreign Ministers which was started by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and continued by all our Foreign Ministers in that regard. That is how India is known for its free thinking and the role that India played in the world affairs.

Sir, in the 13th NAM Conference which the hon. Minister attended, I wish, he could have played a role and he would have focussed more on political and economic orientation to the movement as the developing countries face the new challenges today. The world has become unipolar. India has miserably failed to point out to the world the new challenges, the new dangers within the Non-Aligned countries.

I think, Mr. Chairman, Sir, the new Government has failed to assess the new situation in the world today. The Cold War is over. The forty years of bipolar world is not there. Russia has disintegrated. Now, there is only one power in the world which is playing a role of Super Power and the whole world is watching to them. Where is that India of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who would have

[Shri R.L. Bhatia]

spoken in such a situation? The world is facing the problem of economic domination. We, the Non-Aligned countries together fought with imperialism. Now a new imperialism 'economic imperialism' has come on this world. All countries are trying to assess and trying to formulate policies.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether in this new situation of changing world whether he is contemplating of having a new perception and in the changed circumstances continue the policy which has been pursued in this country.

I would like to know whether our foreign policy is in our national interest or our policy of world peace has changed. Are all these principles which were relevant in the past are relevant today or not? Are we not to pursue our national goals aimed at achieving the economic development of our country?

I call upon the hon. Minister kindly to clarify whether what he said in the non-aligned Conference is correct. There is a great contradiction in what has been said by the National Security Advisor and by Shri Ajit Kumar Panja. I would be grateful if you kindly tell us what is the true position. Do you believe in non-alignment policy or not? Do you have faith in this policy? Are you enunciating a new policy?

I would like to know what is that new policy and whether your new policy is based on the consensus of this country. Have you talked to the Leaders of the Opposition because foreign policy is always based on consensus of the country. I would like to have answers to all these questions.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Government has no clear-cut foreign policy. The Foreign Minister is speaking in one voice. Its National Security Advisor and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister is speaking in another voice. The question on the floor of the House has arisen out of a statement made by National Security Advisor in regard to our non-alignment policy.

We adopted this non-alignment policy even before we achieved independence. This policy does not belong to any Government, but it belongs to our country. Our Party differed in the past also. We are opposed to a number of policies of the previous Government. But on one policy, our Party also supported the Government in the past and today also we want that in the interest of our country, we should pursue the policy of non-alignment.

There was a time when we provided leadership to our country. Our country was the leader of the non-alignment movement. This non-alignment movement is needed to protect not only the interest of our own country, but the interest of all the developing nations. This non-aligned movement in the past was utilised against any move or attempt by the super-power to convert the world into a unipolar world.

This helped us to unite the developing countries. So, this was a movement. We adopted this Non-Aligned Movement after our freedom movement. So, there is a need to strengthen this Movement. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any change because we find today that there is a change in the attitude of this Government towards the Non-Aligned Movement. During these two or three years, this Movement has been weakened. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any change in the attitude of the Government towards our policy that does not belong to any Party or any Government but to the people of the country.

Sometimes, we find that we are gradually aligning ourselves away from the Non-Aligned Movement. So, I would like to know the policy of this Government. I would also like to know why the National Security Advisor has spoken in a different voice in regard to the Non-Aligned Movement. I would like to know the policy of the Government in regard to the Non-Aligned Movement.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Hon'ble Mr. Chairman, Sir, the fundamentals of our foreign policy are peaceful co-existence, non-alignment, protection of human rights, disarmament and 'Live and let Live' and I think the present Government are firm on these principles. Whatever the Special Defence Secretary of hon'ble Prime Minister, Advisor of National Defence Committee of Government of India and the Special Secretary, Shri Brajesh Mishra had said regarding Defence Policy in the Munich Conference held on 6th February 2000, it seems that the Members of Opposition are presenting before this House the same fact after distorting its meaning. Before I ask any question, through you I would like to clarify that in reality the policy of non-alignment has proved successful and the dynamism which our dynamic foreign Minister has shown under the leadership of Atalji by mobilising world opinion and support has also confirmed this fact though the all countries of the world criticised it on the issue of plane hijacking or declaring Pakistan as a terrorist state and withdraw its forces into its own territory during the Kargil war. Similarly, in present circumstances because the world is no more divided into

two blocks and when economic imperialism and other things are increasing in such situation we are firm on our policy of non-alignment and certainly this Government is following this policy only.

Through you, I would like to ask this question to Hon'ble Finance Minister as to what steps are being taken by the Government to make non-alignment policy more effective and to strengthen non-alignment movement and to make it practicable. Hon'ble Minister is requested to tell this thing to this House.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members who have raised this Half-an-Hour Discussion because it enables the Government to lay all doubts at rest and to clarify the Government's position in this regard.

Shri R.L. Bhatia had, in fact, held this post earlier. He has initiated this discussion and he really asked three main questions, which in effect, have been repeated by other hon. Members—not all the three, but the essence about the relevance of Non-Aligned Movement. I have no difficulty in reaffirming and sharing with the hon. Members that the ideas that inspired the founding fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement are resolute opposition to colonialism and all forms of domination, apartheid, and international relations based on the politics of blocs. They are intimately related and continue to have relevance because they are intimately related to the entire freedom struggle of the country.

In that sense, the concept of non-alignment was a natural foreign policy distillate as it were of our freedom struggle. Therefore, this belief in the Non-Aligned Movement, which implies the independence of thought and autonomy of action, has been and will continue to remain an element of India's foreign policy. I will leave no doubt in anyone's mind in this regard.

We do not believe that the relevance of the Movement has diminished as a result of the end of the Cold War because we believe that the Non-Aligned Movement was not just a by-product of the Cold War. I just attempted to explain it, that it was the genesis of the idea of the Movement itself that had different origins. India is one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement. It remained committed to its basic principles; and the issue of our relations with non-aligned countries remains a priority area. We have participated, as prominent members, in all the forums of the Movement.

In the 1998 Keynote Address, which was at the 12th Summit of NAM in Durban, the Prime Minister had urged the NAM to develop strength to translate the numbers of NAM into an effective voice in international affairs.

The second question that the hon. Member, Shri R.L. Bhatia asked, related to the Summit at Cartagena and to the role we played at Cartagena. I had the honour of representing the country at Cartagena. I would not go into all that was achieved. I have no difficulty in sharing it with the hon. Members that, at Cartagena, we found a new enthusiasm about the entire Movement, a greater participation by member-countries, etc. In fact, in the final document that was issued at Cartagena, in the Ministerial meeting, amongst many issues — I do not wish to take the time of the House on those things — on Afghanistan, for the first time, a NAM Communique strongly condemned Taliban. It was, I believe, an initiative that India had taken and it was the consequence of that. The Communique also reiterated its support for our proposal for a comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

It was India's delegation which successfully maintained the NAM's position, first expressed during the NAM Foreign Ministers' meeting which categorically rejects the concept recently propounded by the USA on humanitarian intervention. The NAM Communique speaks about that. As far as the economic issues about which the hon. Member has specifically asked, the Indian delegation was successful in incorporating the need for taking into account the concerns of predominantly agrarian economies in multilateral negotiations on agriculture and the need to bring in agriculture within the normal WTO rules. The NAM's position on such issues as child labour, bio diversity, and climatic changes are all well preserved. These are largely on account of the initiatives taken by the Indian delegation. I do not wish to take the time of the House. The Communique speaks about many other aspects. The hon. Members must have read that Communique.

The third question was whether foreign policy goals of peace and disarmament have been abandoned. How can peace as a goal be abandoned? It is a goal worthy enough to pursue, no matter what are the difficulties. I wish to reassure the hon. Member that there is no departure from the principles of India's foreign policy. It will continue to remain extant. Shri Basu Deb Acharia also raised largely the same question.

[Translation]

I would like to express my gratitude towards Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat as he has mentioned the policy of

[Shri Jaswant Singh]

Government in a proper manner. He has asked as to what measure Government is taking to make non-alignment movement more strong and meaningful? Just now I had given reply as to what effort Government is making and I would like to assure hon'ble Member that Government will always make efforts in that direction.

[English]

After this, I believe that the matter should be finally left because all aspects and questions raised by the hon. Members have been answered.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since the discussion on Information and Technology Bill was incomplete therefore now the discussion starts again.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let the Minister reply. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI R.L. BHATIA: A bureaucrat has made a statement. The hon. Minister has not referred to that. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The whole discussion had arisen out of the statement made by a bureaucrat. The Minister has not said anything about that. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

My question was. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Minister has given reply to all those questions which you had asked.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Hon'ble Minister has not given reply properly. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI R.L. BHATIA: Mr. Charman, Sir, hon'ble Minister has not given any reply. He has not even mentioned the name of Shri Brajesh Mishra that he has done something wrong or he should have not done that. ...(Interruptions) This is not our policy. He has not mentioned anything over this...(Interruptions)

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR (Mayiladuturai): We would like to know the opinion of hon'ble Minister about the views expressed by Shri Brajesh Mishra and Shri Ajit Panja. You say that you are not agree with them and drop them from Council of Minister, after that we will be happy. But you are saying that your policy is one whereas policy of my State Minister is different. What kind of Government is this?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: It is not so...(Interruptions)

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: First you tell us that Shri Panja Saheb has not said this and if you agree that he has said this then it is not proper to keep him in the Council of Ministers...(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Reply of Question No. 286 has already been given on 15th March, 2000 in the House.

SHRI R.L. BHATIA: That was ambiguous reply that is why I had asked for discussion over it. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I had already given the clarification which you had sought.

SHRI R.L. BHATIA: Even now you are not saying that what Brajesh Mishra had said is wrong. If you say this, we will accept it. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: How will I answer the misconceptions of hon'ble Members? I had already given appropriate reply to all those questions which were asked by you.

18.00 hrs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL—Contd.

[Translation]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA (Ambala): I was saying that we got independence on 15th August, 1947...(Interruptions)

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR (Mayiladuturai): Mr. Chairman, Sir, are we discussing the date of our independence?

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA: Alongwith this, Japan also got independence after the IInd World War. But through Information and Technology...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is already six O'clock. If the House permit, we could continue this discussion on Information and Technology Bill as it is a very important Bill.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we all want that discussion should continue but not today, we will continue tomorrow.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): We also want that discussion should continue but not today, it should continue tomorrow.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Sir, the Prime Minister himself told that you take as much time as you want. He was not present in the House. Let it be discussed tomorrow. If necessary, we will sit late night tomorrow and pass it. *..(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Four hours have been allotted for this but it could not be completed within stipulated time period.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I think the hon. Minister was not present in the House today when all the leaders expressed their views including the ex-Prime Minister, Shri Chandrashekher. At that time, the hon. Prime Minister himself stood up and intervened that this Bill is really complex in many ways and he desires that as many hours as Members want, they can continue the discussion. So, the limit of four hours was overruled by the Leader of the House.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I have no objection. You speak for even more than four hours. The Prime Minister never said that it will be discussed tomorrow. But you can discuss it for as many hours as you want today. We have no objection. We are ready to sit and we would like the House to be extended.

Sir, every time the Opposition comes with a discussion under Rule 193 and we accept it for tomorrow or day-after-tomorrow. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: This is not under Rule 193. This is a very important Bill.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I know it is a very important Bill. That is why, I am pressing for it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: This Bill is not opposed by any quarter of the House. None of us are opposing the Bill. We are all in favour of the Bill. Sir, almost all the Parties expressed the view that this Bill requires. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Not almost all the Parties.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: All right. I would say that not the ruling parties. But the hon. Prime Minister who is our hon. Leader of the House responded to our apprehensions and said that the discussion should not be barred. You discuss it for as many hours as you want. If I may recall you also said before you left the House that let the discussion start and we can take up the other matters later.

18.02 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi, the Business Advisory Committee allotted four hours. So, let the discussion continue.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you want to get every business to be disposed of in this way by totally disregarding the sentiments and feelings expressed by the Members, then what is the point of our intervening? We want to support the Bill and we want to accommodate the Government. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, all the discussions under Rule 193 are for two hours. But never even one discussion under Rule 193 was continued for two hours only. We always sat here for six hours to eight hours. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: You are not the first Minister of Parliamentary Affairs who has done this. The other Ministers of Parliamentary Affairs have also done this. You have not done any favour. *..(Interruptions)* The Prime Minister is being over-ruled here. He is being devalued. He is trying to be super Prime Minister. What we have understood is that the Prime Minister said that it can continue tomorrow. If you want to pass it without us, you can pass it. If you do like that, it will be stopped in Rajya Sabha.

MR. SPEAKER: There are many speakers.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: If it is passed here, it will be stopped in Rajya Sabha.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI (Garhwal): We have discussed in the BAC today that this item of business would be finished today itself. Based on this only, the Business for tomorrow and day after tomorrow has been fixed. *..(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let him complete his speech.

..(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: If the discussion is continued tomorrow, what is wrong in that? *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I have to get it passed in the Rajya Sabha also. I need one day's gap to take it up to the Rajya Sabha with the President's sanction. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: What is the urgency in it?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would appeal to you to consider what the senior leaders were saying. I only leave it to you. You have studied the mind and the mood of the leaders in the morning. You must appreciate the sentiments expressed by the hon. Prime Minister in response to the sentiments expressed by the leaders on this issue. *..(Interruptions)* If they are resolved to get it done today itself, let them do it. It seems that they do not need our presence. Let them discuss it in any manner they like. Is this the way of doing things? *..(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let him complete it.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, all the senior leaders were present in the meeting. Whatever is discussed in BAC is not adhered here. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Do not blame us. I have already communicated to the hon. Speaker about this. *..(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I was saying that our country achieved independence on August 15, 1947 and Japan also commenced its journey on the path to progress after the second world war. *..(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RASHID ALVI (Amroha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, without extending the time of the House, how can the House continue? It is already 6.05 p.m. *..(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA: Japan became self-reliant after adopting the Information Technology and made so much progress that even a country like U.S.A. figures amongst its debtors. If such a model of development had been adopted in our country, we would also have been one of the superpowers of the world. Now that Shri Pramod Mahajan has introduced this Bill in the House today, it is being said that this Bill should not be passed in a hurry. The countries like U.S.A., Australia, Canada, Germany, France and even the Small Asian countries like Ghana and Singapore have adopted it. Out of the 500 reputed companies working in the field of Information Technology throughout the world, 206 companies are Indian Companies which are dominating the global market. Similarly, in the silicon valley also, the Indians. *..(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Kataria, please resume your seat for a minute. If the House agrees, we can continue the discussion up to Seven of the Clock today.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: We cannot do that. We want that this item of business should be finished today.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: If the Parliamentary Affairs Minister insists that this item of business should be finished today itself, he can do it with this party Members. We are going out. *..(Interruptions)* This is the attitude of the Government. At least, I did not expect it from the hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister. What is this? The hon. Speaker is supreme. *..(Interruptions)*

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: We have prepared the programme for tomorrow and day after tomorrow based on the agreement that this Bill would be passed today itself. *..(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I would like to submit very humbly that in the morning, the hon. Members wanted that this should not be taken up in this Session. There was a suggestion that there should be a Special Session for this. But the hon. Prime Minister said that we could discuss it for as much time as we need to discuss it and almost all the Members including Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, said that this Bill would be passed.

I think, in view of this kind of a Statement, it should not be tried to see that it is passed when these people are not there because it creates difficulties for passing the Bill in the other House also. May I say that let us

accommodate each other rather than saying that it should be done? If he is not doing it then he should not forget that he needs cooperation in the other House also.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Firstly, I would like to remind you with folded hands that a meeting of Business Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday and Hon'ble Speaker was also present there. It was decided in that meeting as to which issues are proposed to be discussed by the Opposition next week and which bills the ruling party intends to get passed. A detailed discussion was held in this regard. Accordingly the hours were fixed, a day-wise schedule was drawn up and it was decided as to which item would be taken up on a particular day of the week. This bill has not been introduced all of a sudden. This Bill has been lying pending with the House for six months. It was informed well in advance that this bill would come up for consideration in the House on Friday. It is not as if we are pushing through this bill. Having done that, the sittings of the House have been extended beyond six O'clock daily and we have agreed to all the conditions. They are saying that the Government wishes to get this bill passed. All of us had agreed to it unanimously. This was a unanimous decision but if someone changes his stand in the House and claims that I am pushing this bill, it would be unjust. All of us had agreed to it in the presence of Hon'ble Speaker. All this is in writing in the minutes of the meeting. Accordingly it was announced in the House. Now it is being said that the business marked for today's agenda can not be finished.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur): It is not so.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: My submission is that we should dispose of today's business. This is my request.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: This is an important Bill. You are also aware of it and you wish to get it passed. As you might have heard that the Members sitting on this side also want that this bill should be passed and the Members occupying the treasury benches are also of the same opinion. It is just the matter of difference of a day or two. It can be passed at a later date. As you are a part of the Government, you want to get this bill passed and as we are in the opposition, we would like to express our views. This way the bill will also be passed and we will also get the chance to make our points. You have stated that you are prepared to sit late. However, the Members sitting on this side do not wish to sit late due to certain reasons but are prepared to compensate tomorrow. It is not as if we have some other plans. We have passed bill at a later date earlier also. Hence it

should not be turned into a prestige issue. Hon'ble Speaker has directed the Members to sit in the House till 7 O'clock. This way, Mr. Speaker's word will be honoured and your request will also be acceded to.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, we are not taking up Sankhya Vahini tomorrow and we will be completing this Business. Then we have a discussion under Rule 193 also. Sir, we always have a new schedule in the House instead of what is decided in the BAC.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have always held the view that we should never dishonour the decision of the B.A.C. I entirely agree with it. The tradition of this House is that even if the BAC decides something and if something extraordinary comes, then we must react in the House.

Sir, before the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs likes to submit to you, in the Business Advisory Committee meeting, it was decided that on the Friday Afternoon if the report of the Standing Committee comes, we shall take it up on Monday for four hours. Till that time, we did know what are the amendments of the Standing Committee that the Government is accommodating. All those things have come only by Sunday. Obviously, in the morning today, when we all assemble, each party, at least from the Opposition did explain through all their whips that we had to go into detail and give our views on all such amendments because they wanted to pass this Bill and it might take more time.

MR. SPEAKER: We have discussed all these things in the morning and again you are raising this.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, that is the point that I am talking about. When we discussed that, you know what was the mood of the House in the morning and what did the hon. Prime Minister say.

MR. SPEAKER: No, please. We will sit up to 7 O'clock.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: What have we decided, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: We are extending the time of the House up to 7 O'clock.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: All right.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: No, Sir, but what is the fate of the Bill? What will happen tomorrow? Shall we be going to the original agenda of BAC?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: We will pass it tomorrow. We are saying this on the floor of the House.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Hon. Shri Shivraj Patil is saying that tomorrow he will pass it. All right.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: No, I am not saying that. I am saying that everybody is agreeing to it.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: But they will allow me to pass this Bill tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA: I am about to conclude. Lastly, while highlighting the importance of this bill, I would like to say that two lakh and eighty thousand people are engaged in the field of knowledge based industry and we hope to increase the G.D.P. of our country through this field. We visualise a growth of 87 billion by the year 2008 and to achieve this target, we shall have to impart training to 2.2 million workers in the field of knowledge based industry by 2008.

18.16 hrs.

[SHRI BASU DEB ACHARJEE *in the 'hai'*]

It is extremely important for our country to take revolutionary steps in the age of information technology because our competitors and even a neighbour country like China has a trade of the value of 18 billion in this field presently. China is also promoting internet and hopes to extend internet facility to 3.8 million people by the end of year 2000. Hence while supporting this Bill, I would urge upon the House to pass this bill unanimously today itself in the national interest so that we may improve the economy of our country to bring it at par with other developed countries of the world by adopting the Information Technology and lead our country to greater prosperity. Alongwith this, I would also like to thank you for having given me the opportunity to express my views.

[*English*]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for having brought this very important legislation on the 16th of December. For such an important legislation, we have to wait for five months and we are now in a hurry to have it passed even without detailed discussions.

Sir, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons—they are very noble indeed—one is on E-Governance and the other one is on E-Commerce. Whereas it has gone into detail of e-Commerce in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, on e-Governance, it says:

"With a view to facilitate Electronic Governance, it is proposed to provide for the use and acceptance of electronic records and digital signatures in the Government offices and its agencies. This will make the citizens' interaction with the Government offices hassle free."

But it is not necessarily transparent.

Sir, if one goes through the Annual Report of the Ministry of Information and Technology, it has been mentioned that in the history of civilisation, no work of science has so comprehensively been impacted on the course of human development as information technology. So, Sir, I am more likely to agree with Prof. Rupchand Pal. Although the Annual Report enunciates that it has an impact on the human development, this Bill, which has been introduced, has nothing to offer for human development at all excepting e-Commerce.

Sir, I did have a stint in the Ministry now being occupied by Shri Arun Jaitley about half a decade back. My distinguished predecessor, Shri Upendra and myself had felt at that time that there should be a convergence of broadcasting, communication, micro-chip, electronics and space because it has a direct impact on every single Indian. Anyway, Sir, it is better late than never.

Today there is a talk of convergence. Also there is talk on human development through the great revolution, the information revolution, known as information technology. That time we had information super highway by a flick of a switch. One could use the television as a telephone, as a telex, as a fax as well as internetting throughout the world. But today it has been overtaken within half a decade by the multimedia information highway of which information technology is the manifestation. Today we find that the Government has broad-based, although it has identified in the Annual Report and had thought it fit to appoint three task forces. One for software, one for hardware and one—it claims to have it—for rural development, manpower training and education which is totally missing from this Bill which has been brought.

Then the Annual Report also talks about international gateways and also by 2008, it will be information for all. This is belied by this Bill. That is why, my predecessor, Shri Shivraj Patil while speaking first on this Bill, has said that it is not a comprehensive Bill at all. That is one of our apprehensions that it is totally narrow and it is only confined to commerce. This information super highway is another way of the Americans dominating commerce through this speed of receiving as well as retrieving data, and having an overall lead in the commercial world. So, if one goes by the track record of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India which being a service provider became a regulator, today the entire IT industry is crying because of the role of the Telecom regulatory Authority of India as well as the Telecom Ministry.

Shri Arun Jaitley, there was an exercise in the I&B Ministry which had brought out the flaws then when the Telecom Regulatory Authority was being set up. It was brought to the notice of the Government. They did not have consultation with any of the Departments including Defence, Electronics, or Space and they enunciated something. It was accepted by the then Government rightly or wrongly. But today the entire IT industry is crying that out of 22 IT service providers, 18 have gone to the red. I mean they are at loss and only four are surviving in this entire atmosphere. India wants to be a super-power, a global power in information technology. It is not by butchering our own people, by our own laws or by our own regulatory Authorities. Nowhere is a service provider, the Judge, the Jury and the accused. Here it was the case. It being a regulator, it was also a service provider.

Now, with infrastructure not having developed, this information technology will only be a pious hope to dupe Parliament and to dupe the people of making claims of giving a million people jobs by information technology per year. That means, if this Government exists, in five years, five million jobs. That means, 50 lakh jobs will be provided.

Apart from that, we have given computers and Internet facilities to our Members of Parliament only recently, not even a month back. When hon. Members of Parliament discuss in various fora, there is so much dissatisfaction that there is so much delay in the Internet. There is so much delay in processing the computer that it has remained a dead letter than being utilised to make a Member of Parliament more effective, more useful to Parliament and to the country. We are depending on this infrastructure which is totally letting us down at the most crucial points.

So, human development would mean, education, health, agriculture, environment, distance education, sports, culture and right to information which we hear everyone is talking about but we have been hearing this for the last few years because without the establishment of the proper type of infrastructure, none of this is going to happen.

This has had no mention in the Bill. There is a mention in the Annual Report but there is no mention in the Bill. If the hon. Minister could clarify in his reply we would be most happy. That would look transparent also.

I congratulate the hon. Minister for trying to implement the vision for the North-East of the Prime Minister by having inter-connectivity with every single block of the North-East. The implementation lies with the hon. Minister for Information Technology. I had got so enthused that I shot off a letter to him also asking him why should he not take up Orissa along with the cyclone-affected area, or why not portions of Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, portion of Andhra Pradesh, the Agency area. We are also equally at a disadvantage just as the North-Eastern sector as far as digital communication is concerned. And communication is a good medium to empower our people where literacy is needed, where ordinary communication is needed or communication and where educational facilities are not available and Information Technology can be a multiplier effect.

So, I would request, through you, that the hon. Minister could shed some light about what is this North-East programme, what is this vision in North-East and it can be replicated in some areas of Ladakh, may be the portions of Andaman or Lakshadweep Islands and also in those areas ravaged by weather related phenomena like floods and cyclones and where communications get cut off.

In Information Technology we could come across cyber crime and very recently Shri Fall Nariman had also drawn the attention of the Government to 'Web-casting'. It is not included in the proposed Broadcast Bill before the 11th Lok Sabha which is now being formulated I hope so and also the Tele-Communication Ministry has certain laws which are not in consonance, which are being brought in this particular Information Technology Bill.

Therefore, there are some lacunae, there are certain aberrations, dichotomies, there are differences in the various Ministries having different-different laws; so I think that a comprehensive legislation will be brought by the Minister sooner or later, after six months or may be in the next Session, because this is not a comprehensive

[Shri K.P. Singh Deo]

legislation. This is basically meant for commerce and this is raising the hopes of the entire nation.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to an interesting article called "JACK THE HACKER". It is from the *Telegraph* dated the 20th February. Our LARRDIS has given a cutting. I quote.

"As a potential information technology power, India should take warning from hacker attacks. Cyber attacks are increasing in number and sophistication every year."

This was February 2000, i.e. It was in December, some two months ago a United States Judge freed Mr. Kevin Mitnick, the great criminal hacker of the Eighties, from jail. Even the great Federal Bureau of Investigation could not do much for 20 years and I do not know which agency under this law where a Police Constable or an Assistant Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner is going to catch hold of these hackers. Who is a hacker? It says:

"Mr. Mitnick is the type who 'hacks' into computer systems and takes control from inside and zombie attacks are crude, the digital equivalent of human wave attacks."

Now, it can have implications of national security; it can have implications of internal security; and it can paralyse the Government machinery. I think, through Information Technology, you are going to have these community centres; you are going to do e-Governance. So, all these implications must be studied in depth. Since the hon. Minister has said that he has to get it passed in the Rajya Sabha, knowing his intentions, I can only hope — being a very dynamic person, I know he has been into the Ministries of Defence, and Information and Broadcasting where I was there, and is a forward-looking young man, who is a good wicket keeper of Parliament also, he will bring an amendment in the near future so that we can tackle all the impressions which have been put by the media as well as the apprehensions in our mind based on the experience of the United States, Japan and some of the leading countries of the world who have had a head start over us.

We have a habit of aping the West. We try to accept something very quickly, without going into the depth of the implications, which they suffered after eight to ten years. Today, the entire privacy of human being is affected. That is why, the Information Super-highways, which was the brainchild of Mr. Al Gore as well as Mr. Bill Clinton, had to be shelved in the nineties.

Now, we are going in for this Information Technology with the multi-media Information Highway. What is the social impact it is going to have on the human-mind, on our children and the manner in which video piracy and all these things are happening, the vulgarity which is coming in for which the hon. Minister used to take me to task in the other House? I just want to remind him that these are the things which we have to safeguard.

Sir, with these few words, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to support the legislation which has been introduced by the Minister of Information Technology, Shri Pramod Mahajan. It also gives me an opportunity to respond to some of the issues which have been raised by some of the very senior and distinguished Members of this House.

A question which has repeatedly arisen today is as to what is the urgency in passing this Bill. The second question which has been raised, particularly by Shri K.P. Singh Deo and Shri Rupchand Pal is this. Should the law not be comprehensive enough to take into account the impact of convergence of technologies? Shri Shivraj V. Patil has listed several issues which he feels will have to be considered before this Bill can be eventually passed. He says: "Do not legislate in a hurry because some contradictions may emerge later on".

The purpose of this Bill is two-fold. The first aspect of this law is e-Documentation, e-Commerce, and e-Communication which have become a reality. They already face us and our existing laws have so far lagged behind in not giving a legal sanction to those documents.

The second purpose is that with the emergence of this new technology, new crimes have come into existence. Therefore, any delay in the passing of this Bill is really going to enable either a non-recognition of what is the reality in terms of e-mail, e-documentation and also allowing those who committed these offences to get away till such time that this law has been passed.

Sir, I will illustrate it by two small illustrations. Today contracts, international trade, even domestic trade do not take place by two individuals physically meeting, interacting, discussing and then signing a written document. It is a harsh reality that these are going on by e-Mail; these are going on through various electronic

documentations. Our courts still will not recognise any one of these because these documents are not documents, are not recognised within the meaning of our traditional laws.

Therefore, if somebody were to resale out of these contracts, these documents will not be worth the paper they are written on because there is no legal recognition of it. How long can we wait and see? The United Nations adopted the model law in 1997. Nation after nation have been adopting these laws. There is now an international model of this legislation which has emerged and I feel that it is about time that we pass this law which gives recognition to the entire documentation which takes place through e-Documentation so that it can facilitate e-Trade in this country. Just last week we had the 'Love Bug' which destroyed a large number of computers. I was wondering to myself, when I read newspaper reports, that under which law in India would this kind of an exercise be an offence. Somebody can actually come and hack computers, steal information, destroy information and still go scot free because we have already been too late in legislating in this regard. So, when you say, Sir, what is the urgency, the urgency is that we have already been too late in this regard and, therefore, the Legislature has to live up to these changing realities and enact a law which not only gives recognition to this documentation but which also starts recognising these new realities which are also a reality today.

Keeping pace with technology for any legislative exercise, Shri Patil is right, is a difficult exercise. Technology moves faster than legislation. You always get educated by experience in this line and, therefore, you may well have to change your legislation from time to time to keep pace with this legislation. The best evidence is what was provided by Shri Pal and Shri K.P. Singh Deo when they said, what about a larger convergence law? These are all areas which are not conceived of years ago. Convergence is a reality, but let me just say this on convergence that in law-making, you do not mix one branch of law with another. This law is limited for the purpose of creating these new Cyber offences, providing remedies against those offences, compensation with regard to those offences and punishment with regard to those offences. This law seeks to recognise e-Documentation as a reality in law. The impact of convergence between Internet, telecommunication and broadcasting is an entirely different branch which, as has been rightly pointed out, is a fact that the Government is certainly concerned with and we are working in this area.

Several questions were raised with regard to the proposed Bill and I shall deal broadly with each of the important ones which have been raised. Shri Patil wanted

to know as to why contracts for sale of immovable property have been left out of e-Commerce. Leaving them out is a reality because there is a separate legislation—the Registration Act—which deals with recognising each immovable property transaction after it has been registered. You have offices of Sub-Registrars all over the country and you have offices of Registrars all over the country. Unless those offices also tune themselves to the changing technologies which, I have no doubt, in due course of time they would. Today, to say that every contract of immovable property will come under this, may not be possible. We will have perhaps to wait for some time when the reality of documentation also penetrates and reaches those areas.

There were several questions which have been raised. For instance, it was pointed out that under Clause 57, why do we provide for an appeal not being there. Clause 57(2), Shri Patil objected, is a superfluous provision. No appeal shall lie against a Tribunal by an order made with the consent of parties. Much that it may appear to be a superfluous provision, when two parties before the Adjudicating Officer agree for a particular amount of compensation, normally no Tribunal is going to entertain an appeal against that. But practical experience is to the contrary. People have filed appeals even after agreeing against consent orders and, therefore, we have amended a series of our laws. In fact, I was just going through the Civil Procedure Code which contains now an identical provision in Section 96 that against the consent order passed by a court, an appeal is to be specifically barred. Otherwise an abuse was going on. You go and agree before one authority and still you seek to challenge that order before another authority.

So, it is a matter of precaution that various laws have been amended. This is not the only law that has this provision. Various laws have been amended to have this kind of a provision introduced in these laws.

Section 58 says that the Tribunal is not bound by the Code of Civil Procedure, but it is bound to comply with the principles of natural justice. And, thereafter, in Section 58(2), hon. Member, Shri Shivraj Patil saw a contradiction when it was mentioned. But some powers of the C.P.C. are still given to the Tribunal. Section 58 is a standard provision which is contained in all legislations where Special Tribunals are created. The object of Special Tribunals is that you must have an expeditious remedy and the cumbersome procedure mentioned in law should not apply, should not be a long-winded remedy, but still there must be fairness in the procedure. And fairness in the procedure requires that the persons who are concerned with this must be given a fair hearing. Therefore, even though you are not bound

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by the Civil Procedure Code, you are bound to observe the principles of natural justice. Every adjudicating law which provides for an adjudicating authority has this power. But some specific powers of the C.P.C. are given, because if those powers were not given, how would the adjudicating authority summon witnesses; how would he confer an oath to them; how would he allow oral evidence or affidavit evidence? So, only some selective powers are given and the generality of the procedure code does not apply. Now, this is there in various Acts which provide for adjudicating authorities which have been created.

In fact, I was drawing parallels in other laws—in the SEBI law, in the FERA law, in the Administrative Tribunals Act where an almost identical provision of this kind does exist. So, there is nothing extraordinary that in this particular law, a provision has been put in.

An issue was raised that Section 62 provides for an appeal to the High Court. Are we creating a system of three appeals? The answer is 'No'. There is an adjudicating authority. His order on facts and law is appealable to the Tribunal. So, on facts only one appeal is provided, namely appeal to the Tribunal. A second appeal is provided to the High Court in *para materia* with our civil law, not on facts but only on a question of law. No further appeal is provided. On facts, there is only one appeal. On a question of law, you can go to the High Court which is there in the normal civil law of the land. This law is in *para materia* with that law.

And thereafter, an appeal to the Supreme Court, by Special Leave, under Article 136 is there which is never a statutory right. It is a highly discretionary remedy which is never considered an appellate right of any particular person. So, there is one appeal on facts and two appeals, as far as the question of law is concerned and there is no other appeal.

Regarding Section 76, though Shri P.H. Pandiyan expressed the contrary view, Shri Shivraj Patil has suggested that Section 76 is really violating the principle of double jeopardy. Because Section 76 says: "No penalty under this act shall prevent imposition of punishment under any other law..."

Shri Pandiyan had responded to that by giving a very correct illustration by saying that you may have disproportionate assets; you may also be equally liable under another law to pay tax on the assets you have acquired even if they are illegally acquired. The Act may be the same. But the offences are different. Therefore, the principle of Article 20 which brings in double jeopardy applies as far as different offences are concerned that no person shall be punished twice for the same offence. If

the offences are different, one, under the Prevention of Corruption Act and the other under the Income-tax Act, as Shri Pandiyan has rightly said, two remedies are permissible in law. The mandate of Article 20 does not come in.

Regarding Section 79, as a large number of hon. Members also pointed out this morning, it is a provision which has come for extensive comment even in the media. The provision says that 'Notwithstanding anything in the criminal law, an officer not below the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police is entitled to enter a public place, search the public place and even arrest the person without a warrant'. Now, it has been commented that such a provision is draconian in character.

Hon. Minister, Shri Pramod Mahajan while intervening earlier, had clarified that. On the surface, this argument appears to be attractive. But how are you going to give this power to a police officer to search a premises?

But is this the first law where this power is there? This power has a very strong rationale. In Section 41 and Section 165 of the Criminal Procedure Code, this power is there. In FERA, this power is there in Section 45. In fact, Section 45 of FERA is identically reproduced in clause 79 of the present Bill. This power is there under Section 105 of the Customs Act.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Is there no such judgement by the higher courts against arrest without warrant?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I am afraid, these provisions which are time-tested provisions have been upheld and none of these provisions has been struck down.

I will just explain the rationale to you. Let us not go in for what a populist impression may be. Why is this power there in the Cr. P.C.? A Police Officer is informed that there are arms lying in some place and some terrorist is using arms. Is he supposed to wait for three days, go to some authority, seek his permission and then search it? By the time he comes there, the arms are removed. A Customs Officer is told that there are smuggled goods lying in a particular place, in a vessel or in an aeroplane and some smuggling is going to take place, and he wants to search it. Is he to go to some other authority and ask for permission? And it takes him 15 days to get that permission. Then, he comes back and searches the property. Suddenness, taking the criminal by surprise, is the essence of investigation. Let us, in the name of populism, not create a situation where the criminal who is already ahead of the law, by such approaches, is benefited a little further.

Today, in the changing times when this new technology has come, cyber crimes have become the rule of the day. Shri Pramod Mahajan rightly mentioned that there are cyber crimes. Let us take moneylaundering though it is not covered in this Act and is a subject matter of another legislation. The problem is being faced world over that through Internet banking, money can be laundered into hundred countries in one day. The principle behind it is to immediately go and freeze the evidence and seize the evidence. Are we to create cumbersome procedures by which we tie down the hands of our police officers or customs officers and the criminal is enabled because while legislating we thought of a popular argument that why we give such powers to the police.

If there is a foreign exchange transaction which is illegal, which is going on, the Enforcement Officer has to go and seize the property. If you take away this power of seizure and search then and there, you are crippling every criminal investigation. If there is any cyber offence taking place, the officer in charge—and in this Bill, it has rightly been an officer of the level of DSP and above — has the right to go there, go to the computer head, seize the software or the hardware through which the offence is taking place. If you say that this power should be denied to him, then, in the name of liberalising the law, we will be creating an institutional mechanism in which only the law breaker is going to benefit and the investigating authorities are going to be crippled.

Shri Shivraj Patil mentioned offences by companies. Now, there is nothing unusual about this Bill that this provision is there. In a large number of commercial and economic legislations, the business activity is done by a company, but there is some person who is in charge of and responsible for the affairs of the company. So, when a company commits an offence, the company, being a legal entity but not a physical entity, is incapable of being put to trial and being sent to jail. At best, there can be a penalty or a fine on a company. Therefore, the principle of vicarious liability is introduced into criminal law that when you put on the mask of a company, do business and then commit an offence, the law will remove the mask and see who is the person behind the company responsible for the functions of the company so that that person can be taken to task. Now, this is not the first time that this provision has been introduced. In all laws providing for economic offences, this provision is identically there. This provision is there in Section 26 of the SEBI Act. It is there under Section 68 of FERA. It is there under Section 140 of the Customs Act. So, this provision is there in every case because if this provision was not there, it will be a haven for criminals. All that they have to do is, instead of committing the offence themselves, have a company being formed, customs business will be

done in the name of the company, foreign exchange violations will take place in the name of the company and then he can say that you cannot send the company to jail and he is also not liable. Therefore, law removes the veil of a company, brings out the person behind the company and then takes him to task and hold him accountable to law. Therefore, there is really no objection with regard to Section 64. It is a common provision which has been introduced almost in every legislation.

Clause 65, removal of doubts, is also important in this legislation. As I mentioned earlier, removal of doubts takes place where law is competing with changing and developing technologies. Shri Patil is very right when he says, "No clarification can be issued which conflicts with the Act." An executive clarification by the Government cannot override the mandate of law, but insofar as it is only clarificatory in nature and can coexist with the Act. In all laws which have to lay down the version of the future, a clarificatory power has to be there with the Government that if there is a doubt, clarify the doubt because new technologies will emerge, new situations will arise which cannot be foreseen by us today. So, the general power, which is not used to violate the Act but to clarify the provisions of the Act in such legislations, is always there.

Two very relevant points were raised by Shri Pandiyan. Under Clause 50, when you appoint a Tribunal, the Tribunal could be headed by a sitting or a retired judge of a High Court, you feared that it will be an appeal from that Tribunal to the High Court itself. If I may phrase it differently, "is it an appeal from the same authority to a similar authority, or as they call it in law, an appeal from Caesar to Caesar?" It is not so. A large number of Tribunals are headed by judges of the High Court; Commissions of Inquiry are headed by judges of the High Court; all Tribunals under the Unlawful Organisations Act, where organisations are banned, are headed by a sitting High Court judge. An appeal against that order is provided to the High Court because when a High Court judge goes and heads a Tribunal, he is a person who has been designated, but he is not the High Court. When a High Court judge heads a Tribunal, he does not, while heading the Tribunal, have the writ powers of a High Court. He is only a person who was the judge of the High Court. That is a qualification. He is heading a Tribunal; his orders are made appealable even under several laws to the High Court itself because sitting there, it is the same person but his jurisdiction is much narrower; it is not the larger jurisdiction of a High Court. Therefore, this really may not be sustained.

Section 61 has been repeatedly construed and you should have no fear when it says, "No Court will have

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the power to entertain issues which are before the Tribunal." When such laws use the words 'no court', the fear expressed was that how can this legislation take away the power of a High Court under article 226. Shri Pandiyan is absolutely right. Under Section 61, where the words 'no court' are used, they only refer to the jurisdiction of courts as civil courts. This has been repeatedly clarified. For instance, in the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution which deals with the powers of the Speaker under the Anti-Defection Law, there is a similar provision: "No Court shall entertain issues which are within the jurisdiction of the hon. Speaker." But the Constitution Bench said, "This cannot cut down the writ jurisdiction of a High Court because it is a part of the basic structure." But this can only take away the powers of a civil court. Therefore, when there is an issue which is pending before an adjudicating authority or it is pending before the Tribunal, you cannot go to a civil court. As far as the writ power is concerned, there is almost unanimity of view that it is part of a basic structure. Even a Constitution amendment cannot take it away. So, the words 'no court has the power' are only relevant, as far as the civil courts are concerned.

Shri Pandiyan wanted to know whether there is a conflict between Clauses 45 and 76. Well, my reading of the law is that the two operate entirely in different directions. Section 45 only deals with compensation. So, if you cause injury to somebody through a cyber act and that is not otherwise provided for in this law, it is a general power which says that you can get compensation up to Rs. 25,000. Clause 45 is the power relating to compensation; Clause 76 is the power, as Shri Patil had given a possible view that it is a power where the provisions of this Act will not come in the way of punishing a person, if he has committed an offence under another Act. Section 76, therefore, deals with an offence committed under another Act. The two are operating entirely in different jurisdictions, in different areas. So, one really cannot have a conflict with the other.

The issues that have been raised are certainly issues of concern but some of these provisions have not been brought into this law for the first time. These have existed in time-tested legislations in different laws. It is on a larger international model that this law is being brought. The purpose of this law itself underlines the urgency for its enactment. When Shri K.P. Singh Deo was reading an article regarding a hacker, I asked myself the question as to what offence in today's law had that hacker committed. You can hack, you can steal somebody's information, you can destroy somebody's information and still go scot-free because our criminal law has not treated it as an offence. That itself is the ground for utmost

urgency. So, may appeal to Members on all sides would be that this law requires to be passed with utmost urgency. There will be occasions where technology overtakes us and we may have to add to this law. But adding would be an exercise of strengthening this law. The purpose of this law is to recognise the reality. We are already behind in this exercise. I am sure, keeping this in view, Members from all sides would certainly support this legislation to come into force at its earliest.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Jaitley has discussed the Bill in the House in much the same manner as a learned lawyer argues his case in the Court. Having introduced the Bill of Information Technology, the Government has claimed that this Bill has paved the way for revolution and progress in this field in our country. Hon'ble Members from Opposition stated that this is a very useful Bill. There is a need to go through it in detail. Hence it should not be passed in a hurry. Hon'ble Minister has advanced arguments in favour of passing this bill at the earliest and has explained as to why the Government is so keen to get this bill passed. I would like to ask him if the Government was so eager to pass this bill, why was it not introduced earlier and why was it introduced at the fag end of the session?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon'ble Minister has stated that this bill was introduced in December and Hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs also claimed that this bill was introduced earlier, so why no action was taken in the last six months and who should be held responsible for the delay in enactment of this legislation? If the heavens would fall and it would be disastrous to pass the bill with a delay of two-three months, why didn't the Hon'ble Minister introduce this bill for consideration in the House earlier and now that he himself has delayed it, who should be held responsible for it?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the manner in which Hon'ble Minister has advanced his arguments in the House like an advocate and has tried to project right as wrong and wrong as right, is not the correct way. Debate is not conducted in the House in such a manner. I would like to ask as to what is the use of enacting this legislation when the citizens of our country do not have the right to information. When we do not have the right to information, how will we benefit from the legislation pertaining to Information Technology.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Ram Jethmalani is a reputed advocate especially in the field of criminal cases. I have heard that he charges a lot of money to appear in the

court for just one hearing. It is good that our Law Minister is a learned person. He has informed me that the legislation pertaining to right to information could not be passed because the issue of transfer of some official was involved therein. I would like to ask Hon'ble Minister of Law as to why that legislation has been kept pending by the Government. The Government is so keen to get the legislation pertaining to Information Technology passed. If the delay in the passage of the bill would lead to disastrous consequences, why is the Government shying away from enacting the law pertaining to right to information.

Mr. Chairman Sir, this is right that our country has been progressing in the field of Information Technology, but it is lagging behind in other fields. Infact there is one reason behind this progress and it is that mechanical persons, scientists, engineers, computer literates, software and hardware developers etc. have worked very hard in their streams. That is why, they are progressing, moreover, a foreign national having the same qualification, gets a higher salary, but scientists having knowledge of technology and persons from such other streams in our country, get a lesser salary and, therefore, it just seems to be progress.

19.00 hrs.

They have claimed that this would bring revolution. Previously since the paper was prone to be eaten or destroyed by worms etc. or one could forget after keeping it here and there, whereas now it was quite comfortable to feed such information in the computer and get it immediately as soon as required, so, it is good. He said that there are two main impediments in strengthening the electronics commerce and electronics administration. I would like to ask as to whether the information technology could get strengthened or would proceed further with the introduction of this bill? I have apprehensions to the fact that introduction of this bill may not create hinderances in this. We are progressing even without the bill, India has developed, but now you want to stop it by introducing it. What is the utility of this bill? There should have been a law in this regard but I wonder why the Government have not introduced it as yet? one thing is coming into notice that obscene information is being published in the electronic draft. We have been told that some indecent persons are muddling up within the computer internet system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Raghuvanshi, it is seven now. ...*(Interruption)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let him finish his speech.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Still eight more speakers are there to participate.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I am not saying about the rest of the speakers. I am saying about his speech. Let him conclude his speech today, and the rest of the speeches can be made tomorrow...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are eight more speakers to speak. If the House agrees, we can finish the discussion today and have the reply tomorrow.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, Sir.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (Khajuraho): Let him finish his speech today. Till then, we are here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

So, the time of the sitting of the House is extended till his speech is over.

[Translation]

You please finish up quickly.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I am talking about the basic facts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have talked enough about the basics. Kindly hurry up now.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Chairman, sir, if I would say clause-wise, then it will take one hour ...*(Interruptions)*, I am talking about only the basic thing. We, therefore, apprehend that whatever progress, India has made would come to a stand still if this Information Technology Bill is introduced. It shall create turmoil. It is said that the police has been given extensive freedom of action and due to this even crimes have been controlled. eg. the material or goods that are smuggled will not reach over to their actual destination but would go somewhere else. Wherever the computer works properly, it shall struck on to that place and wherever it will not work properly, it shall not go there, what remedy do you have for this? That is why we are concerned that no one should be given rights to such an extent that he starts mis-using them. If we start justifying the old CRPC, then it is right that if any crime has been committed anywhere, then you have the right to catch hold of the culprits. Police and others have the right to go there. So nobody should be given liberty to mis-use it, we were actually under doubts that why we had said that no one should

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

be given so much of liberty that he may relentlessly go anywhere, or insult any one or try to create medley.

It is asserted that we are acquiring more and more knowledge with the process of interchange of information. It is right that technology has been developed. Process of information was very wide in the ancient times. When the Mahabharata war was taking place in Kurukshetra, then Sanjay had described the whole scene of the battle, as to who was speaking, who had died etc., which means that technology at that period of time was also developed. America stands number one in the field of information technology.

We have Premji on the second number. We have heard that his treasure has decreased. He is coming down from his number two rank. The poor man is not going to get anything with this drama of information technology. Do you think that the foodgrain or production of any poor person would increase with this. There would be no increase in the production of farmer by the information technology. Can you provide for fertilizer with this. Nothing is going to happen. It is convenient, but is not necessary...*(Interruptions)* The business of traders is going to flourish with this only. How has the Public been mentioned in the Bill. The public has nothing to do with this. They have written—although the public is well aware of these benefits but common people do not know anything about the computers, even then in the absence of complete legal structure, trade would be done in the electronics form. Further it has been mentioned—Information and Technology Bill has been introduced for two matters, viz. electronic commerce and administration through electronics. Trade and commerce would flourish and the traders would be benefited out of this.

Expectations regarding the writing signature for legal recognition that is becoming an impediment in the process of strengthening the electronic administration. What is the objective behind such writings? Further, they have mentioned—the United Nations Commission UNCITRAL related to the International Trade Law has done in 1996. If it is more beneficial, then why have you delayed it for four years. Then you mentioned in Resolution No. 5162 of 27th January, 1997 that whichever state prepares such type of a bill, may keep its ideal law in mind. Who has said that you expedite this, you are yourself hurrying up. 715 items are coming to the country from foreign countries in 2003 under the WTO. They have

implemented it this year itself. It is not good to do acts that are against the country. There is possibility by the World Trade Organisation to undertake its work through electronic trade and commerce with the possible creation of multi-dimensional trade practices.

19.08 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Where is the need of Information and Technology Bill in this. You have not made the programme as such, but it is said that there are possibilities. Therefore, the people knowing law in the complete bill, have made objections after observing over all facts. But we are not very much satisfied after going through the objectives and reasons that our country shall benefit out of this bill, we are doubtful as to whether this bill may not create obstructions in the progress that our country has made. We are therefore, concerned...*(Interruptions)* It has been done under the pressure of WTO just to please the foreign countries. We, therefore utterly object to it. Government have hastily done this, but if any loss occurs, then the Government would itself be responsible for this. We were thinking of doing more investigation, but he is in hurry. Why didn't you bring it in the beginning. Therefore, there is need to consider all these points. No law, which is detrimental to the country, or which leads to any type of confusion, or mistake, or difficulty, or even increase the problems of the common people, should be enacted. There is need to investigate this matter deeply, and to reconsider it. With these words, I finish up my view points.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev, will you speak now?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): No, I will speak tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 16th May, 2000 at 11.00 a.m.

19.09 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, May 16, 2000/Va. shka 26, 1922 (Saka).

Corrigenda to Lok Sabha Debates
(English Version)

Monday, May 15, 2000/Vaisakha 25, 1922 (Saka).

...

<u>Col./line</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Read</u>
12/11	(c)	(e)
135/2	MINISTRY COMMUNICATIONS	MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
138/14	3019.30	3977.55
153/1 (from below)	5X62.5+3X200+1X210	5X62.5+X200+3X210
196/3	SHRI TAPAN SIKDR	SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR
198/16 (from below)	SHRI BABUL MARANDI	SHRI BABULAL MARANDI
248/24	add "(i) Does not arise."	
248/30	Delete the line "(i). does not arise.	
283/6 (from below)	SHRI MANIBAHAI RAMJIBAHAI CHAUDHRI	SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI

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