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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, May 12, 2005/Vaisakha 22, 1927 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

[*English*]

I will adjourn the House. I will not allow you to shout. Some of you will have to go out of this House also.

...(Interruptions)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down.

[*English*]

You should learn at least this much lesson. Learn to behave! I am sorry to say all these harsh words. This is very strange. I have not been able to take my seat and you are shouting.

...(Interruptions)

[*Translation*]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Mr. Speaker, Sir, sister Mayawati, who has been the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please slow down your pitch, there is no need of speaking so loudly.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Sister Mayawati, who has been the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh is saviour of dalits. But CBI is adopting double standard to harass her continuously. I request you to kindly allow me to speak on this issue. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All right, I will allow you to speak during the Zero Hour.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: It is a very serious issue. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJESH VERMA (Sitapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very serious matter, please allow us to speak. ...(Interruptions)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You do not have to help me. I do not need anybody's help.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rajesh Verma, please control them.

...(Interruptions)

11.03 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Bhal Chandra Yadav and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table)

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please go back to your seats. I will take action against you. Please go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 11.15 a.m.

*Not recorded.

11.06 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Fifteen Minutes past Eleven of the Clock.

11.15 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Fifteen minutes past Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

SUBMISSION BY MEMBERS

- (i) **Re: Investigation conducted by CBI against the Leader of Bahujan Samaj Party**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Brajesh Pathak, what do you want to say?

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Hon. Speaker, Sir, keeping in view the interests of crores of dalits and downtroddens of the country I rise to reveal the double standard being adopted by CBI so that these classes may not be subjected to any sort of injustice of future.

Sir, the way in which CBI is adopting double standard against dalits and downtroddens, shows clearly that India is the only country in the world where though law is one for all, it is implemented in different manner. In our country law is enforced in a different manner against dalits and downtrodden as compared to other sections of the society and the biggest example of this is the Taj case involving national President of our party *i.e.* Bahujan Samaj Party. In this case CBI has adopted double standards. A different view has been taken in respect of our leader while separate view is taken in other cases. Is it so because our leader belongs to dalit community.

In this regard I would like to tell you that single FIR has been registered against other persons involved in the Taj case whereas double FIR's have been registered against our leader. Why is it so? Is it because our leader belongs to dalit community? It is evident from the acts of CBI that it is no more an independent investigating agency and it has become hundred percent a political and casteist agency the biggest proof of which is news got published by CBI in all the newspapers of the country in respect of our leader.

So far as filing of DA case linking it with Taj episode by CBI is concerned. CBI has already accepted before the hon. Supreme Court that there is no proof in respect of embezzlement of funds provided by the Government. In spite of this, the CBI has been investigating the assets of our leader though the entire assets of our leader is registered in the IT departments. I deem it necessary to clarify that the case which is being termed as the scam of Rs. 175 crores, the government has made a payment of Rs. 17 crores only till now. The CBI has been publicising it as a scam of Rs. 175 crores so as to malign Kumari Mayawati ji. Despite all this a case of disproportionate assets has been foisted on her and the basis on which this case has been made out need to be exposed here.

The CBI has made out a case of D.A. against our leader after deeming all the assets of mother, father, brothers, sisters and other relatives of our leader as that of our leader and conducting an inquiry into it. Now I appeal to you to direct the Government to follow this formula and file cases of D.A. against all the national, and state level presidents of all national and regional parties after calculating and aggregating the assets of their father, mother, brothers, sisters and relatives as their assets and thereafter the cases so framed against them should be investigated like that of our leader. If the Government does not apply this formula, this will explicitly manifest that it has been adopting dual standards in ordering CBI probes and all this is happening on the behalf of the Government to cause political damage to our party out of caste bias. In such a situation, our party will have to reconsider the support extended to the UPA Government at the Centre and also to decide where or not the support is to be extended further. This announcement has been made by our leader yesterday. Though our party had called a meeting of all our MPs today to deliberate on this issue and this issue was discussed thoroughly there.

I would also like to know from the Government if it deems that this new formula of making D.A. case against our leader is wrong then I demand that the Government should remove such officers from CBI and take stern action against them. In the end I would like to say that it is the issue of honour of the Dalits and downtrodden and Bahin Mayawati is fighting to protect their honour. I, through you, appeal to the Government to issue a statement as to what action the government is going to take in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now we will take up Question Hour. Q. 661.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister is present here in the House. He should reply as to why these double standards are being adopted. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is very unfortunate. I cannot compel them. This is very unfortunate. I have given you full opportunity. How can I compel them to answer? It is entirely for the Government to respond.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH VERMA (Sitapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble leader of the House is present here in the House. I would request him to assure the House that he would take some action. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is very unfortunate. You know very well that I cannot compel the Government to respond. It is entirely for the Government to respond to it.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Brajesh Pathak ji, we have heard you and you were given full opportunity to express your views. Now you please listen to me and allow the House to run smoothly.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You gave me your undertaking. I have allowed you to make a statement for full five minutes. Even then you are disturbing the proceedings of the House. I can only say that it is unfortunate. I have no right to compel them to say something. The Government has heard your views. The Ministers are present here.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJA RAM PAL (Bilhaar): Our party is supporting the Government and we are being insulted.

Sir, leader of the House is present here in the House. We want that he should assure that he would do something about it. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will request the hon. Leaders of other parties to say what happened and what transpired in the Chamber. I have agreed with them. But now you are not keeping your words. I am very sorry about it.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah): Mr. Speaker Sir, the similar treatment has been meted out with Shri Lalu Prasad Ji. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, the hon. Members have raised certain issues. But you will appreciate that it is not possible for the Government to respond instantly. He has raised certain issues. We have noted them. That much I can say. I cannot make any other comment beyond this.

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more, after this, will be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: What are you talking? Under what rule can I compel the Minister to reply? The hon. Leader of the House has responded to you. You are only trying to disturb the proceedings of the House. I have given you full opportunity. You know very well that I cannot compel the Government to make a comment. The hon. Leader has already responded to the issue. You are now deliberately creating disturbance. I can only say that it is a shameful behaviour.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You want Bhain ji to be respected then respect the Speaker also. You are showing the

*Not recorded.

respect this way. You should respect the House and respect the public.

[English]

He has already responded. I have already said that I do not want to recall it.

[Translation]

What was discussed?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please let the Speaker speak for two minutes.

[English]

You are not helping your cause by behaving in this irresponsible manner. I had suggested certain things. I have said it again that I do not want to recount what happened in the Leaders' meeting. I am saying it again. Very well, you said that you wanted to speak and I have allowed you to make your statement fully..

Then, I have said it not once but repeatedly to show me the rule under which I can compel the Government to speak or not to speak in a manner in which you want. This is the point. The hon. Leader of the House has said that he has heard it, the matter is important and he cannot react instantly. Now, where does the House come in here? It is for you to go and talk to them outside and find out about it. If the House is not running, are you benefited? Nobody is saying that it is properly done. Nobody is giving any certificate. I am not giving a certificate to the CBI. So, what is the good in holding the House like this? You have important issues to raise. Your other colleagues have important issues to raise. I earnestly appeal to you. I have allowed you because of the seriousness of the matter and I appreciate your feelings that your leader, according to you, is not being treated properly. I am sure the Government is responsible and the Government will have to look into it. Give them also an opportunity. Please do not think that we are minimising the importance of the issue. At least, I am not minimising its importance. She is a respected leader and she has been our colleague here. But you want an answer immediately favouring you or according to what you like.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH VERMA: You just listen to me for one minute.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please speak one by one.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will hear your leader.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH VERMA: The Hon. Leader is sitting in the House, he should assure the House that they will take our harassment at the hands of the C.B.I. seriously and this is what we demand and if need be, the Government is prepared to give a reply that's it and he may give a reply whenever he wants. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, I have told the hon. Members that I have listened to them and understood their concern. But it is not possible for the Government to react instantly. If it is needed, we are prepared to listen to them and talk to them.

We will try to understand their problem and we will try to resolve it. It is not our intention to harass an important leader. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: He says that he will talk to you. But how can he do that today itself.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: There is no question of any intention of harassing any leader. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What do you want now? He was already agreed to talk to you.

...*(Interruptions)*

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rajesh Verma, you are a responsible Member.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: We are all concerned because she is our colleague. She is the supporter of the UPA. This matter should be sorted out. Let them not disrupt the proceedings of the House. I am prepared to sit with them and talk. The Home Minister is prepared to sit with them. Let us resolve the issue. But I cannot just give any assurance that we will act as per their wish.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJESH VERMA: Alright, Sir.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much all of you. Hon. Leaders, this is the way to solve the matters. He has assured that he will sit with you and talk. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

11.31 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni, Q. No. 661.

[*English*]

Strengthening of Distribution Network

*661. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:
SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:

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

(a) whether the Government has drawn elaborate guidelines to stop diversion of kerosene oil supplied through PDS for adulteration of diesel and petrol and to strengthen the distribution network of subsidized kerosene as reported in Asian Age daily dated April 7, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the punitive action proposed in case of any violation/case of adulteration is detected?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Government/Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) already have in place the following major measures to contain adulteration:

- (i) As advised by Government, OMCs have established separate wings, to report to a Director other than Director (Marketing), to specify norms and guidelines as well as oversee and monitor all activities and operations which could lead to adulteration;
- (ii) The import of Superior Kerosene Oil (SKO) has been canalized through OMCs to curb the misuse/diversion of SKO by parallel marketeers;
- (iii) OMCs have introduced new tamper-proof tank-truck locking systems to prevent *en route* adulteration by transporters;
- (iv) OMCs are introducing retail automation to monitor the level of fuel tanks in retail outlets as also IT solutions like monitoring the movement of tank-trucks through the Global Positioning System (GPS);
- (v) OMCs have initiated the branding of Retail Outlets and third party certification, both of which measures are expected to contribute to the curbing of adulteration.

These and other measures to check adulteration are kept under continuous review of the Government,

Besides the measures already in place, Government have recently approved an innovative pilot project of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for radically revamping the PDS kerosene distribution network with the primary objective of ensuring that this heavily subsidized project is actually made available in the required quantities at subsidized prices to the intended beneficiaries; and secondly, to thus cap, reverse and eventually eliminate the diversion of PDS SKO for adulteration. The pilot project is to be implemented in

10% of the blocks of the country for a period of six months. Thereafter, the working of the scheme would be independently assessed and, based on the experience gained, Government will consider scaling up the scheme to cover the entire country.

The principal features of this innovative pilot project are summed up below:

- (i) OMCs will establish at least one SKO dealership in each of the country's development blocks (at present, less than half the blocks are covered and there is disproportionate, often multiple concentration, in urban blocks);
- (ii) In consultation with the District Administration and the wholesale dealer, about 5-10 sub-wholesale points will be located in each block;
- (iii) There will be a dedicated fleet of tanker-trucks (TTs) for transportation of PDS kerosene to ensure widespread public information and transparency as these TTs will prominently display the special logo that is being devised for the dedicated fleet. It will be clearly written on the outside of the TT that it is transporting kerosene meant for the Public Distribution System;
- (iv) To bring storage dispensing services at SKO dealerships at par with the modern facilities provided at petrol and diesel outlets by OMCs at their own expense, the Ministry's Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) will fund OMCs to ensure the installation of the following facilities at each of the dealerships covered under the pilot projects:
 - storage tanks with minimum capacity of 20 KLs
 - electronically metered dispensing pumps
 - an adequate number of barrels, appropriately decorated with the special logo, for the delivery of SKO to sub-wholesale points
 - one or more barrel sheds;
- (v) Supplies to sub-wholesale points will be made under the direct supervision and responsibility of the OMCs, who will provide an adequate number of barrels, decorated with the special logo, at the sub-wholesale point for the

convenient and assured transportation of PDS SKO to the retail points. Similar logos will be displayed on vehicles transporting PDS SKO from wholesale to sub-wholesale points and from there to retail points at Fair Price Shops;

- (vi) At each Fair Price Shop, PDS SKO will be stored in barrels with clearly identified logos which the general public can access to determine for themselves the balance availability of PDS SKO at that Fair Price Shop;
- (vii) In consultation with State Governments, Panchayats and Gram Sabhas will be empowered to generally supervise the availability of PDS SKO and at subsidised prices, and a reporting mechanism will be put in place for Panchayats/Gram Sabhas to report any deficiencies to the State Administration and the OMCs concerned.

The details of the implementation mechanism are being worked with the authorities concerned. It is hoped this will lead to a significant breakthrough in the delivery of subsidized SKO to the entitled segments of society and thus contribute to the curbing of diversion for adulteration.

Over and above these measures, the Ministry have commissioned the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) to prepare the first-ever scientific study of the demand for PDS kerosene in the country with a view to thereafter putting in place a comprehensive and rational policy for meeting the genuine requirements of PDS kerosene for entitled beneficiaries on a country-wide sale.

(c) Punitive action against adulteration is taken by the Government/Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) under the following provisions:

- (i) In accordance with the Control Orders issued by the Government under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, to prevent fuel adulteration, State Governments are empowered to take action against those indulging in adulteration. Government have repeatedly urged State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to step up inspections/surprise checks to ensure that adulteration related activities are minimized and to exercise vigil/conduct inspections at various private firms, factories, processing units etc., under their

jurisdictions to identify the perpetrators of adulteration and the stringent action against them within the available legal framework.

- (ii) OMCs undertake regular and surprise inspections of Retail Outlets and also take action under Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) and Dealership Agreements against those indulging in adulteration and malpractices. MDG provide for penalty of termination of dealership in cases of adulteration being established.

SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Hon. Speaker, Sir, there has been a widespread anger in the country in regard to adulteration of kerosene with diesel and petrol. There has been no stopping of this danger in spite of the efforts being taken by the Ministry from time to time. The Ministry has been taking steps and has been making efforts to ensure that kerosene meant for distribution under Public Distribution System is not diverted for adulteration of diesel and petrol. Adulteration can be prevented through measures like filter paper test, blue dyeing of kerosene, regular and surprise inspection by vigilance teams etc. Has the Ministry been successful in this regard?

An Anti-Adulteration cell was set up by the Minister. I would like to know whether it is functioning or not. Is it true that India's consumption of diesel has come down by four per cent in the last three years due to adulteration of kerosene meant for distribution through PDS? If it is true, what steps is the Minister taking in this regard?

MR. SPEAKER: This is not right. We should learn how to put questions.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had detailed in the statement that we are taking very large number of measures in this regard. The fact of the matter is that so long as there is a substantial price difference between kerosene and diesel, unscrupulous elements, who are bound in the country, will take advantage of that or will try to take advantage of that. We are attempting to counter it. We believe that we have substantially brought down the extent of adulteration that takes place. Additional moves that we are making, which have been detailed in the answer, will further contribute to the achievement of this end.

As regards the Anti-Adulteration Cell, precisely because it was ineffective—some of the officers were under investigation by the CBI—it was felt that no further

useful purpose could be served by maintaining the particular Cell. We have wound it up after receiving a Report from a one-man Committee. We are trying to find other ways, including the novel pilot project which has been described in the written answer for ensuring that PDS kerosene reaches people for whom it is meant. We have, under our consideration, a number of steps to try to ensure that free-sale-kerosene is available in plastic pouches in larger numbers. We trust that all this together will reduce the gap between kerosene and diesel prices on the one hand and on the other hand actively contribute to controlling adulteration as well as ensuring that PDS kerosene reaches the intended beneficiaries.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a very exhaustive answer. Do you want to ask any further supplementary?

SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Yes.

Hon. Minister has stated in his reply that the Government has recently approved an innovative pilot project for revamping the PDS kerosene distribution. I would like to know whether before approving this project, whether the Minister discussed this with the State Governments because ultimately they are the implementing agencies. When would the Minister implement it?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is now engaged in finalizing the details of this Pilot Project. There are a number of administrative details that have to be looked after. We intend very, very soon or in a matter of a few days, to call the officials of the State Governments together and work with them. We are also working with the Central Ministry which is concerned with the consumers and distribution matters. I can assure the hon. Member that before we move on to the actual stage of implementation, we would have done so in consultation with the State Governments. Of course, the cooperation of the State Governments is required to this end. But, I do hope that all the State Governments will agree that this is a serious problem; this is a serious attempt to resolve it and will extend their full cooperation to us to ensure the success of the 10 per cent Pilot Project.

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY: Thank you, Sir. Kindly permit me to complete my question.

MR. SPEAKER: Very unfair. If it is not too lengthy, then I will have to interrupt you!

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY: Kindly excuse me, Sir. The hon. Minister is making all his earnest effort efficiently to meet the demand and supply situation, as no other Minister did in the past, and I know that. But, hon. Minister in his exhaustive reply detailed all the steps taken or being taken not only to strengthen the distribution but also to just eliminate the diversion for this highly subsidised kerosene.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal to distribute this kerosene to much-needed poor people of the remote areas by Mobile Vans, as proposed earlier.

I want to know whether steps have been taken by the Ministry, as reported in *The Economic Times* on 4.8.2004, to revamp the distribution by launching poly packs for which a proposal has also been submitted to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister also has said "strengthen the distribution system on this."

I would like to know whether the hon. Minister is aware that in UP, their wholesale agent has taken 125 kilo litre (kl) of kerosene on auction for Rs. 55 lakh. I do now know how he is earning profit without adulterating or without blackmarketing their commodity. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the steps that he is contemplating to streamline and strengthen the distribution system for the poor.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please allow me to say that I am flattered to receive these comments from an hon. Member, who was a predecessor of mine in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

MR. SPEAKER: You put the question without interruption.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, we are certainly addressing the question of ploy packs. But, I think, we need to appreciate that there are two types of kerosene involved in this. On the one hand, it is the PDS kerosene system for which this elaborate, innovative Pilot Project has been created. It does involve attempting to reach the kerosene directly to the consumers. If it is done by Mobile Vans, it could be done. But, given that there are two-and-a-half lakh village Panchayats in the country and close to five lakh fair price shops, you will appreciate that the role of Mobile vans is somewhat limited. What we need is a systemic answer which will actually get the

kerosene delivered to these 500,000 Fair Price Shops around the country. What we attempted to do is to bring them, in some sense, under the general supervision of the *Gram Sabha* and the village Panchayat in each of the different areas of the country.

With regard to the specific case that was mentioned by the hon. Member, you will appreciate, Sir, that under your own rules, we are not normally allowed to comment about a particular instance. I must also confess that I do not have the full details of what the hon. Member has mentioned. If you would kindly make it available to me, I assure the House that we will undertake a more serious investigation.

SHRI ANIL BASU: Sir, the hon. Minister has given a very long, four-page reply. He has also confirmed about the seriousness of the problem. Is the Minister aware of the fact that the kerosene oil allotted for PDS is allotted in the metropolitan cities in huge quantities where LPG is available in every household? What is the mystery behind it? Will he inquire about that?

The point is that pilferage takes place from the depot during transport and also from the point of big dealers. In the allocation pattern, you would see that in all the metropolitan cities, a huge quantity of PDS kerosene oil is allotted. Nobody knows the reason for this. Most of the kerosene oil is used for adulteration. Will the hon. Minister also consider to supply PDS kerosene oil in the villages where there no electricity is available? I would like to know whether the hon. Minister would take up this responsibility on himself.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a good question.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is precisely because I do not regard any other task given to my Ministry as being as important as the task of reaching kerosene to crores upon crores of the poor people living in the villages of India that I have abused the patience of this House by giving such an elaborate and detailed reply in the written form to the hon. Members. But I have to point out to the hon. Member that we, in the Central Government, only make allocations to the States. The manner in which the further allocation is done by the States is the responsibility of the State Governments. I have to confess that most of the State Governments seem to be allotting a disproportionate amount of this kerosene to metropolitan and other urban areas. Therefore, we have commissioned the National

Council of Applied Economic Research to undertake the first ever scientific study—in Independent India, it is never being done—to assess what is the demand for kerosene of different segments of our society and at different price availability. This study is at an advanced stage of preparation. I am hoping to get the result by July. They earlier said that they would give it to us by May. But the minute this invaluable document is in our hands, we would be able to proceed to a more rationale system of distribution than we have inherited from the past. In this exercise, I do hope that the State Governments, including the Government of West Bengal, will extend a great deal of cooperation to us because one of the great metropolitan cities of India, where there is—I am excessive in my view—concentration of kerosene supplies is the City of Joy, Kolkata.

MR. SPEAKER: I am glad that you acknowledged it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, no more question will be allowed.

SHRI ANIL BASU: Out of the total allocation, how much is being given to the metropolitan cities?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that it is for the State Governments to do it.

[Translation]

DR. ARVIND SHARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, SKO Kerosene is used for the PDS. OMC, IOC, BPCL Companies distribute white kerosene to only those distributors who supply to the PDS. I want to know, whether it is true?

Secondly, parallel marketing system was in place from 1993 to 2003 but now the Government has banned it. The order is as follows—

[English]

"The ban order was imposed on 25th November, 2003. The words "free import" were substituted with the sentence. "Import channellised through OMC's i.e. IOC, i.e. IOC, BPCL, HPCL, IBP and STC with the explanation of avoiding adulteration of the white SKO in Diesel from the port."

[Translation]

I want to know whether the Government propose to reintroduce the parallel marketing system?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, the parallel marketing system has been discontinued and we have no intention to re-introduce it. As for the white kerosene or free sale kerosene; we have asked the State Governments to decide the distributors for these on their own. As far as the OMCs are concerned, we have compelled them to arrange kerosene for the PDS. Besides, they are fully at liberty to sell the kerosene minus the PDS kerosene. But this exemption is subject to the condition that they should do the business as per the norms laid down by the State Government for the purpose.

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is true that the Government is making all sorts of efforts to check adulteration in kerosene but all its efforts have met with failure. Still 100 percent adulteration in kerosene is taking place and kerosene is not reaching the general public, the farmers and the poor people living in villages. Today, you find the adulterated kerosene is being sold openly everywhere be it a petrol pump or a retailer's shop. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether it can be considered to frame a rule whereby the poor or the general public could be provided a gas connection in lieu of the kerosene being distributed to them? That can help prevent adulteration in kerosene oil. Whether the Government consider providing such gas connections at a concession?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, in my opinion, this is a misconception that with the increased use of LPG, the use of kerosene gets decreased. Earlier the policy was based on this but as we all know that some well off people manage double connections and divert the LPG meant for domestic use to commercial use. I think, instead of taking these two things together it will be better to assess the actual demand of kerosene in other sections of the society in the country. For this we have mandated the National Council for Applied Research to conduct a study in this regard and we expect its report in few weeks. Only after this, we will be in a position to decide our course of action. I feel, it will be better.

So far as the issue of making arrangements for providing Kerosene to the target consumer for whom the subsidy is meant, is concerned, I have stated it in detail

in my written reply. At the same time, I want to say one more thing that maintenance of law and order is a state-subject and we have fully empowered the State Government to keep control over it. If the hon. Member is aware that at every petrol pump or at most of the pumps this is being practised, then I would like to request him to inform the State Government, as this is his duty to take such steps so that the culprits fall into the clutches of the law and the poor consumers may get rid of such people.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I think we have covered almost every issue.

Shri Ram Kripal Yadav.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Unless you cooperate, how can I reach your Question.

[Translation]

You are asking only one thing repeatedly and get annoyed when not allowed to speak.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has explained as to what efforts are being made to stop adulteration in Kerosene. We have no doubt about his sincerity but despite that, adulteration is going on.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He has repeated that this is the State Government's matter.

[Translation]

You may ask if you have any new question.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, even today, they are not able to provide kerosene to the poor and farmers. In Bihar, the rates for Kerosene have been and still today are at rupees 45 a litre. Sir, through you, I want to know the steps taken to ensure that action is taken against the owners of petrol pumps indulging in adulteration in petrol or the other persons involved in adulteration which causes pollution and also adversely affects the engine of the vehicles. It is necessary to make law to strictly deal

with such culprits so that they are deterred from indulging in adulteration. Generally, our Government cancel their license. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You please allow other Members also to speak. What is the use of repeating the same thing time and again?

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, these steps are inadequate, there is a need to make them more stringent.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let there be brevity on both sides.

[Translation]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, suggestion of the hon. Member is very constructive. I will communicate this suggestion to Dr. Buta Singh the Governor of Bihar so that he takes action in this regard which should have already been taken. Every state should apprehend the culprits. Maintenance of Law and Order is not the responsibility of the Central Government rather it is a state subject. We are ready to extend full support to them in this regard.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: This question relates to mixing of PDS kerosene with petrol and diesel. In the present scientific age, we can add any colour to kerosene so that it can be detected easily. *...(Interruptions)* If some colour is already added to it, why is it not detected? Instead of asking a question, I want to give a suggestion that with any colour added to kerosene people can easily detect that kerosene has been mixed with petrol and diesel. If we are able to do so, the entire problem will be solved, other things will become secondary. Is the hon. Minister contemplating to do any such thing in this regard?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, this work is being done. But, science is a double-edged sword. When we try to curb the activities of the adulterators, they try to find out some technic to remove the colour from kerosene, they are so clever. This is a war which will continue forever. I hope with your cooperation, finally we will be victorious.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hope that ultimately you win and not them.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJESH VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, how the mixing of kerosene oil in petrol and diesel be checked is a very important question. The hon. Minister in his written reply, has told various methods by which this adulteration can be checked. The biggest reason behind this adulteration is that when SKO is sent by the SKO tank lorry, the same is downloaded directly in the petrol pump's tank. You have told that somewhere there are locks, somewhere there is density and somewhere there is nothing else. SKO is blended in the petrol pump's tank directly from the lorry containing the tank.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: You are repeating the same question. He has already replied.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJESH VERMA: In order to check it, will the hon. Minister formulate any scheme under which the SKO tank lorry is painted with same specific colour so that one could find just by going to the site that it is an SKO lorry?

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: We have taken only one question till this time.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member towards my written reply where I have explained in detail that we have installed a new kind of tamper proof tank locking system to check adulteration in tank trucks. Besides, we are using new information technology under which global positioning system will be installed in that truck. While sitting in office we will be able to see through computer if that truck is going to the storage point or to some other place. The Government is installing this system on the tanks at storage points at its own expenses. This point has also been explained in detail in my written reply. Besides, using the invention of science and technology, calibrated dispensing pumps are also being installed from our side so that at any point of time, we could be in a position to know as to how much kerosene oil was dispatched to the wholesale point and how much of it was made available just as it happens at any petrol

and diesel retail pump. We are providing all these facilities for allotment of kerosene oil at our own expenses. I hope that this pilot project of us would prove to be a success and all of you would extend your cooperation to make it a success.

[*English*]

Exchange of Defence Medical Research and Facilities with USA

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*662. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS SADHU
YADAV:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and USA have agreed to exchange their Defence Medical Research and Facilities being given to defence personnel of each country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any agreement has been signed between the two countries in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extent to which Indian Defence personnel will be benefited after the implementation of said agreement?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

A Memorandum of Agreement has been signed on April 13, 2005 between the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences (USUHS), USA and the Indian Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) for training, research and workshops in the field of medicine for uniformed medical professionals of the two countries.

The main objective of the Agreement is the exchange of professional military medical knowledge between the Armed Forces of USA and India.

This collaboration will help in expanding and upgrading the knowledge of the Indian Armed Forces Medical Services especially in certain frontier areas of medicine.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Defence as to how much cost is required for exchange of medical science in the Armed forces and whether any special scheme has been formulated for the women defence personnel in this regard?

[*English*]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, as far as this programme is concerned, it is for taking advantage of the advanced medical service, research, medicine and specially in certain critical areas. Whatever facilities are available, those will be available to the participants of the Indian Armed Forces both male and female.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE: What provision has been made in the Budget for this expenditure.

[*English*]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, there is no provision in the budget because this will be met from the existing resources which we have because it is not a very highly financial incentive arrangement. Most of the funds which will be required here will be raised by the US organisation with whom we have entered into this Memorandum of Understanding. From our side, the resources available will be extremely meagre.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anirudh Prasad alias Sadhu Yadav—Not present.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the functioning of the Indian Armed Forces Medical Service is very good and their performance is excellent. It is to be really welcomed that training and research project is being augmented by the Ministry of Defence. Simultaneously, the Indian Council of Medical Research is also taking up some interesting and effective research programmes.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question?

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: I would like to know from the Minister whether there is any plan in the Ministry of Defence also to coordinate the efforts of Armed Forces Medical Service with the research activities of ICMR so as to help the people in a greater way.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, as far as business efforts are concerned, we are always encouraging them. So far as this Memorandum of Understanding is concerned, it is between the Indian Armed Forces Medical Service and the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. Therefore, it is a totally different package in which we are trying to take advantage of the advancement in medical science, discovery of medicines, research and training of this advanced institution.

[*Translation*]

Expansion of Transmission Capacity

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*663. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to expand the transmission capacity of Akashvani and Doordarshan during Tenth Plan;

(b) whether any specific proposal has been mooted in this regard for the backward and rural areas;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) It has been the endeavour of the Government to expand the coverage of Doordarshan (DD) and All India Radio (AIR) to uncovered and under-served areas, including backward and rural areas.

All AIR/DD terrestrial transmitters cover backward and rural areas within their respective coverage zones. During 10th Five Year Plan period, AIR have commissioned 28 transmitters, while DD have set up 144 transmitters so far, as per details in the Annexure.

The details of 152 radio and 29 TV transmitters which are under implementation are also given in the Annexure.

In addition, the Ku-Band transmission Service (Free to Air DTH) of Doordarshan, with a bouquet comprising

33 TV Channels and 12 radio channels, was launched on 16th December, 2004 to provide coverage to hitherto uncovered and under-served areas. This service can be received anywhere in the country excluding Andaman and Nicobar Islands, with the help of a small sized dish receive system.

Annexure

All India Radio

Transmitter Projects Commissioned during 10th Plan (28 Nos.)

State	Place	Details of Scheme
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	1. Hyderabad	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)
Chhattisgarh	2. Raipur	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)
Gujarat	3. Bhuj	20 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 10 kW MW Tr.)
Jammu and Kashmir	4. Jammu	50 kW SW Tr. (Repl. of 1kW SW Tr.)
	5. Khalsi	1 kW MW Tr. (Relay)
	6. Naushera	20 kW MW Tr. (Relay)
	7. Rajouri	10 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	8. Srinagar	300 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 200 kW MW Tr.)
	9. Kupwara	20 kW MW Tr. (Relay)
	10. Bhadarwah	6 kW FM Tr.
Karnataka	11. Mangalore	10 kW FM Tr. (Repl. of 1 kW MW Tr.)
	12. Mysore	10 kW FM Tr. (Repl. of 1 kW MW Tr.)
	13. Dharwad	10 kW FM Tr. (Repl. of 1 kW MW Tr.)
	14. Bellary	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)
Kerala	15. Calicut	10 kW FM Tr. (Repl. of 1 kW MW Tr.)
Madhya Pradesh	16. Indore	200 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 100 kW MW Tr.)
Manipur	17. Imphal	300 kW FM Tr. (Repl. of 50 kW MW Tr.)
Maharashtra	18. Nagpur	300 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 200 kW MW Tr.)
Nagaland	19. Kohima	100 kW FM Tr. (Repl. of 50 kW MW Tr.)
	20. Kohima	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)

1	2	3
Orissa	21. Cuttack	300 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 100 kW MW Tr.)
Rajasthan	22. Jodhpur	300 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 100 kW MW Tr.)
Uttar Pradesh	23. Varanasi	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)
	24. Kanpur	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)
West Bengal	25. Shantiniketan	LRS with 3 kW FM Tr.
Union Territory	26. Delhi	3x250 kW SW Tr. (Repl. of 3x100 kW SW Tr.)
	27. Port Blair	100 kW MW Tr. (Repl. of 20 kW MW Tr.)
	28. Pondichery	1 kW FM Tr. (Int. Set up)

*Doordarshan**Transmitters Commissioned during X Plan*

(1.4.2002—9.5.2005)

State/UT	Transmitters	
1	2	
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	VLPT	Kalighat
	VLPT	Swaraj Gram
Andhra Pradesh	HPT	Rajamundry (DD News)
	HPT	Vishakhapatnam (DD New)
	LPT	Madugula
	LPT	Miryalguda
	LPT	Talakondapally
	LPT	Kakinada (DD News)
	LPT	Nellore (DD News)
	VLPT	Madipadu
	VLPT	Maripadu
Arunachal Pradesh	HPT	Itanagar (DD News)

1

2

Bihar

LPT	Bhabhua
LPT	Darbhanga (DD News)
LPT	Gaya (DD News)
VLPT	Marhaura
VLPT	Masrakh

Chhattisgarh

HPT	Ambikapur
LPT	Pandaria

Delhi

HPT	Delhi (Digital)
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Gujarat

HPT	Surat
HPT	Rajkot (DD News)
HPT	Surat (DD News) (int.)
LPT	Bhavnagar (DD News)
LPT	Jamnagar (DD News)
LPT	Vadodara (DD News)

Haryana

LPT	Hissar (DD News)
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Himachal Pradesh

HPT	Kasauli (DD News)
VLPT	Chirgaon
VLPT	Kaja
VLPT	Phooladhar

Jammu and Kashmir

HPT	Gurez
HPT	Naushera
HPT	Samba (int.)

1

2

HPT	Tithwal
HPT	Gurez (DD News)
HPT	Naushera (DD News)
HPT	Poonch (DD News)
HPT	Samba (DD News) (int.)
HPT	Tithwal (DD News)
LPT	Dharamsal
LPT	Patni Top
LPT	Pattan
VLPT	Amas
VLPT	Bani
VLPT	Basgo
VLPT	Chakroi
VLPT	Chanani
VLPT	Dhar
VLPT	Doongi Grati
VLPT	Gujjaron Nagrota
VLPT	Jajjar Kotli
VLPT	Keri
VLPT	Loran
VLPT	Nagrota
VLPT	Nimu
VLPT	Sansaar
VLPT	Sudh Mahadev
VLPT	Tatapani
VLPT	Thathari
VLPT	Tilel
VLPT	Boniyar
VLPT	Gulmarg

1

2

VLPT Manigam

VLPT Mohri

VLPT Pulwama

VLPT Tral

VLPT Yusmarg

Jharkhand

HPT Jamshedpur (DD News)

LPT Bokaro (DD News)

VLPT Ramgarh Hill

Karnataka

HPT Mysore

HPT Raichur

HPT Dharwad (DD News)

HPT Gulbarga (DD News)

HPT Mysore (DD News)

LPT Bellary (DD News)

LPT Davangere (DD News)

VLPT Huvin Hippargi

VLPT Kudligi

VLPT Sringeri

Kerala

HPT Calicut (DD News)

LPT Thrissur (DD News)

VLPT Erattupetta

VLPT Mundakayam

Madhya Pradesh

HPT Guna

HPT Gwalior (DD News)

LPT Sindhwa

1

2

Maharashtra

HPT	Chandrapur
HPT	Jalgaon (int.)
HPT	Ratnagiri
HPT	Ambajogal (DD News) (int.)
HPT	Aurangabad (DD News)
HPT	Pune (DD News)
HPT	Mumbai (Digital)
LPT	Badalpur
LPT	Shirdi
LPT	Akola (DD News)
LPT	Amravati (DD News)
LPT	Dhule (DD News)
LPT	Kolhapur (DD News)
LPT	Malegaon (DD News)
LPT	Nanded (DD News)
LPT	Nashik (DD News)
LPT	Sangli (DD News)
VLPT	Vasantgarh

Manipur

HPT	Imphal (DD News)
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Meghalaya

HPT	Shillong (DD News)
LPT	Cherapunji

Mizoram

HPT	Aizawal (DD News)
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Nagaland

HPT	Kohima (DD News)
Xser	Bara Basti

1

2

Punjab

HPT Amritsar (DD News) (int.)
 HPT Jalandhar (DD News)

Rajasthan

HPT Ajmer
 HPT Ajmer (DD News)
 HPT Bundi (DD News)
 LPT Pirawa
 LPT Alwar (DD News)

Sikkim

HPT Gangtok (DD News)
 VLPT Zorethang

Tamil Nadu

HPT Kodaikanal (DD News)
 HPT Chennai (Digital)
 LPT Erode (DD News)
 LPT Madurai (DD News)
 LPT Tirunelveli (DD News)
 LPT Tirupattur (DD News)
 VLPT Kanchipuram
 VLPT Tiruvannamalai

Tripura

LPT Jolaibari

Uttar Pradesh

HPT Faizabad
 HPT Lakhimpur
 HPT Bareilly (DD News)
 HPT Kanpur (DD News)

1	2
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Uttaranchal

LPT	Bachher
VLPT	Dewal
VLPT	Dugadda
VLPT	Fata
VLPT	Manila

West Bengal

HPT	Balurghat (int.)
HPT	Kharagpur (int.)
HPT	Krishnanagar
HPT	Calcutta (Digital)
LPT	Baghmandi

Transmitter Projects under implementation (132 Nos.)

Place with State	Details of schemes
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1	2
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Andhra Pradesh	1. Nellore	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	2. Kakinada	10 kW FM Tr. with studio
	3. Karimnagar	5 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	4. Srikakulam	1 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	5. Adilabad	10 kW FM (Repl. of 1 kW MW)
	6. Vijayawada	10 kW FM (Repl. of 1 kW MW)
	7. Hyderabad	10 kW FM (additional channel)
	8. Hyderabad	10 kW FM (Repl. of 6 kW FM)
Arunachal Pradesh	9. Anini	1 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	10. Bomdila	1 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	11. Daporijo	1 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	12. Changlang	1 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	13. Khonsa	1 kW FM Tr. with field production facility

1	2	
Assam	14.	Stilchar 5 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	15.	Karimganj 1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	16.	Lumding 1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	17.	Golpara 1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	18.	Guwahati 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
Bihar	19.	Gaya 10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	20.	Motihari 10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	21.	Banka 10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	22.	Madhubani 10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	23.	Patna 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
Chhattisgarh	24.	Dantewara 5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	25.	Rajnandgaon 5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	26.	Jashpurnagar 5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	27.	Baikunthpur 10 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	28.	Raipur 10 kW FM Tr. (additional Channel) interim set up commissioned
Delhi	29.	Delhi 20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 10 kW FM)
	30.	Delhi 20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 5 kW FM)
Gujarat	31.	Jamnagar 10 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	32.	Junagarh 10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	33.	Ahmedabad 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	34.	Bhuj 10 kW FM Tr.
	35.	Surat 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
Haryana	36.	Ambala 5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	37.	Rohtak 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
	38.	Kurukshetra 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
Himachal Pradesh	39.	Shimla 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
Jammu and Kashmir	40.	Srinagar 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	41.	Kargil 200 kW FM Tr.

1	2	
Jharkhand	42. Dhanbad	10 kW FM Tr. with studio
	43. Dumka	5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	44. Gumia	5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	45. Ranchi	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	46. Ranchi	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
Karnataka	48. Gulbarga	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
	47. Sringeri	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	48. Bellary	10 kW FM Tr. with studio—interim set up already commissioned.
Kerala	49. Cochin	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
	50. Konni	5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	51. Trivandrum	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
Madhya Pradesh	52. Ujjain	5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	53. Bhopal	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
Maharashtra	54. Nagpur	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
	55. Aurangabad	10 kW FM Tr. (Repl of 1 kW MW)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
	56. Shirdi	5 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	57. Oras	5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	58. Pune	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
	59. Sholapur	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW FM)
	60. Amravati	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	61. Mumbai	20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 10 kW FM)
	62. Mumbai	20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 5 kW FM)
	Manipur	63. Tamenglang
64. Ukhrul		1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
Meghalaya	65. Dawki	1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
Mizoram	66. Champhai	1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	67. Tuipang	1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities

1	2
Nagaland	68. Kolasib/Sarchip 1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	69. Kohima 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	70. Phek 1 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	71. Zunheboto 1 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
	72. Wokha 1 kW FM Tr. with field production facilities
Orissa	73. Tuensang 5 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW)
	74. Mona 5 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW)
	75. Bhawanipatna 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	76. Bhubaneswar 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW VB Tr. at Cttuack)
	77. Deogarh 5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	78. Raygada 5 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	79. Rairangpur 1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	80. Baripada 5 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW)
Punjab	81. Parlakimidi 5 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	82. Jalandhar 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW VB)
	83. Fazilka 10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
Rajasthan	84. Amritsar 20 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	85. Banswara 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
	86. Alwar 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
	87. Chittorgarh 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 6 kW FM)
	88. Jaipur 10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW FM)
	89. Udaipur 10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
	90. Ajmer 10 kW FM Tr.
	91. Ramgarh 20 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	92. Chauthan Hill 20 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	93. Bikaner 10 kW MW Tr. (additional channel)
	94. Dungarpur 1 kW MW Tr. with field production facilities
	95. Kota 20kW MW Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW)

1

2

Sikkim	96.	Gangtok	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
Tamil Nadu	97.	Kanchipuram	5 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	98.	Tirunelveli	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)
	99.	Chennai	20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 10 kW FM)
	100.	Chennai	20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 5 kW FM)
Tripura	101.	Madurai	10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
	102.	Udaipur	1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	103.	Nutan Bazar	1/5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	104.	Dharmanagar	1 kW FM Tr. with studio
Uttar Pradesh	106.	Longtherai	5 kW FM Tr. with studio
	107.	Varanasi	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW VB)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. commissioned
	107.	Kanpur	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW VB)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. commissioned
	108.	Lucknow	10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 10 kW MW VB)
	109.	Gazipur	10 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	110.	Gorakhpur	10 KW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up with 1 kW FM Tr. ready
	111.	Banda	10 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	112.	Lakhimpur Kheri	10 KW FM Tr. (Relay)
Uttaranchal	113.	Najibabad	200 kW MF Tr. (repl of 100 kW MW)
	114.	Dehradun	10 kW FM Tr. with studio
	115.	Haldwani	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	116.	Bageshwar	5 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	117.	Champawat	1 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	118.	Gairsain	1 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	119.	Rudraprayag	1 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	120.	New Tehri	1 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	121.	Dharchula	1 kW FM Tr. (Relay)

1	2	
West Bengal	122. Darjeeling	10 kW FM Tr. with studio
	123. Purulia	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	124. Maldah	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	125. Kochbihar	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	126. Kolkata	20 kW FM Tr. (repl of 5 kW FM)
	127. Bardhaman	10 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	128. Tamluk	5 kW FM Tr. (Relay)
	129. Balurghat	10 kW FM Tr. with field production facility
	Union Territory	130. Chandigarh
131. Pondicherry		10 kW FM Tr. (additional channel)—interim set up commissioned
132. Kavaratti		10 kW FM Tr. (repl of 1 kW MW)

Transmitter Projects Technically Ready (20 Nos.)

State	Place	Detail of Scheme
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	1. Machrela	3 kW FM Tr.
Arunachal Pradesh	2. Itanagar	10 kW FM Tr.
Chhattisgarh	3. Saraipalli	1 kW FM Tr.
Gujarat	4. Himmatnagar	1 kW MW Tr.
Jammu and Kashmir	5. Tiesuru	1 kW MW Tr.
	6. Nyomarap	1 kW MW Tr.
	7. Diskit	1 kW MW Tr.
	8. Padum	1 kW MW Tr.
	9. Drass	1 kW MW Tr.
Kerala	10. Manjeri	3 kW FM Tr.
Madhya Pradesh	11. Mandla	1 kW FM Tr.
	12. Rajgarh	3 kW FM Tr.
Manipur	13. Imphal	10 kW FM Tr.
	14. Churachandpur	6 kW FM Tr.

1	2	3
Meghalaya	15. Shillong	10 kW FM Tr.
Mizoram	16. Aizawal	6 kW FM Tr.
Orissa	17. Soro	1 kW MW Tr.
Tamil Nadu	18. Dharmapuri	10 kW FM Tr.
Tripura	19. Agartala	10 kW FM Tr.
Union Territory	20. Port Blair	10 kW FM Tr.

Doordarshan Transmitters under implementation

I. HIGH POWER TRANSMITTERS (HPTs)

1. Bhatinda (DD News)
2. Bikaner
3. Bilaspur
4. Chhatarpur
5. Dharamshala
6. Dharmapuri
7. Hissar
8. Hissar (DD News)
9. Kamal
10. Kurseong (DD News)
11. Radhanpur
12. Sagar
13. Saharsa
14. Tirunelveli
15. Vadodara
16. Vadodara (DD News)
17. Srinagar (DD News—upgradation)
18. Srinagar (Kashir channel—upgradation)

II. LOW POWER TRANSMITTERS (LPTs.)

19. Ambassa
20. Satrasal

21. Bahalda
 22. Khajuwala
 23. Kaithal
 24. Fatehabad
 25. Punganur
 26. Kolhapur (Andhra Pradesh)
 27. Mudhol
 28. Sindhur
- III. VERY LOW POWER TRANSMITTERS (VLPTs)
29. Devbhog.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has been making efforts to extend the coverage of programmes of Doordarshan and Akashwani in the areas including the backward and rural areas not covered so far or not fully covered. But Akashwani and Doordarshan have not been able to properly cover the backward and rural areas so far. Akashwani has commissioned 28 transmitters while Doordarshan has set up 144 transmitters so far during the tenth Five-Year Plan. What I am to ask is that what action Government proposes to take for setting up of high power transmitters so that every village as well as backward and hilly areas of the country could be covered under the Akashwani and Doordarshan network in a proper way?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You have to know the entire information of the Ministry.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I appreciate the concern of the senior Member.

MR. SPEAKER: And a colourful Member!

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, in the 10th Plan, our target for Doordarshan Transmitters is 188. We have either commissioned or commissioning as many as 173. In All India Radio, our Plan target is 205, out of which we have either commissioned or commissioning as many as 180. So, the hon. Member can see that we have made more than considerable progress during the 10th Five year Plan.

12.00 hrs.

Besides, at the risk of reiterating the points I made earlier, we have put in place Doordarshan DTH platform, which can cover every inch of the area in this vast country, except Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Acquisition of Aircraft

*664. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:
SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal of acquisition of aircraft for Indian Airlines has been approved by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the agreement has been signed with any supplier in this regard;

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

(e) the types of aircraft proposed to be acquired by the Indian Airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The proposal involves acquisition of 43 aircraft by Indian Airlines Limited, comprising of 19 A-319, 4 A-320 and 20 A-321 aircraft.

Hague Convention for Inter-Country Adoption

*665. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hague convention was signed for the protection of children and cooperation for inter-country adoption;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to implement the convention to safeguard the country's children placed in inter-country adoption; and

(c) the extent to which India will benefit through much closer cooperation with the central authorities of the other countries?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Convention was signed by India. The procedural streamlining as laid down under the Hague Convention with respect to adoption through recognised placement agencies, enlisted foreign agencies and foreign Government bodies/Departments was already in place. However, the additional requirements like designating a central authority to discharge the duties imposed by the Convention was fulfilled by designating Central Adoption Resource Authority for this purpose. Circulars/guidelines have also been issued from time to time to carry forward the spirit of the convention and have the requisite safeguards in place.

(c) The main benefits that will arise are as under:

(i) An adoption certified by the competent authority of this country as having been made in accordance with the Convention shall be recognised by operation of law in the other contracting States.

(ii) The recognition of an adoption in the receiving country will include recognition of the legal parent-child relationship between the child and

his or her adoptive parents; and parental responsibility of the adoptive parents for the child.

- (iii) There would be (a) greater transparency and (b) reliability of reports received from foreign government bodies and agencies because of procedural communality.

Agreement with US under Open Sky Policy

*666. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:
SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently concluded an agreement with United States under the 'Open Sky' policy;

(b) if so, the salient features of the agreement;

(c) the extent to which India is likely to be benefited by such agreement;

(d) whether the Government is considering bilateral aviation agreement with USA particularly with regard to cross certification for civilian aircraft; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A revised Air Services Agreement between India and USA has been signed on 14th April, 2005 replacing the earlier Agreement, which was signed in 1956. The earlier Agreement between India and USA already permitted either side to designate any number of airlines to operate air services between the two countries. While retaining this provision in the new Agreement, the revised Agreement also grants unlimited access to the designated airlines to any points of call in the territory of the other country as against four airports under the earlier Agreement. Besides, the revised Agreement also removes all restrictions on exercise of 5th freedom traffic rights, code share rights and provides for greater operational flexibility. Removal of restrictions on points of call, code share rights and 5th freedom rights would provide greater commercial opportunities to Indian carriers and would enable them to wean away traffic on India-USA route from third country carriers.

(c) India-USA route is one of the major markets for the Indian carriers. The revised agreement has removed

all constraints for operations on India-USA route. Indian carriers will be benefited from the various flexibilities provided in this agreement, particularly from the unlimited intermediate and beyond traffic rights which can now be exercised by them from/to any intermediate/beyond point. Indian carriers can also operate to any point in USA. Under this agreement, benefits are available to both sides on reciprocal basis.

(d) and (e) A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in civil aviation has been proposed by the USA Government, which provides for USA assistance in the following fields:—

- Providing technical and managerial expertise in developing, improving and operation of civil aviation infrastructure, standards, procedures, policies, training and equipment.
- Providing training for Civil aviation personnel.
- Inspection and calibration of our civil aviation equipment and air navigation facility.
- Providing resources, logistical supports and equipment for air navigation facilities.
- Assistance in airport certification in India.
- Assistance in the field of Helicopter Operational Safety initiative.

The proposed MOA is presently being examined in consultation with the concerned Ministries of Government of India.

Protection to Heritage Buildings

*667. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that a number of heritage buildings have lost their significance due to rapid development of various cities in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the important heritage buildings identified in various States by the Union Government; and

(c) the steps taken/to be taken by the Union Government to protect these heritage buildings?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI

S. JAIPAL REDDY: (a) to (c) No, Sir. None of the centrally protected monuments have lost their significance due to rapid development of various cities in the country. The Archaeological Survey of India protects 3659 monuments, a State-wise breakup of which is given in the enclosed Statement.

In order to contain unauthorized constructions and encroachments around centrally protected monuments, the Central Government, *vide* Notification No. SO 1764 dated 16th June, 1992, has declared an area upto 100 mts from the protected limits as the "prohibited area" and a further 200 mts. as the "regulated area". No new construction or mining activity can be taken up within the prohibited area. Construction activity in the regulated area can be taken up only with due approval of the Competent Authority.

In order to remove the encroachments in and around the centrally protected monuments, the Archaeological Survey of India takes regular steps under the provisions of Section 19(1) and 19(2) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rule 38(1) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 1959. Legal action is also initiated against encroachers by filing cases in the courts of law. Regular watch and ward, police and private security personnel are deployed in the monuments for their protection. Steps have also been taken to provide fencing around the centrally protected monuments.

Statement

*List of Centrally Protected Monuments (State-wise)
under Archaeological Survey of India*

Sl.No.	States/U.T.	No. of Centrally Protected Monuments in each State/U.T.
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	136
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	5
3.	Assam	50
4.	Bihar	65
5.	Chhattisgarh	47

1	2	3
6.	Daman and Diu	12
7.	Delhi	172
8.	Goa	21
9.	Gujarat	202
10.	Haryana	90
11.	Himachal Pradesh	40
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	69
13.	Jharkhand	12
14.	Karnataka	507
15.	Kerala	26
16.	Madhya Pradesh	287
17.	Maharashtra	286
18.	Manipur	01
19.	Meghalaya	08
20.	Nagaland	04
21.	Orissa	79
22.	Pondicherry	07
23.	Punjab	31
24.	Rajasthan	161
25.	Sikkim	03
26.	Tamil Nadu	416
27.	Tripura	05
28.	Uttar Pradesh	742
29.	Uttaranchal	44
30.	West Bengal	131
Total		3659

Oil Import Bill

*668. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

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

(a) whether the Government's oil import bill during the year 2004-05 has increased by 32 per cent;

(b) if so, the factors responsible for such a steep hike in oil import bill;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to check such hike in oil import bills;

(d) whether the Government has chalked out any scheme to meet the oil requirements of the country without resorting to excessive imports and subsequent price rise of petroleum products; and

(e) if so, the details therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The import bill for the year 2003-04 and 2004-05 is given in the enclosed statement. While imports for the year 2004-05, have registered a growth of 6.4% in terms of quantity and 41.5% in terms of value, exports have also grown 20.5% in terms of quantity and 69.1% in terms of value as compared to the year 2003-04. Net imports (crude oil and petroleum products) for the year 2004-05 have registered a growth of 4.0% in terms of quantity and 35.5% in terms of value as compared to 2003-04. The main factor responsible for the hike in the import bill is the spike in crude oil price (Indian basket) which increased over the year by 40.27% from an average of US\$ 27.96 during 2003-04 to US\$ 39.22 in 2004-05. The peak price recorded in 2004-05 was US\$ 51.64 per barrel on 17.3.2005 (Indian basket).

(c) to (e) With around 70% import dependency, which is likely to rise to 85% over the next 20 years, Indian crude oil prices will necessarily be heavily influenced by international prices. Taking this into account, Government have taken the following steps for creating an Energy secured environment:—

- (i) Implement Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/ Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes to augment recovery from existing major fields. In this regard, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) have taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs. 10,000 crore.
- (ii) Increase exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Under the four rounds of NELP, Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) have been signed for 90 blocks. Bids for 20 exploratory blocks have now been invited under NELP-V. The response from the international oil community appears to be more encouraging than ever before.
- (iii) Speed up exploration efforts by ONGC and OIL in the blocks allocated to them on a nomination basis, on their own or in collaboration with other partners.
- (iv) Explore new areas, especially in deep water and difficult frontier areas, as also explore the deeper layers of already producing fields.
- (v) Develop newly discovered fields faster and in producing areas; and step up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, simulation operations, drilling of wells, etc.
- (vi) Acquire producing and prospective acreages abroad. ONGC-Videsh Limited (OVL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), GAIL (India) Ltd. and Oil India Ltd. (IOL) have already acquired Participating Interests in over a dozen countries and the oil sector is exploring the possibilities in as many as 47 countries. To this end, oil diplomacy is being harnessed to commercial endeavour.
- (vii) Make efforts to import natural gas in the form of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as well as through trans-national pipelines from gas-rich regions such as West Asia (including Iran); Central Asia, and South-East Asia, specifically Myanmar.
- (viii) Strategic crude oil storage of 5 million metric tonnes (MMT) capacity as an emergency response mechanism against short-term oil supply disruptions.

Statement*The quantity and value of crude and petroleum product imported during 2003-04 and 2004-05*

	2003-04		2004-05*	
	Quantity (TMT)	Value (Rs. Crore)	Quantity (TMT)	Value (Rs. Crore)
Crude	90,434	83,528	95,861	1,17,032
Product import	8,001	9,723	8,872	14,950
Total imports	98,435	93,251	1,04,733	1,31,982
Product export	14,620	16,781	17,624	28,386
Net imports	83,815	76,470	87,209	1,03,596

*Provisional

*[Translation]***India-Bangladesh-Myanmar Gas Pipeline**

*669. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI NITISH KUMAR:

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

(a) whether talks were held with Bangladesh in the recent past to bring gas pipeline from Myanmar to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any objection has been raised from some quarters in this regard; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) In January 2005, a delegation led by the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Panchayati Raj visited Myanmar to participate in a trilateral meeting of Oil Ministers of Myanmar, Bangladesh and India to discuss cooperation in hydrocarbon sector with Myanmar and import of natural gas through an onland pipeline via Bangladesh. A Joint Press statement was issued by the three Ministers on 13.1.2005, a copy of which is given in the enclosed Statement-I. Simultaneously, a Joint Press Statement was also issued by the Ministers of Bangladesh and India, a

copy of which is given in the enclosed Statement-II. The three Ministers agreed to constitute a Techno-Commercial Working Committee to prepare an MoU for cooperation for implementation of Myanmar-Bangladesh-India Pipeline Project, to be signed by the three Governments. The draft MoU was prepared at the meeting of the Techno-Commercial Working Group in Yangon on 24-25 February, 2005. The draft MoU is under examination of the Governments of the three countries.

Statement I*Joint Press Statement*

1. Substantial natural gas reserves have been found in off-shore and on-shore structures, including the North Eastern blocks of the Bay of Bengal off the coast of Myanmar. In addition, sizeable quantities of natural gas reserves have been found in on-shore structures in the North Eastern regions of Bangladesh and India as also on-shore in Myanmar. The speedy implementation of development programmes by all the Governments of the region and accelerating economic growth is boosting a huge market for natural gas in the region requiring the regional development of energy sources and infrastructure for the delivery of the gas to consuming centres. In concert with parallel developments in other segments of the power and energy sector, a new era of cooperation is opening up for the countries of the region.

2. To harness this win-win opportunity, the Honorable Minister for Energy of Myanmar, H.E. Bring. Gen. Lun

Thi took the initiative to convene a Tripartite Ministerial Meeting between himself, the State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. A.K.M. Mosharraf Hossain, and the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Panchayati Raj of the Republic of India, H.E. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, in Yangon, on 12-13 January, 2005.

3. The following was agreed to by the three Governments:—

- (i) The Government of Myanmar agrees to export natural gas to India by pipeline through the territory of Bangladesh and India to be operated by an international consortium as may be agreed upon by the parties concerned, based upon technical and commercial feasibility. The Governments of Bangladesh and India reserve the right to access the pipeline as and when required, including injecting and siphoning off their own natural gas; details in this regard will be worked out on the basis of commercial agreements. The route of the pipeline may be determined by mutual agreement of the three Governments with a view to ensuring adequate access, maximum security and optimal economic utilization.
- (ii) The Governments of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, represented by their respective Ministers and delegations, recognizing the unique potential for developing energy resources and related infrastructure needed to access and deliver energy to various parts of the region, agree to set up an appropriate mechanism for cooperation between and among themselves to pursue their common goal of development for all the people of the region.
- (iii) The Governments of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar agree to establish a Techno-Commercial Working Committee comprising duly designated representatives of the three Governments. The Working Committee shall:—
 - (a) identify areas of cooperation, collaboration and investment to develop natural gas resources, infrastructure and marketing in the region; and
 - (b) deliberate and advise the three Governments on policy issues as set out in Para 3(i) above such as pipeline routing, access-related issues as well as technical and commercial matters.

- (iv) The first meeting of the Committee will be held in Yangon within a month with a view to preparing a draft Memorandum of Understanding which will be concluded and signed at Dhaka at the earliest mutual convenience of the three Governments.

4. The Governments of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar agree to pursue both trilateral and bilateral cooperation to promote, develop and implement projects and forums to augment the utilization and development of energy resources and related infrastructure in the region.

5. The Governments of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar agree to exchange relevant information to jointly promote energy surveys; develop upstream, downstream and other energy-related projects; and jointly recommend measures for the development and expansion of access to energy for the benefit of people of the region.

6. The Governments of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar agree to continue keeping contact with each other at the Ministerial level and to meet both trilaterally and bilaterally at regular intervals in order to update each other on the measures being taken relating to the development of activities in their respective countries in regard to natural gas and, more generally, the power and energy sector.

7. With respect to issues of bilateral cooperation which impinge on their trilateral cooperation, such as hydroelectricity and other diversified sources of energy supply, trade and transit, the Ministers of the three countries agree that such bilateral issues will continue to be pursued bilaterally. In this context, they agreed to recommend to their respective governments the importance of evaluating issues relevant to bringing their nations closer to each other by establishing policy frameworks which will augment practical measures for further economic cooperation and collaboration among themselves. The Ministers further noted that energy cooperation is being promoted within the framework of initiatives in BIMSTEC and SAARC and agreed that these initiatives need to be pursued vigorously.

8. The Ministers of Bangladesh and India place on record their high appreciation of the leadership as well as hospitality and cooperation extended by H.E. Brig. Gen. Lun Thi, Minister for Energy of the Government of the Union of Myanmar, in convening this historic Tripartite Ministerial Meeting in Yangon.

Statement II

Joint Press Statement between the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas of the Republic of India to promote bilateral Energy Cooperation (January 13, 2005)

The State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. A.K.M. Mosharraf Hossain and the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Panchayati Raj of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar, met in Yangon, Myanmar, on 12-13 January, 2005 on the occasion of the Tripartite Conference called in Yangon by the Government of the Union of Myanmar to discuss cooperation in developing regional energy resources and infrastructure.

2. On the sidelines of the Tripartite Conference, the Bangladesh Minister raised with the Indian Minister the following issues relating to bilateral cooperation between the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Republic of India:—

- (i) Transmission of hydro-electricity from Nepal and Bhutan to Bangladesh through Indian territory;
- (ii) Corridor for supply of commodities between Nepal and Bhutan and Bangladesh through Indian territory; and
- (iii) To take necessary measures to reduce trade imbalance between the two countries.

3. In respect of the above issues, the Indian Minister stated as follows:—

- (i) With regard to Bangladesh's request for the provision of electricity facilities from Nepal and Bhutan to Bangladesh, the Indian Minister agreed that the Government of India would examine positively any fresh proposals received from Bangladesh in regard to examining required facilities.
- (ii) In regard to Bangladesh's request for transit facilities to Bhutan and Nepal through India between Bangladesh on one side and Bhutan and Nepal on the other, the Indian Minister conveyed that the Government of India supported this request. He pointed out that some facilities had already been provided at Phulbari which at present were not being fully utilized. He

conveyed that the Government of India would favorably examine any further requests that might arise to augment existing facilities.

- (iii) With regard to Bangladesh's request for rectifying the imbalance of trade, the Indian Minister agreed with the need to expand bilateral trade between the two countries in order to bridge the trade gap that exists at present. Projects such as proposed at the Trilateral Conference will contribute to this objective.

4. The Indian Minister accepted the kind invitation of the Bangladesh Minister to visit Bangladesh in the near future.

Renewal of Licences

*670. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that some cases of irregularities reported in adopting different criteria for renewal of licences of general and reserved categories under the revised catering policy as appeared in the Dainik Jagran dated April 17, 2005;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the number of complaints in this regard received so far; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to check irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Ministry is aware of the news item dated 17.4.2005 appearing in the Dainik Jagran, -Delhi edition. There are no irregularities in the new Catering Policy. However, separate norms have been framed with regard to renewal of licences of small catering units of general and reserved categories under the new Catering Policy dated 16.3.2005.

(b) Renewal of small catering unit licences of reserved categories at 'A', 'B' and 'C' category stations will be done after every 3 years on satisfactory performance by the licensee and there would be no renewal for small catering unit licences of general category. Renewal of small catering unit licences of general and reserved

categories at 'D', 'E' and 'F' category stations will be done after every 5 years on satisfactory performance by the licensee.

(c) Some representations have been received including those from Members of Parliament regarding this aspect of new Catering Policy.

(d) Does not arise.

Anti-Adulteration Cell

*671. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

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

(a) whether the Anti-Adulteration Cell working in the Ministry has been abolished;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether in its place the Government has set up or proposes to set up an alternative body to check adulteration in petroleum products;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Anti-Adulteration Cell (AAC), was set up in March 2001 under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MOP&NG). It was found to be ineffective in its functioning on account of the possible involvement of some of its officers who are under investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for undesirable activities. Therefore, a one-man committee under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas was set up in April, 2004 to conduct an extensive review of the working of the AAC. The report showed that the AAC, with its existing structure and functions, could not play a meaningful role in the Ministry's efforts to curb the menace of adulteration. Accordingly, the Cell was wound up in July 2004.

(c) to (e) There is no proposal to set up an alternative body to check adulteration in petroleum products, as the following mechanisms already exist in this regard:—

(1) Under the Control Orders issued by the Government to prevent fuel adulteration, under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, State Governments are empowered to take action against those indulging in adulteration. Government have taken up this matter with all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to step up inspections/surprise checks to ensure that adulteration related activities are minimized and to exercise vigil/conduct inspections at various private firms, factories, processing units, etc., under their jurisdictions so as to identify the perpetrators of adulteration and take stringent action against them within the available legal framework.

(2) The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) undertake regular and surprise inspections of Retail Outlets and also take action under Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) and Dealership Agreements against those indulging in adulteration and malpractices. MDG provide for penalty of termination of dealership in cases of adulteration being established.

In addition to those measures, Government/OMCs have taken the following major steps to contain adulteration:

- (i) as advised by the Government, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have created a separate wing to report to a Director other than Director (Marketing), which will oversee and monitor all activities and operations to curb adulteration and specify norms and guidelines in this regard.
- (ii) Keeping in view the misuse/diversion of SKO for adulteration, the import of SKO by private parties has been canalized through OMCs.
- (iii) OMCs have introduced new tamper proof tank-truck locking systems to prevent en-route adulteration by transporters.
- (iv) IT solutions like monitoring movement of tank trucks through Global Positioning System (GPS) and monitoring level of fuel tanks in Retail Outlets through retail automation are being introduced.
- (v) Branding of Retail Outlets and third party certification of Retail Outlets have been initiated by the OMCs.
- (vi) A pilot project covering 10% of blocks in the country has been recently approved by the Government for strengthening the distribution network of PDS kerosene with a view to working towards ensuring that this product is made

available to the targeted consumers and is not diverted for adulteration. The Scheme proposes setting up wholesale storage facilities at block level, with storage tanks and calibrated dispensing units; creation of 5-10 sub-wholesale points within the block to facilitate deliveries to retail outlets; and involving Panchayati Raj Institutions in monitoring the implementation of the scheme. The details are being worked out.

Measures to check adulteration are kept under continuous review of the Government.

[*English*]

Excavation by ASI

*672. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has undertaken excavations during the last three years;

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

(c) the details of new discoveries of historic significance made during the excavations by the different circles?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has undertaken excavations during the last three years. The state-wise excavations and discoveries of historic significance made during the last three years by various Circles and Branches are placed in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Excavations Carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India during last three years (2002-03, 2003-2004 and 2004-05) showing New Discoveries

Sl.No.	Name of site	District	Year(s) of Excavation	Nature of discoveries made
1	2	3	4	5
ANDHRA PRADESH				
1.	Kapavaram Korukonda Mandal	East Godavari	2002-2003	Remains of a <i>stupa</i> , large number of votive <i>stupas</i> , monastic cells, an <i>apsidal chaitya</i> of the early centuries of the Christian era. Two rouletted bowls bear Brahmi inscriptions.
2.	Swayambhu Temple Complex, Warangal Fort	Warangal	2002-2003 2003-2004	Plan of the Swayambhu Temple, remains of stone <i>prakara</i> wall, pillared wall. The associated finds include a large number of architectural members, inscribed Chinese porcelain.
ASSAM				
3.	Maidam No. 2	Sivasagar	2002-2003	Remains of burials of the Ahom Kings datable of 18th century A.D. were found as a Massive brick vault with a domical roof under a hemispherical structure.
4.	Talatalghar (Karenghar complex)	Sivasagar	2002-2003	Remains of brick structures datable to 18th century A.D.

1	2	3	4	5
BIHAR				
5.	Kesariya	East Champanan	2002-2003 2003-2004	Remains of a brick built terraced circular <i>stupa</i> , and Buddha images in various postures in the niches.
6.	Sujatagarh, Bakraur	Gaya	2002-2003 2003-2004	Remains of a brick built circular <i>stupa</i> .
DELHI				
7.	Tughlaqabad Fort	South NCT, Delhi	2002-2003 2003-2004	Remains of habitational remains datable to the Tughlaq period.
GOA				
8.	Chandor	Goa	2002-2003 2003-2004	Plan of a brick temple with an enclosure wall. Squarish platforms and solid plinth datable to 11th century A.D.
9.	St. Augustine Complex	North Goa	2003-2004	Remains of a chapter chapel with tombstones and burial chambers of the friars (brothers) of Augustinian order.
GUJARAT				
10.	Dholavira	Kachchh	2002-2003 2003-2004 2004-2005	Evidences of Harappan civilization, (circa 3rd-2nd millennium B.C.) water management and storage system reflected by reservoirs, both rock cut and of stone masonry. Excavations in burial ground, have revealed pottery, beads of semi precious stone and gold as burial goods without skeletal remains.
11.	Hathab	Bhavnagar	2020-2003	Remains of an early historic mud fortified city. Seals, sealings, coins, etc. Roman amphorae indicating maritime activities.
12.	Juni Kuran	Kutchchh	2003-2004 2004-2005	Habitational remains of a Harappan settlement. Two divisions of fortification, typical Harappan period pottery and antiquities.
HARYANA				
13.	Adi Badri	Yamunanagar	2002-2003 2003-2004	Remains of <i>stupa</i> , monastic complexes, stone structures datable from late Kushana period to medieval times.
14.	Bhirrana	Fatehabad	2003-2004 2004-2005	Habitational remains of early and mature Harappan periods. Harappan seals, copper antiquities, beads, bangles, etc.
15.	Hansi	Hissar	2003-2004 2004-2005	Habitational remains starting from the Kushana period to the British occupation. Two coin hoards of Rajput period, were also found.
16.	Harsha-ka-Tila, Thaneswar	Kurukshetra	2002-2003 2003-2004	Cultural remains from the Kushana to late Mughal period and massive house complexes.

1	2	3	4	5
17.	Sandhuali	Kurukshetra	2002-2003	A portion of a brick built tank in the form of four steps belonging to the late Gupta period.
JAMMU AND KASHMIR				
18.	Ancient site Babour (Thalora) Manwal	Udhampur	2003-2004	Structural remains of Gupta and post-Gupta periods. The structural remains of a post-Gupta period temple also found.
19.	Sudh Mahadev	Udhampur	2002-2003	Structural remains datable to the Gupta period.
JHARKHAND				
20.	Sarikel, Khunti	Ranchi	2003-2004	Habitational remains datable to the early centuries of the Christian era
KARNATAKA				
21.	Fort-at-Chitradurga	Chitradurga	2002-2003 2003-2004	Structural remains cooper coins, iron objects, terracotta objects, etc., all datable to 16th-17th centuries A.D.
22.	Hampi	Bellary	2002-2003 2003-2004	The cobbled pathway of Vitthala bazaar; an ornate basement of a pillared <i>mandapa</i> in the Vitthala temple complex; a criss-crossed tank all datable to 14th-15th centuries A.D.
23.	Pattadakal	Bagalkot	2003-2004 2004-2005	Remains of a temple datable to Chalukyan times; habitational remains of Maharathis and Satavahanas of the early centuries of the Christian era.
KERALA				
24.	Kodakkalluparambu, Cheramanagad	Thrissur	2002-2003	Remains of two megalithic urns covered by dressed semi hemispherical laterite hood-stone.
MADHYA PRADESH				
25.	Chichali	Khargaon	2002-2003	Habitational remains of Ahar, Malwa, Jorwe Wares and early Historic periods.
26.	Sanchi	Raisen	2002-2003	Structural remains datable to post-Gupta period; copper coins, beads, stone fragments with inscriptions.
27.	Bija Mandal, Khajuraho	Chhatarpur	2002-2003	Remains of a temple datable to 10th-11th century A.D.
28.	Bhimbetka	Raisen	2002-2003 2003-2004 2004-2005	Remains of the lower Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods. Artifacts like microlithic blades, flakes, core, and raw materials.
29.	Khulharia	Raisen	2002-2003	Structural remains, sculptural fragments, copper coins beads, terracotta glass objects, glass etc., datable to medieval period.
30.	Udayagiri	Vidisha	2002-2003	Remains of stone structures near the Varaha sculptural panel. Antiquities like stone sculptures, terracotta beads, etc.

1	2	3	4	5
MAHARASHTRA				
31.	Daulatabad Fort	Aurangabad	2003-2004 2004-2005	House complexes, stone paved & lime floor, drains of medieval period, gold coins of Vijayanagara dynasty, copper coins of Khiljis, Mughals and Nizams of Ahmednagar; stone and marble sculptural panels.
32.	Ellora	Aurangabad	2002-2003	Evidence of cave excavation, various methodologies adopted in removing the rock mass and its disposal, habitation remains, etc. datable to the 8th-11th centuries A.D.
ORISSA				
33.	Barabati Fort	Cuttack	2003-2004	Remains of medieval habitation datable to c. 13th to 18th century A.D.
34.	Ancient site Haripurgarh	Mayurbhanj	2002-2003	Brick structures of 16th Century A.D.
35.	Buddhist site, Ratnagiri	Jaipur	2003-2004	Brick <i>stupas</i> built on square platform, different types of votive <i>stupas</i> and sculptural remains
36.	Udayagiri-2	Jaipur	2003-2004	Buddhist monastic complex and <i>stupas</i> datable to c. 13th to 18th century A.D.
RAJASTHAN				
37.	Baror	Rajasthan	2003-04 2004-05	Structural remains of early and mature Harappan periods. Fortification wall made of mud bricks, early and mature Harappan antiquities.
38.	Chak 86 and Tarkhanewala Dera	Rajasthan	2003-2004	Painted Grey Ware and Harappan settlement remains.
TAMIL NADU				
39.	Adichhanallur	Tuticorin	2002-2003 2003-2004 2004-2005	Remains of urn burials and habitation along with Iron objects like dagger, knife, spearhead, sword, and graffiti marks on pottery
40.	Gingee	Villupuram	2002-2003	Remains of habitational structures, celadon and glazed ware datable to late medieval period.
41.	Sadras	Tuticorin	2002-2003	Remains of habitational structures, celadon, porcelain and glazed wares and antiquities datable to Dutch period.
42.	Mahabalipuram	Kanchipuram	2004-2005	Two structural temples to the south of Shore Temple datable to Pallava period.
TRIPURA				
43.	Mound at Boxanagar	West Tripura	2002-2003 2003-2004	Remains of a brick <i>stupa</i> , <i>chaityagriha</i> and monastic complex datable to c. 6th-8th centuries A.D.
UTTARANCHAL				
44.	Govisana, Kashipur	Udham Singh Nagar	2002-2003	Habitation remains starting from the Kushana period to the medieval times, tageways, coins, etc., and a brick temple datable to 6th-7th c. A.D.

1	2	3	4	5
UTTAR PRADESH				
45.	Achichhatra	Bareilly	2003-2004	One of the entrances to the ancient city was exposed along with residential complexes.
46.	Fatehpur Sikri	Agra	2004-2005	A <i>hammam</i> complex was brought to light.
47.	Gaushala, Taj Mahal	Agra	2002-2003	Remains associated with the Taj Mahal.
48.	Kalinjer Fort	Banda	2003-2004	Remains of a staircase of a lower level below the present Neelkanth temple complex, rock cut sculptures of medieval period.
49.	Residency, Lucknow	Lucknow	2002-2003 2003-2004	Complete house complexes along with sewer systems, well, etc., of the British period.
50.	Musabagh	Lucknow	2002-2003 2003-2004	Partial remains of a palace complex built by Saadat Ali
51.	Sravasti	Sravasti	2002-2003	Remains of panchayatana temples, citadel wall, residential complexes.
WEST BENGAL				
52.	Mound near Clive's House at Dum Dum	24 North Parganas	2002-2003	Remains of habitation starting from early centuries of Christian era to 15th-16th century A.D. antiquities like coins, seals & sealings, terracotta, etc.
53.	Mound adjacent to Baisgazi wall known as Palace area of ancient Gaur	Maldah	2002-2003 2003-2004 2004-2005	Remains and structures belonging to Sultanate period (15th century A.D.) to the Mughal period (17th century A.D.)
LAKSHADWEEP (U.T.)				
54.	Off Bangaram Island,	Lakshadweep	2002-2003 2003-2004	Shipwreck of Princes' Royal datable to 1792 A.D.

Oil Sector Reforms

*673. SHRI K.J.S.P. REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to implement oil sector reforms in India to take the lead in forging an Asian Oil market;

(b) if so, whether the Government has worked out any plan in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The scope for improving Asian markets for petroleum and petroleum products was discussed during the first Round Table of Asian Ministers on regional cooperation in the oil & gas economy held in New Delhi on 6th January, 2005 and attended by Ministers from India, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait, besides representation from China and Korea. The issue requires careful study and detailed consideration with a view to identifying broad policy parameters that might require further inter-Governmental deliberation. The inaugural address of the

Chairman and the statement by the Chairman setting out the draft conclusions of the conference, which, *inter alia*, deal with the question of a well-prepared Asian oil and petroleum products market, are enclosed as Statement I and II respectively.

Statement I

The Inaugural Address of Chairman of Round Table Conference

Your Excellency, the co-host of this conclave, the distinguished Head of Delegation of the Emirate of Kuwait,

Your Excellencies, Ministers and Heads of Delegation from the principal Asian suppliers and consumers of petroleum,

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors to New Delhi of these countries,

Distinguished representatives of the Governments of participating countries,

Distinguished representatives of National Oil Companies and the Asian Oil Industry,

Distinguished delegates of the principal international organizations here present, our co-sponsor, the Secretary-General of the International Energy Forum, the distinguished representative of the International Energy Agency, and the distinguished Acting Secretary-General of OPEC—the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries,

My fellow-Minister, the distinguished Minister of State for External Affairs of India, Shri E. Ahamed, ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Asians,

We meet in the shadow of the terrible Tsunami tragedy that has struck our shared continent of Asia. Might I request you to please stand and observe a minute's silence in memory of the 125,000 or more who have been snatched so cruelly from our midst? Thank you.

This is a moment that might yet be recorded as "historic" in the annals of regional cooperation in Asia. For this is the first gathering together of the principal Asian ministers charged with responsibility for the most crucial sector of the economy—petroleum and natural gas. Whether our meeting today does get recorded as "historic"

does, of course, depend on the outcome of our deliberations and of our resolves to persist on the path of such dialogue. I have little doubt, however, that it will—in the very act of journeying to our capital you have registered your commitment to our shared destiny. Through almost all of the advancement of human civilization, it is Asia that has been in the vanguard. For the last few centuries, we fell to the sway of others. Now, once again, are we the captains of our ship and the masters of our fate. I thank you most warmly and sincerely, on behalf of our Government and all our one billion people, for having done us the unforgettable honour of being present here at the creation. Thank you, indeed.

Excellencies, in the sector of our concern, hydrocarbons, the dawn of the 21st century heralds an unprecedented, dare I say revolutionary change in international oil and gas relations. In the last quarter of the last century, Asian oil producers came into their own when OPEC secured fair and just remuneration for the most vital element of growth and prosperity—oil. Now has come Asia's turn to consume that oil—and thus fuel the resurgence of Asia as the harbinger of the further advancement of human civilization. The total consumption of the Asian countries here present almost equals the total production of the Asian countries here present. No longer are we labouring so that others might profit. We have already emerged as the world's principal source of supply; we are emerging as the world's principal destination for the consumption of that supply. Already, some two thirds of the fossil fuel that principal producers around this table extract from the bosom of Mother Nature is bought by the principal consumers represented at this very table. That trend will only accelerate as we traverse the 21st century—the Asian Century. We are gathered here to rise to that challenge and to avail of that opportunity.

The Challenge, Your Excellencies, lies in eschewing the errors of the past. The opportunity, Your Excellencies, lies in fashioning a more fair, more just and more remunerative oil order for all of us in Asia—in which the Asian producer is ensured a stable, secure and sustainable return for a most precious but depleting natural resource, and the Asian consumer is assured a stable, secure and sustainable regime within which to promote progress and prosperity for that deprived one-half of humankind that inhabits our shared continent of Asia. We commence here a dialogue to meet that challenge and rise to that opportunity.

How do we do so?

First let me deal with stability. Last year has seen the worst roller-coaster ride in oil prices for the better part of a generation. OPEC has behaved most responsibly through this period of turmoil and turbulence. Instead of pursuing short-term advantage, OPEC, led by its Asian members, has persistently striven for moderating volatility and dampening speculation. For this, OPEC and its membership have earned the world's gratitude. Moreover, OPEC's production plans give the world the reassurance that global oil supply will keep pace with booming global demand, and that over the next twenty years at least there will be no market disequilibrium to warrant any wild fluctuation in prices. If, nevertheless, volatility rather than stability has marked international prices in the last twelve months that is largely because of speculation and apprehensions—that have been mostly belied—of the fallout on oil production of exogenous political developments. The fact is that however uncertain developments in the world political order have been, the underlying global oil economy has held a steady course.

For us in Asia to convert that underlying stability in production (and the prognosis for production) into stability in oil markets, it is essential that we develop a sophisticated Asian market for petroleum and petroleum products. That is how the West converted their abundance of natural resources into abundance to production and consumption.

Unfortunately, we in Asia continue to behave as if we were still a residual consumer of Asian oil production when, in fact, we are the principal consumer.

Your Excellencies, for Asia to be the residual consumer made some economic sense when there was large and growing production on both sides of the Atlantic, on-land in the Americas and off-shore in Europe. It was in that era that Western Texas Intermediate (WTI) and Brent emerged as markers. But as the world wheels into the 21st century, WTI output is down by three-quarter compared to two decades ago and Brent output is down by two-third compared to just a decade ago—and both are set decline even further, and to decline quite precipitately at that. Meanwhile, it is Asia, from Eastern Siberia through the Caspian, Central Asia and China, to South-East Asia and to some extent even South Asia, and, of course, above all, Iran and West Asia, that is booming in both the output and throughput of oil. Yet, Asia has little in terms of a global market. And even less in terms of a well-prepared oil and oil products market.

With a view to bringing about greater stability in Asian trade in petroleum and petroleum products, can we think in term of an Asian market—

- where long-term contracts become longer,
- where price discovery through the market is more transparent,
- where such transparency facilitates greater stability in formulate for pricing in long-term contracts,
- where spot purchases occupy a progressively larger share of market transactions,
- where petroleum exchanges are established and used,
- where derivatives are integrated into market practice,
- where, in short, an Asian market emerges.

which reflects Asian realities and the real role in the global oil economy of Asian production, Asian consumption and Asian trade?

To pose the problem, Your Excellencies, is easier than to find the answers. But I do submit, Your Excellencies, that through sustained dialogue among ourselves, buttressed by dialogue among our experts and market operators, we might be able to find an Asian solution to the imperatives of Asian stability.

As for the second theme of our meeting—security—the answer there too lies in promoting mutual interdependence. Security has two aspects. One is security against unexpected disruption of supplies. As a joint emergency response mechanism, perhaps we should consider jointly building storages which would enable consumers to enjoy an uninterrupted flow of supplies and producers to enjoy an uninterrupted flow of oil revenue till normalcy is resorted.

The second aspect of security relates to assurance of markets for producers and assurance of supplies for consumers. This calls for mutual interdependence through mutual investments in each other's countries by producer and consumer nations of the Asian oil community. Hitherto, we have looked West for much of the investment in Asian petroleum exploration and production, Asian petroleum refining, and Asian petroleum marketing—and in saying so I include gas as well. Now, increasingly,

Asia itself is merging as a significant source of investment in Asia. Japan is, of course, a long-established Asian investor in other Asian countries. China in the last decade, as also Malaysia, have become key players in E&P in Asia and, indeed, the world over. So has India. We are already in E&P, refining and marketing projects in more than ten countries and much of our overseas investment is in Asia. Reciprocally, in refining, we in India have been the beneficiary of investments by Iran in the Chennai Petroleum Corporation and of Qatar of LNG. These are but illustrative examples. A future beckons in which Asian countries can become major participants in the massive investments which need to be made in the Asian countries represented at this table, running to an estimated 1580 billion dollars over the next 25 years in upstream and downstream oil and gas development in all our countries put together. Investment on this humungous scale, to the extent possible mutual and reciprocal intra-Asia investment, would hugely enhance security of production and consumption for all of us around this table, for all our fellow-Asians and, indeed, for all of humankind the world over. The oil and gas sector in India welcomes the world with open arms, and reserves a particular welcome for Asian investors. Equally, we stand ready to do our share for the promotion of the global oil economy in general and the Asian oil economy in particular. We believe we should continue and intensify this dialogue in the interests of facilitating mutual investments to ensure mutual security.

The third great theme of our meetings today is sustainability. It has taken millions of years for Nature to create and store what we have substantially exhausted in a mere one hundred years or so. What remains we can use only if used with great care. That calls for conservation, on the one hand, and technology, on the other. Japan has shown the way to both conservation and the technology for conservation, as perhaps no other country in the world has. India has had no alternative but to conserve and innovate, although we still have a long, long way to go. China has taken significant initiatives. So has the Republic of Korea. Asian oil exporting countries have demonstrated a commendable awareness of the importance of sustainability. The time now is for us to pool together our experience, forge them into a shared, common experience, and build on that experience in concert. Sustainability in Asia calls for sustained dialogue among Asians. We stand ready and willing to place our Petroleum Conservation Research Association, the Indian Institute of Petroleum, the University of Petroleum Studies, The Energy and Research Institute of India (TERI), our Center for High Technology,

our Oil Industry Safety Directorate, Indian Oil's R&D Centre, and all our other scientific and technological research and development institutions at the service of all Asia. It is said that one in every three Information Technologists in the world is an Indian. Our achievement in petroleum technology is perhaps less spectacular. But we would be more than happy to share what we know with our fellow-Asians and even more to learn from others, above all to learn from our fellow-Asians.

As we embark on this historic initiative which will, I hope, bring us together frequently, even up to once or preferably twice a year, perhaps alternately in a net oil exporting and a net oil importing country of Asia, and perhaps progressively expanding our ambit while keeping our core intact, I welcome all of you once again to our national capital and wish you all a pleasant and fruitful stay in our midst.

Your Excellencies, I thank you, once and all.

Statement II

Chairman's Statement on the conclusion of the first Round Table of Asian Ministers on Regional Cooperation in the Oil and Gas economy, New Delhi on 6th January, 2006

A. GENERAL

1. The Asian oil economy is integral to, and inseparable from, the global oil economy.
2. With Asian destinations emerging as the principal consumers for Asian production, and the share of Asia in global production and consumption likely to progressively increase, cooperation between Asian producers and Asian consumers is crucial to ensuring.

Stability,

Security and

Sustainability

through

mutual interdependence

in the Asian oil and gas economy.

3. The fundamentals of such cooperation must include moderation, dialogue, mutual understanding and respect, security of international supplies, demand-supply

equilibrium, and strategic partnerships based on a reciprocity of interests.

4. To this end, an Asian dialogue is both welcome and indispensable aimed at evolving and elaborating an Asian consensus.

5. It is, therefore, agreed that the instrumentality of Round Tables of Asian Ministers on Regional Cooperation in the Oil and Gas Economy, initiated here in New Delhi, must be maintained. The following countries have kindly agreed to host/co-host subsequent Round Tables:

Second Round Table : Saudi Arabia, Co-host: Japan

Third Round Table : Japan, Co-Host : Qatar

Fourth Round Table : Kuwait, Co-host: Republic of Korea

The Round Tables may follow the pattern of alternating between net importing and net exporting countries.

6. For the preparation of Ministerial Round Tables, the secretariat of the International Energy Forum might convene experts, operators and officials to prepare position papers and agenda documents.

7. To reinforce Ministerial-level discussions at the Round Tables, a parallel effort may be initiated to bring together Asian business operators belonging to the countries represented at the Round Table.

B. STABILITY AND SECURITY

1. There is scope of improving Asian markets for petroleum and petroleum products. The issue requires careful study and detailed consideration, primarily among experts and operators with a view to identifying broad policy parameters that might require further consideration.
2. Prices should be sustained at levels which encourage Asian consumers to increase their purchases of Asian produce; at the same time, prices should be such as to encourage Asian producers to promote investment in oil and gas for Asian consumer destinations as an economic priority.
3. Crisscross investments all along the entire oil gas products chain through reciprocal investment interlocking of producers and consumers will

guarantee security of both supply and demand, thus contributing to stability of prices and thereby security of both supply and demand. Thus stability of prices would encourage domestic and cross-country investment in all streams of the petroleum sector and other energy-related projects.

4. Caution must be exercised in promoting balanced investment so that over-investment does not lead to excess capacity nor under-investment to shortage of supplies.
5. Strategic storage and stockpiling contribute to security, and in this regard the valuable experience of Japan might hold significant lessons for other major consumers. However, there must be no abuse for illegitimate commercial purposes of such strategic storage and stockpiles.
6. The exchange of information and knowledge is the key to increasing confidence on the part of both buyers and sellers.
7. The Sustainable and Flexible Energy system ("SAFE") proposed by Japan constitutes a useful framework for further consideration of issues of energy security.
8. The Iranian proposal for an Asian Bank for Energy Development merits deeper consideration.

C. SUSTAINABILITY

1. Endorsing the importance of energy conservation for the protection of the environment and issues of climate change, the need for technological cooperation in the pursuit of cleaner and more environmentally-sound fossil fuel technologies was emphasized.
2. To this end, cooperation among Asian research and development centers and the promotion of conservation awareness among the general public were recognized a key instrumentalities.

Shortage of CNG Conversion Kits

*674. SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR:
SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY:

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

(a) whether the Government is aware that there is shortage of CNG conversion kits in the country;

(b) if so, the action taken/being taken by the Government to meet the shortage;

(c) whether any fiscal incentives *i.e.* concessional customs duty on import of CNG kits and its parts is provided by the Union Government; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) At present, CNG is being supplied by M/s Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) in NCT of Delhi and by M/s Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL) in Mumbai, Thane and Mira-Bhayander. The majority of CNG kits available in India are imported from various countries like Italy, Argentina and U.S.A. While MGL have not reported any shortage of CNG kits in their areas of operation, the increasing popularity of CNG conversions among the various types of vehicles may have caused some shortage of CNG kits in NCT of Delhi.

To review the situation of CNG conversions, IGL held discussions with the authorized kit importers/distributors/manufacturers, whose numbers have gradually increased over the years. During the discussions, IGL stressed the need for opening up as many authorized workshops as possible in different areas of NCT of Delhi. Further, during the course of discussions with the CNG kit approving agencies, *i.e.*, Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) and Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (VRDE), IGL have impressed upon these bodies the need to expedite the process of Type—Approvals of CNG kits for various popular vehicle variants/models. These agencies have also been requested to give priority to all approvals related to CNG vehicles.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. At present, CNG kits and parts of such kits attract a concessional customs duty of 5%.

National Tribal Museum

*675. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any policy to protect and preserve the Tribal Art and Culture of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to establish a National Tribal Museum; and

(d) if so, the details alongwith the location thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Culture has a number of programmes to preserve and promote tribal culture and folk art. They include a number of programmes sponsored by the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, Zonal Central Centres and the Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata. In addition, the Ministry of Culture has a specific scheme for Preservation and Promotion of Tribal and Folk Art and Culture. Under this scheme, Voluntary Organisations, Institutions and Individuals both tribal and non-tribal, who are engaged in the preservation of Tribal and Folk Art and Culture are provided financial assistance.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Rehabilitation of Oustees

*676. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of refineries in the country run by the various oil PSUs;

(b) the total area of land of the farmers acquired by them and the amount of compensation paid during the last three years;

(c) whether all farmers have been rehabilitated or provided employment by those PSUs;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) the steps taken by the Union Government to rehabilitate the remaining farmers; and

(g) the time by which these farmers will be rehabilitated?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) There are 17 Public Sector refineries operating in the country.

(b) Approximately 17,800 acres of land have been acquired for setting up these refineries. In addition to compensation already paid during previous years, the amount of compensation paid during the last three years by various PSUs is as under:

Indian Oil Corporation Limited	: Rs. 3.60 crore
Bongaigaon Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.	: Rs. 0.62 crore
Kochi Refinery Limited	: Rs. 22.61 crore
Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	: Rs. 4.28 crore

(c) to (g) All land owners, including farmers, have been duly compensated in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894. There are no outstanding compensation or obligatory rehabilitation dues, other than matters pending in the courts.

In addition, as a measure of social responsibility, these refineries have given employment to those who have been displaced due to the acquisitions, subject to their educational qualifications being adequate and the availability of vacancies in the refineries.

Besides, these refineries have given rehabilitation grants, provided training to displaced persons and provided opportunities for self-employment in the area of transport, contracts etc.

Sl.No.	Ammunition Depots	Date of incident	Estimated Loss (in Rupees)
1.	Ammunition Depot, Dapper	27th July, 2002	Nil
2.	19 Field Ammunition Depot, Jodhpur	2nd August, 2002	31.54 lakhs
3.	Indian Air Force Ammunition Depot, Amla	10th July, 2004	27.84 crores
4.	Central Ammunition Depot, Pulgaon	22nd March, 2005	22 crores

Two civilian Mazdoors died in the incident in Ammunition Depot Dappar.

There was a fire at Central Ammunition Depot Pulgaon on 22nd March 2005 in which Ammunition worth

Fire in Ammunition Depots

*677. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of incidents of fire which took place in various Ammunition Depots in the country during the last three years;

(b) the total loss of lives and property as a result thereof;

(c) whether the Government has lost several crore of rupees in devastating fire in Central Ammunition Depot at Pulgaon in Maharashtra;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the persons killed and injured therein;

(e) whether in the recent past, fire at Ammunition Depots are taking place regularly in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra;

(f) if so, whether the causes of fire at Amla, Chandrapur and Pulgaon Ammunition Depots have been inquired;

(g) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(h) the corrective steps taken to prevent recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (h) Four incidents of fire have been reported in Ammunition Depots during 2002-2005. The estimated value of loss of property in these incidents is as under:—

Rs. 22 crores approximately has been lost. Minor injuries to three Defence Security Corps personnel have been reported. The Courts of Inquiry in respect of Central Ammunition Depot, Pulgaon and Indian Air Force Ammunition Depot, Amla are under progress. There is no Ammunition Depot at Chandrapur.

Following steps/remedial measures have been to prevent recurrence of such incidents:-

- (i) All depots have been directed to update safety and security instructions.
- (ii) All depots have been inspected by a Board of Officers to check adequacy of safety and security arrangements.
- (iii) Shortage in fire fighting equipment are being made up and defective equipment repaired.
- (iv) Unserviceable ammunition is being disposed of on priority.
- (v) Additional funds have been allotted for creation of more Explosive Store Houses for shifting ammunition presently stored on plinths under canvas.

[Translation]

Compensation on Acquiring Land by ONGC

*678. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

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

- (a) whether the ONGC compensate the farmers for acquiring their lands;
- (b) if so, the norms fixed therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has received complaints regarding irregularities in providing compensations; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. ONGC acquires

land on outright purchase or rental basis, as required, for carrying out its exploration and production activities. The land acquired on a temporary basis is restored to normal condition and returned to the farmer after the exploration work is over and the area/site is no longer required. However, once the hydrocarbon potential is established, the land is acquired on a permanent basis. The amount of compensation is decided in accordance with the rates fixed by the Revenue Authorities of the State Governments concerned. Normally, payments of compensation are made within three months of acquisition through the State Authorities to the land owner.

(c) and (d) As may be seen from the table enclosed as statement a few representations have been received regarding acquisition of land by ONGC in the States of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Maharashtra. These primarily relate to matters such as restoration of land to normal condition, and its return to land owners in the State of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, once the purpose is over payment of compensation at enhanced rates in Tamil Nadu; provision of jobs and civic amenities to Project Affected Persons in the States of Assam and Maharashtra. Whenever such representations/complaints are received, they are referred to ONGC for immediate redressal of grievances. The process of resolution of such complaints is a continuous one. A number of steps have been taken by ONGC for timely disbursement of compensation and redressal of such grievances.

- (i) Early survey of damages and preparation of Panchnama;
- (ii) Involving Revenue Officers of the State Government concerned and in the absence of that formation of house committees for assessment;
- (iii) Hearing of grievances for redressal by identified and nominated officers of ONGC.

Statement

Receipt of State-wise complaint regarding compensation payment by ONGC during last one year

State	Received from	Date of Receipt	Contents of Complaint
1	2	3	4
1. Maharashtra	Reports in Lokmat newspaper on 9.4.2005	12.4.2005	For provision of civic amenities for Project Affected Persons at Uran.

	1	2	3	4
2.	Assam	Shri Santosh Mohan Dev, Minister of HI & DPE	12.08.2004	Jobs for Project Affected Persons against acquisition of land
3.	Assam	Shri A.F. Golam Osmani, M.P.	23.3.2005	Jobs for Project Affected Persons against acquisition of land
4.	Assam	Shri Digvijay Singh, General Secretary, AICC	4.1.2005	Jobs for Project Affected Persons against acquisition of land
5.	Tamil Nadu	ONGC Land Donors' Association, Thattangudy, Nemmeli Village, Mailaduthurai, Nagapattinam.	29.12.2004	Payment of Lease Compensation Rate at market rate and restoration of site in original condition to farmers from whom the land was acquired.
6.	Gujarat	Shri Jivabhai Ambalal Patel, M.P.	3.5.2005	Referring to Unstarred Question No. 2344 of Lok Sabha for 17.3.2005, Hon'ble M.P. has made suggestion for return of land acquired by ONGC on permanent basis to the same farmers (from whom the land was acquired by ONGC) after the purpose is over.

National Pipeline Policy

*679. SHRI MUNSHI RAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated the National Pipeline Policy;

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

(c) whether the Government proposes to prescribe uniform norms as followed in European and American countries for the pipeline being laid in the country;

(d) if so, whether a special cell has been constituted with Bureau of Indian Standards for stipulating uniform norms for laying of petroleum and gas pipeline; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The Natural Gas Pipeline Policy is under formulation. The draft policy envisages *inter alia* the development of a nation-wide natural gas pipeline network. The network is proposed to be laid in

a competitive environment with participation from both the public and private sectors. The salient features of the proposed policy include authorization for laying pipelines; developing technical and safety standards as well as a code for grid connectivity; availability of spare capacity on an open access basis; tariff determination etc. These norms, when approved, will, it is expected, be uniform throughout the country.

(d) and (e) For high pressure oil and gas transmission systems, there are established international specifications which are followed by major national and international oil and gas companies. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) have been requested to take up the task of developing of standards for high pressure oil and gas transmission systems in our country.

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Training to Railway Staff

*680. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of rail accidents due to negligence of staff has not come down despite implementation of the rail safety measures;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the railways impart training to their staff for handling modern equipment;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the reasons for higher number of railway accidents despite imparting training to the staff; and

(f) the percentage of decline brought about in the number of railway accidents after setting up of Rs. 17000 crores Special Railway Safety Fund?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. A number of technical and systems inputs have contributed to reduction in failure of railway staff leading to drop in the number of accidents on Indian Railways. Number of consequential train accidents and out of those attributed to failure of railway staff during the last few years have been as under:

Year	Number of Accidents	Accidents due to failure of Railway staff
2000-2001	473	293
2001-2002	415	248
2002-2003	351	186
2003-2004	325	161
2004-2005	234*	133*

*(Provisional)

(c) and (d) All staff including safety category staff, are trained for handling modern equipments, before their introduction so as to equip them with skills for their efficient use and upkeep. Railways are continuously updating knowledge and skills of Railway employees at regular intervals. The training modules are also continuously modified and updated.

(e) Does not arise in the light of reply to parts (a) to (d).

(f) Number of consequential train accidents in 2004-2005 has come down to 234 (Provisional) against 415 in 2001-2002 when Special Railway Safety Fund was set up, representing decline of 43.6%.

[English]

Irregularities in Sahitya Akademi

6994. SHRI PRASANTA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any complaints about misuse of public funds and irregularities in appointments in Sahitya Akademi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Government has received a few complaints about irregularities in certain repair works and hiring of cars.

(c) The allegations were examined and remedial steps taken.

Execution of Sub-Way in Rayagada

6995. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Waltair Division of Railways under East Coast Zone executed the sub-way in Rayagada Municipality, Orissa funded by MPLADS programmes;

(b) if so, the total funds made available to the executive agencies by Rayagada Municipality year-wise and the progress made so far;

(c) whether the utilisation certificate by the Railway authorities is yet to be submitted to the Collector Rayagada;

(d) if so, whether the work of sub-way has not been fully completed;

(e) if so, the reason therefor; and

(f) the time by which the work is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. The work was completed by Railway on deposit terms for Rayagada Municipality.

(b) The work of subway had already been completed in 1999 and subsequently approach roads were constructed on both sides of the subway in November 2002 also on deposit terms. The details of payments received through Bank drafts, dates and amount is given as under:

Year	Amount paid
19.01.1999	11,47,000
28.02.2000	06,00,000
05.07.2002	06,00,000
30.04.2002	04,00,000
07.09.2002	02,00,000
26.11.2002	02,00,000
16.05.2003	01,93,100
Total	33,40,100

(c) The fund utilization certificate has already been sent to Executive Officer, Rayagada Municipality on 29.01.2005 with the request to deposit Rs. 5,41,236 to complete the left over works or else to take up the work at their own.

(d) and (e) In fact, Railway had completed the work of bridge proper *i.e.* subway in 1999. Thereafter, approaches work was also taken up by Railway at the request the Rayagada Municipality and completed in 2002. Work of protection of side slopes and black topping however, remains. This left over work is estimated to cost Rs. 6,15,000. Railway have only Rs. 73,764 as balance fund of Municipality on this account. Hence, deducting their balance amount, Rayagada Municipality was requested to deposit Rs. 5,41,236 to enable Railways taking up the work.

(f) As soon as the required funds are deposited with Railways by the Municipality, balance work will be taken up.

[*Translation*]

Setting up of a Planatorium

6996. SHRI JAI PRAKASH (MOHANLAL GANJ): Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has sent any proposal to the Union Government for setting up of a planatorium in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Beautification of Dr. Ambedkar's Memorial

6997. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent any proposal for the beautification and reconstruction of Dr. Ambedkar memorial;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Implementation of Schemes for SCs

6998. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry maintains the details of schemes and programmes implemented by different Ministries and Departments separately for the all round development of Scheduled Castes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any mechanism in the Ministry, other Ministries and departments of Central Government to monitor and assess the utilisation of allocated and sanctioned amount for various development programmes and welfare schemes meant for development of Scheduled Castes;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of assessment made the monitoring done in Rajasthan and other States through this mechanism during the last three years along with results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) The steps taken/mechanism adopted to ensure the proper utilization of funds released by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment are as follows:—

- (i) Utilization Certificates are insisted upon in respect of Past releases before fresh releases are made.
- (ii) Periodic progress report are obtained from the States/Union Territories including Rajasthan, Showing the progress of implementation of schemes, number of beneficiaries, etc.
- (iii) Meetings with State Secretaries are convened to ascertain the progress of implementation of Schemes.

Modernisation of Indian Coast Guards

6999. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:
SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to provide sophisticated boats to Indian Coast Guards;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which these are likely to be provided to the Indian Coast Guards; and

(d) the amount likely to be spent by the Government for the modernisation of Indian Coast Guards?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Vessels are approved for induction in the Coast Guard as replacement for decommissioned platforms and for augmenting the

strength of the Force. This is a continuous process and is undertaken according to the identified roles that Coast Guard are required to perform.

(d) An amount of Rs. 466 Crore has been provided for the modernization of Coast Guard during 2005-2006.

[English]

Rail Line Without Signal

7000. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that a New Rail Line between Akalakhi to Balurghat is running without signal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is also aware that there are no shades on the stations between Akalakhi to Balurghat;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether there is shortage of staff on the stations between Akalakhi and Balurghat rail line; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Railway line between Akalakhi to Balurghat was sanctioned with "one train only system". Therefore, signalling arrangement was not required.

(c) This is a newly commissioned section and passenger amenities are planned as per norms.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Incidents of Pilferage from Goods Trains

7001. SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the incident of pilferage of diesel from a goods train stopped near Barkera village falling between the stations of Kurtasi and Garoth in the Kota-Nagda Railway section;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) the number of cases of pilferage of diesel and other items from goods trains reported during the last three years, till date, zone-wise and division-wise;

(e) the action taken/to be taken by the Railways in respect of those cases; and

(f) the measures taken/to be taken to check recurrence of such incidents and to provide security in goods trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On 5.4.2004, at around 2315 hours, a goods train was stopped by miscreants at KM No. 803/20-24 between Kutlasi—Garoth Railway Stations of Kota Division over West Central Railway and diesel was pilfered from a tank wagon.

(c) On getting information, Railway Protection Force personnel of Shyamgarh reached the spot and recovered 250 litres of diesel valued Rs. 6,050/- and arrested 8 miscreants. On further enquiry from destination station, total shortage of 8,826 litres petrol, 2,079 litres kerosene and 6,039 litres diesel, valuing Rs. 4,86,738 was found short. A case *vide* crime No. 2/2005 was registered under section 3 of the Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act against the arrested miscreants.

(d) A Zone-wise statement showing the cases of pilferage/theft of Booked Consignments during the last three years *i.e.* 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 (upto 31st March) is enclosed.

(e) The cases are registered and thoroughly investigated. Offenders are effectively prosecuted under the Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act.

(f) The following preventive steps are being taken to prevent theft/pilferage of booked consignments:-

1. Escorting of trains carrying valuable consignments over vulnerable sections as far as possible.
2. Intensive beat patrolling in yards and other affected areas/sections.
3. Joint checking at interchange points to take stock of the condition of wagons/seals, carrying consignments. Whenever interference is noticed, previous units are alerted to detect the crime.
4. Railway Protection Force personnel are also deployed to collect criminal intelligence to work out the cases and to track down the offenders.
5. Close coordination between Railway Protection Force, Government Railway Police and local police is maintained at various levels to exchange intelligence on crime, to apprehend criminals and receivers of stolen property.
6. Based on criminal intelligence, raids and searches are conducted against criminals/receivers of stolen property to bring them to book.

Statement

Cases of Theft and Pilferage of Booked Consignments Over Zonal Railways during the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 (Upto March)

Rly	Year	Cases		Property		Arrest			
		Registered	Detected	Stolen	Recovered	Outsider	Rly.	Employee	RPF
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CR	2002	136	69	885615	662542	126	1	0	127
	2003	106	55	611452	317916	96	5	0	101
	2004	82	47	561446	132226	80	2	0	82
	2005	31	12	1517435	1317894	27	0	2	29

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ER	2002	694	145	6399395	1177569	243	1	0	244
	2003	486	36	3149086	966335	59	1	0	60
	2004	305	38	1700015	346193	37	0	0	37
	2005	94	12	643758	60040	33	0	0	33
ECOR	2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	22	12	381642	252230	21	1	0	22
	2004	36	13	312252	142751	43	2	1	46
	2005	5	1	99891	63460	5	0	0	5
ECR	2002	100	49	550741	339590	58	0	0	58
	2003	309	149	2155224	1887457	238	1	0	239
	2004	321	207	2215854	1678092	388	1	0	389
	2005	84	57	612363	488955	126	0	0	126
NCR	2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	44	21	370850	197027	23	0	0	23
	2004	61	39	1349802	859564	54	2	0	56
	2005	11	8	103230	80680	15	0	0	15
NER	2002	131	50	781820	211130	56	0	0	56
	2003	82	39	1272980	822435	51	1	0	52
	2004	72	42	784330	469590	42	3	0	45
	2005	17	8	71380	28550	9	1	0	10
NFR	2002	345	39	2226142	275571	52	1	4	57
	2003	266	79	4678925	512161	124	6	0	130
	2004	337	61	1852959	223580	80	2	0	82
	2005	91	12	469175	41885	12	1	0	13
NR	2002	363	208	2342329	1637758	289	9	0	296
	2003	312	205	2128428	1589867	302	15	0	317
	2004	257	142	2505250	1592523	231	9	0	240
	2005	117	31	531709	270933	55	0	0	55

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
NWR	2002	17	11	34826	28700	17	1	0	18
	2003	57	28	214730	112650	35	1	0	36
	2004	35	16	185773	66270	20	1	0	21
	2005	9	7	20875	14775	10	1	0	11
SCR	2002	103	39	1479079	92380	106	1	0	107
	2003	72	32	806129	378395	88	0	0	88
	2004	83	42	881135	233350	126	3	0	129
	2005	13	8	25647	21020	17	0	0	17
SECR	2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	12	9	53827	45750	19	0	0	19
	2004	16	7	32295	17518	23	0	0	23
	2005	1	1	1100	1100	2	0	0	2
SER	2002	128	35	1034963	369755	75	3	0	78
	2003	55	23	287795	174610	47	0	0	47
	2004	48	16	573212	162210	30	0	0	30
	2005	17	6	214596	103430	11	0	1	12
SR	2002	180	31	973122	251182	47	8	5	60
	2003	1236	24	763446	184324	39	0	0	39
	2004	555	23	1392006	101622	22	3	0	25
	2005	78	4	64666	11580	4	1	0	0
SWR	2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	25	2	306822	5000	0	1	0	1
	2004	45	11	472624	68964	22	1	0	23
	2005	16	2	76065	9675	5	0	0	5
WCR	2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	35	34	200324	194335	58	1	0	59
	2004	45	38	183967	169812	71	8	0	79
	2005	10	8	32750	17500	15	2	0	17

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WR	2002	225	69	767365	346217	145	10	0	155
	2003	202	78	616147	370890	113	8	0	121
	2004	142	53	423183	1517776	105	4	2	111
	2005	23	8	178167	165537	18	2	0	20
Total	2002	2422	745	17475397	5392394	1214	35	9	1258
	2003	3321	826	17997807	8011382	1313	41	0	1354
	2004	2440	795	15226102	7782041	1374	41	3	1418
	2005	617	185	4662807	2697004	364	8	3	375

Disposal of Old Stock

7002. SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to the Unstarred Question No. 1404 dated December 9, 2004 regarding "Renovation of Petrol Pumps by HPCL" and state:

(a) the number of Petrol Pumps renovated in Delhi by DPCL Delhi Division;

(b) whether old stock is dumped in godowns;

(c) whether committee on scrap has been constituted to dispose of the old stock;

(d) the amount deposited with HPCL earned by selling of scrap during the last three years; and

(e) the manner in which the old stock was disposed if it was not dumped in godowns and the amount earned by selling of scrap not deposited with the company?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The number of retail outlets (petrol pumps) renovated by the Delhi Regional Office of M/s. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) during the last three years is as under:—

Year	No. of outlets renovated
2002-2003	06
2003-2004	06
2004-2005	20
Total	32

(b) Old materials such as used dispensing units, dismantled canopy structures and old bandings are sent to HPCL's Shakurbasti installation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) During the last three years, an amount of approximately Rs. 1.84 lakhs has been generated from scrap disposal by the HPCL Delhi Regional Office.

(e) As per Corporation policy, disposal of old stock is made in the following circumstances:—

- (i) Surplus to the Company's requirements
- (ii) Obsolete/uneconomical to operate/uneconomical to repair
- (iii) Unserviceable
- (iv) Slow moving/non-moving
- (v) Scrap.

All the scrap has either been transported to the godown or sold as scrap as per Corporation policy. For the scrap sold, the Corporation has received all the money.

Domestic Flights from Allahabad

7003. SHRI ATIQ AHAMAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to start domestic flights from Allahabad to various cities of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the effective steps taken by the Government to start these domestic flights from Allahabad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Sahara Airlines already operates scheduled air service to/from Allahabad as per following details:

Delhi-Lucknow-Allahabad-Kolkata & Return—3 flights/week

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

Vocational/Residential Courses for Depressed Persons

7004. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to prepare vocational and residential courses for persons suffering from depression (ATM Vimoha), cerebral palsy and the diseases related thereto; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith name of implementing agencies and amount of annual allocation thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government gives grant to Non-Governmental Organizations to set up both residential and non-residential Centres to provide vocational training and education under the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme. The details of Non-Governmental Organizations who are implementing the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme can be seen at Ministry website www.socialjustice.nic.in Budget allocation for 2005-06 is Rs. 80.00 crore.

[English]

Durgapur Station as Model Station

7005. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to make Durgapur Railway Station as a model station;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Durgapur Railway Station is an 'A' category station and has already been selected as a Model Station. All the identified Passenger Amenities for a model station except train indicator boards have been provided at this station. The work of providing train indicator boards has also been sanctioned.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Removal of Abattoirs Around Hindon Airport

7006. SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN:
SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether pollution created by the illegal abattoirs around Hindon Airport attracts the hovering of big birds in the sky which has posed a threat to the Combat Aircraft of the Indian Airforce;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in regard to removal of abattoirs; and

(c) the time by which these abattoirs are likely to be removed from there?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Cleaning of the environment around Indian Air Force airfields, in co-ordination with the State Government/Local Civic Authorities is a continuous process. The respective State Government/Local Civic Authorities are pursued by the Indian Air Force to create hygienic environment around the airfields in the interest of flight safety.

[English]

Publication of International Herald Tribune

7007. SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has banned the publication of International Herald Tribune in India;

(b) if so, whether the Government is aware that despite the ban, it is being published in India;

(c) if so, whether the Government has taken any action in the matter;

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

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (e) The extant print media policy of the Government prohibits publication of any foreign newspapers or newsmagazines in India. In pursuance of this policy, no foreign newspapers or newsmagazines have been permitted to be published. However, this Ministry, in June 2004 on learning about the publication of an Indian edition of the "International Herald Tribune" from Hyderabad, by M/s Midram Publications Pvt. Ltd., wrote to M/s Midram Publications to stop publication of the same, and to International Herald Tribune, Hong Kong and New York, to stop supply of material/contents for publication of the International Herald Tribute from Hyderabad as it violates the extant print media policy of the Government.

The Government is examining the options of strengthening its policy, through suitable legislative measures. For this purpose, a Group of Ministers (GOM) has been constituted.

[Translation]

Losses to Doordarshan

7008. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Doordarshan and the D.D. News Channels are running in losses in comparison to the private T.V. Channels;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to check these losses?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI

S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Doordarshan is a Public Service Broadcaster and is not motivated by purely commercial considerations, as is the case with private channels.

(c) It is the constant endeavour of Doordarshan to enhance the quality of its programmes and news covering national and international events, by adopting innovative methods and modern market strategies to increase its commercial revenue. Doordarshan has taken various steps to increase commercial revenue which includes setting up of Marketing Divisions at six centres, introduction of new programme formats, undertaking fuller utilization of time slots in non-prime band through adjustments in commercial rate card etc. The commercial revenues have shown an upward trend in 2004-05.

[English]

Modernisation of Ordnance Depots

7009. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to Modernise Ordnance Depots;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The Government of India has taken up modernisation of Ordnance Depots in a phased manner. The modernisation of COD Kanpur involving an approximate expenditure of Rs. 187 crores is at an advanced stage of completion. The modernisation of Central Ordnance Depot, Kanpur covers state-of-the-art warehousing facilities which include higher vertical space utilisation, automated material handling, a computerised inventory management system and installation of state-of-the-art fire prevention, fire fighting and security systems. In respect of modernisation of the Central Ordnance Depots at Agra and Jabalpur, detailed project reports are under finalisation.

[Translation]

Upgradation of Railway Lines

7010. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATTIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the action plan for the

year 2005-06 for the capacity upgradation of railway lines and expansion of facility on stations at Kota-Nadia and Ratlam-Bhopal, Ujjain-Indore railway section under Ratlam and Kota Railway Divisions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Following works for upgradation of railway lines and expansion of facility of stations at Kota-Nagda, Ratlam-Bhopal and Ujjain-Indore sections have been taken up:-

A. Kota-Nagda section on Kota Railway Division

- (i) Directional loops at six stations between Nagda-Mathura section.
- (ii) Up and Down loops at Dakaniya Talav.
- (iii) Improvement of goods shed and drainage system at Kota.
- (iv) Extension of shunting neck, at Kota.
- (v) Improvement of cement concrete apron on line No. 1, 4 & 5 at Kota passenger yard.
- (vi) Replacement of foot over bridge at new location at Kota.
- (vii) Extension of platform to accommodate 24/26 coaches at seven stations on Kota-Nagda section.
- (viii) Improvement of existing surface in platform No. 1 & 2 at Chaunmala.
- (ix) Provision of Kota stone flooring on platform No. 1, 2, 3 & 4 at Kota.
- (x) Provision of desirable passenger facilities as per yardsticks on all stations under Kota division.

B. Ratlam-Bhopal and Ujjain-Indore on Ratlam Railway Division

- (i) Doubling of Kalapipal-Phanda section.
- (ii) Doubling of Akodia-Mohemed Khera-Shujalpur.
- (iii) Provision of extra goods siding at Mangliyagaon.

Transmission of Programmes in Bengali Language

7011. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the programmes in Bengali language are not being transmitted in the several parts of West Bengal adjoining Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to upgrade the transmitters of Doordarshan covering the adjoining areas of West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that Doordarshan's terrestrial signals are available to 97.1% of the population of West Bengal. Areas not covered by terrestrial coverage in the State and other parts of the country (excluding the A&N Islands) can now receive the DD's Ku Band transmitter service (DTH) with its bouquet consisting of 33 TV channels including DD Bangla, and 12 Radio channels with the help of a small sized dish receive unit.

In so far as All India Radio is concerned, Programmes in Bengali language are broadcast from all stations located in West Bengal and is available to about 99% of the population in the State. There is, therefore, no scheme to upgrade TV transmitters in West Bengal in the areas adjoining Jharkhand.

Aerodrome in Jalgaon

7012. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to construct an aerodrome at Jalgaon in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the time by which the said airport is likely to be constructed; and

(c) the funds likely to be allocated by the Government for its construction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

27436

Subsidy Bill

7013. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has requested the Union Government to consider an alternative mechanism by which the company stops picking up the kerosene and cooking gas subsidy bill but is adjusted against the dividend pay out the Union Government; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. While ONGC have been discussing with Government issues arising out of their sharing the burden of subsidies, they have not proposed that their subsidy burden be adjusted against their dividend put-out to Government.

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

Extension of childline Service

7014. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to extend the childline service to other cities/towns in the country where it is currently not available; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith name of eligible institutions for providing such service, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The expansion of childline service to uncovered cities is an ongoing exercise.

(b) State-wise details regarding eligible institution are not maintained.

Taking over Agriculture Land

7015. SHRI SURESH ANGADI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Defence has taken over a large area of agricultural land in Belgaum District of Karnataka and declared it a dangered zone;

(b) if so, the total area taken over by the Ministry of Defence;

(c) whether any compensation has been paid to the farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to help those farmers whose lands have been taken over?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) The question does not arise in view of (a) above.

Pensionary Benefits to Dismissed/Discharged Personnel

7016. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in 1994 the Government had decided to sanction pensionary benefits to the dismissed and discharged personnel from various Defence Forces;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present stage of the implementation of this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Rail Projects of Uttaranchal

7017. SHRI RAJENDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal regarding construction of new rail lines, gauge conversion of the existing narrow gauge lines and modernisation of railway station in Uttaranchal are pending with the Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith reasons for delay in clearing the above proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) An updating survey for gauge conversion of Bhojpura-Pilibhit-Tanakpur section (101.79 Kms.) has been completed recently. Further consideration of the proposal would depend upon the results of survey after due examination. No proposal is pending for modernisation of railway station in the State.

[English]

Upgradation of Mathura as Sub-Division

7018. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been persistent demands for upgradation of Mathura as a Sub-Division;

(b) if so, whether there is also demand for providing stoppage at Mathura of all trains passing from there; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The issue has been examined but not found operationally feasible at present.

Petrol Pumps on Highways

7019. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps on National Highways in Punjab and Haryana on such sites after 17.10.2004 which are not meeting the norms of the Ministry of Rural Transport and Highways and have submitted the false undertakings that the sites meet the norms;

(b) if so, whether the Government has inquired into the matter;

(c) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken against the officers/persons found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI

SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) IBP Co. Limited (IBP) have commissioned one retail outlet (petrol pump) in the State of Haryana which does not meet the norms of the Department of Road Transport & Highways with respect to the required distance of 300 metres between two retail outlets on both sides of the undivided carriage way. IBP have stated this fact in their application submitted to the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). NHAI approval is awaited. Some clarifications sought by NHAI have been furnished by the company. IBP have denied for any false information/undertaking has been given by them to NHAI.

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

Expenditure Incurred on Modernisation of Petrol Pumps

7020. SHRI A.F.G. OSMANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by the oil sector oil companies on advertisements and modernization of petrol pumps separately during each of the last three years, Company-wise; and

(b) the net refinery and marketing margin on sale of diesel and petrol during the said period, company-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of House.

Irregularities in Lalit Kala Akademi

7021. SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any complaints from artists, scholars and critics regarding irregularities in appointments and functioning of Lalit Kala Academy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No specific complaints regarding appointment and functioning of Lalit Kala Akademi have been received.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Constitution of Juvenile Justice Boards
and Child Welfare Committee**

7022. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts in the country having Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committee duly constituted under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, State-wise;

(b) whether there is any institution prescribed in the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 to supervise and monitor adoption of children from children homes/shelter homes; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The information regarding status of implementation of various aspects of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 including setting up of Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committees with Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is based on the feedback it receives from respective States/Union Territories from time to time. The same is available on the official website of the Ministry, viz. www.socialjustice.nic.in. The number of districts having Juvenile Justice Board and Child Welfare Committee based upon information received from State Governments/Union Territory Administrations may be seen at this website.

(b) and (c) The supervision and monitoring of adoption prescribed under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 is guided by the provisions listed as under:

- (i) The Child Welfare Committee shall have the final authority to dispose of cases for the care, protection, treatment and rehabilitation of the children.
- (ii) No abandoned child shall be offered for adoption until 2 members of the Child Welfare Committee declare the child free for adoption.
- (iii) The children's homes or the State Government run institutions for orphans shall be recognized

as adoption agencies both for scrutiny and placement of such children for adoption in accordance with the guidelines issued by the State Governments from time to time.

- (iv) In keeping with the provisions of various guidelines of adoption issued from time to time by the State Government, the Juvenile Justice Board shall be empowered to give children in adoption and carry out such investigations as are required for this purpose in accordance with the said guidelines.

[Translation]

Resumption of Air Services

7023. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to resume the air operations at the places where Indian Airlines flights have been discontinued;

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

(c) whether air service to Khajuraho is proposed to be resumed; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Alliance Air has discontinued its services to Agra, Khajuraho and Varanasi due to operational and fleet constraints with effect from January, 2005. Alliance Air is not in a position to resume its flights to Khajuraho till its aircraft position improves.

Irregularities in Procurement

7024. SHRI RAM CHANDRA PASWAN:
SHRI SURAJ SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received complaints from the Members of Parliament regarding irregularities in procurement relating to computerization and information technology by the Airports Authority of India during the last three years;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any investigation has been ordered in the matter;
- (d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the action taken against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

MoU between IRCON and Malaysian Government

7025. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether under the exchange programme any MoU was signed between the Indian Railway Construction Company International Limited (IRCON) and the Malaysian Government regarding contract work for edible Palm Oil;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the terms and conditions of the MoU;
- (c) whether the work on the said project was executed;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An MoU was signed in May 2001 between IRCON International Limited and Ministry of Transport, Government of Malaysia to execute a Railway Project in Malaysia with the payments having a 'Counter Trade Obligation', in Palm Oil products. Based on this MoU, a 'Letter of Intent' was issued by the Government of Malaysia in June 2001, according to which the Government of Malaysia and IRCON would conclude a Counter Trade Obligation agreement involving Palm Oil products for execution of the aforesaid project. The MoU was in force till 31.03.2002.

(c) and (d) No work was executed on the said project.

(e) Due to some re-thinking on the part of the Government of Malaysia, the Letter of Intent issued by the Government of Malaysia was withdrawn in October 2003.

Allocation of Funds to Lumding Railway Division

7026. SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIIDYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the amount allocated for Passenger Amenities for Lumding Railway Division under N.F. Railway during each of the last three years;
- (b) the amount utilized for the purpose, year-wise alongwith the reasons in case the funds have not been fully utilized; and
- (c) the amount spent during the said period on the stations in the sections namely Lumding-Badarpur-Manu, Katakhal-Vairabi, Badarpur-Silchar-Jirighat and Baroigram-Dullavchera?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The funds allocated for Passenger Amenities for Lumding division during 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 were Rs. 138.91 lakh, 185.27 lakh and Rs. 153.60 lakh respectively.

(b) The amount utilized during 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 were Rs. 94.32 lakh, 122.90 lakh and Rs. 119.80 lakh respectively. The funds could not be fully utilized for various reasons, such as slow progress of workers due to contractual problems, delay in finalisation of plans and estimates and difficulty in executing work under traffic conditions.

(c) Amount spent during the said period on the stations in the sections was Rs. 20.30 lakh during 2002-03, Rs. 31.48 lakh during 2003-04 and Rs. 33.49 lakh during 2004-05.

Energy Security

7027. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is exploring several options to expand the energy security options with the Gulf countries;
- (b) if so, the details of talk held with Gulf countries in this regard; and

(c) the further action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) yes, Sir. Government is exploring several energy security options with Gulf countries including long-term contracts for crude oil, mutual investments in the oil and gas sector, the possibility of Saudi Arabia establishing commercial strategic storage in India, the import of natural gas as Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), or through transnational pipelines from gas rich regions such as West-Asia (including Iran), Myanmar and, possibly Turkmenistan and the acquisition of acreages abroad.

The issue was also discussed at the first Round Table of the Asian Ministers on regional cooperation in the oil and gas economy held in New Delhi on the 6th January, 2005 which was attended by Ministers/representatives from Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, China, Korea, besides host India. The chairman's draft conclusions of the conference is given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Chairman's Statement on the conclusion of the first Round Table of Asian Ministers on Regional Cooperation in the Oil and Gas economy, New Delhi on 6th January, 2006

A. GENERAL

1. The Asian oil economy is integral to, and inseparable from, the global oil economy.

2. With Asian destinations emerging as the principal consumers for Asian production, and the share of Asia in global production and consumption likely to progressively increase, cooperation between Asian producers and Asian consumers is crucial to ensuring.

Stability,
Security and
Sustainability
through
mutual interdependence
in the Asian oil and gas economy.

3. The fundamentals of such cooperation must include moderation, dialogue, mutual understanding and respect, security of international supplies, demand-supply

equilibrium, and strategic partnerships based on a reciprocity of interests.

4. To this end, an Asian dialogue in both welcome and indispensable aimed at evolving and elaborating an Asian consensus.

5. It is, therefore, agreed that the instrumentality of Round Tables of Asian Ministers on Regional Cooperation in the Oil and Gas Economy, initiated here in New Delhi, must be maintained. The following countries have kindly agreed to host/co-host subsequent Round Tables:

Second Round Table	: Saudi Arabia, Co-host : Japan
Third Round Table	: Japan, Co-Host : Qatar
Fourth Round Table	: Kuwait, Co-host: Republic of Korea

The Round Tables may follow the pattern of alternating between net importing and net exporting countries.

6. For the preparation of Ministerial Round Tables, the Secretariat of the International Energy Forum might convene experts, operators and officials to prepare position papers and agenda documents.

7. To reinforce Ministerial-level discussions at the Round Tables, a parallel effort may be initiated to bring together Asian business operators belonging to the countries represented at the Round Table.

B. STABILITY AND SECURITY

1. There is scope of improving Asian markets for petroleum and petroleum products. The issue requires careful study and detailed consideration, primarily among experts and operators with a view to identifying broad policy parameters that might require further consideration.

2. Prices should be sustained at levels which encourage Asian consumers to increase their purchases of Asian produce; at the same time, prices should be such as to encourage Asian producers to promote investment in oil and gas for Asian consumer destinations as an economic priority.

3. Crisscross investments all along the entire oil gas products chain through reciprocal investment interlocking of producers and consumers will guarantee security of both supply and demand, thus contributing to stability of prices and thereby security of both supply and demand. Thus stability of prices would encourage domestic and cross-country investment in all streams of the petroleum sector and other energy-related projects.
4. Caution must be exercised in promoting balanced investment so that over-investment does not lead to excess capacity nor under-investment to shortage of supplies.
5. Strategic storage and stockpiling contribute to security, and in this regard the valuable experience of Japan might hold significant lessons for other major consumers. However, there must be no abuse for illegitimate commercial purposes of such strategic storage and stockpiles.
6. The exchange of information and knowledge is the key to increasing confidence on the part of both buyers and sellers.
7. The Sustainable and Flexible Energy system ("SAFE") proposed by Japan constitutes a useful framework for further consideration of issues of energy security.
8. The Iranian proposal for an Asian Bank for Energy Development merits deeper consideration.

C. SUSTAINABILITY

1. Endorsing the importance of energy conservation for the protection of the environment and issues of climate change, the need for technological cooperation in the pursuit of cleaner and more environmentally-sound fossil fuel technologies was emphasized.
2. To this end, cooperation among Asian research and development centers and the promotion of conservation awareness among the general public were recognized a key instrumentalities.

[Translation]

Non-Boarding Schools

7028. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any request from non-governmental organizations of Maharashtra in regard to non-boarding schools; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the year 2004-05, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had received a total of 24 requests from the Non-Governmental Organisations of Maharashtra for release of grant in aid for non-residential schools. Out of these, grant-in-aid have been released to 17 Non-Government Organisations.

[English]

Maintenance of Monuments

7029. SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the historical monuments maintained by ASI in Jammu are in a very bad shape;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to improve the maintenance system of these historical monuments;

(c) whether the Government has received proposals/ requests from Members of Parliament for proper maintenance and development of these monuments; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) It is not correct to say that the historical monuments maintained by ASI in Jammu are in a bad shape.

[Translation]

Shortage of Kerosene

7030. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantum of kerosene imported during the year 2004-2005;

(b) whether there is still a shortage of kerosene in the country inspite of its import; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps being taken by the Government to do away with the shortage of kerosene annually?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) During the year 2004-05, the total quantum of kerosene imported was 210.4 Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT).

(b) and (c) PDS kerosene is allocated to the States/UTs by the Government of India. In terms of the policy in place since 2001-02, PDS kerosene allocations to States/UTs have been reduced after taking into account the number of new LPG connections released to the States/UTs. In addition to PDS kerosene, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) also sell free sale kerosene as per demand. Government have commissioned the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) to conduct a study to ascertain the actual demand for kerosene in different states in the country. Further necessary action in deciding state-wise allocations of PDS kerosene would be taken after receiving this study report.

[English]

Indo-Romanian Agreement in Oil Sector

7031. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level delegation comprising officials of ONGC, IOC and GAIL had recently discussions with Romanian delegation for cooperation in the oil and gas sector;

(b) if so, the issues discussed therein;

(c) whether any agreement has been reached between the two countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI

SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) On 30.3.2005, a Romanian delegation led by the Director General, Ministry of Economic and Commerce, Romania visited India and held discussions with representatives of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the oil sector companies/institutes. Various projects/programmes and the Indian oil companies, which would pursue tie ups with Romanian counter-parts were identified.

The Romanian side was handed over for concurrence the final draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the field of oil and natural gas. This MOU is proposed to be signed during the forthcoming visit to Romania of the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

[Translation]

Renovation of Submerged Temples

7032. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any steps for the excavation and renovation of temples submerged in the lakes/rivers in different States of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of such temples/historical places, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to excavate and renovate the temples; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Inclusion of Saratha Samaj Community in SC/ST List

7033. SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL (YATNAL): Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Saratha Samaj (Barber Community) from Karnataka has sent any proposal to the Union Government to include them in SC or ST list;

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

(c) whether any financial package is being worked out to financially strengthen them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Revival of Explosives Manufacturing Unit

7034. SHRI SURESH WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the explosives manufacturing unit in Wardha district in Maharashtra has been lying closed since quite sometime;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to revive the said unit;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government is also contemplating to transfer the employees working in the above unit to some other units; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir. No manufacturing unit of Ordnance Factory Organisation is lying closed in Maharashtra.

(b) to (f) Question does not arise.

Train between Giridih and Dhanbad

7035. SHRI FURKAN ANSARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether no train is being plied between Giridih and Dhanbad in Jharkhand despite existence of rail line there;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the time when the said line was constructed; and

(d) the action being taken by the Government to ply a train between Giridih and Dhanbad for the convenience of the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a), (b) and (d) Yes, Sir. At present, there is no direct train running between Giridih and Dhanbad. However, 4 pairs of trains are available from Madhupur to Dhanbad and 5 pairs of passenger services between Giridih and Madhupur. Running of direct train between Dhanbad and Giridih is not feasible due to operational and resource constraints.

(c) As per the records available, the line from Giridih to Madhupur and beyond upto Dhanbad was completed in later part of 19th century.

[*English*]

Enhancement in Authorised Capital of NMDFC

7036. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the authorized capital of National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) was decided on the basis of 1981 census;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to enhance the authorized capital of NMDFC keeping in view the 2001 census;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Increase in Speed of Passenger Trains

7037. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is planning to increase the speed of passenger trains; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Increase in speed of passenger carrying trains including mail/express/passenger trains is an ongoing and continuous process over Indian Railways. However, the trains identified for speeding up during the year 2005-06 are given below:-

Sl.No.	Train No. and Name
1	2
1.	1604 Nanded-Daund Passenger
2.	4083 Sikkim Mahananda Express
3.	1082 Mumbai CST-Kanniyakumari Express
4.	1069 Lokmanya Tilak (Terminus)-Allahabad Express
5.	2165 Lokmanya Tilak (Terminus)-Varanasi Express
6.	2779 Vasco-Nizamuddin Goa Express
7.	3448 Dadar-Bhagalpur Express
8.	5645 Dadar-Guwahati Express
9.	5647 Dadar-Guwahati Express
10.	9045 Surat-Varanasi Tapti Ganga Express
11.	9047 Surat-Bhagalpur Tapti Ganga Express
12.	2405 Bhusaval-Nizamuddin Gondwana Express
13.	2409 Bilaspur-Nizamuddin Gondwana Express
14.	2411 Jabalpur-Nizamuddin Gondwana Express
15.	8033 Ahmedabad-Howrah Express
16.	8201/8202 Durg-Gorakhpur Express
17.	2305 Howrah-New Delhi Rajdhani Express

1	2
18.	2315 Sealdah-Ajmer Ananaya Express
19.	3025 Howrah-Bhopal Express
20.	3151 Howrah-Jammu Tavi Express
21.	2329 Sealdah-Delhi Samprak Kranti Express
22.	5625 Bangalore-Guwahati Express
23.	5627 Trivandrum-Guwahati Express
24.	5227 Muzaffarpur-Yesvantpur Express
25.	5637 Secunderabad-Guwahati Express
26.	3142 Sealdah-New Alipurduar Teesta Torsha Express
27.	6003 Howrah-Chennai Central Express
28.	8562 Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam Express
29.	8564 Bangalore-Visakhapatnam Express
30.	2644 Nizamuddin-Kanniyakumari Express
31.	6009 Mumbai CST-Chennai Central Express
32.	474 Kakinada-Tirupati Passenger
33.	9119/9120 Ahmedabad-Veraval Intercity Express
34.	8450 Patna-Puri Express/5640 Guwahati-Puri Express
35.	6309 Patna-Ernakulam Express
36.	2307 Howrah-Jodhpur/Bikaner Express
37.	2308 Jodhpur/Bikaner-Howrah Express
38.	5632 Guwahati-Jodhpur/Bikaner Express
39.	5631 Jodhpur/Bikaner-Guwahati Express
40.	2985/2986 Sealdah-Jaipur Express
41.	2315/2316 Sealdah-Ajmer Express
42.	2395 Rajendranagar-Ajmer Express
43.	4853/4863 Varanasi-Jodhpur Marudhar Express

In addition to the above the following trains have been identified for upgradation into superfast by speeding up:-

Sl.No.	Train No. and Name
1.	1063/1064 Dadar-Chennai Express
2.	6041/6042 Chennai Central-Alleppey Express
3.	6323/6324 Trivandrum-Howrah Express
4.	6803/6804 Tiruchirappalli-Howrah Express
5.	5621/5622 Guwahati-New Delhi North East Express
6.	4659/4660 New Delhi-Amritsar Intercity Express
7.	4229/4230 Lucknow-New Delhi Mail
8.	1051/1052 Lokmanya Tilak (Terminus)-Howrah Express
9.	1045/1046 Lokmanya Tilak (Terminus)-Bhubaneswar Express
10.	6703/6704 Chennai Egmore-Turticorin Pearl City Express
11.	6669/6670 Chennai Central-Erode Yercaud Express
12.	3013/3014 Howrah-Dehradun Upasana Express
13.	5265/5266 Darbhanga-New Delhi Sampark Kranti Express
14.	9149/9150 Ahmedabad-Dhanbad Parsavnath Express
15.	5087/5088 Jammu Tavi-Gorakhpur Amarnath Express

Gauge Conversion of Rangia-Murkongselek Rail Section

7038. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is considering to abandon a few stations in the Rangia-Murkongselek section in NF Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the survey of gauge conversion of Rangia-Murkongselek section has been completed;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the progress so far made on the project; and

(e) the total expenditure incurred on the project so far and the funds provided during 2005-06 for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The updating survey for gauge conversion of section was completed in 2002-03 and based on that, the project has been sanctioned. The detailed estimate for Rangia-Rangapara North has been prepared and is under process. Hydrological study of the area which undergo regular washaways/subsidences/slips etc., have been taken up by Indian Institute of Technology/Roorkee.

(e) No expenditure has been incurred on the project so far. An outlay of Rs. 7.96 crore has been provided for the year 2005-06.

27462 Reservation in New Catering Policy

7039. SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in New Catering Policy, 2004 the Government has provided enhanced reservation of 49.5% for SCs/STs/OBCs. Minorities, Women and Physically/Mentally handicapped persons for awarding railway catering contract at the railway stations; and

(b) if so, the details of licences awarded under the reservation category so far, separately, zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Catering Policy, 2004 provided 49.5% reservation at 'D', 'E' and 'F' category of stations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women including war widows and widows of Railway employees, Other Backward Classes, Minorities and physically/mentally challenged persons. The latest Catering Policy 2005 provides 49.5% reservation at 'D', 'E' and 'F' category of stations and 25% reservation at 'A', 'B' and 'C' category stations for Scheduled Castes,

Scheduled Tribes, People below poverty line, Freedom Fighters/women including war widows and widows of railway employees, Other Backward Classes, Minorities and physically/mentally challenged persons.

(b) Award of catering contracts on Indian Railways are now being done based on latest Catering Policy provisions.

[Translation]

Availability of Defence Medical Facilities

7040. MOHD. SHAHID:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the defence medical facilities are available in bordering areas as well as areas having different climatic conditions; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and the efforts being made by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Armed Forces Medical Services provide comprehensive medical cover in all border areas as well as having different climatic conditions.

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

Rail Projects in Haryana

7041. SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the works on several projects of gauge conversion/laying new railway lines in Haryana which have been given approval earlier are going on at a slow pace in absence of sufficient funds; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to provide sufficient funds for completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The works are being progressed as per availability of resources. A number of initiatives have been taken to mobilize other than normal budgetary resources to expedite completion of ongoing projects.

[English]

Energy Charter Treaty

7042. SHRI M. SHIVANNA:
SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:

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

(a) whether the Government has been considering signing the Energy Charter Treaty that may obviate the need for multilateral agreements for various projects to import gas through pipelines; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) is a multilateral instrument for promoting inter-Governmental cooperation in the energy sector. The fundamental aim of ECT is to strengthen the rule of law on energy issues by creating a level playing field of rules to be observed by all participating Governments, thus maximizing security to supply and minimizing the risks associated with energy-related investments and trade. India is not yet signatory to ECT.

The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas had organized a workshop on 6 April 2005 in New Delhi to discuss various aspects of ECT, which was also attended by the officials from the Energy Charter Secretariat. The question of signing the ECT is under the examination of Government.

[Translation]

Rail Projects

7043. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work of laying new rail lines, conversion of rail-lines and construction of new rail bridges are on in East Central Railways and North-Eastern Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount allotted for these schemes separately; and

(d) the time by which these are likely to be completed?

RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The details of such projects together with their outlay for 2005-06 and the target date of completion, wherever fixed, are given as under:—

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

East Central Railway

Name of Project	Outlay provided during 2005-06 (Rs. in Crores)	Target date for completion wherever fixed
1	2	3
NEW LINE		
Ara-Sasaram (98 kms)	18.00	Sasaram-Nokha-Sanjauli completed. Sanjauli-Piro 2005-06
Fatuha-Islampur restoration including Biharsharif-Barbigaha and Sheikhpura-Neora via Daniawan (171.5 kms)	5.00	Fatuha-Islampur completed.
Khagaria-Kusheshwarsthan (44 kms.)	1.11	—
Koderma-Tilaiya (65 kms.)	4.00	—
Kosi Bridge (21.85)	22.00	—
Munger-Rail-cum-Road Bridge on river Ganga (14 kms.)	72.00	—
Patna-Ganga bridge with linking lines between Patna and Hajipur (19 kms.)	72.00	2007-08
Giridih-Koderma (105 kms.)	6.00	—
Koderma-Ranchi (189 kms.)	27.07	—
Rajgir-Hisua-Tilaiya and Islampur-Natesar new line (67 kms.)	10.00	Jagdishpur-Tilaiya and Rajgir-Nekpur completed. Nekpur-Natesar-2005-06
Sakri-Hasanpur (79 kms.)	8.00	—
Hajipur-Sagauli (148.3 kms.)	1.00	—
Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi (63 kms.)	8.00	—
GAUGE CONVERSION		
Jayanagar-Darbhanga-Narkatiaganj (268 kms.)	20.00	—

1	2	3
Mansi-Saharsa and Dauram-Madhepura-Purnea (142 kms.)	10.01	Mansi-Saharsa—2005-06
Samastipur-Khagaria and Mansi-Khagaria (94 kms.)	35.04	2005-06
Sakri-Laukha Bazar-Nirmali and Saharsa-Forbesganj (206.06 kms.)	10.00	—
North Eastern Railway		
NEW LINE		
Hathua-Deoria Sadar (84.6 kms.)	4.00	—
Kichha-Khatima (57.7 kms.)	0.10	—
Maharajganj-Masrakh (35.49 kms.)	1.00	—
Rampur-Lalkuan-Kathgodam Road over Bridge on national highway	0.10	—
GAUGE CONVERSION		
Gonda-Gorakhpur Loop with Anandnagar-Nautanwa (250 kms.)	0.10	—
Gonda-Bahraich-Sitapur-Lucknow-Ph-I (60 kms.)	0.01	—
Aunrihar-Jaunpur (58.66 kms.)	2.00	—
Kaptanganj-Thawe-Siwan-Chhapra (233.5 kms.)	8.00	—
Kanpur-Kasganj-Mathura-Bareilly including material modification for extension from Bareilly to Lalkuan (544.5 kms.)	43.35	Kanpur-Farukhabad—2005-06

The works which have been completed have not been shown in the above list. However, the completion of the works whose targets have been indicated above would depend upon overall availability of resources.

*[English]***Rail Connection with Asian Nations**

7044. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to establish rail connectivity with Asian nations;

(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 RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Rail connectivity already exists with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. A feasibility study for rail connectivity between India and Bhutan is being done. Ministry of Railways has no specific proposal for rail connectivity with other countries at present.

*[Translation]***Recruitment in Groups C & D Employees**

7045. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU:
SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees in Railways in each group as on March 31, 2003, March 31, 2004 and March 31, 2005, separately;

(b) the number of persons recruited in each Group during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the number of posts in Groups C & D has been reduced;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the number of vacancies in Group 'D' posts at present and the steps taken to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Number of employees (Group 'C' & 'D') in Railways are given below:-

As on	Group 'C'	Group 'D'
31.03.2003	869965	588264
31.03.2004	860077	567154
31.03.2005*	861981	545169

*(Provisional)

(b) Year-wise and Group-wise number of candidates empanelled by Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) are as under:—

Year	Group 'C'	Group 'D'
2002-03	3993	78
2003-04	14137	2655
2004-05	14368	2385

(c) and (d) Indian Railways' righting activities are in accordance with the initiatives taken by the Government to right size the manpower in the Government of India. Further railways have been adopting modern technology in various facets of railway working e.g. abolition of steam traction, modern track structure & signalling system, improved operating practices, induction of high capacity rolling stock, computerization, etc. This leads to reduced requirement of manpower in certain activities while needing manpower in newer areas and thus necessitating retraining, re-deployment and recruitment. Railways have also been using the bench marking principles to develop and implement the best practices, which would help in rationalizing the workforce vis-a-vis activities.

(e) There are approximately 36000 vacancies in group 'D' as on 31.3.2005. Arising and filling up of vacancies is a continuous process. Vacancies arise due to normal retirements, voluntary retirements, death, etc. and are filled up through open market recruitment, compassionate appointments and through promotions. Action towards filling up of promotee quota vacancies as also direct recruitment quota vacancies has been initiated.

*[English]***Doubling of Railway Track between Cuttack and Barang**

7046. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether doubling of the Railway track between Cuttack and Barang under East Coast Railway has been sanctioned long back;

(b) if so, the total cost of the project;

(c) the total amount sanctioned and released till date;

(d) the present status of the project; and

(e) the time schedule for completion of the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Doubling of Cuttack-Barang was included in the Budget 2003-04.

(b) and (c) The anticipated cost of the project is Rs. 127.13 crore. An expenditure of about Rs. 6.73 crore (provisional) has been incurred on the project upto 31.03.05 and an outlay of Rs. 30 crore has been provided during 2005-06.

(d) Final Location Survey has almost been completed. Contract for sub-structure for Kukahai bridge has been awarded and work taken up. The project is being executed through Asian Development Bank (ADB) funding by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) a company formed by the Ministry of Railways for fast-track execution of certain identified works/projects.

(e) By March, 2008.

[Translation]

Inclusion of OBC of State List in Central List

7047. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of castes which have been included in the State list of other backward classes but have not been included Central List of OBCs, State-wise;

(b) whether the remaining castes are proposed to be included in the central list of OBCs; and

(c) if so, the time by which the same is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI

SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) examines requests for inclusion of any caste/community in the Central List of OBCs only after the receipt of requests from Associations/Organizations or individuals. Out of the 605 castes in the State List which have not been included in the Central list, the Commission has received representations for inclusion in the Central List of OBCs for 103 castes/communities only. The Commission has since rejected the requests of 91 castes/communities and it is not possible to give the time limit for the disposal of the other 12 cases by the NCBC. No representation has been received in respect of the remaining 502 castes/communities.

[English]

Heritage Train

7048. SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways proposes to introduce heritage steam trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways has considered other aspects like its impact on environment; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Rail Development in West Bengal

7049. SHRI RUPCHAND MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals received from the State Government and the MPs from West Bengal regarding rail development in the State during 2005-06; and

(b) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The details of each and every demand for rail development in a State is not maintained. However, some of the proposals

received from State Government and Honourable Members of Parliament-(MPs) from West Bengal during

2005-06 regarding new rail projects in the State as under:—

Sl.No.	Demand	Current status
1.	New line from Nandakumar-Haldia	Construction of the suggested line is not feasible due to heavy throw forward of project and acute constraint of resources.
2.	New line from Jhargram-Purulia	Updating survey has been taken up. Further consideration of the proposal would be feasible once the results of the survey become available.
3.	Doubling of New Jalpaiguri-New Bongaigaon via New Alipurduar	Survey has been sanctioned recently.

Petrol Pumps in Arunachal Pradesh

7050. SHRI TAPIR GAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the locations approved for setting up of petrol pumps and gas agencies in the State of Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) whether petrol pumps and gas agencies have been set up at the approved locations;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and time by which petrol pumps/gas agencies are likely to be setup at the approved locations?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) The public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) have so far approved 34 locations for setting up retail outlet dealerships (petrol pumps) and 31 locations for setting up LPG distributorships (gas agencies) in the State of Arunachal Pradesh. Out of these locations, 19 retail outlet dealerships and 28 LPG distributorships have been commissioned, details of which are given in the enclosed Statement I and II respectively.

Out of the remaining retail outlet dealership locations, two locations have since been dropped, as they were found to be unviable. Similarly, one location for LPG distributorship is also proposed to be dropped because of its non-viability. Further, the commissioning of one retail outlet dealership is held up as the case is *sub judice*.

The remaining cases of retail outlet dealerships and LPG distributorships are at various stages of processing. However, it may be possible to indicate the time-frame within which the remaining retail outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships are likely to be commissioned as the process involves a number of stages like selection of dealers/distributors as per policy guidelines, various approvals, etc.

Statement I

OMC-wise retail outlet dealerships commissioned in the State of Arunachal Pradesh

Sl.No.	Location	District
1	2	3
Indian Oil Corporation Limited		
1.	Itanagar	Lower Subansiri
2.	Namsai	Lohit
3.	Daporizo	Upper Subansiri
4.	Jairampur	Tirap
5.	Kharsang Bazar	Tirap
6.	Basar	West Siang
7.	Ruksin	East Siang
8.	Tawang	Tawang
9.	Seppa	East Kameng
10.	Yingkiong	East Siang

1	2	3
11.	Mebo	East Siang
12.	Changlang	Changlang
13.	Pasighat	East Siang
14.	Mayuliang	Lohit
15.	Along	West Siang
16.	Boleng	East Siang
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited		
17.	Jenging	Upper Siang
IBP Co. Limited		
18.	Papu Nallah	Papum Pare
19.	Yazali	Lower Subansiri

Statement II

OMC-wise LPG distributorships commissioned in the State of Arunachal Pradesh

Sl.No.	Location	District
1	2	3
Indian Oil Corporation Limited		
1.	Along	West Siang
2.	Along	West Siang
3.	Along	West Siang
4.	Basar	West Siang
5.	Borndila	West Kameng
6.	Borndir	Tawang
7.	Bordumsa	Tirap
8.	Changlang	Changlang
9.	Dahung	West Kameng
10.	Daporijo	Lower Subansiri
11.	Doimukh	Papumpare
12.	Itanagar	Papumpare

1	2	3
13.	Itanagar	Papumpare
14.	Khonsa	Tirap
15.	Likabali	West Siang
16.	Miao	Changlang
17.	Naharlagun	Papumpare
18.	Namsai	Lohit
19.	Passighat	East Siang
20.	Roing	Dibang Valley
21.	Rupa	West Kameng
22.	Seppa	East Kameng
23.	Tawang	Tawang
24.	Tengavally	West Kameng
25.	Tezu	Lohit
26.	Yazali	Lower Subansiri
27.	Yingkiong	Upper Siang
28.	Ziro	Lower Subansiri

Tender for trolley

7051. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned, 'trolley se bhar gaye jholi', appearing in the 'Outlook' weekly dated September 13, 2004;

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

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into the matter;

(d) if so, the findings thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) In March, 2004 Central Vigilance Commission forwarded a source information to the Chief Vigilance Officer, Airports Authority of India (AAI) regarding procurement of 5115 nos. of passenger baggage trolleys for various airports in India. The matter was investigated by the Vigilance Directorate of AAI and a report forwarded to the Central Vigilance Commission bringing out certain infirmities noticed in the processing in the procurement case. Central Vigilance Commission, in turn, advised Airports Authority of India to issue "Recordable Warning" to two officials of Airports Authority of India for extending date of opening without recorded reasons. The Disciplinary Authority of Airports Authority of India complied with the same.

(e) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Change of Route of Goa Express

7052. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to ply Goa Express (train no. 2779/2780) on Konkan Railway line via Manmad-Nasik-Kalyan to save the valuable time and money of the passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there are technical and administrative problems to implement it; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Examined but found not operationally feasible. Besides, the diversion will be resisted by the passengers of Manmad-Pune-Londa-Madgaon/Hubli section who will be deprived of the available service.

[*English*]

Maintenance of Planes

7053. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air Services in India are not in accordance with the international standards;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the maintenance standard of the planes of the domestic carriers is very poor; and

(d) if so, the programmes formulated/proposed to be formulated by the Government to bring the standard of domestic airlines at par with the international airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Air transport services in India are operated in accordance with the standards laid down by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Aircraft Rules and Civil Aviation Requirements.

(c) and (d) The maintenance standards of aeroplanes are in accordance with manufacturers recommendations and are approved by DGCA.

[*Translation*]

Rectification of Snags

7054. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to implement a suitable system for the Air Force wherein the snags the aircraft leading to air crash will be rectified in advance;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said scheme will be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A suitable system already exists within the Indian Air Force to detect snags and rectify them expeditiously.

All snags occurring on various aircraft are analyzed to establish a trend. Based on the analysis, pro-active measures are undertaken to carry out preventive maintenance and related activities to avoid recurrence of such snags. However, it is not possible to forecast the occurrence of all snags on an aircraft.

The process of analyzing the trends and preventing accidents/incidents is a continuing process.

Lignite Gasification Plant

7055. SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Ltd. has signed an agreement with Agro Energy Technologies Inc. for establishment of a Lignite Gasification Plant in Barmer district of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL) have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with M/s Ergo Energy Technologies Inc., Canada to establish a Lignite Gasification Plant in Barmer District of Rajasthan. The MoC is aimed at developing a long-term working relationship between GAIL and Ergo Energy aimed at enhancing the level of development of large coal resources, that for economic or technical reasons, are not exploited by conventional methods of coal/lignite mining. The parties have also expressed their agreement to cooperate in the development and implementation of commercial Underground Coal Gasification projects, under various geological conditions and with due regard for environmental implications.

(c) GAIL are in the process of carrying out a Pre-feasibility Study for the production of synthesis gas. The cost implications can be estimated only after the pre-feasibility study is completed.

Arrangement of Containers

7056. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the industrialists of Uttar Pradesh have sent any representation to the Government to arrange regular movement of containers of Railways in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said facility is likely to be extended?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Some representations from trade in Uttar Pradesh have been received for running regular and scheduled train services from Container Corporation of India's Inland Container Depots (ICDs). Container Corporation of India Ltd. is operating four ICDs in Uttar Pradesh namely, Moradabad, Kanpur, Agra and Dadri. Regular train services are available for clearance of export traffic from Moradabad, Kanpur, Agra and Dadri. On the representation of the trade nominated days train services are being run from these terminals within operating constraints and subject to availability of sufficient traffic for transportation by train and matching return traffic from ports.

Encroachment Around Protected Monuments

7057. SHRI MOHAN SINGH:
SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA:
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the encroachment in and around the protected monuments in Delhi;

(b) if so, whether Archaeological Survey of India has issued notices to the erring parties to evict their premises in and around the protected monuments in Delhi;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other concrete measures taken/to be taken by the Government to remove the encroachment around these protected monuments?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir. Some of the protected monuments in Delhi are under encroachment.

(b) to (d) Appropriate action under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Public Premises Act, 1971 have been initiated by the Archaeological Survey of India for removal of the encroachments. In a few cases, the matters relating to eviction of encroachers from the protected monuments are pending before various courts of law. The details are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

List of Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites where Encroachment Exist/made free from Encroachment in recent past in Delhi

Sl.No.	Name of Monument/Sites	Location	Remarks
1	2	3	4
1.	Kashmere Gate and portion of the City Wall on either side of the Kashmiri Gate on the side and on the other upto and including the water bastions at the northern corner of the wall and also including the ditch outside the City wall where this is exposed.	Kashmere Gate	Action for removal of encroachment is under process with other law enforcing agencies.
2.	Lothian Road Cemetery	Kashmere Gate	Encroachers have been issued as per provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules, 1959 and matter is sub-judice.
3.	The Mosque	Qudasia Garden	The mosque has been encroached. The matter is sub-judice in Civil Court.
4.	Purana Qila (Indraprashta)	Two miles south of the Delhi Gate of Shahjahanabad, Delhi	A small part of the protected area has been encroached upon by the priest of Kunti temple. The matter is sub-judice in the Hon'ble High Court for final disposal.
5.	Rajpur (Mutiny) cemetery	Old Rajpur Cantonment, North Distt.	Since long the cemetery encroached.
6.	Sunehri Masjid near Red Fort	Delhi Fort	The mosque is encroached since the time of its protection and prayers are being offered at the monument.
7.	Tomb of Razia Begum in Mohalla Butbli Khana	Shahjahanabad	The tomb is encroached and is being misused by some members of the public. Action for removal of encroachment is in process.
8.	Tughluqabad	Badarpur Zail	The matter is sub-judice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for final hearing.
9.	Begumuri Masjid	Begampur	The encroachers have been issued notices as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archeological

1	2	3	4
			Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules, 1959 and the demarcation report as per direction of the Hon'ble Court is awaited for further necessary action in the matter.
10.	Lal Gumbad	Chirag Delhi	The encroacher has been issued with notices as per the directions of the Hon'ble High Court, action for eviction is in process.
11.	Ancient Mosque	Palam	The mosque is encroached since the time of its protection. Prayers are being offered at the monument.
12.	Sarai Shahji	Near Shivalik, Malviya Nagar	The part of protected area is under encroachment since the time of its protection. Besides, a Maulvi is using the mosque for running a madarsa. Besides, above, some local persons have got stay orders to maintain status-quo from the Hon'ble High Court.
13.	Arab-ki-Sarai	East Nizamuddin	Action for removal of encroachment is under process.
14.	D'Eremao Cemetery	Kishanganj	Matters is sub-judice.

[English]

Export of Missiles

7058. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India is in a position to export missiles;
- (b) if so, whether some countries have demanded to have a deal with India for missile sale;
- (c) if so, the names of countries who are keen on this deal; and
- (d) the steps the Government proposes to take to supply the missiles to these countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY

HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir. India is in a position to export certain categories of missiles.

(b) to (d) It may not be in the national interest to disclose details of such countries.

[Translation]

Advertisement by Public Sector Banks and Enterprises

7059. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the public sector banks and enterprises have discontinued engaging Government Advertising media namely National D.D. News and D.D. Sports channels of Doordarshan and All India Radio for airing their advertisements;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of reduction in profits of Prasar Bharati, as a result thereof;

(d) if not, the number of advertisements given to Government media channels by the public enterprises in comparison to the number thereof given to the private channels during the last three years; and

(e) the total expenditure incurred by the public enterprises on these advertisements comparatively?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir. Prasar Bharati has informed that Public Sector Banks and Enterprises continue to engage the services of AIR and Doordarshan for broadcast/telecast of their advertisements.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) Department of Public Enterprises has informed that information regarding the number of advertisements given to various TV Channels and expenditure incurred thereon by Central Public Sector Enterprises is not centrally maintained.

[*English*]

Standard Size of Trolley at Platforms

7060. SHRI BRIJBHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mumbai Division of Western Railway has notified the standard size of Trolleys providing catering service at Platforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that in the name of repair of trolleys at Balsad Railway Station, the size of trolleys have become bigger than the standard norms fixed by the Mumbai Division of Western Railway in connivance with the senior Railway Officials;

(d) if so, the action taken against the defaulting contractors and the guilty railway officials;

(e) whether Western Railway has announced the ban on cooking of eatables on trolleys running at the platforms;

(f) if so, whether it is also a fact the trolley-owners are cooking the eatables unauthorisedly in connivance with the railway officials; and

(g) the number of cases reported in this regard and the action taken against the trolley owners and railway officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The size of allotted catering trolleys at platforms in the Mumbai division are notified as under:—

Type of Trolley	Type of Wares	Size (in Cms.)
A	Sweetmeat, Namkeens and/or Puri and Bhajias	106.68X60.96X106.68
B	Tea, Coffee, Milk, Biscuits, etc.	106.68X60.96X91.44
C.	Toys (curios) and Miscellaneous Articles	106.68X60.96X106.68
D	Pan, etc.	106.68X91.44X91.44
E	Books and Magazines	106.68X91.44X91.44
F	Fresh and/or Dry Fruits	91.44x60.96x91.44

(c) No, Sir. Permission in connection with repairs of trolleys has not been given. However, it is noticed that the size of some of the existing trolleys is bigger than the prescribed size.

(d) Contractors have already been instructed to reduce size of trolleys immediately failing which strict action will be taken.

(e) Western Railway has scheduled a time frame to stop cooking activities on station platforms. Cooking on pressure stove and coal fired sigri may not be permitted on the station platforms at 'A', 'B' and 'C' category stations after 31.8.2005 and at 'D' and 'E' category stations after 31.12.2005.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

Permission for Uplinking TV Channels

7061. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the proposals seeking permission for uplinking TV Channels from India pending at present with the Union Government; and

(b) the time by which these proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) As on date, proposals from 23 companies for permission to uplink their TV channels from India are pending in this Ministry. Out of these, 19 companies have been asked to provide additional requisite documents/information to process their proposals. Proposals from the remaining 4 companies are at various stages of examination.

(b) No time frame can be indicated.

Air Travel Concession to Senior Citizens

7062. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that senior citizens are facing hardship due to revision of scheme for Air Travel concession to senior citizens introduced on 7 July, 2003 replacing the earlier scheme of 1999;

(b) whether according to the new scheme, senior citizens loses the concession in fare, if senior citizens book ticket for one way journey;

(c) if so, whether the Government would consider to provide air travel concession for one way journey to senior citizens; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The scheme of air travel concession to senior citizens has been amended further with effect from 4th April, 2005. As per the modified scheme, the condition of purchasing confirmed tickets atleast 7 days prior to departure has been waived off. Secondly, the condition of minimum two nights stay at destination/intermediate point has been modified to minimum of three nights stay.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Criteria for Confirmation of Reservation for VIP

7063. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted by the Railways for confirmation of reservations for VIPs;

(b) whether there is any reservation quota for persons recommended by MPs;

(c) if so, the reasons for not providing reservations to persons recommended by MPs;

(d) whether the persons recommended by MPs for confirmation of reservation is informed about the reservation status;

(e) if not, whether the Government proposes to inform the M.P.s about reservation status in respect of their recommendations for reservation of seats; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) In order to meet the urgent travel requirements of High Official Requisition holders, VIPs and other emergent demands, a limited number of berths/seats have been earmarked as Emergency Quota in all important trains in different classes. Preference in this quota is given for self-travel of high dignitaries. Thereafter, other requests received from various quarters including Hon'ble MPs are considered and the unutilized quota is released taking into account various factors. When the demand exceeds the availability, it is not feasible to accommodate all the requests received for release of Emergency Quota.

(d) to (f) In view of the number of requests being received and the practical difficulties, it is not feasible to inform Hon'ble Members of Parliament about the status of the requests recommended by them.

[English]

Allocation for North-Eastern Region

7064. DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has issued instructions/directions to all the Ministries/Departments to allocate 10% of their Budgets to the North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry of Railways has allocated 10% of its budget to the North-Eastern Region; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) As per the extant instructions, Ministry of Railways allots 10% of the available Budgetary Support, which is derived after setting aside the amounts specifically provided as contribution from General Exchequer for Special Railway Safety Fund, for identified National Projects, for Externally Aided Projects, Railway's share out of diesel cess, etc.

In 2005-06, the outlay to Northeast Region out of the budgetary support available for general distribution works out to about 8.75%. Further, additional funds have been sought for the projects of Kumarghat-Agartala New Line and Lumding-Silchar-Jiribam Gauge Conversion, which have recently been declared as National Projects.

[*Translation*]

Export of Naphtha

7065. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of Naphtha in the country;

(b) the total quantity of Naphtha exported during each of the last three years alongwith value thereof; PSU-wise and country-wise;

(c) whether some public sector companies including HPCL have recently signed any agreement with some foreign countries for selling Naphtha; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Production of Naphtha in the country for the last three years is as under:—

Year	Quantity in Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT)
2002-03	11301
2003-04	12641
2004-05	15828

(b) Details of export of Naphtha for the last three years is given in the enclosed Statement. Public Sector Oil Companies are not exporting Naphtha directly to foreign countries. However, Naphtha has been exported by Public Sector Oil Companies to the following countries through traders:—

Singapore, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates (Fujairah), Japan, Indonesia and Brazil.

(c) No, Sir.

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

Statement

Naphtha Export by Public Sector Undertakings

Name of the PSU	2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	Quantity (TMT)	Rs. in crore	Quantity (TMT)	Rs. in crore	Quantity (TMT)	Rs. in crore
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Indian Oil Corporation Limited	78.6	85.1	31.2	52.2	240.8	376.7
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited	482.7	533.3	377.4	446.4	417.9	721.8
Kochi Refinery Limited	—	—	23.9	27.2	—	—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited	591.7	720.3	729.5	938.1	767.1	1303.0
Oil & Natural Gas Corporation	135.5	145.8	402.7	456.0	537.3	949.8
Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited	321.8	347.8	393.5	495.2	639.9	1085.1
Total	1610.3	1832.3	1958.2	2415.1	2803.1	4436.4

[English]

Damage to Srinagar-Jammu Highway

7066. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether heavy snowfall, avalanches and skidding rocks have damaged Srinagar-Jammu national highway;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has assessed the damage caused to the national highway;

(d) if so, the authority entrusted the work to repair the national highway; and

(e) the steps taken to ensure that there is no disruption of traffic in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The highway was breached at Km 77, 85, 116.35, 129.23, and between Km 157.60 to 173.45.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) BRO, responsible for maintenance of the 392 Kilometer Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, was entrusted with restoration & repair of the Highway.

(e) Snow Clearance Equipment is pressed into service immediately whenever required. As there can be no permanent solution to avoid occurrences of avalanches, landslides and blizzards on this road, preventive measures such as construction of retention walls, improvement in drainage systems, erection of mesh at vulnerable points

are continuously taken up in consultation with the Snow and Avalanches Study Establishment (SASE), and other reputed consultancy firms.

Talcher Railway Station

7067. DR. PRASANNA KUMAR PATASANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to make the Talcher Railway Station as a Model Station;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to make the said station as Model Station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) 320 stations over Indian Railways have so far been selected as model stations for providing upgraded passenger amenities, depending upon the category of stations. More stations will be selected once the works at the already model stations are completed.

Push and Pull Trains in Bangalore

7068. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has any proposal to provide Push and Pull trains in Bangalore;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Survey on Disabled/Handicapped Persons

7069. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to order a fresh survey to ascertain the number of disabled handicapped persons of various categories in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be conducted;

(c) whether the Government has categorised and planned for rehabilitation of these persons;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any proposal to start any scheme to give financial assistance to physically challenged persons; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the scheme is likely to be launched and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The survey is conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization once in ten years. The last survey was conducted in the year 2002.

(c) and (d) Section 2 (i) of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 recognises (i) blindness; (ii) low vision; (iii) leprosy-cured; (iv) hearing impairment; (v) locomotor disability; (vi) mental retardation and (vii) mental illness as disabilities.

A number of schemes/programmes to cater to the needs of persons with various types of disabilities is under implementation. The National Trust for the Welfare of the Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities also implement programmes for persons with Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities. The details of schemes are available on the website www.socialjustice.nic.in and www.nationaltrust.org.in.

(e) and (f) Various State Governments/U.T. Administrations have been implementing social security schemes viz. disability pension and unemployment allowance for persons with disabilities with different eligibility criteria. Amount of pension and unemployment allowance vary across States/UTs from Rs. 60/- per month to Rs. 500/- per month.

Committee on Revamping and Streamlining the Legal Setup on Railway

7070. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry had examined the Report of the Committee on Revamping and Streamlining the legal set-up on Indian Railways;

(b) if so, whether all the recommendations have been implemented by the Railway Board;

(c) if not, the number of recommendations still pending for implementation; and

(d) the time by which the remaining recommendations are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) 14 recommendations are still pending with Railway Board for implementation.

(d) These 14 recommendations are under consideration and no specific time-frame for implementation can be given at this stage as other Ministries are also involved in the decision making process.

International Airport at Kolkata and Chennai

7071. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Japan has offered to build a state-of-art international airport at Kolkata and Chennai;

(b) if so, whether any talks have been held between the two countries in this regard; and

27493

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

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

Construction of Rail Lines

7072. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has completed trail run on Badnera-Chandur bazar line of Amaravati-Markned Railway line under construction;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways has formulated any time limit for completion of Amaravati-Markned line; and

(d) if so, the time by which the construction work on the said line will be completed and opened for traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The section from Amaravati to Chandurbazar (44 Kms.) of Amravati-Narkher New Line project (138 Kms.) has been completed and engine trial run conducted successfully on Bandera-Chandurbazar sub-section on 21.3.05.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in Indian Ocean

7073. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any surveys to find the Oil and Natural Gas reserves in the Indian Ocean;

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof alongwith the estimated quantity of oil and gas reserves; and

(c) the steps taken to explore those reserves?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Oil India Limited (OIL), and Private/Joint Venture companies have carried out 681994 line kilometers of 2D Seismic surveys, 99448 sq. kilometers of 3 D Seismic surveys and have drilled 1125 wells in the eastern and western offshore areas of the country.

(b) Based on the exploratory efforts, listed at (a) 4697.92 Million Metric Tons (MMT) of in-place reserves have been established.

(c) In order to accelerate exploration efforts, Government of India have announced the fifth round of NELP on 4 January, 2005. Out of 20 exploration blocks offered, 6 blocks are in offshore areas along the Eastern and Western Coast of the country and 12 exploration blocks are in onland areas. The list of exploration blocks on offer under NELP-V is given in the enclosed Statement. The bid closing date is 31 May 2005.

Statement

Details of Exploration Blocks on offer under NELP-V

Sl.No.	Block Name	Basin	Area (Sq. Km.)	State/Offshore	District
1	2	3	4	5	6
Deep Water Blocks					
1.	KK-DWN/2003/1	Kerala Konkan	18245	Western Off.	
2.	KK-DWN-2003/2	Kerala Konkan	12285	Western Off.	
3.	KG-DWN-2003/1	Krishna-Godavari	3288	Eastern Off.	

1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	MN-DWN-2003/1	Mahanadi	17050	Eastern Off.	
5.	AN-DWN-2003/1	Andaman Nicobar	9970	Andaman Off.	
6.	AN-DWN-2003/2	Andaman Nicobar	13110	Andaman Off.	
Shallow Offshore Blocks					
7.	CB-OSN-2003/1	Gulf of Cambay	2394	Western Off.	
8.	GS-OSN-2003/1	Saurashtra	5970	Western Off.	
Onland Blocks					
9.	AA-ONN-2003/1	Assam-Arakan	81	Assam	Golaghat
10.	AA-ONN-2003/2	Assam-Arakan	295	Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang
11.	AA-ONN-2003/3	Assam-Arakan	275	Assam	Tinsukia
12.	GV-ONN-2003/1	Ganga Valley	7210	Uttar Pradesh	Deoria, Gorakhpur
13.	VN-ONN-2003/1	Vindhyan	3585	Rajasthan	Kota & Jhalawar
14.	RJ-ONN-2003/1	Rajasthan	1335	Rajasthan	Jaisalmer-Barmer
15.	RJ-ONN-2003/2	Rajasthan	13195	Rajasthan	Jaisalmer-Barmer, Jodhpur
16.	CB-ONN-2003/1 Part-A & B	Cambay	635	Gujarat	Ahmedabad, Kheda
17.	CB-ONN-2003/2	Cambay	448	Gujarat	Bharuch
18.	DS-ONN-2003/1	Deccan Syneclise	3155	Maharashtra	Dhule
19.	KG-ONN-2003/1	Krishna-Godavari	1697	Andhra Pradesh	Krishna, Guntur
20.	CY-ONN-2003/1	Cauvery	957	Tamil Nadu	Thanjavur

[*Translation*]

Petroleum Sports Control Board

7074. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the programmes introduced in Rajasthan by Petroleum Sports Control Board during each of the last three years alongwith the amount spent thereon;

(b) whether Petroleum Sports Control Board has failed to work satisfactory and its economic resources are negligible; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) At Ajmer in Rajasthan since 1995, Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) has been running a residential Table Tennis Academy in collaboration with the Sports Authority of India and the Table Tennis Federation of India. The following amounts have been spent on the PSPB Table Tennis Academy during the last three years:-

Year	Amount Spent (Approximate)
2002-03	Rs. 29.00 lakhs
2003-04	Rs. 22.00 lakhs
2004-05	Rs. 27.00 lakhs

(b) No, Sir. PSPB players have performed exceptionally well in various disciplines. Notable among them are one Padam Shree and 22 Arjun Awardees. More than 60 players in various disciplines like Athletic, Badminton, Billiards, Chess, Cricket, Golf, Hockey, Kabbaddi, Table Tennis, Tennis and Volleyball have represented India in International Championships during the last 3 years. Also, 11 players of PSPB represented the country in the Athens Olympics. PSPB's expenditure on the participation of players and hosting of events is met from a contribution of Rs. 1.38 crore, received each year from Member Organizations.

(c) Government are satisfied with PSPB's performance.

Connectivity with Cities

7075. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the cities connected with air services in the country during the last one year;

(b) whether the Government are contemplating to connect some more cities with air service; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Cities connected with air service from January, 2004 onward were Agartala & Patna by Jet Airways, Coimbatore, Jaipur, Srinagar & Vizag by Sahara Airlines and Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Agra, Bhavnagar, Bhopal, Delhi, Dehradun, Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kolhapur, Kolkata, Surat, Vadodara, Vizag, Bagdogra, Jabalpur, Jammu, Lucknow & Nasik by Air Deccan.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Alliance Air has plans to procure 6 ATR aircraft on lease and operate to Gwalior, Jabalpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Dehradun, Dharamshala, Shimla, Kanpur, Ludhiana, Vijayawada, Salem, Tuticorin, Rajmundry, Kandla, Keshod, Nasik, Surat, Cooch Behar etc.

However, Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-Eastern region. It is, however, upto the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending

upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by the Government.

Development of Historical and Religious Culture

7076. SHRI RAJENDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any specific scheme has been implemented by the Government in Uttaranchal particularly in Haridwar district to promote and develop further historical and religious culture;

(b) if so, whether assistance of Non-Governmental organizations is being taken; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) There are many cultural organizations/Non-Governmental Organisations who get financial assistance under regular schemes for preservation and promotion of heritage and culture in Uttaranchal.

[English]

SKO/LDO Dealership

7077. DR. M. JAGANNATH:
SHRI A.F.G. OSMANI:

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

(a) whether it is a policy of the Government/Oil PSUs to discourage the operation of SKO/LDO dealership by the retail outlet dealer in case one HUF is having multiple dealerships;

(b) if so, whether the oil companies initiate the operation of SKO dealerships and RO dealerships by the different family members separately at the time of reconstitution through family settlement of HUF families as per Hindu law;

(c) whether there is a policy to allow cancellation of the part/share of one partner of the dealership/distributorship who created problems in smooth operation of respective dealership;

(d) if not, whether the interests of other original allottees of the dealerships would be allowed to suffer because of one mischievous dealer; and

(e) if not, the remedy available with such original allottees?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) As per the extant guidelines of the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) for selection of dealerships/distributorships, only one dealership/distributorship is allowed to a family unit consisting of the individual concerned, his/her spouse and unmarried sons/daughters.

(c) to (e) In case there are disputes between the partners of a dealership affecting the operation of the dealership, OMCs are competent to take action against the dealership, including termination, in terms of the dealership agreement. However, efforts are made by the OMCs to bring about an amicable settlement between the partners before invoking the provisions of the agreement.

Protection and Development of Orphans

7078. SHRI A.F.G. OSMANI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of orphans lodged in Government institutions as on 31 December, 2004, State-wise; and

(b) whether there is any standard of norms fixed by the Union Government/State Governments to ensure adequate protection and development of the orphans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No such data is maintained. However, a statement showing the number of children in need of care and protection, including orphans lodged in Children's Homes/Juvenile Homes being assisted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, under the scheme 'A Programme for Juvenile Justice' is enclosed.

(b) The Model Rules framed by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment under The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection and Children) Act, 2000 lay down the detailed minimum standards to be maintained in the various homes to be set up under the Act to ensure

adequate protection and development of the children covered under this Act. The State Governments/Union Territory Administrations have accordingly notified their own Rules or adopted the Model Rules as per local requirements.

Statement

Number of children in need of care and protection lodged in Government run Children/Juvenile Homes being assisted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment under the Scheme of "A Programme for Juvenile Justice".

Sl.No.	Name of State/UT	Number of children
1.	Andhra Pradesh	639
2.	Goa	26
3.	Gujarat	623
4.	Haryana	200
5.	Himachal Pradesh	70
6.	Karnataka	2335
7.	Kerala	625
8.	Madhya Pradesh	214
9.	Maharashtra	3160
10.	NCT of Delhi	1506
11.	Pondicherry	120
12.	Punjab	277
13.	Rajasthan	284
14.	Tamil Nadu	1425
15.	Tripura	5
16.	Uttar Pradesh	791
17.	West Bengal	1780
Total		14080

[Translation]

IOC Depot at Satna

7079. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation is considering to set up a new depot at Satna, Madhya Pradesh;
- (b) whether work at the said depot has been stopped;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the present status of the said depot?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) do not propose to set up a new depot at Satna. IOCL had earlier acquired a piece of land at Bagha, near Satna, from the State Government for constructing an LPG Bottling Plant. However, this proposal was dropped in 1998 because of economic reasons. Since the acquired land was available, it was proposed at one stage to construct a new depot, on an industry basis at this site and to shift the operations of the existing Satna depot to the new depot. However, this proposal was also dropped in the year 2002 as it was not found viable and economical. IOCL have approached the State Government to surrender this piece of land.

The existing depot at Satna is operational. Since it is very old and does not meet the safety requirements and Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD) norms, IOC plan to close down operations of this depot and shift to three other supply depots namely Bhitoni (Jabalpur), Narialo (Sagar) and Jayant.

[English]

Repairing of Jama Masjid

7080. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the amount spent by the Union Government on repairs of Jama Masjid in Delhi during each of the last three years till date;
- (b) whether the Jama Masjid in Delhi is a protected monument under the Ancient Monuments Act;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons for spending money on its repairs?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI

S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) An amount of Rs. 6,45,864/- was spent by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for repairs to damaged sand stone flooring of the courtyard of Jama Masjid during the last financial year 2004-2005. In the preceding two financial years no expenditure was incurred by the ASI.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The Jama Masjid is a mosque of outstanding architectural & historical importance under the administrative control of Sunni Majlis Aqaf. On request from Jama Masjid authorities, the Govt. of India agreed to the repairs for this mosque and the work was taken up accordingly by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Credit of Revenues in Government Account

7081. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any specific law or Government order that allows defence wings to realise revenue from commercial complexes located in Government buildings/lands;

(b) if so, whether it is mandatory for defence officials to credit the revenue amount in Government account;

(c) whether the Government is aware that certain Indian Air Force units had realised Rs. 1.77 crore during January, 2001—March, 2003 as revenue from commercial complexes located in Government building/land;

(d) if so, whether the said amount was credited in Government account;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The orders exist to realise rents from commercial complexes and to credit 50% of the revenue realised from commercial complexes built on Government land to the Government account.

(c) Yes, Sir. However, the amount of Rs. 1.77 crores realised during January 2001—March 2003 was from the Regimental shops and not from the commercial complexes.

(d) to (f) The Regimental shops in the premises of the Indian Air Force are not governed by the rules applicable to commercial complexes. The amount realised as rent and allied charges are credited to the public fund in accordance with Government rules. The amount so realised is not credited to the Government account.

Facsimile Edition of Foreign Newspapers

7082. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:
SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has been considering to allow facsimile edition of foreign newspapers;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to discuss the matter with various political parties and experts before taking a final decision on allowing facsimile of newspapers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) The extant print media policy of the Government prohibits publication of Indian edition of a foreign newspaper in India. The policy is under review.

[Translation]

Import-Export Policy of Petroleum Products

7083. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is considering some changes in the export-import policy of petroleum products; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) While no changes in the export-import policy of petroleum products are at present under consideration of the Government, in view of the shortage of kerosene, IOCL have requested Government

to consider imposing restrictions on the export of Jet-Kero/Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF).

[English]

Meeting with Representatives of Airlines Industry

7084. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government held any meeting recently with the representatives of the airlines industry both in public and private sector;

(b) if so, the issues discussed and outcome thereof; and

(c) the follow-up action taken to implement the decisions taken in the meeting?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A meeting, chaired by Minister, Civil Aviation was held on 12th April, 2005 with the Scheduled Airlines and NOC holders for scheduled airlines. A meeting was also held on 19th April, 2005 with the above representatives.

The issue of shortage of skilled manpower in civil aviation like pilots, engineers etc., was discussed.

Profit Margin on Sale of Petroleum Products

7085. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN:
SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS SADHU
YADAV:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

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

(a) whether the public sector oil companies have been suffering huge losses on the sale of petrol/diesel, LPG and kerosene;

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

(c) whether profit margin of Indian Oil is less as compared to other public sector oil companies;

(d) if so, the comparative figures thereof;

(e) whether Indian Oil Corporation has requested the Union Government to increase the price of petroleum products;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The estimated amount of under-recoveries suffered by the PSU oil marketing companies (OMCs) during 2004-05 are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Name of the Company	Petrol	Diesel	LPG (Domestic)	PDS (Kerosene)
IOC (including IBP)	67	1,206	4,215	6,193
HPC	37	432	2,045	1,765
BPC	45	515	2,100	1,521
Total	149	2,153	8,360	9,479

(c) and (d) The comparative statement showing company-wise profit after tax (PAT) for April-December, 2004 vis-a-vis April-December, 2003 of PSU OMCs is as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

	April- December' 03	April- December' 04
IOC (including IBP)	5276	3831
HPC	1377	778
BPC	1281	615
Total	7934	5224

(e) to (g) From time to time Government have been receiving requests from PSU OMCs, including Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), for increasing in the prices of petroleum products, namely, petrol, diesel, domestic LPG and PDS kerosene. Since the end of 2003, there has been an unprecedented, sharp and spiraling increase in international oil prices combined with considerable week-to-week and even day-to-day volatility. The Indian basket of crude oil touched an all-time high of US \$ 52.83 per bbl of 04.04.2005 compared to an average price of US \$ 27.96 per bbl in 2003-04 and US \$ 39.21 per bbl in 2004-05. The international prices of crude oil and petroleum products decisively impact domestic prices, but Government have been taking various measures to

substantially inure domestic consumers from high and volatile international prices. Oil sector PSUs have shared this burden. The Government continues to monitor the price situation.

[Translation]

Project/Proposals from State Finance and Development Corporation

7086. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation and National Scheduled Caste Finance and Development Corporation have received some proposals/projects from the Minorities Development and Finance Corporation of various States during the last three years;

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

(c) the details of the projects/proposals accorded approval by the Union Government and financial assistance allocated/released thereunder, State-wise; and

(d) the time by which the remaining projects of the States are likely to be accorded approval alongwith the reasons for delay therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. As per the lending policy of the National Minorities

Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) the State Channelising Agencies (SCAs) are required to furnish their proposals in the form of Annual Action Plans (AAP) at the beginning of each financial year. Based on Annual Action Plan, NMDFC decides the Annual Allocations for each of the SCAs. NMDFC has delegated the sanctioning authority to its SCAs for projects of individual beneficiaries. Statement-I showing allocations and disbursements made for the last three years by NMDFC is enclosed.

Statement-II showing details of the proposals received and funds released for the last three years in respect of National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) is enclosed. Clearance of pending proposals is an ongoing process in NSFDC. After appraisal of the proposals, they are placed before the projects Clearance Committee on regular basis for their clearance or seeking clarification from the State Channelising Agencies.

Statement I

State-wise/SCA-wise Allocation and Disbursement of Funds by NMDFC

(Amount in Rs. lakhs)

Sl.No.	States	SCAs	2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005	
			Allocations	Disbursements	Allocations	Disbursements	Allocations	Disbursements
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Andhra Pradesh	APSMFC	500.00	100.00	500.00	565.00	800.00	800.00
2.	Assam	AMDFC	100.00	0.00	100.00	50.00	150.00	0.00
3.	Bihar	BSMFC	563.00	196.60	500.00	500.00	800.00	800.00
4.	Chandigarh	CHCFDCL	36.48	0.00	50.00	12.71	50.00	6.00
5.	Chhattisgarh	CHSCSTDC	0.00	15.26	100.00	0.00	100.00	50.00
6.	Delhi	DSCSTDC	300.00	100.00	200.00	75.00	200.00	100.00
7.	Gujarat	GMFDC	926.00	700.00	900.00	600.00	900.00	100.00
8.	Himachal Pradesh	HPMFDC	50.00	33.00	50.00	50.00	150.00	150.00
9.	Haryana	HBCKN	212.00	156.76	175.00	150.00	275.00	275.00
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	JKSCSTDC	643.66	0.00	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
		JKWDC	150.00	117.60	200.00	200.00	350.00	341.19
11.	Jharkhand	JHSCSTDC	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
12.	Kerala	KBCDC	1025.00	1025.00	1025.00	1025.00	1750.00	1750.00
		KSCFFDC	200.00	100.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	55.00
		KSWDC	200.00	100.00	150.00	150.00	275.00	275.00
13.	Karnataka	KMDC	600.00	439.67	600.00	700.00	1137.50	1137.50
14.	Maharashtra	MAMDFC	1000.00	200.00	800.00	500.00	1000.00	1000.00
15.	Manipur	MTDC	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16.	Madhya Pradesh	MPBCMFC	150.00	50.00	200.00	50.00	200.00	150.00
		MPHDC	70.00	0.00	50.00	30.00	50.00	25.00
17.	Mizoram	MCAB	275.00	275.00	200.00	50.00	275.00	0.00
		ZIDCO	307.00	307.00	275.00	0.00	200.00	0.00
18.	Nagaland	NDC	300.00	150.00	300.00	200.00	300.00	300.00
		NHDC	75.00	18.75	50.00	50.00	100.00	100.00
19.	Orissa	ORSCSTFDC	188.00	50.00	150.00	20.00	150.00	53.35
20.	Pondicherry	PDBCMDC	25.00	21.75	25.00	8.50	25.00	10.00
21.	Punjab	BACKFINCO	280.00	50.00	250.00	50.00	350.00	350.00
22.	Rajasthan	RSCSTFDCC	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
		RJMDFC	200.00	30.00	150.00	50.00	150.00	150.00
23.	Tamil Nadu	TABCEDCO	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
		TCDW	100.00	25.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
		TAMCO	300.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	250.00	250.00
24.	Tripura	TSCDC	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00
25.	Uttaranchal	UMPFDC	0.00	25.00	100.00	0.00	150.00	0.00
26.	Uttar Pradesh	UPMDFC	1450.00	1282.00	1350.00	1178.25	1944.00	1944.00
27.	West Bengal	WBMDFC	2000.00	1600.00	1600.00	1750.00	2750.00	2750.00
Total			12306.14	7218.39	10900.00	8424.47	15431.50	13072.04

Statement II

Details of Proposals Pending, Received, Sanctioned, Rejected by NSFDC during the last three years and as on 31.03.05

Sl.No.	State Name	Application pending as on 31.3.02	2002-03			2003-04			2004-05			Cumulative Pending (As on 31.03.05)	No. of Schemes				
			Received	Sanctioned	Rejected	Application pending as on 31.3.03	Funds disbursed (Rs. in lakhs)	Received	Sanctioned	Rejected	Application pending as on 31.3.04			Funds disbursed (Rs. in lakhs)	Received	Sanctioned	Rejected
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0	31	28	0	3	3909.32	34	28	0	11	3487.39	18	18	11	2423.40	0
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
3.	Assam	0	18	6	0	12	0.00	0	1	11	0	0.00	4	0	0	0.00	4
4.	Bihar	1	12	9	1	3	0.00	0	0	3	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0
5.	Chhattisgarh	0	6	5	1	0	28.47	3	3	0	0	39.35	8	4	2	36.35	2
6.	Chandigarh	2	4	5	1	0	631.00	0	0	0	0	252.78	3	3	0	210.40	0
7.	Delhi	6	26	19	6	7	229.63	13	8	6	6	613.10	8	11	2	156.33	1
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	15.76	0	0	0	0	8.68	0	0	0	2.17	0
9.	Goa	1	2	3	0	0	680.85	0	0	0	0	1245.33	7	7	0	12.71	0
10.	Gujarat	1	10	10	1	0	261.38	2	2	0	0	93.05	5	5	0	140.03	0
11.	Himachal Pradesh	4	16	15	2	3	454.57	35	29	0	9	203.38	10	12	7	62.71	0
12.	Haryana	2	3	4	1	0	303.35	3	3	0	0	283.95	3	3	0	0.00	0
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	0	4	4	0	0	0.00	5	3	0	2	0.00	8	7	3	186.11	0
14.	Jharkhand	1	9	9	1	0	1233.35	6	6	0	0	414.75	25	9	10	1101.00	0
15.	Kerala	4	5	9	0	0	280.27	6	5	0	1	389.56	4	4	1	333.63	0
16.	Karnataka	9	75	48	34	2	1618.95	50	16	1	35	702.29	14	19	21	1156.25	9
17.	Maharashtra	20	125	95	35	15	1333.55	148	55	11	97	1333.08	39	28	106	2572.34	2
18.	Manipur*	9	8	8	0	0	98.05	4	3	1	0	0.00	3	3	0	0.00	0
19.	Mizoram*	23	1	1	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0
20.	Madhya Pradesh	7	23	21	3	6	6.00	9	11	4	0	0.00	14	12	2	0.00	0
21.	Orissa	2	4	5	1	0	140.71	0	0	0	0	73.98	0	0	0	0.00	0
22.	Pondicherry	2	11	13	0	0	0.00	5	5	0	0	24.02	0	0	0	0.00	0
23.	Punjab	1	0	0	1	0	99.77	7	7	0	0	32.45	4	4	0	68.08	0
24.	Rajasthan	1	2	2	0	1	3120.40	15	9	1	6	223.04	17	21	1	816.44	1
25.	Sikkim*	6	12	7	7	0	1.80	12	12	0	0	133.70	7	7	0	78.56	0
26.	Tamil Nadu	21	130	147	4	0	276.14	3	0	3	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0
27.	Tripura*	14	27	25	5	3	301.15	33	27	2	7	74.80	6	6	7	173.15	0
28.	Uttar Pradesh	1	44	44	1	0	749.80	18	14	0	4	863.41	20	20	4	957.40	9
29.	Uttaranchal	1	8	8	1	0	493.56	8	5	0	3	0.00	6	5	4	158.12	0
30.	West Bengal	1	25	25	1	0	2547.34	22	20	2	0	815.00	39	35	0	4057.95	4
	Total	96*	641	575	107	55	16007.17	441	270	45	181	11307.09	272	243	181	14713.13	29

Note: *The actual total of applications pending as on 31.03.02 is 140. However, after adjusting the 44 proposals (Manipur-9, Mizoram-23, Sikkim-4 and Tripura-8) concerning ST cases transferred to NSTFDC, the total has been taken as 96.

Beautification of Vardha Railway Station

7087. SHRI SURESH WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to beautify the Vardha railway station;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to formulate any scheme to construct platform and booking office on the North side of Vardha railway station; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Vardha is an 'A' category developed Model Station. All the required amenities as per norms have already been provided at this station.

(c) At present there is no proposal to further enhance number of platforms and booking office.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Offer of AIA Shares

7088. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to offer 20% to 25% of Air India (AI) and Indian Airlines (IA) shares to public;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the employees of both the airlines will also be offered shares; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The issue of an Initial Public Offerings for Air India and Indian Airlines is at a preliminary stage of discussion.

Gas Reserves in Tripura

7089. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

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

(a) whether ONGC has been suffering loss of about Rs. 200 crore per annum in Tripura due to its inability to sell huge recoverable gas reserves due to transportation problems;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to use this gas to avoid further loss to the company?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The present total production potential of the gas fields of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) in Tripura is 4.2 million standard cubic meters per day (MMSCMD) and the contracted quantity for sale through GAIL (India) Limited is only 1.47 MMSCMD, because of the lack of sufficient consumers. As a result, ONGC have been incurring losses, which are estimated (without reckoning allocation on over heads) at Rs. 29.34 cr., Rs. 55.32 cr. and Rs. 40.46 cr. (prov.) for the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05, respectively.

(c) In order to monetize ONGC's locked up assets in terms of the isolated gas pools in the State, Government have approved ONGC's equity participation in a Joint Venture Company for setting up a 750 MW combined Cycle Gas Turbine Power plant in Tripura. In this Joint Venture, the Govt. of Tripura, ONGC and M/s. Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Limited (IL&FS) are equity partners in the ratio of 24%, 26% and 50% respectively.

Opening of CNG and LPG Filling Stations

7090. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:
MS. INGRID MCLEOD:
SHRI AJIT JOGI:
SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:
SHRI GANESH SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government has formulated any policy about encouraging the use of CNG and LPG in vehicles;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the norms fixed for opening of CNG/LPG filling stations;

(d) the number of CNG/LPG filling stations in the country, State-wise;

(e) whether the Government proposes to open new CNG/LPG filling stations in the country during the next two years; and

(f) if so, the details alongwith locations thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Use of CNG and auto LPG is being encouraged to reduce pollution in various cities. Subject to availability of natural gas and necessary infrastructure, CNG is proposed to be introduced in various cities in phased manner. Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are also progressively introducing auto LPG at their retail outlets in different cities as per the demand.

(c) For setting up new outlets, the companies have to seek various statutory clearances such as explosive licence from Chief Controller of Explosives, clearance from local bodies, etc. It may be further noted that CNG/Auto LPG stations are primarily being set up at existing retail outlets. Apart from these, some CNG stations are being set up to cater to the fuel requirements of heavy vehicles and for filling CNG cascades which are directly operated by the companies.

(d) At present, Indraprastha Gas Limited is operating 133 CNG stations in Delhi and 2 stations in NOIDA, UP. Mahanagar Gas Limited is operating 105 CNG stations in Mumbai and 2 stations in the outskirts of Mumbai city. In Gujarat, 2 CNG stations are being run by oil PSUs, besides a few CNG outlets by some private/multinational companies.

As on 1.4.2005, 105 Auto LPG dispensing stations (ALDS) are in operation in the country, State-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(e) and (f) The Oil PSUs and the Joint Ventures promoted by them plan to set up about 70 CNG stations and 124 ALDS in different parts of the country in the next two years.

Statement

Auto LPG Dispensing Stations (ALDS) of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) as on 1.4.2005

States/UTs	Cities	Number of ALDS
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad	9
Andhra Pradesh	Tirupati	1
Delhi	Delhi	16
Gujarat	Ahmedabad	8
Karnataka	Bangalore	13
Kerala	Trivandrum	1
Madhya Pradesh	Indore	1
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	1
Maharashtra	Mumbai	21
Maharashtra	Pune	5
Maharashtra	Nasik	1
Rajasthan	Jaipur	2
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	14
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	1
Uttar Pradesh	Agra	1
West Bengal	Kolkata	8
Chandigarh	Chandigarh	2
Total		105

Dealers Commission

7091. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:
SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:
SHRI A.F.G. OSMANI:

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

(a) the rate of commission currently provided to the dealers on petrol and diesel;

(b) whether the Federation of All India Petroleum Traders has recently called a 24 hour strike throughout the country in protest against failure to raise the dealer's commission;

(c) if so, whether the Government has taken any steps to resolve the issue of dealer's commission;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The current rate of dealers commission on petrol and diesel is Rs. 707 per KL and Rs. 425 per KL respectively.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Federation of All India Petroleum Traders (FAIPT) called for closure of all petrol pumps in the country from midnight of 17th April 2005 to midnight of 18th April 2005. However, during this period all company owned company operated (COCOs) and jubilee retail outlets were in operation to meet customer demand.

FAIPT have raised a number of demands, including increases in dealer commissions.

(c) to (e) The issue of increase in the commissions paid to MS and HSD dealers is under the consideration of Oil Marketing Companies and the Government.

Fund to Karnataka for Organizing Mahamastak-Abhisheka

7092. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has sought financial assistance from the Union Government for organizing Mahamastakabhisheka at Shravanabelagola in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details are as under:

Sl.No.	Details of works to be carried out	Amount in lakhs
1.	Security services at Vindhyagiri and Chandragiri hill	62.00
2.	Redesign of entrance gate and paving of entrance area Vindhyagiri hill	6.50
3.	Railing for visitor's movement in the courtyard in front of tourism office	3.20
4.	Palki arrangement at the base of the hill	2.00
5.	Developing seating area and providing benches	4.00
6.	Incoming and outgoing signage and directional signage	2.00
7.	Redesign of office and redesign of Hundi	1.50
8.	Provision of toilets and drinking water	3.00
Total		84.20

(c) Since the proposal relates to creation of facilities for the tourists on the occasion of Mahamastak-Abhisheka Ceremony, the proposal has been sent to Ministry of Tourism, as Ministry of Culture has no suitable scheme for this.

[Translation]

Import of Petroleum Products

7093. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

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

(a) whether petroleum products were imported during 2004-2005;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the quantity and value thereof, product-wise; and

(c) the share of public and private companies in the said import?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The details alongwith the quantity and value of petroleum products imported by PSUs and private companies during 2004-05 is given below.

2004-05 (Prov.)		
	Quantity in Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT)	Value (Rs. Crore)
1	2	3
Products		
<i>PSU</i>		
LPG	2138.747	4,055.127
Petrol	233.099	500.761
Naphtha	251.578	469.976
Avia. Petrol	3.156	14.185
Kerosene	210.364	429.195
Diesel	703.408	1,422.289
Fuel Oil	314.289	304.175
MTBE	22.117	43.071
Sub Total	3876.668	7,238.780
<i>PRIVATE/DIRECT</i>		
Propane	588.000	986.938
LPG	223.468	399.486
Naphtha	1962.024	3,559.331
Diesel (HSD)	162.823	257.382

1	2	3
Lobs	538.087	928.628
Fuel Oil/LSHS	446.768	405.481
CBFS	153.099	119.579
Bitumen	21.105	16.673
Coke	43.774	15.020
RPO	11.377	10.046
Paraffin Wax	0.210	0.289
LSWR (RIL)	844.590	1,012.020
Sub Total	4995.325	7,710.875
Total Products Import	8871.993	14,949.656

Oil Production by IOC

7094. SHRI NITISH KUMAR:
SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA:

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

(a) whether the responsibility of oil production in certain areas of the country is being fulfilled by the Indian Oil Corporation;

(b) if so, the areas where crude oil is being produced by the corporation;

(c) the quantum of increase in crude oil production in these areas during the last three years;

(d) the average cost of production of crude oil produced by the Indian Oil Corporation in the country during 2003-2004 and 2004-2005;

(e) whether the crude oil so produced was sold to the oil refineries at par with the prices of imported oil; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation

Limited (IOC) is not engaged on its own in the production of crude oil. However, IOC is pursuing exploration activities, in joint ventures with other national and private oil companies, in the following blocks in the country:—

1. NELP Blocks

- (i) MB-OSN-97/4, Shallow water, Mumbai Offshore (IOC-30%, ONGC-70%)
- (ii) GV-ONN-97/1, Onland, Ganga Valley, Uttar Pradesh (IOC-30%, ONGC-40%, Cairn Energy-30%)
- (iii) MB-OSN-2000/1, Shallow water, Mumbai Offshore (IOC-15%, ONGC-75%, GSPC-10%)
- (iv) MN-OSN-2000/2, Shallow water, Mahanadi Offshore (IOC-20%, ONGC-40%, GAIL-20%, OIL-20%)
- (v) MN-ONN-2000/1, Onland, Mahanadi basin (IOC-20%, ONGC-20%, GAIL-20%, OIL-40%)
- (vi) WB-OSN-2000/1, Shallow water, West Bengal (IOC-15%, ONGC-85%)
- (vii) MB-DWN-2000/1, Mumbai Offshore (IOC-15%, ONGC-85%)
- (viii) MB-DWN-2000/2, Mumbai Offshore (IOC-15%, ONGC-50%, GAIL-15%, OIL-10%, GSPC-10%)
- (ix) AA-ONN-2001/2, Mizoram (IOC-20%, ONGC-80%)

Except for the block MN-ONN/2000/1 where Oil is the operator, all other blocks are being operated by ONGC.

2. Col Bed Methane (CBM) Blocks

- (i) BK-CBM-2001/1, Jharkhand (IOC-20%, ONGC-80%)
- (ii) NK-CBM-2001/1, Jharkhand (IOC-20%, ONGC-80%)

ONGC is the operator for both the CBM blocks.

3. Farm-In Blocks

- (i) Block APP-ON-94/1 (Assam-Arunachal Pradesh) (IOC-27%, Premier Oil-38% & Operator, HOEC-25%, OIL-10%)

- (ii) Block CR-ON-90/1 (Lower Assam) (IOC-35%, Premier Oil-49% & Operator, Essar Oil-16%)

(c) As exploration efforts are continuing in these blocks, crude oil production is yet to start.

(d) to (f) Do not arise in view of (c) above.

Fake Rail Tickets Racket

7095. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fake rail tickets racket has been unearthed recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in the matter;

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(e) the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) One case was detected in December 2004 at Bharuch Reservation Office, under Vadodara Division of Western Railway where refunds were granted fraudulently by way of cancellation of fake tickets. A case of sale of fake tickets for general bogies was also detected at Patna in February 2005. Some outsiders were nabbed from the unreserved booking counter campus of Patna Junction who were in possession of the fake Railway tickets.

(c) to (e) The relevant records including the suspected forged tickets were delivered to the Railway Protection Force, Vadodara for further enquiry. The suspected officials have been placed under suspension.

Government Reserve Police (GRP) Patna is investigating the second case. Two Railway officials have been taken up under Disciplinary Action and transferred from their respective places of working to some other places.

[English]

Creation of Posts

7096. SHRI JUAL ORAM:
SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal for creation of additional posts in higher ranks in the Defence forces; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Creation of posts is a dynamic process and is undertaken when functional justification is established and also as a part of restructuring of the cadres from time to time. Based on the functional requirements, proposals for creation or upgradation of posts are prepared by the Service headquarters in various ranks including higher ranks and submitted to the Government for sanction.

Demand for Control and Management of Taj

7097. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA:
SHRI RANEN BARMAN:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sunni Waqf Board of U.P. has demanded control and management of the Taj on account of its being a Graveyard as reported in *Hindustan Times* dated March 19, 2005;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir. The Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board has issued a notice for registration of Maqbara Shahjahan and Mumtaz Mahal property known as "Taj Mahal, Agra" under the provision of Section 36 of the Wakf Act, 1995. (Central Act 43 of 1995).

(b) and (c) The Central Government is of the view that the notice to declare Taj Mahal as a Waqf property

is illegal, without jurisdiction and contrary to the provisions of the said Act. The Taj Mahal was notified as a protected monument in the United Province Gazette on 22.12.1920 under the provisions of Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904. The Taj Mahal has also been inscribed as a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. Therefore any such attempts on the part of the Sunni Waqf Board would be treated as interference in the management of a centrally protected monument owned and maintained by Archaeological Survey of India.

[*Translation*]

Demolition in Deolali Cantonment Area 27520

7098. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether houses of some of the land owners in Deolali cantonment area have been demolished by the concerned authorities;

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

(c) whether the Government has taken any step to provide relief to the permanent dwellers of the cantonment area; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Some unauthorized constructions carried out by the property owners have been demolished by the Cantonment Board after following due process of law.

(b) The details are enclosed as statement.

(c) There is no provision in the Cantonments Act, 1924 to provide relief for demolition of unauthorized constructions.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement

Details of cases of unauthorized construction demolished by the Cantonment Board, Devali

Sl.No.	Name of the Owner/ Builder S/Shri	Location	Description of unauthorized Construction demolished and Reasons	Category of land
1	2	3	4	5
1.	P.D. Shah	Lam Road, Rev. Sy. No. 41-A/1A/ 6A & 42/A-2 of Belatgaon	Demolished the RCC slabs/ walls of 11 shops admeasuring approx. 1408 Sq. Ft. which violated the permissible FSI.	Private land

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Sevaram H. Chawla	Sansari Lane No. 11	Demolished one room admeasuring approx. 339 Sq. Ft. which was used for office purpose constructed adjacent to compound wall, which was the violation of Cantonment Board rules.	Private Land
3.	Smt. S.P. Kadam	Main Street Sadar Bazar H.No. 358/359	Demolished the RCC slab alongwith walls admeasuring approx. 382 Sq. Ft. of 2nd floor, which was being used for commercial purpose. It violated the permissible FSI & old grant terms.	Old grant
4.	Smt. Sultanaa Ahmed Maniar	Main street Sadar Bazar H.No. 360/361	Demolished the parapet wall of ht. 3.3" which was constructed without any permission of the competent authority.	Free hold
5.	Shri S.S. Balani & others	Rest Camp Road Opp. Devi Mandir Rev. Sy. No. 353/A-2	Demolished the Store Room & Toilet admeasuring approx. 86 Sq. Ft. which violated the permissible FSI.	Private land
6.	Smt. Jasbir Kaur Gurusharan Ismar	Satyavinayak Society, Rev. Sy. No. 5-1/B-Plot No at Vijay Nagar.	Demolished 4 shops admeasuring approx. 443 Sq. Ft. which was being used for commercial purpose and violated the permissible FSI.	Private land
7.	Smt. Geetabai Sakharam Shelke	Sainik Sty. Road, Vijay Nagar	Demolished one shop admeasuring approx. 280 Sq. Ft. which was used for commercial purpose and violated the permissible FSI.	Private land.

[English]

Study Conducted by RITES in Nepal

7099. SHRI UDAY SINGH:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

(a) whether the feasibility study conducted by RITES in Nepal's ailing railway system has been hit by Maoist guerrillas as reported in the *Statesman* dated April 17, 2005;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(c) whether the expensive equipments of RITES have been stolen;

(d) if so, whether the Government has taken up the matter with the Nepal authorities in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) There have been an incidence of snatching away of survey instruments from RITES survey team and threats by Maoist group on 25.02.2005 near Ramnagar Birta in Nepal. The survey work has since been suspended until a more secure environment is restored.

(d) and (e) The matter has been taken up with Nepal Authorities at the appropriate level to make arrangements for safety and security of the survey officials and to recover the survey instruments.

Operation of Thai Airways in India

7100. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposals from Thai Airways International for operation of their flights to other destinations in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Crash Proof Test for Passenger Coach

7101. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has conducted first crash proof Coach;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the time schedule worked out for its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Indian Railways are trying

to design a coach in which the loss to passengers in the event of a collision can be reduced. It would perhaps be more appropriate to call it a 'Crash Worthy' Coach rather than a 'Crash proof Coach. As a part of this exercise a Crash test was conducted on 29.3.2005.

(b) Data obtained from this testing is being studied and after that conclusions will be drawn from this test.

(c) Under this project Crashworthy designs of 'Second Class' and 'Second Class, Guard & Luggage' type of coaches are being developed first. It is expected that these designs will be used in construction of new coaches from 2006-07.

[Translation]

Economic Development of Socially Backward Classes

7102. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
MOHD. SHAHID:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has reviewed the action plan and target for economic development of people belonging to the socially backward classes during the Tenth Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of concerted efforts and programmes on developmental policies to protect the socially backward classes, minorities and other backward classes from exploitation and discrimination;

(d) the details of funds provided to generate more employment opportunities during the year 2004-05, State-wise;

(e) whether the funds allocated under the schemes has been fully utilized; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The programmes are constantly reviewed by the Ministry from time to time to ensure that the benefits reach the target

group. The following schemes for the welfare of backward classes and minorities are being implemented by the Government:

- (i) Pre-matric Scholarships for OBC Students;
- (ii) Post-matric Scholarships for OBC Students;
- (iii) Hostels for OBC Boys & Girls;
- (iv) Assistance to Voluntary Organisations working for the welfare of OBCs;
- (v) Pre-examination Coaching for SCs, OBCs and Minorities;
- (vi) Educational scheme of Central Wakf Council (CWC);
- (vii) Loan Schemes of National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC);
- (viii) Loan schemes of National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC);

(d) The details regarding funds released by NBCFDC and NMDFC during 2004-05 to generate employment opportunities for backward classes and minorities, respectively, are given in the enclosed Statement.

(e) and (f) Utilisation certificates for the amount released during a financial year are submitted by the State Governments/UT Administrations/other implementing agencies in the succeeding year and utilization certificates for the amount released during 2004-05 have not yet been received.

Statement

Funds Released by NBCFDC and NMDFC during 2004-05 to Generate Employment Opportunities for Backward Classes and Minorities

Sl.No.	Name of the State	Funds provided during the year 2004-05 (Rs. in lakhs)	
		NBCFDC	NMDFC
1	2	3	4
States			
1.	Andhra Pradesh	250.00	800.00
2.	Assam	80.20	150.00

1	2	3	4
3.	Bihar	170.00	800.00
4.	Chhattisgarh	108.19	100.00
5.	Gujarat	350.00	900.00
6.	Goa	28.45	0.00
7.	Haryana	175.00	275.00
8.	Himachal Pradesh	260.00	150.00
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	40.60	600.00
10.	Jharkhand	0.00	100.00
11.	Karnataka	1000.00	1138.00
12.	Kerala	1697.50	2175.00
13.	Madhya Pradesh	148.75	250.00
14.	Manipur	0.00	50.00
15.	Maharashtra	1950.00	1000.00
16.	Mizoram	0.00	475.00
17.	Nagaland	0.00	400.00
18.	Orissa	50.00	150.00
19.	Punjab	200.00	350.00
20.	Rajasthan	293.40	150.00
21.	Sikkim	257.90	0.00
22.	Tamil Nadu	800.00	250.00
23.	Tripura	99.03	50.00
24.	Uttar Pradesh	616.00	1944.00
25.	Uttaranchal	52.75	150.00
26.	West Bengal	600.00	2750.00
UTs			
27.	Chandigarh	24.70	50.00
28.	Delhi	50.00	200.00
29.	Pondicherry	50.00	25.00

*[English]***Incentives to Private Vendors**

7103. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provides incentives to private vendors for developing substitutes for imported defence supplies and subsidise the R&D of vendors; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) There is no scheme of providing incentives to private vendors for developing substitutes for imported defence supplies nor is any subsidy given for R&D. However, private vendors are encouraged to take part in development and production of systems developed by DRDO by associating them at development stage and paying them through development contracts. Annual awards are given to the best industry, public or private, for excellence in production of indigenously manufactured defence items.

*[Translation]***Films on Great Personalities**

7104. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prasar Bharati has disbanded the scheme to screen the films made on the lives of great personalities; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that Doordarshan telecasts feature films on its national and regional channels on a regular basis. Films on eminent national leaders are also telecast from time to time. Films on Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh and Jai Prakash Narayan are some such films telecast in recent months.

*[English]***Allotment of Refreshment Room at Station**

7105. SHRI BRIJBHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Railway allotted a Refreshment Room at Karjat Railway Station;

(b) if so, the terms & conditions of allotment including licence fees;

(c) whether it is a fact that two service counters stalls were also offered in the advertisement published at the time of inviting tenders of the refreshment room;

(d) if so, the terms & conditions for allotment of these service counters;

(e) if not, the manner in which the contractor has been allowed to run 2 service counters unauthorizedly in connivance with the railway officials;

(f) the action taken against official found guilty;

(g) whether it is also a fact that 10 train side vendors were allowed to run such contractors;

(h) if so, the terms & conditions for the same;

(i) whether separate licence fee is being charged for the same; and

(j) if not, the officials responsible for such lapses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The allotment was made to a Scheduled Caste candidate on 31.12.1986 as per prevailing terms and conditions on the basis of applications since no tendering process was in vogue at that time. The initial licence fee was fixed at Rs. 10,000/per annum.

(c) to (f) After the commencement of licence, the licensee had requested for two service tables as the same was permitted to the previous licensee of the refreshment room. The licensee was permitted one service table at Down Platform No. 1 with the condition that the licensee will sell the items permitted in refreshment room through this service counter during the train timings only. Since only one service table was allotted to the new licensee

instead of two tables permitted to the previous licensee, no undue favour has been shown to this new licensee and hence no official is found guilty of undue favour.

(g) and (h) The licensee had applied for permission for train side vending along with extra vendors. The permission was granted for train side vending within existing strength of vendors initially. Thereafter the matter was further reviewed and in order to curb the unauthorized vending and to provide adequate services both in refreshment room as well as on the train side vending, additional 10 vendors were permitted. No new terms and conditions were imposed.

(i) and (j) The licence fee is assessed on overall sales turnover of the unit. The licence fee was revised from time to time and as on date the licence fee is Rs. 1,10,820/- per annum based on the sales turnover.

Gauge Conversion of VM-VKM-KPD Section

7106. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to convert Metre Gauge section VM-VKM-KPD into Broad Gauge;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the work is likely to start;

(c) whether there is any proposal to shift a part of the said track during conversion to the VPM-TAJ chord line; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Gauge conversion of Villupuram-Katpadi (161 kms) Metre Gauge line has already been sanctioned and work has also started.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Renovation of Metre-Gauge Tracks of Barak Valley

7107. SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the Metre-Gauge tracks in Barak Valley have become very old and currently in absolute worn out condition due to negligence and lack of proper maintenance and timely renovation;

(b) if so, when the metre gauge tracks of Barak Valley were last renovated and the reasons for not doing the renovation work timely; and

(c) the amount spent on maintenance of tracks/renovation of this sector during each of the last three years, section-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The track in Barak Valley is not in worn out condition.

Repair and maintenance of Railway track is an on-going process. Maintenance works are carried out regularly depending upon the need. For ensuring safety of traffic, track is inspected regularly and corrective action taken promptly wherever required. Speed restrictions are also imposed for ensuring safety, if the situation so warrants. Track renewals are also undertaken based on age-cum-condition basis and subject to availability of funds.

(b) A total of 62.33 km. of track was renewed during 2004-05 in Metre Gauge track of Barak Valley.

(c) The amount spent during last three years on renovation of Metre-Gauge (MG) Track in Barak Valley is as under:

Year	Utilization of fund (Fig. in thousand of rupees)
2002-03	37691
2003-04	37906
2004-05	69929

[Translation]

Reserved Quota of SC/ST/OBCs.

7108. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reserved quota for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe and OBC has been filled in three major companies of public sector i.e. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd., and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd;

(b) if not, the percentage of reserved quota filled so far;

(c) whether the Government proposes to launch a drive to fill the vacant reserved posts;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) The reservation policy of the Government for providing jobs to SCs/STs & OBCs is being followed in all the three major oil Companies mentioned viz., IOC, BPCL & HPCL. Wherever there is any shortfall, due care is taken to fill the same in accordance with Government Directives issued from time to time.

The shortfall (as on 31.3.2005) and action initiated by Companies is as follows:

IOCL:

Group	Shortfall			
	Strength	SC	ST	OBC
A	972	0	2	30
C	1158	6	0	0
D	589	0	16	34

The shortfall in Group A will be reduced considerably after 77 officer join in May, 2005 for which offers of appointment have been issued in April, 2005. The shortfall of SC in Group C is expected to be liquidated in the course of the regular recruitment exercise. As per companies' requirements, no recruitment is being made at present in Group D except in the case of employment on compassionate grounds. As and when the requirements arise, efforts will be made to wipe off the shortfall.

BPCL:

Group	Shortfall			
	Strength	SC	ST	OBC
A	3701	7	10	48
B	2636	0	1	299
C	2978	0	16	288
D	2714	0	11	396

To clear the shortfall of ST category in Group A, a special drive was launched in November, 2004 and the candidates are likely to join by June 2005. The process to clear the backlog of SC category is underway.

As regards Groups B, C, & D, there are no vacancies at present. As and when vacancies arise, necessary action will be taken to clear the shortfall.

HPCL:

There is no shortfall in SC & ST category. However, there is a shortfall in OBC category.

There is shortfall in OBC category in all the companies primarily due to a very limited recruitment after the introduction of 27% OBC reservation from September, 1993 onwards. However, due care is being taken to clear the backlog as and when vacancies arise.

[English]

Air Services Bilateral Agreement with Qatar

7109. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Qatar have reviewed their air services bilateral agreement; and

(b) if so, the salient features of the new agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. An Air Services Agreement between India and Qatar which was initialled on 24th June, 2002 has been formally signed on 14th April, 2005. The Agreement between India and Qatar permits either side to designate more than one airline or airlines to operate air services between the two countries. Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Trivandrum & Hyderabad are given as points of call to the Qatari side. Indian side has been given liberal intermediate and beyond points with fifth freedom rights in exchange.

Renaming of Radio Stations

7110. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to rename all the Radio Stations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the objectives behind renaming the all India Radio Stations?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir. However, as a trial measure, some of the channels of AIR stations in Delhi and Rajasthan have been renamed.

(b) and (c) It was felt necessary to provide distinguishing identification to different channels of some of All India Radio stations in Delhi and Rajasthan, details of which are given below:

1. AIR, Delhi-A, as Indraprastha Channel
2. AIR, Delhi-B, as Rajdhani Channel
3. FM Channels of AIR, Delhi as FM Rainbow & FM Gold
4. Primary Chanel of AIR, Jaipur as Amer Channel
5. Vividh Bharati Channel of AIR, Jaipur as FM Radio Pink City
6. Primary Channel of AIR, Jodhpur as Surya Nagri Channel
7. Vividh Bharati Channel of AIR, Jodhpur as FM Suncity Channel
8. AIR, Udaipur as Lake City Channel
9. AIR, Suratgarh as Cotton City Channel
10. AIR, Kota as Chambal Channel
11. AIR, Sawaimadhopur as Ranthambhore Channel
12. AIR, Jaisalmer as Golden City Channel
13. AIR, Chittorgarh as Meera Channel
14. AIR, Alwar as Sariska Channel
15. AIR, Banswara as Mahi Channel
16. AIR, Nagaur as Chirmee Channel
17. AIR, Churu as Shekhawati Channel
18. AIR, Bikaner as Dhola Maru Channel
19. AIR, Barmer as Malani Channel

20. AIR, Jhalawar as Chandrabhaga Channel

21. AIR, Mount Abu as Guru Shekhar Channel

Leasing of Aircraft by IA

7111. SHRI SURESH ANGADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines pilots have objected to dry leasing of Boeing 767;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Indian Airlines pilots are not conversant with Boeing 767; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to train them to fly these aircrafts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indian Commercial Pilots Association has indicated that Boeing 767 is an aircraft of old technology.

(c) and (d) Indian Airlines has invited proposal from different training centres for imparting training to its pilots on Boeing 767 aircraft, if and when it is inducted in the fleet.

[Translation]

Latest Equipments to RPF

7112. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has decided to equip the Railway Protection Force personnel with State-of-the-art weapons in the next five years as appeared in the 'Hindustan' dated April 23, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action plan formulated by the Government for the purpose;

(c) the estimated expenditure to be incurred on the said action plan; and

(d) the funds proposed to be spent by the Government on the said action plan during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to equip Railway Protection Force with new modern and compact weapons like AK-47 and 5.56 millimetre Indian Small Arms System Rifles, Carbines 9mm and 5.56 millimetre Light Machine Guns (Indian Small Arms System) by phasing out the old and obsolete weapons like the Bolt Action Rifles, 410" Muskets, 9mm Sten Guns, 455" Revolvers in the next five years.

(b) During the year 2004-2005, 1,000 numbers of 5.56 millimetre Indian Small Arms System Rifles and 500 numbers of 9mm Carbines along with accoutrements costing Rs. 3.58 crore have been procured and its supply is under way. For the year 2005-2006, demand for 1,000 numbers of 5.57 millimetre Rifles (Indian Small Arms System), 62 numbers of 5.56 millimetre Light Machine Guns (Indian Small Arms System) and 953 numbers of 9mm Carbines has been placed. An additional 7,000 numbers of AK-47s and 5.56 millimetre (Indian Small Arms System) Rifles as well as 2,000 Carbines are to be inducted. The full induction is likely to be completed within the next 5 years, i.e. by 2009-2010.

(c) the estimated expenditure on the said action plan will be Rs. 15.55 crore approximately.

(d) The funds proposed to be spent by the Government on the said action plan during the current financial year 2005-06 is Rs. 4.74 crore approximately.

[English]

LPG on Concessional Rates

7113. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is providing LPG gas at concessional rates to educational/social institutes and religious places;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the revenue losses suffered every year by the Government by providing LPG gas at concessional rate?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At present, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are supplying subsidised LPG to domestic as well as certain non-domestic exempted category of customers like schools and colleges, government hospitals, para-military and defence establishments, canteens running under the Co-operative Societies Act and charitable institutions registered under the Societies Act.

(c) The total estimated under-recovery suffered by OMCs in respect of subsidised LPG for the year 2004-05 is Rs. 8362. crore.

Funds Provided and Utilised for Rail Projects

7114. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress of the work by East Coast Railway Zone during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 of different projects; and

(b) the funds provided and utilised so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The project-wise financial progress during 2004-05 along with the budget outlay provided during 2005-06 and the expenditure incurred up to 31/03/2005 (provisional) since the commencement of work on various on-going New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling projects under East Coast Railway are as given under:

Sl.No.	Name of the Project	Financial progress during 2004-05 (% age) with respect to outlay 2004-05	Budget Outlay provided during 2005-06 (Rs. in crore)	Provisional Expenditure incurred upto 31/03/2005 (Rs. in crore)
1	2	3	4	5
<i>New Line</i>				
1.	Daitari-Banspani (155 Kms)	91.89	128.61	461.99
2.	Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh (56 Kms)	34.25	8.00	21.19

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Khurda Road-Bolangir (289 Kms)	54.42	10.00	36.52
4.	Haridaspur-Paradeep (82 Kms)	90.16	20.00	29.52
5.	Angul-Sukinda Road (98.7 Kms)	5.00	0.10	0.76
6.	Talcher-Bimlagarh (154 Kms)	0.00	5.00	0.00
<i>Gauge Conversion</i>				
1.	Naupada-Gunupur (90 Kms)	84.33	5.00	28.30
<i>Doubling</i>				
1.	Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghnathpur (43 Kms)	134.73	8.97	151.50
2.	2nd Bridges on Mahanadi & Birupa (3 Kms)	10.92	28.60	20.83
3.	Lanjigarh-Titlagarh (47 Kms)	81.00	10.00	95.59
4.	Rajathgarh-Barang (20 Kms)	10.66	30.00	1.60
5.	Khurda Road-Puri (Phase-I) 15.3 Kms)	88.10	10.00	33.11
6.	Sambalpur-Rengali (22.7 Kms)	19.40	10.70	4.34
7.	Jharsuguda-Rengali (25.6 Kms)	*	7.00	*
8.	Cuttack-Barang (12 Kms)	33.65	30.00	6.73
9.	Khurda Road-Barang 3rd Line (35 Kms)	81.70	30.00	8.17

*Jharsuguda-Rengali doubling work has been included in the Budget 2005-06.

The Budget for 2005-06 has just been passed by the Parliament. Project-wise financial progress during 2005-06 is not yet known.

Community Kitchen Scheme

7115. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

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

(a) whether the Government is considering to introduce Community Kitchen Scheme in order to expand the use of LPG;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the States where the said scheme is likely to be introduced; and

(d) the time by which it will be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have already introduced the scheme of community kitchens in 22 States with the help of local village communities/panchayats with a view to increasing LPG coverage in rural areas and promoting the use of LPG by economically weaker sections of the society. This scheme is also being implemented in Hospitals, Schools (for Mid-day Meal Schemes) and in forest locations. OMCs plan to set up community kitchens in 1.40 lakh villages all over the country. The community kitchens are set up in keeping with local requirements. Hence, no time frame has been authorised for setting them up.

*[Translation]***Violation of International Air Zone by Pakistan**

7116. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether incidents of violation of international air zone norms adjacent to Pakistani border by Pakistani military aircrafts are on the rise;

(b) if so, number of incidents of violations committed by Pakistan this year, month-wise; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) A total number of three incidents of violation of the Indian airspace by Pakistan's military aircraft have been observed in this year. One such incident occurred in January, 2005 while the remaining two occurred in March, 2005.

The required Air Defence measure are initiated depending upon the situation. Protests are also lodged with the concerned country through diplomatic channels.

[English]

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Science and Technology Project on Mission Mode

7117. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ministry implements "Science and Technology Project in Mission Mode" for developing appliances for the benefit of persons with disabilities;

(b) if so, the details and objectives thereof;

(c) the kind of assistance provided under the project;

(d) the funds provided to the scientific institutions, autonomous bodies, research laboratories and R&D engineers for development of suitable assertive devices during each of the last three years and the current year; and

(e) the number of persons benefited by this project during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Ministry implements the 'Science and Technology Project in Mission Mode' to coordinate, fund and direct application of technology in development and utilization of suitable and cost effective aids, and appliances and methods of education and skill development for persons with disabilities, which can lead to enhancement of opportunities for employment, easier living and mobility, communication, recreation and integration in society.

(c) and (d) Financial assistance is provided to Research & Development Institutes, Public Sector Undertakings, Educational bodies and other Scientific establishments of Government and Non-Governmental Organizations for undertaking suitable research work leading to the fulfilment of above objectives. The year-wise funds disbursed during the last three years and current is as under:

Year	Funds disbursed
2002-03	Rs. 82.84 lakhs
2003-04	Rs. 99.36 lakhs
2004-05	Rs. 36.49 lakhs

(e) The scheme leads to development of Technology/new type of aids and appliances, the impact of which is more qualitative.

*[English]***Porter Service**

27540

7118. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether porter services are available at all the stations;

(b) if so, the total number of porters, zone-wise;

(c) whether any steps have been taken to increase the number of porters in Western Railways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Licensed porters are available on all the important stations on Indian Railways. Number of licensed porters working zone-wise are Central-2500, Eastern-5397, East Central-3956, East Coast-1457, Northern-6726, North Central-1833, North Eastern-1274, Northeast Frontier-2688, North Western-999, Southern-2431, South Central-2458, South Eastern-1123, South East Central-963, South Western-550, Western-2431 and West Central-894.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Communication System at Manned Level Crossings

7119. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the manned level crossings in the Railways have the communication system;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to involve both private and public sector companies to help the upgradation of the communication system of the manned level crossings; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Out of total 16607 manned Level Crossing gates, 15568 have been provided with Telephone. Work is under progress on the balance gates where communication is required.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Cooperation with Yemen in Oil Sector

7120. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any arrangement has been signed between India and Yemen for cooperation in oil sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to implement it?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Bilateral discussions were held during the 5th session of the Indo-Yemen Joint Committee Meeting held in Sana'a between the 15th and 17th January, 2005. Indian Public Sector oil companies have shown interest in exploration and production blocks in Yemen; modernisation of the Aden Refinery and the proposed Hydrocracker Project, sourcing of natural gas from Yemen; and LNG liquefaction plants in Yemen. It has been decided, inter alia, to form a Joint Technical Committee to discuss co-operation in all sector of hydrocarbons.

Stretcher Facilities

7121. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Air passengers on stretchers get a raw deal' appearing in the Times of India dated March 24, 2005;

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

(c) whether the public sector Airlines in India are considering to withdraw the stretcher facilities; and

(d) if so, the alternative facilities proposed to be provided to stretcher users?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The press report refers to a new regulation which makes it mandatory for airlines operating from European Countries to pay heavy compensations to its passengers for flight delays. Since the flights normally get delayed in order to accommodate stretcher patients, it has been apprehended that this delay may result into withdrawal of stretcher services by the Airlines operating from European countries.

(c) Air India and Indian Airlines have no plans to withdraw the stretcher facilities in their aircraft.

(d) Does not arise.

Role of Panchayat Bodies in Rural Development

7122. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has set up a Committee to focus on role of Panchayat bodies in rural development;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken to strengthen implementation of rural development schemes at the ground level; and

(d) the efforts being made to create awareness among the elected representatives of Panchayats?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No Sir. However, a Group of Ministers has been constituted to discuss this and related subjects.

(b) Does not arise

(c) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has examined the list of approximately 300 schemes listed in Volume-II of the Expenditure Budget 2004-05 which, in the explanatory notes, itemizes, *inter alia*, the various Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The overwhelming majority of these schemes are related to the 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule. In most Centrally Sponsored Schemes, there is considerable scope for recognizing the centrality of Panchayats in their implementation, in line with the letter and spirit of Parts IX of the Constitution, so as to empower them to function as "institutions of self-government" as per the provisions of Article 243G of the Constitution in respect of such schemes. These are among the issues that have been pursued through evolution of consensus in the series of seven Round Tables of Panchayati Raj Institutions organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

The Prime Minister has approved a suggestion from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj that all Ministries who are operating Centrally Sponsored Schemes should review their schemes in the light of Article 243G read with the Eleventh Schedule, with a view to incorporating into these Schemes, the Constitutional provisions in this regard in letter and spirit. It has also been decided that the Ministry

of Panchayati Raj should be consulted and their views incorporated in the notes prepared for consideration of Cabinet/Cabinet Committees in all cases relating to Centrally Sponsored Programmes/Schemes that have a bearing on decentralization. Cabinet Secretariat has accordingly issued instructions to all the Ministries on the 8th November, 2004 in this regard. Ministries are expected to take necessary action in this regard.

(d) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj extends assistance to States in meeting the challenge of imparting training to all the elected representatives and official functionaries in an effective and time-bound fashion. An important component of these training programmes is to make the elected members aware of the details of various Rural Development Schemes of the Central and State Govts. The seventh Round Table of Ministries in charge of Panchayati Raj examined in detail all aspects of training including creating awareness about schemes of rural development of the Central and the State Govts. The recommendations of the seventh Round Table are enclosed as Statement.

Statement

Seventh Round Table of Ministers in-Charge of Panchayati Raj—Jaipur, 17-19 December, 2004

IT enabled e-Governance

1. It is recognized that IT (Information Technology and Communication) is a *vital input of capacity* for Panchayats so that they can perform their constitutionally and legislatively mandated functions better.
2. IT ought to be primarily positioned as:
 - (i) a decision making support system for Panchayats themselves;
 - (ii) a total for transparency, disclosure of information to citizens social audit;
 - (iii) a means for better and convergent delivery of services to citizens;
 - (iv) a means for improving internal management and efficiency of Panchayats;
 - (v) a means for Capacity building of representatives and officials of the Panchayats;
 - (vi) an e-Procurement medium.

In this endeavour, the Round Table specifically proposes the following initiatives.

Process Re-engineering

3. All States shall undertake a time-bound exercise of process re-engineering in consonance with the activity mapping already being undertaken by them for the functions transferred to the Panchayats, with a view to moving the processes of decision making, implementation, disclosure to the public, delivery of services and reporting and dissemination of information to Panchayat representatives to an IT enabled environment.
4. In this exercise regard shall be had to avoid duplication of hardware and software initiatives by different State Government departments and agencies.
5. Considering the functional domain of Panchayats that potentially extends to 29 subject listed in the Eleventh Schedule, all e-Governance initiatives at the local level have to converge with the appropriate PRI as the nodal point.

Data Ownership

6. Such re-engineered processes shall ensure that the ownership of the data collected at the Panchayat level is with that level in the first instance, as the system becomes sustainable when those who use the data feel that they own it.
7. While owning the data, the Panchayat could also operate, outsource or provide space to IT enabled multi service kiosk centers that provide IT enabled services to the people, including those that fall within the functions of the Panchayats.
8. The Community Service Centers being rolled out by the Ministry of Information Technology at the Centre may be located in the Panchayat offices so that Panchayats services can also be delivered through these Common Services Centers (CSC).

Training

9. There has to be a systematic approach on training of staff and Panchayat Raj members through a cascading mode on use of IT.

10. The opportunities offered by the satellite connectivity provided through the ISRO, including EDUSAT, can be used for undertaking training,
11. While developing training material, regard shall be had to design user friendly approaches that can facilitate training of the illiterate or the neo-literate.

Software

12. Development of common software application packages with provision for appropriate customisation by states is preferred. In this connection, the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which being a government body present in all districts of the country and which has already done considerable software development for Panchayats, may be considered as the primary software provider.
13. It is recommended that NIC strengthens themselves at all levels and provided dedicated staff through creating a Panchayats informatics division, with a time bound mandate to develop e-Governance solutions to all levels of Panchayats. This will include the strengthening of the District Informatics Office of the NIC to support the District Planning Committee and the Panchayats.
14. The National Panchayat Portal developed by the NIC for the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to become the information hub that links up Panchayats, the State Government and the Central Government for sharing of information, experiences and best practices. As a first step, all State Governments may immediately link and port the content of their existing Panchayat Raj websites or portals to the National Panchayat Portal and all District, Intermediate and Village Panchayats can be enabled and facilitated to link up with the portal. The content can be regularly updated by the respective stake holders.
15. A repository of software solutions already developed by several states shall be maintained by the Ministry of Panchayat Raj or an institution nominated by it, so that they can be used by other states.

16. Software development shall be primarily undertaken in open source software, with Indian language interphase, so as to reduce cost of replication and licencing.

Hardware

17. States should consider specifying a framework for common standards for hardware and put in place a system for transparent procurement through competitive bidding.
18. Funds for acquisition of hardware could be dovetailed from various sources and could include.
- (i) infrastructure funds available in multilaterally funded projects,
 - (ii) Own incomes of Panchayats,
 - (iii) Funds recommended by the Finance Commission for the creation and maintenance of Databases,
 - (iv) Funds sourced from a fund to be created and managed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj,
 - (v) MP and MLA Local Area Development funds
 - (vi) Purchases based on systems of annuity based purchase.
19. Considering the present power situation in the country, while procuring hardware, special attention shall be paid to providing reliable and uninterrupted power supply to computer systems. Special emphasis shall be placed on renewable energy devices and systems that consumer less energy.

Infrastructure and connectivity

20. It is recommended that the NIC expands its communication network, NICNET, to link all Panchayats at all levels by using State Wide Area network funds provided by the Department of Information Technology, Government of India.
21. State Governments can approach ISRO for providing satellite based connectivity in all the states to enable connectivity of all Panchayats. The initial infrastructure cost could be considered to be met or supported by an infrastructure fund that could be operated by the Ministry of Panchayat Raj.

Operationalisation of the plan

22. The initiative of empowering Panchayats with IT capacity shall be treated on par with creating national infrastructure such as power, telecom and roads.
23. Formulate a mission mode/empowered committee mode for IT enabled automation of panchayat institutions with NIC and other solution providers, keeping in view the national e-governance action plan of the Government of India.

Capacity Building & Training

1. Training and communication ought to reach PRI functionaries and elected representatives, namely,
- (i) Gram Panchayat Members, Chairpersons and Office bearers,
 - (ii) Intermediate Panchayat Members, Chairpersons and Office bearers,
 - (iii) District Panchayat Members, Chairpersons and Office bearers,
 - (iv) All officials concerned at National, State, District, Intermediate & Village level; and
 - (v) Standing Committee members at all levels.
2. There should be special effort made towards sensitising the media, political parties, representatives in the legislatures, civil society organisations and citizens.
3. There must be special campaigns for mobilization of Gram Sabha members.
4. There must be special training for women, SC/ST representatives as well as first time entrants into the panchayat system within 3 months of their entry.
5. Training for PESA areas should be designed so as to have regard to the cultural traditions and special needs of tribal people.
6. Training and communication should not be viewed as a single one-time intervention but should be a continuous, ongoing process leading to enhanced sense of self esteem and confidence. Training should cover both the "before" and "after" election periods. Initial training and communication should reach all elected representatives within one year.

7. For those Panchayat members who need it, a functional literacy training course should be undertaken immediately after their elections.
8. The panchayats should be encouraged to have a sense of ownership of the training programmes and play a major role in designing content and mechanisms of training. To this end, there must be representation for Panchayat members in the governing boards of training institutions that cater to their needs.
9. Content of training should press on strategic and technical aspects and should be based on a systematic Training Needs Analysis arrived at through multi-stakeholder consultative workshops, which would precede the design of training modules and materials.
10. There should be a minimum core curriculum that is common across the States adapting to suit local contexts. Core curriculum should include:
 - (i) Vision on purna swaraj through Gram swaraj;
 - (ii) Principles of secularism, equality and human rights emanating from the Constitution of India;
 - (iii) Gender equity and social justice;
 - (iv) Status of human development;
 - (v) Poverty alleviation;
 - (vi) Participatory planning, implementation and monitoring;
 - (vii) Right to information and transparency; and
 - (viii) Social Audit;
 - (ix) Rules and regulations covering Panchayat raj.
11. Overall perspective of training must reinforce issues of social equity, gender sensitivity and justice among all participants in the process of governance through Panchayati Raj, including all levels of the bureaucracy.
12. Thematic curriculum should include:
 - (i) Human Resource Management,
 - (ii) Natural Resource Management,
 - (iii) Disaster Management,
 - (iv) Financial management, including own resource management and accounting,
 - (v) Sectoral approaches into providing basic human needs.
13. Training strategy should be inclusive, participative and interactive and a composite mix of various interventions:
 - (i) face-to-face participatory training;
 - (ii) exposure visits;
 - (iii) peer training/learning;
 - (iv) satellite training;
 - (v) radio/cassettes/films;
 - (vi) Traditional means of communication;
 - (vii) Newsletters, updates and digests of replies to Frequently Asked Questions;
 - (viii) Resource centers and Help Desks for Panchayats.
14. Training content and processes should be relevant to the ground reality of elected representatives. It should continue to develop and evolve based on feedback and impact assessment. Training should become a two way process so that feedback can help in reforming the content and process of training, as also result in systemic changes in panchayat and government functioning.
15. States should move towards formation of training networks and collectives to share experiences, learn from each other, and access material from each other. States should also institutionalise collaboration with Community based organisations at the State, District, and Block level.
16. Training should inspire elected representatives to form federations or collectives and facilitate them to voice their demands for genuine devolution and development.
17. Trained members should be encouraged to become resource persons for further training of panchayat representatives Peer to peer learning, both within and outside the state through regional

or national tie ups should be encouraged and supported.

18. Training should include exposure to best practices through visits to other Panchayats.
19. All open universities may tie up with IGNOU and build linkages with the SIRDs and other like institutions engaged in training and capacity building.
20. Training programmes shall be designed especially for the secretarial and technical staff working with Panchayats through institutions such as IGNOU. Such training programmes should lead to formal certification on achieving prescribed standards of learning.
21. Education in democracy and the constitutional role of panchayats as institutions of local self-government should be made part of school curricula.
22. It shall be the endeavour of the central government to provide in as short a time as possible a panchayat capacity building fund through the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, which could include a certain percentage of central transfers specially earmarked for that purpose. Similarly, state governments should also create a Panchayat Capacity Building Fund for periodic training.
23. There should be a national perspective plan on decentralized training and capacity building for all PRI functionaries with specific objectives, timeframe and resources.
24. States can benefit by the use of pedagogy and training techniques with information accessible to all. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj could develop a repository of training programmes, including training resources and manuals developed by the Commonwealth. Development of master modules in training in issues of gender, poverty, mass communication etc. could also be developed.
25. Independent training impact assessment studies should be periodically undertaken to assess the outcomes of training and inform emerging needs for follow up,

26. States shall work towards upgradation of training centers, such as SIRDs, and extension training centers at the districts, block level and below.

27. With respect to the training needs of Panchayat members from the Union territories and States with Sixth Schedule areas, the Government of India would identify as SIRD or a group of institutions that could undertake the training.

[*Translation*]

Theft of Scrap from Railway Godowns 2754

7123. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the absence of proper monitoring of railway godowns, a large quantity of old scrap is stolen;

(b) if so, whether the Government has received complaints about theft of scrap for railway godowns under Bhusawal Division of Railways; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) No theft of Railway scrap from railway godowns of Bhusawal Division has occurred. However from way side, 02 incidents of theft of railway scrap worth Rs. 4,34,880/- were reported over Bhusawal Division of Central Railway in the month of March, 2005. Both the cases were detected and stolen properties worth Rs. 1,09,420/- were recovered with arrest of 8 miscreants and cases have been registered under the Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1966.

Setting-up of NCC Units 27546

7124. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set-up units of National Cadet Corps in all Secondary and Sr. Secondary Schools in the country particularly in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

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

[English]

Allotment of Store Room

7125. SHRI BRIJBHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Western Railway has a policy to allot store-rooms to the Railway Canteen Contractors/stall-owners/dining car allottees;

(b) if so the details thereof and the details of contractors who have been allotted such store-rooms on Mumbai Central (Main Line) Railway Station;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some contractors/stall-owners/Dining Car Allottees have unauthorized possession of store-rooms at Mumbai Central (Main Line) Railway station in connivance with railway officers;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon; and

(e) the number of cases in which kitchen has also been allotted alongwith the store-rooms at Mumbai Central (Main Line) railway station to the contractors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 05 Store rooms have been allotted to:

- (i) M/s Maheshchand & Company
- (ii) M/s Shah Caterers
- (iii) M/s. Boon Caterers
- (iv) M/s. Boon Caterers
- (v) M/s Boon Caterers
- (c) No, Sir.
- (d) Does not arise.

(e) One store room with kitchen facility has been allotted to M/s. Boon Catering Company on 05.02.1997.

Operation of Old Steam Engines

7126. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway board has funded the project on the Technology Transfer of Oil Fired Steam Engines to run the old type of steam engines;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith its cost effectiveness;

(c) whether it is profitable when compared to the Diesel and Electric Locos;

(d) whether the old steam engines have been disposed of as scrap; and

(e) if not, how these old steam engines are proposed to be disposed of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. The diesel and electric locomotives have better technologies than steam locomotives and are cheaper to run than steam locomotives.

(d) Yes, Sir. Earlier due to the replacement of steam locos with diesel & electric locomotives, the steam engines were disposed off as scrap. However, some steam locomotives have been left.

(e) the remaining steam locomotives will not disposed off as scrap. They will be preserved for posterity.

Train Service between Badarpur and Lumding

7127. SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIIDYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the meter gauge train service between Badarpur and Lumding suspended frequently due to alleged landslides causing enormous difficulties to the passengers;

(b) if so the number of days during the last financial year the train service was suspended, which forced the passenger to travel by road;

(c) the name of places where landslides occurred on the route during the said period, date-wise; and

(d) the amount spent on clearance of debris during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Owing to landslides, train services on Lumding-Badarpur (MG) section were suspended for 102 days during the last financial year.

(c) A Statement is attached.

(d) Rs. 9.4 crores approximately was spent on the clearance of debris and the restoration of traffic.

Statement

The place along with the dates, on Lumding-Badarpur (MG) section where land slides occurred during the last financial year are as under:

Sl.No.	Place	Date of Occurrence
1.	Bandarkhal Yard	15th April, 2004
2.	Mahur-Phiding	15th April, 2004
3.	Damcherra-Chandranathpur	16th April, 2004
4.	Bandarkhal-Damcherra	17th April, 2004
5.	Bandarkhal-Damcherra	2nd May, 2004
6.	Mailongdisa-Lower Haflong	12th May, 2004
7.	Lower Haflong-Bagetar	12th May, 2004
8.	Lower Haflong-Bagetar	23rd June, 2004
9.	Bandarkhal-Damcherra	29th June, 2004
10.	Mailongdisa-Harangajao	10th July, 2004
11.	Kalachand-Mupa	18th July, 2004
12.	Dauthuhaja-Phiding	19th July, 2004
13.	Phiding-Mehur	20th July, 2004
14.	Kalachand-Maibong	20th July, 2004
15.	Damcherra-Bandarkhal	5th September, 2004
16.	Phiding-Dautuhaja	12th September, 2004
17.	Dihakho-Mupa	5th October, 2004

[Translation]

Non-Availability of Raw Water In Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.

7128. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some units of Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd. have been closed down due to non-availability of raw water;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for arranging raw water to revive these units?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Some units of Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) were shut down in April 2005 as water inflow to the refinery from the Netravati River was completely stopped. With the improvement of water supply from the river, these units were restarted in phases and normalcy was restored by 28 April, 2005.

(c) In order to overcome water shortages in the future, MRPL is exploring the following options:

- (i) Construction of check dams in the natural water streams existing around the refinery.
- (ii) Construction of dams across other nearby rivers, such as Gurupur and Pavanje.
- (iii) Further maximisation of the effluent recycle by adopting newer technologies.

[English]

Electrification of East Coast Railway

7129. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has fixed any target for completion of electrification of East-Coast Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the allocation of funds made so far for the purpose; and

(d) the steps taken to expedite the electrification work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) 44% of total route kilometres of East-Coast Railway is already electrified. Electrification work on Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar and Cuttack-Paradeep sections, which falls in East-Coast Railway, is in progress. Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar section is targeted for completion by Dec, 2005.

(c) and (d) Rs. 19.50 crore have been allotted during the year 2005-06 for the above project and the progress of the work is being regularly monitored.

Setting up of Branch Offices of Publication Division

7130. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of branches of Publication Division in the country at present;

(b) whether any steps have been taken to improve the working of the Branch offices;

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

(d) whether the branch offices of the Publication Division are proposed to be set up in each State capital; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) The Publications Division does not have any Branch Offices. However, It has Sales Emporia and Yojana offices in the different parts of the country. Their details are given in enclosed Statement.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement

1. Sales Emporium, Delhi
2. Sales Emporium, Patna

3. Sales Emporium, Lucknow
4. Sales Emporium, Mumbai
5. Sales Emporium, Chennai
6. Sales Emporium, Kolkata
7. Sales Emporium, Hyderabad
8. Sales Emporium, Bangalore
9. Sales Emporium, Thiruvananthapuram
10. Yojana (Marathi), Mumbai
11. Yojana (Bengali), Kolkata
12. Yojana (Tamil), Chennai
13. Yojana (Gujarati), Ahmedabad
14. Yojana (Assamese), Guwahati
15. Yojana (Telugu), Hyderabad
16. Yojana (Kannada), Bangalore
17. Yojana (Malayalam), Thiruvananthapuram

[Translation]

Doubling of Rail Line from Luxar to Dehradun

7131. SHRI RAJENDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal pertaining to doubling of rail line from Luxar to Dehradun is under consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the date from which this work is likely to be started; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A survey for doubling of rail line between Laksar-Haridwar-Dehradun section (79 kms.) has been included in the Budget 2005-06. Further consideration of the proposal would be feasible once the survey report becomes available.

[English]

Purchase of Defence Equipment

7132. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the on-going controversy over corruption in defence deals would affect the timely purchase of necessary defence equipment; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to ensure that recent events do not create a disincentive to timely decision regarding armaments?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government have effective institutional mechanism to control corruption, which are implemented through the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of Ministry of Defence. There is a well defined Procurement Procedure with in built checks and balances. Government is confident that the budget earmarked for procurement of Defence equipment this year will be spent.

Implementation of Article 243(IX)

7133. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments had implemented the provision of Article 243 Part IX "the Panchayats" of the Constitution;

(b) if so, the mandatory provisions and obligatory provisions adopted and implemented so far, State-wise;

(c) whether the State Governments have fully implemented the provisions of Article 243 and Eleventh Schedule; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Panchayati Raj system is being implemented in all the States/Union Territories to which the mandatory provisions of Article 243 Part IX of the Constitution apply, except Jharkhand and Pondicherry where elections are still to be held. However, implementation of the other provisions of Part IX and Article 243ZD of Part IX-A (District Planning Committees) has been uneven.

(c) and (d) Article 243G of the Constitution provides that the Legislature of the State may, by law, endow the Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of

self-government and such law may contain provisions for the devolution of powers and responsibilities upon Panchayats at the appropriate level subject to such conditions as may be specified therein. The Eleventh Schedule gives a list of 29 subjects in respect of which functions, functionaries and finances may be devolved by the States to Panchayati Raj Institutions. The authority relating to transfer of powers and funds to Panchayati Raj Institutions vests with the State Governments. Statement-I showing the status of devolution of funds, functions and functionaries is enclosed. It may be seen therefrom that Panchayati Raj Institutions are functioning fairly effectively in some States and are becoming progressively more effective in others. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is mandated to facilitate and secure implementation of Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992, by States in letter and spirit, by encouraging the States/UTs to adopt plans of action to inter alia devolve functions, functionaries and funds to Panchayati Raj Institutions. Some provisions relating to the District Planning Committees remain to be implemented in some States/UTs. Statement-II showing the position regarding the constitution of DPCs by States/UTs is enclosed. Though the PRIs had been set up still much remains to be done to empower them.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj convened seven Round Table meetings with State Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj and evolved by consensus a set of around 150 points for action which have been put together in a Compendium that was adopted unanimously at the conclusion of the last Round Table in Jaipur. The Ministry have now initiated a process of visiting each of the States/UTs to review with the authorities concerned the progress in implementing the points for action contained in the Compendium. It is expected that this will accelerate the pace of implementation of the provisions of Part IX, read with Article 243ZD, of the Constitution and bring about greater conformity, in both letter and spirit, to the Constitutional provisions of Panchayati Raj in all States/UTs concerned. The first such visit was to Karnataka between 29 April, 2005 and 1 May, 2005. The joint statement of conclusions signed by the Chief Minister of Karnataka and the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj during this visit may be seen in the enclosed Statement-III.

A Council of Ministers under the Chairmanship of Minister of Panchayati Raj and a Committee of Chief Secretaries and Panchayati Raj Secretaries under the Chairmanship of Union Secretary (Panchayati Raj) have

been set up to monitor the progress of implementation of the recommendations of seven Round Tables. The first

meeting of the Committee of Chief Secretaries and Panchayati Raj Secretaries was held on 11 April 2005.

Statement I

Status of Development of Funds, Functions and Functionaries to Panchayati Raj Institutes

Sl.No.	States/UTs	No. of Departments/subject Transferred to Panchayats with			
		Funds	Functions	Functionaries	
1	2	3	4	5	
1.	Karnataka	29	29	29	
2.	Kerala	26	26	18	
3.	Sikkim	29	29	29	
4.	Maharashtra				
5.	Andhra Pradesh	Action is being taken to devolve	24	24	
6.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	4	—	Elections held recently Yet to devolve 3 Fs.
7.	Assam				
8.	Bihar				
9.	Jharkhand	—	—	—	Elections have not yet been held.
10.	Goa	6	6	—	
11.	Gujarat	15	15	15	
12.	Haryana	—	-16-	—	
13.	Himachal Pradesh	Nil	26	Nil	
14.	Madhya Pradesh				
15.	Chhattisgarh				
16.	Manipur	—	22	4	
17.	Orissa	09	21	21	
18.	Punjab				
19.	Rajasthan	18	29	18	
20.	Tamil Nadu	—	29	—	
21.	Tripura	—	12	—	

1	2	3	4	5	
22.	Uttar Pradesh	04	12	06	
23.	Uttaranchal	9	9	9	
24.	West Bengal	12	29	12	
25.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	—	—	—	
26.	Chandigarh	—	—	—	The case is under active consideration.
27.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	—	—	—	
28.	Daman & Diu	—	—	—	
29.	NCT of Delhi	Panchayati Raj System is yet to be revived			
30.	Pondicherry	—	—	—	Elections have not yet been held.
31.	Lakshadweep				

The provisions of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 are not applicable to the States of Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland.

Statement II

Status of District Planning Committees

Sl.No.	States/UTs	Status of Constitution of DPCs	No. of Districts		
			Total	Constituted	Due
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	A.P. Ordinance No. 10/2003 dated 30.12.2003 constituting the DPCs at District Level was issued. To replace the said ordinance A.P. DPC Bill 2004 was introduced in A.P. Legislative Assembly on 16.7.2004. The bill was not come up for consideration. Action is being taken to re-promulgate the Ordinance.			
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Exist under Chairmanship of DC but not under Chairmanship of ZP chairperson.	15	14	1
3.	Assam				
4.	Bihar				
5.	Chhattisgarh				
6.	Goa	Constituted, President of ZP is the Chairperson of DPCs.	2	2	
7.	Gujarat				
8.	Haryana	Yes, in all 19 districts, concerned Divisional Commissioners are Chairperson of the DPC.	19	19	

1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Himachal Pradesh	Constituted. Minister chosen by the State Govt. is the Chairperson of the DPC.	12	12	
10.	Jharkhand	Not constituted. Panchayat election yet to be held.			
11.	Karnataka	Out of 27 Districts DPC has been formed in 26 districts. President ZP is the chairman of DPC.	27	26	1
12.	Kerala	Yes, Chairman of DP is Chairman of DPC.	14	14	
13.	Madhya Pradesh				
14.	Maharashtra				
15.	Manipur	Constituted, Adhyaksha, DP is the Chairperson of the DPC.	4	4	
16.	Orissa	30 Districts. Minister is Chairperson of DPC.	30	30	
17.	Punjab				
18.	Rajasthan	32 District. Yes. Zilla Pramukh is Chairperson of DPC.	32	32	
19.	Sikkim	Yes.	0	0	0
20.	Tamil Nadu	District Panchayats constituted. Chairperson of DP is chairman.	29	29	
21.	Tripura	Not constituted.			
22.	Uttar Pradesh	DPCs are not functional.			
23.	Uttaranchal	Yes. Minister is chairman of DPC.	13	13	
24.	West Bengal	Yes. Chairperson, DP is Chairperson of DPC.			
25.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Yes. Adhyaksha, ZP is the Chairperson of DPC.	2	1	NI*
26.	Chandigarh	Not constituted, being a small territory.			
27.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli				
28.	Daman and Diu				
29.	Lakshadweep	Yes. Collector cum Dev. Commissioner is Chairperson.	1	1	
30.	Pondicherry				

- Note:
1. 73rd Amendment Act not applicable in Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland.
 2. Jammu & Kashmir yet to adopt the provisions of 73rd Amendment Act.
 3. NCT of Delhi is yet to revive Panchayati Raj System.
 4. Panchayati Raj Act is applicable in only 4 districts of Manipur.
 5. Panchayat Elections not yet held in Pondicherry & Jharkhand.
 6. *As per law provision, there is supposed to be one DPC for the entire UT.

Statement III***Devolution of Panchayats in Karnataka: The way forward:***

Joint Statement of conclusions arrived at after the visit of the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj and Petroleum & Natural Gas to Karnataka on the 29th April and 1st May, 2005:

Karnataka has championed the noble cause of empowering Panchayatis and developing powers to them since decades. The State has been at the forefront of the empowerment of all three levels of Panchayats so that they function as institutions of local self-Government in the letter and spirit of Part IX of the Constitution. The recent measures of the Karnataka Government stand testimony to its sustained support to Panchayati Raj reform. The amendments made to the Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act in October 2003 and the subsequent steps taken to strengthen the Grama Sabha, create and empower Ward Sabhas; complete Activity Mapping; and rationalize and simplify schemes entrusted to the Panchayats are examples to be emulated countrywide. The monitoring of the actualisation of devolution by the Legislative Committees is a significant step in the strengthening of Panchayats in the State. The entrustment of schemes by the State Government to Panchayats in the current year's budget is a giant step forward in matching the functional transfer with funds. Through this process, the Panchayats now handle in excess of Rs. 3500 Crores of Plan funds per year. However there is a need to both substantially increase the quantum of funds available at each level of Panchayats and to untie the bulk of these funds.

A fresh national impetus has been given to the devolution of powers and responsibilities through the Seven Round Tables of State Ministers of Panchayati Raj which arrived by consensus, at 150 recommendations pertaining to 18 dimensions of Panchayat Raj Karnataka has initiated implementation of 77 of the 106 recommendations of the Round Tables that pertain to it. The Government of Karnataka will address itself with all deliberate speed to the remaining recommendations.

- The challenges before Karnataka in sustaining the pace of reform will require effective support and close coordination with the Central Government. In this endeavour the State Government of Karnataka and the Union Ministry

of Panchayati Raj, have agreed to accord priority to the following points.

- Karnataka has devolved through legislation all the 29 matters in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution to the Panchayats. This functional transfer has been further clarified through an Activity Mapping framework, issued in August 2003. This has been followed by the entrustment of all schemes pertaining to the activities devolved upon Panchayats to the respective levels, in the State Budget of 2005-06. In the letter and spirit of Article 243 G of the Constitution the Government of Karnataka commit itself to following up the devolution of functions and funds with the matching devolution of functionaries.
- For Panchayats to effectively plan and implement the functions that have been devolved upon them it is necessary that funds pertaining to these schemes are transferred to them without delay or diversion. Karnataka has already shown the way by putting in place a Bank transfer mechanism for transferring funds to Gram Panchayats. In continuation of this reform process, it agree to put in place systems that are capable of tracking transfers of funds to panchayats.
- The Government of Karnataka will consider the establishment of a cadre of administrative and technical staff exclusively for PRIs.
- Karnataka has recently conducted elections to the Gram Panchayats and is due to conduct elections to the Taluk and Zilla Panchayats shortly. A new set of elected representatives have assumed office. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj shall assist the Government of Karnataka in capacity building and training of these representatives.
- In order to build capacity and leadership among categories for whom seats are reserved, Karnataka shall consider favourably the slowing down of the reservation cycle so that the option to reserve seats for more than one-term is open but it is for the State Legislature to decide the number of terms for which seats will remain reserved.
- The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj will pursue the devolution of Central funds through united

block grants, and systemic reform of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including the establishment of a Panchayat Empowerment Incentive Fund to bring these in conformity with the constitutional provisions for good governance at the district and sub-district levels as set out in Part IX read with the relevant articles of Part IXA.

Underwater Exploration

7134. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India has taken up any sites for excavation and exploration during 2004-05 including underwater exploration, if any;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Archaeological survey of India has identified any other sites in the country for excavation and exploration; and

(d) if so, the details and the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of excavations and explorations carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India during 2004-05 including underwater exploration are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) and (d) Identification of archaeological sites for exploration and excavation is a continuous process and proposals of identified sites are scrutinized by the Standing Committee of Central Advisory Board of Archaeology for permission to undertake exploration and excavation.

Statement

Excavation and Exploration by ASI for the Field Season 2004-05

Sl.No.	Name of the Site	District	State
1	2	3	4
Excavations:			
1.	Tughluqabad Fort	South Delhi	NCT Delhi
2.	St. Augustine Complex	Old Goa	Goa
3.	Dholavira,	Kuchchha	Gujarat
4.	Juni Kuran	Kuchchha	Gujarat
5.	Bhirrana	Fatehabad	Haryana
6.	Hansi	Hissar	Haryana
7.	Babour (Thalora) Manwal	Udhampur	Jammu & Kashmir
8.	Saridkel	Ranchi	Jharkhand
9.	Pattadakal	Bagalkot	Karnataka
10.	Painted Rock shelter at Bhimbetka	Raisen	Madhya Pradesh
11.	Daulatabad Fort	Aurangabad	Maharashtra
12.	Baror	Ganganagar	Rajasthan
13.	Adichchanallur	Tuticorin	Tamil Nadu
14.	Fatehpur Sikri	Agra	Uttar Pradesh

1	2	3	4
15.	Baisgazi wall of ancient Gaur, Mouza-Paschin Nazir	Maldah	West Bengal
	Explorations:		
1.	Exploration in Sattari Taluka and adjacent region	North Goa	Goa
2.	Exploration within the township of Old Goa	North Goa	Goa
3.	Exploration in Southern region of Bhavnagar	Bhavnagar	Gujarat
4.	Exploration in Distt. Hazari Bagh	Ranchi, Singhbhum	Jharkhand
5.	Exploration in Bangalore Rural area near Devanahalli	Bangalore	Karnataka
6.	Exploration in Palakkad	Pallakad	Kerala
7.	Exploration in Ahmednagar	Ahmednagar	Maharashtra
	Underwater Exploration/Excavation		
8.	Mahabalipuram	Kanchipuram	Tamil Nadu

Excavation Work in Goa

7135. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has carried out any excavation work in Goa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount spent on excavation work in Goa during each of the last three years;

(d) whether any significant evidence of any historical monuments has been established; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has carried out excavation at Chandore, Taluk Salcette, Goa, during the seasons

1999-2000 to 2002-2003. the excavations have brought to light plan of a brick temple and a long enclosure wall. Besides, squarish platforms and a solid plinth, datable to *circa* 11th century A.D., were also unearthed. In addition to above, scientific clearance within the Augustine Complex of 17th century, and within St. Paul College site, have been carried out.

(c) The amount spent on excavation and scientific clearance in Goa during each of the last three years is as below:

Year	Expenditure
2002-03	6,79,842/-
2003-04	2,73,229/-
2004-05	5,99,041/-

(d) and (e) In the course of scientific clearance within the St. Augustinian Complex, a chapter chapel has been exposed, where relics of the Queen Ketevan, a patron saint of Georgia, were believed to have been buried.

Welfare Scheme for Wounded/Disabled Soldiers

7136. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has entered into any partnership with the corporate world to help the wounded/disabled soldiers;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme prepared for the welfare of wounded/disabled soldiers;

(c) whether the Government is considering to establish a foundation for the help of wounded/disabled soldiers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUÉ): (a) and (b) There is no formal agreement between the Corporation Sector and the Government for rehabilitation of wounded/disabled soldiers. However, Adjutant General Branch of the Armed Forces has been managing and coordinating 15 Army Welfare Corpuses which were donated by various Corporate houses during and after operation Vijay Kargil.

(c) and (d) The Armed Forces already have well established schemes for looking after the wounded/disabled soldiers during service. After their retirement from service, the ex-servicemen are entitled for various benefits and concessions like disability pension, war injury pension, family pension, Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme, educational concessions, preference for admission into professional colleges, reservation in seats in IITs, Sainik and Military Schools, rail/air travel concession, canteen store facilities, priority telephone facilities, financial assistance from Armed Forces Flag Day fund etc. The State/UT Governments also have a number of schemes for rehabilitation and welfare of ex-servicemen including wounded/disabled soldiers.

Rail Projects in Chennai-Egmore

7137. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that many projects such as Chennai Egmore-Chennai Central link and shifting of VM-VKM-MG section of VM-KPD section to LC No. 13 on Chord Line are pending for approval since long;

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

(c) the steps, the Government proposes to take to clear these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The project of Chennai Egmore-Chennai Central Rail Link has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 90.44 crore (approximately) as a material modification to the suburban Gauge conversion project of Chennai Beach-Tambaram-Chengalpattu section. Regarding shifting of Villupuram-Venkatesapuram meter gauge section of Villupuram-Katpadi section to Level Crossing (LC) No. 13 on Chord Line, it is stated that the proposal is only a straight conversion of Villupuram-Katpadi in the same alignment without any shifting.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Projects of Chittaranjan Locomotives Works

7138. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) has identified three strategic projects to develop better and safer fleet for the Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of locos manufactured by CLW during each of the last three years and proposed for the year 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The 3 Projects identified and duly worked upon by Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) are:

1. **Migration to Insulated Gate Bipolar Transistor (IGBT) Drive.** This project aims at switching over to IGBT switching elements from the existing Gate Turn-off (GTO) Thyristors. This is necessitated in view of foreseeing obsolescence of GTOs in favour of IGBTs.

2. Migration to Standard Vehicle Control Hardware. This project aims to migrate from proprietary vehicle control units presently used in three phase electric locomotives to International Electro technical Commission (IEC)-61375 standardised train control network. The project envisage the use of industrially standardised hardware suitable for traction application.

3. Migrating to IEC-61131 Standardised Programming Platform. The project envisages to port vehicle software of existing 3 phase electric locomotives, which is based on proprietary software platform to a platform conforming to IEC-61131 standard.

(c) The number of locos manufactured by CLW during each of the last three years are:

Year	Locos
2002-03	69
2003-04	86
2004-05	90
2005-06	128 Proposed.

Creation of Divisions

7139. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to crate some more Railway Divisions in the newly created East Coast Railway Zone; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Recruitment of Staff

7140. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flights of Indian Airlines and Air India increased during the last three years and estimated to be increased during the next three years;

(b) the revenue earned by both the Airlines during the last three years, Airline-wise;

(c) whether there is any shortfall in technical and non-technical staff in comparison to the increase in volume of work;

(d) whether Indian Airlines and Air India have taken any steps to recruit staff as per their volume of work requirements; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The number of flights operated by Air India and Indian Airlines (including Alliance Air) during the last three years are as under:

Year	Air India	Indian Airlines
2002-03	258	284
2003-04	301	308
2004-05	326	322

During the next three years, both the airlines have plans to introduce flights to new destinations as well as to increase the existing frequencies. However, exact numbers cannot be indicated at this stage.

(b) Revenue earned by Air India and Indian Airlines (including Alliance Air) during the last three years is as under:

Year	Air India	Indian Airlines
2002-03	5689.88	4687.94
2003-04	6322.07	5379.75
2004-05 (provisional)	3470.76 (upto Sept. 04)	5916.13

(c) to (e) As the aircraft manpower ratio in Air India and Indian Airlines is adverse in comparison to the global

standards, both airlines avoid recruitment in non-technical categories. As far as technical categories are concerned, the details of recruitment in Air India and Indian Airlines are as follows:

- (i) Air India has recruited 190 pilots, 130 Graduate Engineer Trainees, 812 Trainee Cabin Crew and 300 Trainee Service Engineers during the last 2½ years. Selection has also been made for 23 posts of Deputy Manager—Finance and are undergoing pre-appointment formalities.
- (ii) As regards Indian Airlines, recruitment action is being undertaken for filling up of 167 posts of Pilots, 403 posts of Cabin Crew/Trainee Cabin Crew, 64 posts of Officers. Recruitment of Captains/Co-Pilots is also in progress in Alliance Air.

Policy Package for Private FM Radio

7141. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has forwarded the policy package for private FM Radio to the various Ministries for taking their views;

(b) if so, the details of the views expressed by the different Ministries thereon; and

(c) the further action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Policy for Phase II of Private FM Radio Broadcasting is under consideration through Inter-Ministerial consultations and no final decision has yet been taken.

New TV Centres/TV Stations

7142. DR. K. DHANARAJU:
SHRI FURKAN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up new TV Centres/TV Stations in the country to strengthen the telecasting system;

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

(c) the time by which these are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Five new TV Studio Centres and 29 transmitters are presently under implementation in various parts of the country (locations are given in the enclosed Statement). These projects are at different stages of implementation and expected to be completed, in phases, by the end of 10th Plan period.

Statement

New TV Studio Centres/Transmitters under implementation

I. TV Studio Centres

Patiala*

Calicut*

Madurai*

Coimbatore*

Rajouri*

II. TV Transmitters

HPTS

Bhatinda (DD News)

Bikaner

Bilaspur

Chhatarpur

Dharamshala

Dharmapuri

Hissar

Hissar (DD News)

Karnal

Kuseong (DD News)

Radhanpur

Sagar

Saharsa

Tirunelveli

Vadodara

Vadodara (DD News)

Srinagar (DD News-upgradation)

Srinagar (Kashir channel-upgradation)

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The allegations mentioned in the news item purportedly made by Airbus regarding Air India's selection of Boeing aircraft for purchase are baseless and not based on facts. Air India has followed the laid down procedures in aircraft evaluation. A Request For Proposal (RFP) was issued to the manufacturers laying down Air India's requirement of aircraft. The evaluation was carried out within the ambit of the RFP and there were no deviations as alleged in the news Report. Equal opportunities were given to both aircraft manufacturers for submitting competitive bids.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

LPTs

Ambassa

Satrasal*

Bahalda*

Khajuwala*

Kaithal*

Fatehabad*

Punganur*

Kolhapur (Andhra Pradesh)*

Mudhol*

Sindhnur*

VLPT

Devbhog

Computerised Weighbridges

7144. SHRI HARILAL MADHAVJI BHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of computerised weighbridges in the country particularly those which are in the premises of Railway Stations, Zone-wise;

(b) whether the Government has received any complaints regarding facing of problems by traders in Bareilly due to two railway crossings; and

(c) if is, the details thereof any the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A statement is enclosed.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A representation has been received through an Hon'ble Member of Parliament regarding permission for installation of lorry weighbridge at Bareilly Junction, Railway Station. The proposal has been examined by the Railway and not found justified.

*-Installation completed & technically ready.

Purchase of Aircraft

7143. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned 'AI settles for Boeing, Airbus cries foul' appearing in the *Times of India* dated April, 2005;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to enquire into the charges made by the Airbus Company about altering the bidding terms mid-ways;

Statement*Number of Computerised (Electronic-in-motion) weighbridges on Indian Railways (zone-wise)*

Sl.No.	Railway	Railway weighbridges	Private weighbridges
1.	Central	1	28
2.	Eastern	4	16
3.	East Central	1	33
4.	East Coast	1	6
5.	Northern	3	Nil
6.	North Central	3	1
7.	North East Frontier	3	2
8.	North Western	1	Nil
9.	Southern	5	Nil
10.	South Central	2	14
11.	South Eastern	4	6
12.	South East Central	3	40
13.	Western	3	4
14.	West Central	1	5

Railway Division at Ahmedabad

7145. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has acquired land for setting up of new Railway Division office at Ahmedabad.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total funds allocated for the purpose; and

(d) the time by which the construction work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No land has been acquired by Railway for setting up of new Railway division office at Ahmedabad.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The total funds required for setting up of new division is Rs. 13.26 crore. Out of this, Rs. 6.15 crore has already been spent and funds allotted for 2005-06 is Rs. 4 crores.

(d) The work is in progress and the target date has been kept as June' 06.

Irregularity in Supply of LPG

7146. SHRI NIHAL CHAND: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some persons have been arrested on account of pilferage of LPG from sealed cylinders as reported in the 'Time of India' dated April 9, 2005;

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

(c) whether numerous complaints are also received regarding underweight LPG cylinders being provided by Indane Gas Agencies in Delhi particularly in Vasant Vihar, Vasant Kunj; and

(d) if so, the effective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to take punitive action against those found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) have reported that the Delhi Police have filed an FIR dated 8 April, 2005 against their distributor, M/s. Shivanika Enterprises, and arrested 8 persons on charges of transferring LPG from filled cylinders. The Police is investigating the case.

(c) IOCL have 193 LPG distributors in Delhi, including 5 in Vasant Vihar and 3 in the Vasant Kunj area. During the last three years, 24 IOCL LPG distributors in Delhi have been penalised in terms of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), 2001, for supplying underweight cylinders to consumers. Out of these, one distributor belongs to the Vasant Kunj area.

(d) The following measures have been taken to prevent the supply of under-weight LPG cylinders to consumers:

(i) As per the provisions of the LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000, promulgated under the Essential Commodities

Act, 1955, the supply of partially used LPG cylinders to consumers is punishable with imprisonment.

State Governments are empowered to take action against erring distributors under the provisions of this Order.

- (ii) LPG distributors of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are under strict instructions to supply cylinders of the right quantity and quality to their customers. OMC officers carry out random checks at distributor's godowns, delivery points and en route to ensure that no pilferage takes place.
- (iii) Under the MDG, in case any complaint of supply of partially used cylinders is established, the OMC distributor concerned is penalised, with a fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of the LPG pilfered/supplied short at commercial rate for a first offence; Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG pilfered/supplied short at commercial rate for a second offence; and termination of the distributorship for a third offence.

[Translation]

Central Assistance under Pre/Post Matric Scholarship Scheme to OBC

7147. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments have sent proposals regarding cent percent payment of central assistance under pre-matric and post-matric scholarships scheme to the students belonging to other backward classes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No such proposal has been received from the State Governments.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Financial Irregularities in GAIL

7148. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:
SHRI HEMLAL MURMU:

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

(a) whether the Government is aware of the financial irregularities in GAIL (India) Ltd. as reported in 'Punjab Kesari' dated March 31, 2005;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any inquiry into the matter;

(c) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Government is aware of the news-item which appeared in *Punjab Kesari* newspaper on 31.3.2005 alleging financial irregularities in GAIL (India) Limited.

(b) to (d) GAIL's comments in the matter were sought. GAIL have furnished their comments denying the allegations. Governments have advised GAIL management that the matter relating to pipeline projects be considered by their Board of Directors and further action taken. Thereafter, if required, Government will take further action. It may be noted that Government is represented on the GAIL Board of Directors.

[English]

Sale of Petroleum Products to Foreign Countries

7149. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government, during the last several years, has allowed sale of petroleum products either through public undertakings or through private refineries to foreign countries;

(b) if so, whether the Government has received information that those who get such quota of petroleum products for export purposes are selling them merely outside India's International borders on nearest foreign port and get the same material back into the country;

(c) whether the Government has realized that such companies are taking advantage of imports/exports policies to earn income in foreign exchange; and

(d) if so, the details of such companies who have been found indulged in such activities during the last three years and the action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) While there is no quota for export of petroleum products, it has recently been brought to the notice of the Government that various concessions available on export under different laws are being misused by some persons. The Government is looking into the matter.

Development of Integrated Avionics Display System

7150. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA:
SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has signed a contract with M/s Israel Aircraft Industries for design and development of an Integrated Avionics Display system for Integrated Light Helicopters;

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

(c) the policy of the Government for development of Integrated Avionics Display System indigenously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has signed a contract with M/s Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) in December 2003 for design and development of an Integrated Avionics Display System (IADS) for the Advanced Light Helicopter, which plans to replace the present conventional architecture of the control and display units in the cockpit.

(c) It is the policy of Government to promote indigenous development and Research & Development (R&D). The development/selection/integration of a system

is, however, dependent on technological requirements, time-frames, costs, requirements of integration and in-country capabilities etc. These variables are taken into consideration while making the choice of in-house development, indigenous development or with foreign vendors.

[Translation]

Retail Selling of Petroleum Products

7151. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether there is a condition of making capital investment of atleast Rs. 2000 crore for getting rights of retail selling of petroleum products in the country;

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

(c) whether the Government proposes to withdraw the said condition for making the market competitive; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) As per Government guidelines issued vide Resolution dated 8th March, 2002, a capital investment of at least Rs. 2,000 crore is required in eligible activities for new entrants to get authorization for marketing transportation fuels. This has been done primarily to avoid fly-by-night operators while attracting serious investment in the downstream marketing sector.

(c) and (d) At present, there is no such proposal under Government's consideration.

Allotment of Chemist Shops at Railway Stations

7152. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has decided to allot chemist shops at railway stations;

(b) if so, the railway stations selected for the purpose; and

(c) the time by which these shops are likely to be allotted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Policy instructions already exist that there should be chemist corners as an extension to the existing bookstalls at all important railway stations. As per extant policy guidelines Railways will provide exclusive chemist shops at all large and important railway stations wherever justified. It is an ongoing process.

(c) Does not arise.

Bofors Gun Case

7153. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has assessed total expenditure incurred on investigation of Bofors Gun case;

(b) if so, total expenditure incurred thereon so far;

(c) whether a Guest Room has also been constructed in Patiala House Court for foreign witnesses appearing for hearing of Bofors Case; and

(d) if so, the details of expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Assistance to Small and Medium Newspapers/Magazines

7154. SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIYA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that due to the advent of modern technology small and medium newspapers/magazines, which are doing their jobs on manual letter Printing Press are on the verge of closure;

(b) if so, whether the Government is considering any schemes/financial assistance for their survival; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Obsolescence of technology is part of the process of modernization.

(b) and (c) There is no such scheme. However, while issuing advertisement, the DAVP does not discriminate against the newspapers and magazines using the manual letter Printing Press.

Procurement of Special Items for Siachen Troops

7155. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry of Defence is looking into delays in procurement of special items for troops in Siachen;

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

(c) the steps taken for timely procurement of special items for Siachen troops?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) No specific case of delay in procurement of special items for troops in Siachen has come to the notice of the Government. However, to ensure that troops in Siachen and other Super High Altitude areas, do not have any shortage of special items, the Government, in April, 2005, has approved the Army Headquarters proposal for enhanced scales and authorization. The Command-wise authorization, as it existed earlier and post-revision, is as under:

		Earlier authorisation	Revised authorisation
(a)	Northern Command	17,654	24,751
(b)	Eastern Command	2,100	2,100
(c)	Western Command	—	500
(d)	100% Reserve of above quantity	19,754	27,351
	Total	39,508	54,702

The enhanced authorization mentioned above would allow Army personnel special clothing to face every situation.

12.01 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table-

- (1)
 - (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports, Pahalgam, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts.
 - (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports, Pahalgam, for the year 2003-2004.
 - (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.
- [Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2241/05]
- (3)
 - (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts.
 - (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, for the year 2003-2004.
 - (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2242/05]

- (5)
 - (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, for

the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, for the year 2003-2004.

- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2243/05]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table-

- (1)
 - (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts.
 - (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.
 - (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.
- [Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2244/05]
- (3)
 - (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, for the year 2002-2003, along with Audited Accounts.
 - (ii) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, for the year 2002-2003.
 - (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2245/05]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Oil Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2246/05]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Gas Authority of India Limited and the ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2247/05]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2248/05]

(2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 10 of the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948:

- (i) The Petroleum and Natural Gas (Amendment) Rules, 2004 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 813 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 16th December, 2004.

- (ii) G.S.R. 814 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 16th December, 2004 specifying the rates at which royalties shall be payable in respect of the mineral oils namely Crude Oil, Casing Head Condensate and Natural Gas and also to make certain amendments in the Schedule to the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2249/05]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Airline Allied Services Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Airline Allied Services Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2250/05]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Academi, Raebareli, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Academi, Raebareli, for the year 2003-2004.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, *see* No, LT 2251/05]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table-

(1) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 435 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 29th March, 2005 containing report of Justice G.C. Garg Commission of Inquiry set up to

inquire into the Collision between Train No. 3152 Dn Jammu Tawi-Sealdah Express with derailed coaches of 2903 Up Golden Temple Mail on the Ambala-Ludhiana Section of Northern Railway on 26th November, 1998, together with Action Taken Report thereon under sub-section (4) of section 3 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, see No. LT 2252/05]

12.02 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

[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 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 11th May, 2005 agreed without any amendment to the Prevention of Money-Laundering (Amendment) Bill, 2005 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 6th May, 2005."

12.02 $\frac{1}{4}$ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

Fifth Report

[English]

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): I beg to present the Fifth Report (Hindi and English versions) of Committee on Public Undertakings (2005-06) on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 12th Report of CPU (13th Lok Sabha) relating to "HPCL—Infructuous expenditure on creation of a pipeline."

12.02 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

Sixth Report

[English]

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): I beg to present the Sixth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation.

12.02 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY

One Hundred Seventy Second to One Hundred Seventy Fifth Reports

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): I beg to lay on the table a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of Standing Committee on Industry:

- (1) 172nd report on requirement of coir industries for its promotion and proliferation;
- (2) 173rd report on inter-sectoral strategic co-operation to promote small scale industries;
- (3) 174th report on Operational effectiveness of PMRY, REGP and KVI schemes in Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Maharashtra; and
- (4) 175th report on Key concern areas of small scale industries in select states.

12.03 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

[English]

- (i) Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the First, Third and Fourth Reports of the Standing Committee on Railways

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Statements to be laid on the Table. You may lay it on the Table of the House and this should be circulated to all the hon. Members.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Sir, on behalf of Shri Lalu Prasad, I lay the statement* on the Table of the House.

I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the First, Third and Fourth Reports of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways (2004-2005) in pursuance of Directive 73A, of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha issued *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II, dated 1st September, 2004.

The First Report is on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2004-05.' The Standing Committee on Railways took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Railways on 11.8.2004 and, after examining the Demands for Grants, the Committee presented its Report to the Lok Sabha on 19.8.2004. The Report contains 9 recommendations in all. The recommendations were considered by the Ministry of Railways and Action Taken Reports indicating the action taken by the Government in regard to the recommendations have been furnished to the Committee on 6.12.2004.

The Third Report is on "Railway Recruitment Policy". The Committee presented its Report to the Lok Sabha on 2.12.2004. The Committee made 3 recommendations in the Report and English version of the Action Taken Notes thereon have been furnished to the Committee on 9.3.2005 and Hindi version on 28.3.2005.

The Fourth Report is on "Passenger Amenities". The Report, presented to Lok Sabha on 10.12.2004 contains 28 recommendations and English version of the Action Taken Notes on all the recommendations have been furnished to the Committee on 17.3.2005 and Hindi version 22.3.2005.

In these Action Taken Notes, the Committee has been apprised on the status of implementation initiated by the Ministry. A statement showing the gist of recommendations and implementation status is enclosed.

12.03¹/₄ hrs.

(ii) Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the First Report of Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers pertaining to the Department of Chemicals and Fertilizers

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Mr. Speaker, sir, I lay the following statement** on the table of the House.

Sir, I am making this statement on the status of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the first Report of the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers in pursuance of the directions by the Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

The Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers examined the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals) for the year 2004-05 and presented their first report to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on 20th August, 2004. The report contained 21 recommendations. The gist of the recommendations is as follows:

- (i) To follow the instructions of the Ministry of Finance to observe austerity in non-plan expenditure.
- (ii) To finalize the loan agreement of CIPET and take up the matter with the Department of Economic Affairs and Legal Affairs.
- (iii) Extra efforts in waste management and plastic recycling activities and augmentation of the financial allocation for these activities.
- (iv) CIPET should be made to realize targets so as to make the organization self-sufficient as soon as possible.
- (v) New extension centres of CIPET at identified places with 50 percent assistance from the Central Government may be opened.
- (vi) Implementation of Assam Gas Cracker Project.
- (vii) Disposal of cases relating to appeals, revision petitions and applications for scrutiny and motion hearing of Bhopal gas victims.
- (viii) Removal of toxic wastes within and surrounding areas of former Union Carbide Plant.
- (ix) Notification of Rules and regulations under Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Act.
- (x) Budget allocation for Research and Development in the field of pharmaceuticals.
- (xi) Establishment of Mega Chemical Industrial Estate (MCIE).
- (xii) Announcement of New Drug Policy.
- (xiii) Prices of Non-controlled drugs.
- (xiv) Financial revival of Hindustan Insecticide Limited (HIL)
- (xv) Further diversification of activities in HIL.
- (xvi) Technology upgradation of Mancozeb plant of HIL.
- (xvii) Proposal from Smith Stanistreet Workers' Union for forming an Industrial Co-operative Society and running the undertaking.
- (xviii) Accumulated losses of BCPL.
- (xix) The revival of IDPL units.
- (xx) Performance of HOCL.
- (xxi) Revival of HAL.

All the recommendations of the Committee have been considered in the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals and action has already been initiated. The Department has issued instructions to the implementing

*Statement was laid on the Table and also Placed in Library, See No. LT 2253/05.

**Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, see No. LT 2254/05)

[Shri Ram Vilas Paswan]

agencies for full utilization of funds and to follow the austerity measures. In case of the OPEC loan to CIPET, the Ministry of Finance has been requested to finalize the loan agreement issue. CIPET has been asked to put extra efforts on Plastic Waste Recycling and also advised to make all efforts to achieve the targets fixed so as to make itself self-sufficient. The State Governments concerned and CIPET have been asked to initiate action for the setting up of new centers in States. Regarding expediting the process of disbursement of pro-rata compensation amount, additional posts have been sanctioned. However, it is clarified that the disbursement is being done by the Welfare Commissioner, who is a sitting Judge of the MP High Court, and other Judicial officers under him, and the process is being monitored by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. It has been decided to bring the CWC Act, 2000 into force with effect from 1st July 2005. The Ministry of Law is vetting the rules and notifications as required for facilitating the implementation of the Act. The Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals will endeavour to obtain more allocation for R&D facilities in the Pharma sector. The consultants, who are preparing the feasibility report on setting up a Mega Chemical Industrial Estate have since submitted the Concept paper, the Inception Report, Market Study Report and the Location Study Report. State Governments are making presentations regarding suitability of locating such a complex in their state. The Department is following up the issue of the new drug policy with the Department of Legal Affairs. The NPPA has initiated monitoring of prices of non-scheduled medicines also. As regards HIL, the financial revival or otherwise would depend on the outcome of BIFR proceedings. HIL is also exploring the possibilities of diversifications in other areas. The proposal from Smith Stanistreet Workers' Union for forming and Industrial Co-operative Society and running the undertaking is under consideration. Regarding BCPL, the recommendations of the Committee to wipe out the losses fully by 2008-09 have been brought to the notice of the company. As regards IDPL, the final report of the Expert Committee on techno-financial feasibility for the rehabilitation of IDPL has been received on 20th April 2005. The main recommendations of the Expert Committee are being examined. As regards HOCL, the company has prepared a rehabilitation package which is under consideration in the Government. The Government of India has already approved a package linked with the disinvestments. Regarding HAL, the revised rehabilitation scheme has been submitted to the Board for Reconstruction of PSEs (BRPSE), which has convened a meeting to consider the proposal. The Action Taken Notes (ATNs) of the Department were forwarded to the Standing Committee in November 2004. In its Third Report, the Committee has accepted the ATNs on all the recommendations except ATNs related to:

- (i) Assam Gas Cracker Project.
- (ii) Removal of toxic wastes within and surrounding areas of former Union Carbide Plant.
- (iii) Technology upgradation of Mancozeb plant of HIL.

In order to expedite Assam Gas Cracker Project, it has been decided that GAIL will play the lead role in the implementation of this project. The matter is under consideration by PIB.

It has been decided that the MP Pollution Control Board will execute the work of removal of toxic wastes from the UCIL plant site in Bhopal and a plan of action is being finalized by them.

The job of improvement in the performance parameters of Mancozeb was awarded to the Consultant who are presently in the process of suggesting modifications in the plant. Regarding fixation of responsibility for the delay and non-upgradation of technology of the Mancozeb Plant at the Cochin Unit, a detailed study/investigation is being conducted by HIL through Committee of Senior level officers.

12.03¹/₂ hrs.

(III) Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the Second Report of Standing Committee on Chemicals & Fertilizers pertaining to the Department of Fertilizers

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I lay the following statement* on the table of the House—

I am making the statement on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the second report of the Standing Committee on Chemicals & Fertilizers in pursuance of direction 73-A of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha, issued *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin Pt-II dated September 1, 2004.

The Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers examined Demands for Grants of the Department of Fertilizers for the year 2004-05 and presented the second report to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on 20th August, 2004. The report contained 22 recommendations. These recommendations relate to

1. Payment of subsidy directly to the farmers;
2. The impact of new pricing scheme on the finances of the fertilizer manufacturing units and finding solutions for the same;
3. Facilitate adequate availability of feedstock mainly gas/LNG and conversion of Naphtha/Fuel Oil/LSHS plants into gas based plants, rationalizing and making competitive the pricing of LNG
4. That the planned outlays are left to be utilized during the last 3 years of the plan period as a result, the overall utilization of funds is not adequate and the consequence is lack of planned economic development. While taking serious note of the delay in implementation of the BVFCL-III Project, the Committee recommended that possibility of reviving all the closed urea plants should be examined. It

*Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, *see* No. LT 2255/05)

expressed the desire that Department of Fertilizers should make vigorous efforts to finalize third and long-term financial restructuring package for MFL at the earliest. The Committee recommended that all efforts should be made to ensure that approved projects of KRIBHCO and RCF should materialize during the 10th Plan and expressed happiness over the progress being made in the Oman-India Venture project (OMIFCO).

5. Endorsing the Demands for Grants of Rs. 13294.17 crore of which Rs. 12828.17 crore is non-Plan funds of the Department of Fertilizers for the year 2004-05, the Committee observed that Ministry should try to contain the expenditure for the year within the sanctioned budget of the Ministry.
6. The Committee recommended that for balanced fertilization stagnation in consumption of phosphatic fertilizers is a cause of concern. The factors including the policy environment with regard to phosphatic and potassic fertilizers sector should be looked into. To overcome the availability of basic raw-materials for these fertilizers, Government should give necessary incentives for setting up more joint ventures in countries where raw-materials are available in plenty. The Committee also observed that Department should finalize other policy related issues in the decontrolled fertilizers sector such as MRPs of Complexes and SSP.
7. Recalling the recommendations made by the Committee in its 41st and 44th reports (13th Lok Sabha), the Standing Committee stated that the problem regarding the issuing of sales certificates by the State Governments delays the payment of concession to the units in the decontrolled fertilizers. Efforts should, therefore, be made to expeditiously replace the existing methodology with the new scheme based on the data of imports, production and despatches of fertilizers.

All the recommendations of the Committee have been considered in the Ministry and action has already been initiated. Of the total 22 recommendations/observations, 8 recommendations/observations *i.e.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15 have been accepted by the Government. 3 recommendations/observations *i.e.* 9, 12 & 18, the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies. The factual position in respect of recommendations 2 and 8 have been given to the Committee on 15.3.2005.

The Action Taken Replies in respect of recommendations/observations *i.e.* 1, 3, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20 & 22 have been sent to the Committee on 7th December, 2004. No further observations have been received on these ATNs.

12.03³/₄ hrs.

(iv) Status of Implementation of Recommendations Contained in third Report of Standing Committee on Coal and Steel pertaining to Ministry of Steel

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Mr. Speaker, sir, I lay the following statement* on the Table of the House.

I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Third Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal and Steel in pursuance of direction 73A of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II, dated 1st September, 2004.

The Standing Committee on Coal and Steel held a meeting on 12th August, 2004 to consider Demands for Grants 2004-05 of Ministry of Steel. During the meeting, the Committee also took oral evidence of officers of Ministry of Steel. The Committee, while analysing the Demands for Grants 2004-05 of Ministry of Steel with reference to Aims, Objectives and Achievements of the Ministry, presented the Third Report of the Standing Committee on the Demands for Grants 2004-05 to the Lok Sabha on 25th August, 2004 and this Report was laid in the Rajya Sabha on the same day.

In its report, the Standing Committee had made a total of 29 recommendations. Action Taken Report on these recommendations were furnished to the Committee *vide* Ministry of Steel Office Memorandum dated 17th December 2004. In the Action Taken Report, while accepting the recommendations of the Committee, action taken/proposed to be taken in respect of issues raised were communicated to the Committee.

The Action Taken Notes of Ministry of Steel were considered by the Standing Committee and in its 6th report, out of 29 recommendations, the Committee was satisfied with reference to 26 recommendations/observations. The detailed position with reference to the 3 recommendations is given in the Annexure-I.

12.04 hrs.

(v) Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the Fourth Report of Standing Committee on Rural Development pertaining to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): Sir, I lay the statement* on the Table of the House.

In pursuance of direction 73A of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha issued *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part-II, dated

*Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 2256/05)

**Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 2257/05]

September 01, 2004, I have the honour to submit the Hon'ble House its Statement on the status of implementation of the recommendation contained in the 4th Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development on the Demands for Grants (2004-2005) of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

A statement indicating the action taken/status of all the recommendations contained in the Standing Committee on Ministry of Panchayati Raj is annexed. It may be noted that the report contains 10 recommendations. These recommendations of the Committee were examined carefully by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and 9 recommendations were accepted and action taken thereon. One recommendation could not be accepted for reasons mentioned against this recommendation in the attached Annex. The action taken replies were sent to the Committee on 15th December, 2004.

Subsequent to the submission of the Action Taken Report, there has been further progress in action taken on the recommendations which have already been accepted. As regards the one recommendation that was not initially accepted, namely, obtaining a clear ruling from the Supreme Court in the matter of postponing elections by the States/Union Territories, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj have further considered the issue in the light of the 6th Report of the Committee and decided to initiate appropriate action as explained in the Annex.

12.04¹/₄ hrs.

- (vi) **Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the first Report of Standing Committee on Social Justice & Empowerment on Demand for Grants (2004-2005)**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): Sir, I lay the statement* on the Table of the House.

I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations/observations contained in the First Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) in pursuance of the directions 73 (a) of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II, dated September 01, 2004.

The First Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice & Empowerment (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on 18.8.2004 and laid in the Rajya Sabha on 18.8.2004. The report related to the examination of Demands for Grants of Ministry of social Justice and Empowerment for the year 2004-05.

Action Taken Report on the recommendations/observations contained in the report of the committee has been sent to the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment on 2.7.2004 and the Committee presented the report in the Lok Sabha on 22.3.2005 and laid the report in the Rajya Sabha on 22.3.2005.

There are 19 recommendations made by the committee in the said report where action is called for on the part of the Government. These recommendations mainly pertain to the issues like-General Performance of the Ministry, Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan, Up-gradation of merit for Scheduled Castes, Hostel facilities for SC Boys and Girls, National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, Survey of OBCs Maulana Azad Education Foundation, Scheme of Assistance of Disabled Persons for Purchase of Aids and Appliances, National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Rehabilitation Council of India and An Integrated Programme for Older Persons.

The present status of implementation of the 19 recommendations made by the committee is indicated in the Annexure to my statement, which is laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out of the contents of the Annexure. I would request that this may be considered as read.

The Ministry has been asked to submit the final replies by 22nd June 2005 to the Lok Sabha Secretariat. The Ministry will submit its reply to the Lok Sabha Secretariat by the stipulated date.

12.04¹/₂ hrs.

- (vii) **Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the 151st, 156th and 158th Reports of Standing Committee on Industry Pertaining to the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Sir, I lay the statement* on the Table of the House.

I am making this Statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 151st, 156th and 158th Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry on the direction of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha, in pursuance of the provisions of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha issued vide Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II dated September 1, 2004.

The 151st Report of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industries pertaining to the Department of Heavy Industry contains 33 recommendations. These recommendations can broadly be classified into four categories-

- (i) Matters pertaining to financial matters of the PSEs, raising of internal and extra-budgetary resources, budgetary support for capital investment in PSEs, etc.

*Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, See No. LT 2258/05)

*Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, See No. LT 2259/05)

- (ii) Matters pertaining to excise and customs duty such as rationalization of excise duty on tractors, reduction of duty on components, etc.
- (iii) Management aspects such as ensuring orders for PSEs, management of assets of public sector undertakings and coordination with State Governments and other Departments for providing support to the PSEs, and
- (iv) Setting up of a world class testing centre for the automotive sector.

Action has already been taken in respect of the above recommendations. In some cases, these have been implemented. In others, where action is to be taken by the other Departments, the same is being pursued assiduously. The proposal regarding the testing centre is in its final stages of approval. The Action Taken Notes giving details of the action taken against each of the recommendations have already been submitted to the Committee on 12.1.2005.

The 156th Report contains four recommendations, which mainly relate to excise duty concessions to Hindustan Paper Corporation, conversion of rail line in the Lumding-Silchar sector and a new line on the Kumarghat-Agartala Section.

The Department has taken necessary action in respect of all the above recommendations and has been pursuing further with the Ministries of Finance and Railways. The conversion of gauges has already been announced by the Hon'ble Finance Minister. The Action Taken Notes giving details of the action taken against each of the recommendations have already been submitted to the Committee on 19th April, 2005.

The 158th Report contains 7 recommendations and observations. These pertain to changes in the EXIM Policy, refund of terminal excise duty and reduction in customs duty. The Department has taken action on all the recommendations and the matter has been taken up with the Ministries of Finance and Commerce & Industry. The Action Taken Notes giving details of the action taken against each of the recommendations have already been submitted to the Committee on 24.3.2005.

I am making this Statement on the status of implementation of Recommendations contained in the 79th Report of Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism & Culture in pursuance of the direction 73A of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha which reads as under:

"The Minister concerned shall make once in six months a statement in the House regarding the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Reports of Lok Sabha with regard to his Ministry."

The Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism & Culture has held its meeting on 10th August 2004 to consider the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Tourism for the year 2004-05. The Committee had also taken the Oral Evidence of officers of the Ministry. The Committee which analysing the Demands for Grants of the Ministry with reference to the aims, objectives and achievements presented its 79th Report on the Demands for Grants (2004-05) (Demand No. 93) of the Ministry of Tourism (The Report was presented to the Rajya Sabha on 26.8.2004).

Mr. Speaker Sir, in its Report the Standing Committee made 23 Recommendations in all. Out of 23 Recommendations, the Ministry has accepted 18 Recommendations and 4 Recommendations have been partially accepted. One Recommendation to bring the 'Tourism' into the Concurrent List is under examination of my Ministry. The Action Taken Report on Recommendations of the Committee has been furnished to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat *vide* Ministry of Tourism's O.M. dated 29th November, 2004.

I also lay on the Table of the House the status of implementation of each recommendation as Annexure.

12.04^{3/4} hrs.

- (viii) Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the 79th Report of Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture pertaining to the Ministry of Tourism

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): Sir, I lay the statement* on the Table of the House.

12.05 hrs.

- (ix) Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the 78th and 88th Reports of Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture pertaining to the Ministry of Civil Aviation

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Sir, I am making

*Statement was laid on the Table. (Placed in Library, See No. LT 2260/05)

[Shri Praful Patel]

a statement* on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 78th and 88th Reports of the Departmentally-related Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Demands for Grants for 2004-05 and 2005-06 of the Ministry of Civil Aviation in pursuance of the new Direction 73(a) issued by the hon. Speaker.

It is a long statement. Would you allow me to read it?

MR. SPEAKER: No. Would you like to stress on any particular point? It will be circulated to the hon. Members.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: It will be circulated to the hon. Members but there are some observations. I would like to stress on one paragraph.

MR. SPEAKER: Which one?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: It is paragraph 27. It reads:

"The decision of the present Government to allow Indian Scheduled Carriers to operate on international routes was taken on 29th December, 2004. I would like to briefly explain the background of this decision..."

It is elaborated. I would like to place it on the Table of the House for circulation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: "I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in 78th and 88th Report of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Demands for Grants for 2004-05 and 2005-06 of the Ministry of Civil Aviation in pursuance of new Direction 73A, issued by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II, dated September, 01, 2004.

The Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture had held its meeting on 9.8.2004 to consider Demands for Grants for 2004-05 of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The Committee had also taken the oral Evidence of officers of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The Committee analysed the Demands for Grants for 2004-05 of the

Ministry of Civil Aviation with reference to the aims, objectives and achievements of the Ministry.

In this Report, the Standing Committee made 14 recommendations in all. These recommendations of the Committee have been examined carefully by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Action Taken Replies on these recommendations have been furnished to the Committee *vide* this Ministry's OM dated 2nd March, 2005. Statement containing Action Taken Report is annexed herewith.

The approach suggested by the Standing Committee on various issues has been broadly accepted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and relevant proposals are being proposed in consultation with concerned organizations.

The Committee had taken oral evidence of officers of Ministry of Civil Aviation during the course of the meeting held on 30th March, 2005 and 5th April, 2005 to consider the Demands for Grants 2005-06 of Ministry of Civil Aviation.

We have recently received 88th Report of the Departmentally Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on the Demands for Grants for 2005-06 of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. In this Report, the Committee has made several recommendations on the functioning of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. We are extremely grateful to the Committee for.

- (a) its appreciation regarding the role played by Indian Airlines and Alliance Airlines in evacuation of people from Andaman and Nicobar Island after the Tsunami disaster and from J&K after heavy snowfall in the State in the winter session this year.
- (b) for the recommendations that the Ministry of Finance should consider and give approval to notify ATF as "Declared Good" under Section 14 of the Central Sales Tax Act so that Sales Tax on ATF could be contained within maximum range of 4%.
- (c) for the recommendation that the Ministry of Finance should reconsider its decision about the Fringe Benefits Tax.
- (d) for the recommendations of the Committee that the Ministry of Finance should given special consideration to provide exemption from tax on agreement to acquire aircraft or aircraft engine on lease beyond September, 2005.

*Also Placed in Library, See No. LT 2261/05.

*..." This part of the statement was laid on the Table.

The observations made by the Committee with regard to requirement of trained manpower in the airlines are very timely and will be taken up for implementation on a priority basis.

As regards pricing of the aircraft proposed to be acquired Indian Airlines, I would like to state that the Board of Indian Airlines approved a proposal for acquiring 43 aircraft installed with CFM 56 engines at a total cost of Rs. 10,237 crores. As regards the concern of the Committee regarding the pricing of the aircraft, there is a laid down procedure to be followed. It may be noted that PIB approval was obtained in November, 2004. The work of the In-house Negotiating Committee of Indian Airlines, which negotiated with the lowest bidder according to CVC guidelines was done under the supervision of an Oversight Committee headed by Shri C.G. Somiah, former Comptroller and Auditor General which has been constituted to ensure transparency in the price negotiations. The final report of the negotiating committee was received in March 2005 and a draft CCEA Note has been circulated for inter-ministerial consultation. I would like to point out that a note was also sent to the CVC apprising it of the procedure followed.

The recommendation of the Committee regarding LTC facility from Kolkata to Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be taken up with the Department of Personnel. As regards Apex Fares, these have already been introduced. The recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee regarding sharing of social obligations by the private operators has been noted. It is stated that the objective of the Route Dispersal Guidelines is to ensure social obligations.

PHHL connects 33 destinations in 64 sectors with 155 weekly flights. As regards connectivity to hilly areas inaccessible by fixed winged aircraft by helicopter, it may be pointed out that PHHL operators some flights to Kedarnath Shrine from Agasthamuni. PHHL has also signed on MoU with Gharwal Vikas Mandal Ltd. in August, 2003 to connect important tourist places in Uttaranchal in the hills. Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Sikkim, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands use Pawan Hans helicopters. Pawan Hans will be willing to operate regular helicopter services in other areas also if the helicopter is taken on long term wet lease basis.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation shares the concern about the rising helicopter accidents. A Helicopter Group has been constituted in the DGCA on 17th September, 2003

to look after the maintenance and operations of helicopters. This group will function till a separate Cell is created in the DGCA for helicopters for which proposal has been submitted to the Planning Commission.

As regards the Proficiency Rating System of Pilots in DGCA, a reply has been sent to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat on 4.5.2005.

Coming to the observations with regard to availability of roper-infrastructure before permitting new airlines to commence operations, I would like to clarify that. AAI has been advised to plan in advance for meeting the additional demand for parking bays. With regard to observations of the Committee on the proposal for modernization of the Delhi and Mumbai airports, it may be clarified that the process of restructuring has taken a definite shape after decisions at appropriate levels and Request for Proposal Document alongwith other transaction documents have been released to the pre-qualified bidders on 1st April, 2005 to submit their technical and financial bids with 12 weeks. Global Technical Advisers have estimated the likely expenditure at these airport over 20 years development plan which is approximately Rs. 14,000 crores. The Joint Forum of AAI's Employees are yet to submit a comprehensive alternate plan. AAI will extend all assistance to the Joint Forum in preparing the comprehensive alternate plan. The Government will consider on merit the plan as and when received from the Join Forum. A similar exercise or restructuring and modernization of other Metro airports will also be considered and taken up by the Government in due course of time. It may also be mentioned here that this Ministry has also undertaken an exercise of modernization of 25 tentatively selected non-Metro airports.

Similarly, I would like to clarify that the restructuring and modernization of Delhi and Mumbai airports to world-class standards is estimated to cost in excess of Rs. 14,000 crores over a 20 year period. At present AAI has only around Rs. 1200 crores as reserves. If the development of these two airports is to be financed from AAI's internal resources, it is likely that AAI will not have funds for development and maintenance of other airports. On the other hand after restructuring of the two metro airports, AAI will continue to get revenue from the various sources which are expected to be adequate to maintain and upgrade the other airports managed by AAI.

The suggestion of the Committee with regard to categorization of airports as international airports of world

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class standard have been accepted and suitable action would be taken.

On the question of capital structure of new Greenfield airport at Hyderabad it has already been decided that the State Government and AAI together will hold 26% equity (13% each) in the Hyderabad International Airport Limited (HIAL) and the remaining 74% will be held by the private sector.

It may also be clarified that the decision to shut down the existing airport for civil operations on commissioning of new airport had been taken by the Government on the basis of recommendation of Taskforce on Infrastructure headed by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission. The existing airport has severe limitations for expansion because of natural and manmade obstructions like hill, railway over bridge, factory chimney, building etc. and even though the present runway length is 9060 ft., landing length is 7060 ft. due to the obstruction in the approach path. Reconsideration of this issue at this stage would amount to Government of India's default and may invite payment of compensation to HIAL. Besides, this would create uncertainty in the minds of prospective future investors on the credibility of the Government's policy to involve private sector in the development of infrastructure through public private partnerships.

As regards absorption of employees of Airports Authority of India in the new companies being floated for development of Bangalore and Hyderabad airports, I would like to clarify that consultations are being held through periodic meetings with the representatives of AAI Employees Joint Forum. AAI is also committed to provide full protection to the employees of AAI working at Delhi and Mumbai airports on their restructuring. These employees shall continue to have same terms and conditions as earlier.

Government has obtained a Comfort letter from HIAL stating that the HIAL will consider taking on deputation/absorption basis the employees of AAI at the existing Hyderabad airport. Government is considering the options available under concession Agreement to take up the issues relating to the employees at the existing Bangalore airport with Bangalore International Airport Limited.

As regards the observations made by the Standing Committee with regard to opening up of international skies to a particular airline and granting it passage rights to

some international routes helped that particular airlines' IPO prospects, I would like to assure the House that there is absolutely no link whatsoever between Government's decision of allowing Indian Scheduled Carriers to operate on international routes and the IPO issue of any airline. I would like to place all the facts before the House. Let me first clarify that it is not the function of Government decisions are not guided by dates of issue of IPO's of private companies.

In order to place the facts in correct perspective, I would like to inform the House that there was absolutely no haste in taking this decision as has been made out in the report of the Standing Committee. This was a decision that was consciously taken after due consideration. Requests for allowing private airline to operate on international routes were received in the Ministry for the past several years. Keeping in view the advantages for the country, Industry Associations and Trade Bodies as well as Ministries like Tourism had been requesting the Government to allow more Indian carriers to operate on international routes, in addition to Air India. It was emphasized that this would help in better utilization of our bilateral rights, improve connectivity and create business opportunities within the country, which in turn would help the economy as a whole.

Today, airlines of over 50 countries are operating to India whereas Air India and Indian Airlines are together operating to only 25 countries. It is apparent that the balance is tilted in favour of foreign carriers. As I mentioned, there have been demands to adopt a more liberal approach from various quarters, as global access to and from India is crucial for the growth of our economy. I have frequently made Public pronouncements in this regard right from June 2004 onwards in the media and other public platforms emphasizing the need for a more liberal approach in international air connectivity to and from India. For a major part of the year, it is almost impossible to obtain a seat for travelling to India. Various State Governments like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Kerala have also been pressing for increasing international connectivity from their respective States. The point is that there had been many requests for enhancing global air connectivity to and from India as an essential pre-requisite to sustain and increase economic growth, encourage tourism and develop India as an international aviation hub.

The Naresh Chandra Committee which was constituted to prepare a road map for the Civil Aviation

Sector and which submitted its report in December, 2003 also recommended that the private airlines be allowed to operate on international routes in view of the under capacity in the international segment, particularly during peak season. The Committee also noted that we are presently using barely 40% of our bilateral rights.

Even before the Naresh Chandra Committee's recommendation, in a joint statement made on 21.10.2003, the Prime Ministers of India and Sri Lanka, *inter-alia*, announced that Indian private carriers would be encouraged to operate to Sri Lanka. The matter was subsequently considered by the Cabinet during the previous Government and a decision was taken on December 10, 2003 to allow private airlines to operate to All SAARC countries. In pursuance of this decision, two private airlines—Jet Airways and Air Sahara—commenced operations to Sri Lanka and Nepal. Therefore, it is pertinent to note that the policy to allow private carriers to operate abroad is not a recent one.

In the same Cabinet meeting held on 10.12.2003, the Cabinet also directed the Ministry of Civil Aviation to bring up a comprehensive note on liberalizing international air services. In pursuance of this direction of the Cabinet, the Ministry of Civil Aviation initiated a proposal for allowing private airlines to operate on international routes, except the Gulf countries. This proposal was considered by the previous Government in the Cabinet meeting held on February 4, 2004. However, a decision on this proposal was postponed.

The point I am trying to emphasise, particularly in the context of the observations of the Standing Committee, is that the proposal to allow private airlines to operate on international routes has been under consideration of Government for a long time and was not a hasty or sudden decision by the present Government.

The decision of the present Government to allow Indian Scheduled Carriers to operate on international routes was taken on 29th December, 2004. I would like to briefly explain the background of this decision, so that events are understood in the correct context. While approving the Air Services Agreement with Tunisia, the Cabinet in its meeting held on September 8, 2004 directed the Ministry of Civil Aviation to bring up a proposal for building up capacity both in public and private sector for operation of air services for optimum utilization of our bilateral rights.

In pursuance of this direction of the Cabinet, the Ministry of Civil Aviation initiated a proposal for allowing private airlines to operate on international routes, except the Gulf countries. This was exactly in line with the proposal placed before the Cabinet on February 4, 2004 during the previous Government. Before sending the proposal to Cabinet, all due procedures were followed and the draft Cabinet note was circulated to all concerned Ministries on November 10, 2004. After receipt of their comments, the proposal was sent to Cabinet Secretariat in December, 2004. Thereafter, the Cabinet considered and approved the proposal in its meeting on December 29, 2004. There were no short cuts in procedures and no hasty decision was taken by Government. All due process were followed. Moreover, as far as I am aware, no IPO issue by any airline was open for subscription at this point of time.

I may also point out that the contention of the Standing Committee that passage rights were granted to a particular airline on the opening day of its public offer does not appear to be factually correct. In pursuance of Government's decision taken on 29th December, 2004, the first traffic rights were awarded to Air India and other Indian Scheduled Carriers for operations to UK on January 31, 2005 as the airlines were required to confirm their entitlements to the UK authorities for slot allocation at UK airports. However, this date has no relevance to the IPO offer, as our enquiries have revealed that the opening day of the IPO issue of a particular airline was February 18, 2005.

The House would agree that the decision of the Government to allow Indian Scheduled Carriers to operate on international routes was the culmination of a well considered process starting from as far back as December, 2003 and was in no way a hasty decision as has been made out. It was essentially based on the need to allow Indian carriers to optimally utilize our entitlements *vis-a-vis* foreign carriers. The facts clearly reveal that the Government decision had nothing whatsoever to do with the IPO issue. It would be a little far fetched to try and link the two when there is no link and it would be unfair to impute motives where non-exist. I would once again like to assure the House that we work with complete transparency and accountability.

Let me reiterate that the decisions by this Government are not guided by any vested interest but are taken in the overall public interest. Under the circumstances, I am of the considered view that the observations made by

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the Standing Committee in this regard have been adequately answered. Further, based on the facts enumerated, there is no necessity for any further enquiry into this issue by an independent agency, since we have been completely transparent and there is no issue that needs to be investigated.

In respect of the observations of the Standing Committee that there is an element of arbitrariness in imposing the restriction on airlines in terms of experience etc. and not allowing all the domestic scheduled airlines to fly on international routes, I would like to clarify that the minimum requirement prescribed for airlines to qualify for operation on international routes is entirely based on the consideration that only airlines with proven track records in the domestic sector should be allowed to operate internationally. This was particularly important, as the Government does not want airlines to withdraw operations from domestic routes once they start international operations. That is why a minimum fleet strength of 20 aircraft has been prescribed. This would ensure greater domestic connectivity while enabling the airlines to gain greater experience for operations on international routes at a later stage. The experience clause of 5 years operation is also a carefully thought-out decision based on advice of the safety regulator i.e. the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. It needs to be understood that once airlines start operating to foreign countries, they are subject to checks and inspections by the safety regulators of those countries. It is, therefore, important that airlines first stabilize operations in the domestic sector and establish the requisite safety/maintenance standards before they are considered for international operations.

I may also point out that on the date of Government decision in this regard i.e. 29.12.2004 there were only three private scheduled airlines operating on domestic sectors. Out of the three, two qualified for international operations as per the eligibility criteria decided. One airline, which did not qualify, was in any case only about one year old and had also not shown any interest in international operations. Therefore, there was no discrimination against any airline as such.

As regards due diligence and performance record of the airlines is concerned, once an airline has operated in the domestic sector for five years in accordance with the laid down standards, there is no further requirement for any due diligence. As the House is aware, there are stringent safety requirements that airlines have to follow

and each of the airlines is also required to meet social obligations by adhering to route dispersal guidelines. There is strict monitoring of their adherence to the route dispersal guidelines by DGCA. It is, by the same logic, important that the track record of airlines performance over a period of time is taken into consideration as eligibility criteria.

The Standing Committee has observed that the basic objective of the Government behind allowing the private airlines to fly international destinations was to provide connectivity to new international destinations and that this purpose is defeated as the eligible airlines have applied for the same routes as are being operated by the national carriers. Let me clarify that while it is our intention to encourage the operation of eligible airlines to fly to newer destinations, the primary objective is optimum utilization of the bilateral traffic rights. India offers tremendous opportunities to airlines because of the fast growing size of international traffic to/from India. This potential was largely being exploited by foreign airlines. It is also significant to note that much of the carriage on international routes was also taking place through 3rd countries, instead of direct traffic between India and the concerned country. It can be nobody's case that foreign airlines be allowed to carry traffic to/from India in increasing numbers while restricting our own airlines—public or private—from operating on international routes.

Moreover, Government feels that there should be increased direct connectivity between point-to-point destinations. If the traffic size between UK and India is significant, the commercial opportunities out of this should ideally be utilized either by Indian carriers or carriers of UK. The Government have approached the issue of liberalization of international services with these objectives in mind. It may be emphasized that this is only the beginning. As the process evolves, Government will keep on taking stock of the situation and we are confident that newer destinations will certainly get added.

Sir, I have tried to respond to the various important recommendations made by the Standing Committee. We have taken note of these recommendations and suggestions of the Committee, which will help us in developing and strengthening this sector. On a few issues in which there is a lack of appreciation of our view point, I have tried to satisfy the concerns expressed by the Committee. Sir, in conclusion, I thank the Chairman and Members of the Committee for the many useful and valuable recommendations made in their Report."

12.06 hrs.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER

Need to conserve water resources and constitution of Parliamentary Forum on Water

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: May I make a statement with your kind permission?

Hon. Members, we are all aware how crucial the conservation of natural resources in general and water resources in particular is. It has grown in importance, of late, with crisis after crisis afflicting the majority of living beings in our country and the world as a whole.

A recent tragic news report about a 12-year boys' death in a stampede where people fought for few litres of water from a tanker in Delhi highlights the gravity of the situation. Fall in the level of ground water table at an alarming rate is adding to our difficulties. I am sure, we, being the elected representatives of the people, can do our bit in the Nation's efforts to solve this problem. On my part, I have decided to offer the premises of the Parliament House and the Speaker's House in Delhi, where I am a temporary occupant, and my residence in Kolkata for rain water harvesting. I am also going to ask the concerned Ministries to take up the project of providing the facilities for harvesting rain water in all the residential and official premises under the control of the Speaker. I shall also be writing to the Ministry of Urban Development to take up similar projects for the Government accommodations. Let us hope the system of rain water harvesting will be in place before the onset of the monsoon. This move, I hope, will inspire all concerned to take up similar initiatives all over the country. I shall also take up this matter with the concerned Ministry for inclusion of offering rain water harvesting systems under MPLADS.

I have decided to constitute a Parliamentary Forum on Water so that we can all effectively discuss the problems in a structured manner and can discharge our obligations to the nation with result-oriented approach. I have no doubt that in this endeavour the hon. Members on all sides will render their active support and will carry the message to their constituencies so that the conservation of water does not remain a slogan. These efforts, if continued consistently, will surely go a long

way in replenishing the ground water and mitigating the problems of water shortage.

Let us all hope for a very good monsoon, a rich harvest of crop as well as rain water.

...(*Interruptions*)

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): This is a grand idea. There should be a full-fledged discussion in the House itself. ...(*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a good suggestion. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shall we wait for the next Session?

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): In Andhra Pradesh, we have solved this problem long back. ...(*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there should be a discussion in the House on this issue. This is an important suggestion on the issue of water scarcity, there should be a full fledged discussion on this issue ...(*Interruptions*)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the Speaker's statement is becoming controversial. It is very unfortunate.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Sir, there is nothing controversial.

MR. SPEAKER: You are supporting me. Thank you very much.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: I am not only supporting you but also saying that there should be a powerful law enacted by this House to check the unlimited. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Very good. Make your suggestion when we have a full discussion.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we come to item 18. Shri M.P. Veerendra Kumar. Nothing else will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request you to grant me two minutes time. A large number of child marriages have taken place in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will conclude within two minutes. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What will happen during the zero hour?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please take up Calling Attention after a little while. ...(Interruptions)

[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: You have raised an important issue. I will allow you and give you full opportunity.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will just take two minutes time to conclude. ...(Interruptions)

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Speaker, the hands of a woman were chopped off. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Somehow, we have got the impression that if we can speak on an inappropriate time, our issue becomes important. I do not know why it should be.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ramji Lal Suman, I will give you full opportunity. It is an important matter.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, my issue is also important.

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing else will be recorded except the statements of Shri Veerendra Kumar and the hon. Minister.

...(Interruptions)*

12.09 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

(I) Problems being faced by traditional fishermen in the country and steps taken by the Government in this regard

[English]

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (Calicut): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The problems being faced by traditional fishermen in the country and steps taken by the Government in this regard."

[Translation]

©THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): The Government is well aware of the various issues of marine fisheries sector specially that of traditional sector. On realizing that the earlier deep sea fishing policies of the Government of India had certain drawbacks, the Government has now come up with a Comprehensive Marine Fishing Policy in November 2004 to ensure development of all the sectors involved *i.e.* traditional sector, the small mechanized sector and the deep sea sector. The Government has made Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) a limited access sector by issuing necessary guidelines that fishing in EEZ could be only after obtaining a letter of permission from the Government of India by Indian Entrepreneurs deploying vessels flying Indian flag only for resource specific fishing methods recommended by a Murari Committee on Deep Sea Fishing Vessels. In accordance with a decision taken by the Government while approving the new comprehensive marine fishing policy, an inter-ministerial empowered committee has also been constituted to ensure that development of deep sea

*Not recorded.

©Also placed in Library. See No. LT/2262/05.

*Not recorded.

fishing is done in a transparent manner and also without colliding with the interests of traditional and small mechanised fishing sectors.

In full compliance of the earlier Government decisions to dispense with the operation of all deep sea fishing vessels flying foreign flag, no more such vessels have since been permitted from December, 1996 to fish in Indian EEZ.

Reduction in per boat availability of fish catch is to a great extent due to increased fishing capacity in the traditional and small-scale sector. As per available scientific evidence, breeding and development of most of the commercial species is taking place within the territorial water, and as such the deep sea fishing activities through selective methods of long lining, pelagic and mid water trawling can hardly do any damage to these resources. As regards diesel subsidy to Kerala, the Union Government would consider fresh releases on receipt of proper proposal from the State Government. As regards the requirement of kerosene for fishing sector, the Union Government has advised all coastal states after consultation with Petroleum Ministry that the requirements of fisheries sector of these states should be reflected in overall quota requisition by them from the Petroleum Ministry since no separate allocation of kerosene quota for Fisheries sector has been made by the Government of India.

[English]

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Hon. Speaker, Sir, it is said that in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone, the multinational companies are not operating. Based on the Murari Committee Report, certain decisions have been taken. I want to bring to the notice of the House that the entire coastal belt in India is facing a crisis. There are about 1.2 crore of fishermen in the Indian coasts and there are about 10 lakh fishermen in Kerala alone from where I come.

My information is about 25,000 trawlers owned by the multinational companies, which are operating world over, exploit the marine wealth. The trawlers, the big ships of Norwegian, American and Thailand companies are in the deep sea. According to the Government, fishing in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone is not allowed for the foreign companies with a foreign flag. In a way, it is true, but in reality, foreign factory vessels, big ships owned by joint venture companies are looting our sea wealth. It has been reported that about 200 foreign vessels are fishing in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone at present.

The big corporations have allowed to catch fish based on the assessment that 3.7 million tonnes of fish are available in Indian waters. Government's claim is that only 2.7 million tonnes of fish are normally caught.

Therefore, corporations are given licence to net the balance one million tonnes of fish. However, these statistics are proven wrong and disputed as in the last few decades' availability of fish is getting reduced every year.

Another problem is that these vessels of big multinational companies are getting closer and closer to Indian waters as availability of fish in high seas is only 1,64,000 tonnes according to one assessment. All these affect the catches of fishermen operating in 35,000 semi-mechanised boats and two lakh ordinary boats. Two factors are distinct: operation of these multinational corporations are affecting the livelihood of traditional fishermen as the availability of fish is lesser and lesser and environmental problems are there due to pollution.

Many indigenous varieties are on the verge of extinction because of this catch. As extra catches are being taken by the trawlers, some of the indigenous varieties are getting extinct. I can quote some of them. One of them is elasmobranchs; this is indigenous, our own fish. There are catfishes, ribbon fishes and carangids. They are all getting extinct now. This is a dangerous situation that is happening in our coastal belt. I think, the Government should look into this matter seriously.

Recently, the Tsunami disaster came, and about 20 lakh people are in trouble throughout the coastal belt. They are uprooted. I do not know whether any monitoring mechanism is there to monitor rehabilitation work, if there is, it would be a time-bound programme. Fishermen are getting reduced and catches are also getting reduced. That is also a big problem in the coastal belt.

Another point is that about 220 liters of kerosene is given to fishermen in Kerala. That is not enough. As this issue is under consideration of the Government, I do not go for details.

I want to raise one more point. The fishing community has been demanding the implementation of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: I am closing, Sir. The Tsunami of 26th December devastated the beach-based fishers. Had the coastal State Governments implemented CRZ strictly, the magnitude of the disaster would not have been so devastating. CRZ is an example of farsighted perception of Shrimati Indira Gandhi. I urge the UPA Government to honour her by implementing the CRZ notification.

Sir, the entry of foreign and joint venture companies is killing our marine processing units as well. Kerala has 121 fish processing units, of which hardly 50 are currently

[Shri M.P. Veerendra Kumar]

functioning. There have been 14 units in the District of Kollam, out of which 10 have already been closed. At the time when Indian companies are struggling to survive, foreign companies have come to take over them.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question please.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: This is question Sir. One of the best factories in India, the Amalgom Company in Cochin has already been taken over by a multinational giant and more are in the offing. The multinational companies are exporting marine products without having any value addition. Can you stop these? Since they are exporting frozen raw fish, no new employment is generated. When foreign companies take over, hundreds of people lose their jobs. My question is this. Can you take any action against this?

Another point is regarding Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Recently, Free Trade Agreement has been signed with Thailand. The FTAs have been signed with many countries. I have raised this issue in this Parliament. Have you ever consulted these coastal States? What will be the effect of this agreement when you import so much of fish from other countries? The Thailand Agreement has caused a lot of concern in my State. The entire fishermen community is in trouble. It is a coastal belt of sensitive area. If more people are unemployed and if they have no work, they will take to some other operation which will raise serious problems.

So, I urge, whenever an agreement is signed with any country, it must be brought before Parliament. There must be transparency. It must be discussed and then only should it be implemented. It should not be that somebody goes and signs an agreement with other countries and it is binding on us. The question is, whether the Government would ensure that when such FTAs are signed, before they are implemented, they are brought to Parliament and must be ratified ensured that everybody knows about it.

Crop insurance is given to farmers and insurance companies also insure the vehicles like tractors and motor cars etc. In the coastal areas, the fishermen have no insurance. So, would the Government consider giving some insurance coverage to insure the boats? In the case of natural calamities, when the boats are lost, there is no compensation and the fishermen are in trouble. So, would the government consider insurance for both boats and also for the fishermen so that in times of crises, they are safeguarded?

These are the points I wanted to make. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, Calling Attention Notices are governed by specific rules. you are all aware of these rules. It is not permitted that anybody seeing in the List of Business a Calling Attention would give notice to speak on the matter. I have before me a list of ten hon. Members who had started giving notices from 9.30 a.m. till 10.20 a.m. This is not the way to regulate a Calling Attention matter. Only in rare cases hon. Members whose names are not there on the list or who have not taken the trouble of giving notices could be called. I do not think that this is the way we could regulate Calling Attention. But since I am announcing this today, this would not be done in future. I would call only two hon. Members. This would not be treated as a precedent.

Shri Chandra Sekhar Sahu.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU (Berhampur-Orissa): Thank you, Sir. I just want to raise only two or three points.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question please.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: I want to ask only two or three questions.

In the area in which I come from, we have more than 100 kilometres of seashore and there are about two lakh to three lakh traditional, small fishermen. While moving through the constituency, the fishermen community had given me certain points to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister through you.

MR. SPEAKER: But you never gave any notice.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: I am sorry for that.

When the women belonging to the community of fishermen go to the weekly market, they face a lot of trouble while selling their fish. They want through the Ministry the creation of marketing infrastructure. They require at least night shelter, some sort of toilet facilities and such other things because they have to go and stay the whole night before the start selling fish the next day. There are problems created by anti-social elements and they even face sexual abuse.

There is a housing scheme under which Rs. 40,000 is given for a house but the number of houses provided

for is very small. So, the entire fishing community along the seashore is not being covered. The Government should consider providing for more number of houses.

The next aspect relates to coastal plantation for prevention of erosion and for protection against natural calamities. I think, there is enough coverage but there is also a need to involve the voluntary organisations to have these plantations in the coastal side so that it would have some effect. These people are traditionally staying in the coastal areas and they would get some benefit out of it.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Thank you, Sir.

The traditional fishing sector is facing a serious problem now.

MR. SPEAKER: You are entitled to only ask a clarificatory question. No preface is necessary.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: One of the reasons is the over-exploiting of marine fisheries by foreign fishing vessels. There are about 311 foreign fishing vessels fishing in our deep seas; also, there is unscientific mechanisation.

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. K.S. Manoj, I am sorry. What is your question?

...(Interruptions)

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Sir, I am coming to the question.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do come.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the hon. Minister consider the cancellation of the licences given to these foreign fishing vessels? Some of the foreign vessels have already completed the period and again they are given the licences.

Another question is that the traditional fishermen are getting subsidised kerosene oil and diesel. This time 50 paise are levied on the diesel as road cess. But, unfortunately, these fishermen are not using the road.
...(Interruptions) Even then this road cess is levied on the diesel used by the fishermen. So, will the hon. Minister consider the waiving of the road cess on diesel used by the traditional fishing community?

Also, there is no separate department for the fisheries now. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: There are too many alsos !

DR. K.S. MANOJ: The hon. Chairperson of the UPA is here. Now, the various aspects of the fisheries are led by various Ministries, that is, by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Food Processing and the Ministry of Science and Technology. Will our Chairperson of the UPA.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You should address to the Minister, and also to the Chairperson.

...(Interruptions)

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the hon. Minister consider bifurcation of the Department of Fisheries from the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary?
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I would have called you had I permitted you. I would not permit now. I have already said that.

[Translation]

SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I respect the views that the hon. Members have expressed in the House through you. As for the information that has been sought with regard to the fishermen, I would like to state that after assuming power, the UPA government has increased the amount of Rs. 95 crore, which was being granted by the NDA government for improvement of the financial condition of the fishermen, to Rs. 160 crore. In this year we have made a provision of Rs. 174 crore for this purpose so that their financial conditions, standard of living and employment situation could be improved. The number of fishermen is constantly increasing. As the hon. Members have pointed out, fishermen from other areas are encroaching upon coastal areas of local fishermen and depriving them their employment. To put a stop to this outsiders have been restricted from fishing. In addition to that other facilities are also being provided to traditional fishermen. They will be provided with an additional assistance of Rs. twenty thousand to modernise their conventional boats. The fishermen become incommunicado once they move far into the seas. To solve this problem a grant upto Rs. thirty thousand for purchase of wireless sets is being provided by the government so that these fishermen could be contacted through wireless at the time of emergency. Similarly, the hon. Members have also expressed concerned about housing scheme for the fishermen. In

[Shri Kantilal Bhuria]

this regard, a provision of Rs. twenty thousand for one house per person has been made. In case of an accident immediate assistance of Rs. fifty thousand is provided and if any fisherman becomes handicapped an amount of Rs. twenty five thousand is provided to him.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has pointed out that there is no insurance scheme for fishermen if their boats are destroyed. We are considering this issue and we are trying our level best to provide insurance coverage to their boats.

Sir, hon. Member Shri Veerendra Kumar has said that the fishermen who travel to various places for catching fish, need vessels for which no assistance is being provided. I would like to tell him that assistance has been provided for that also. He spoke about banning the import of foreign made vessels. I would like to inform that there has been a ban on foreign vessels since 1976 and now catching of fishes is done only through indigenous vessels and boats. Another hon. Member said that 25000 trollers are operating in the whole world but they are not granted permission in our country. Through my statement, I have brought the situation in the country in this regard to the notice of the House.

Sir, an hon. Member has asked for information about CRZ also. I would like to tell that it is issued by the Environment Ministry. A study of Tsunami affected cases is being undertaken in this regard. It will be considered after getting their result. Many hon. Members have sought information with regard to improving the condition of the fishermen and efforts being made by the Government to provide facilities to them. I want to tell that we have recently made a provision to set up an authority by amending the Coastal Aquaculture Bill which was pending for the last eight years. The hon. Members already have much knowledge in this regard. Our UPA Government has done much welfare work to remove the problems of the fishermen, to bail them out crisis to make them stronger financially and turn around their destiny. The Bill, pending for the eight years has been passed, as amended. I think that many possibilities of their welfare are connected through it. We are trying to provide them every kind of assistance. The Government has made many efforts before it also. We are considering to constitute a National Fisheries Development Board on the lines of milk business and NDDB.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members have sought varied information. I have explained many points in my statement.

Point has been raised about licence and loan for Kerosene. We are considering as to how assistance can be provided for Kerosene and diesel by contacting and holding meetings with the State Governments. We are making full efforts from our side to see that they get such assistance. But, I would like to tell clearly that in case any proposal for giving assistance to fishermen for Kerosene and Diesel is received by the Union Government from the state governments, then we will definitely and promptly take action on it.

12.33 hrs.

(ii) **Situation arising out of alleged irregular sale of Kovalam Ashoka Beach Resort at Trivandrum to M Far Hotels Private Limited and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto**

[English]

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Tourism to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that she may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of alleged irregular sale of Kovalam Ashoka Beach Resort at Trivandrum to M Far Hotels Private Limited and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

"THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): Sir, the hon. Member has given this notice. But actually, on this matter, Kerala has filed a Special Leave Petition under the Constitution of India before the Supreme Court which is pending.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it by Government of Kerala?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: The matter is *sub judice*. Sir, it would, therefore, not be appropriate for me to offer any comment at this point.

MR. SPEAKER; I did not know this. Is it exactly the subject matter? Is it on this very matter that it is *sub judice*?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Yes, sir, on this very matter. On their own, the State Government has gone in appeal. I cannot comment on it.

*Also placed in Library. See LT No. 2263/05.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it on the sale of this hotel?

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Yes, Sir. The same matter is *sub judice*.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. What is this?

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, I should not have allowed this. I did not know this.

[*English*]

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Sir, we have to say something about it, It is a serious issue. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Karunakaran, I cannot do something which is not permitted by the Constitution and the rules.

MR. SPEAKER: I wish I had been informed.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Sir, I want to place before the House the seriousness of the issue.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: This should not have been admitted at all.

MR. SPEAKER: On which she cannot reply because on the merits, she cannot reply. How can she deal with the merit?

MR. SPEAKER: This should have been informed by your Ministry.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: She can understand what is there.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: We did inform. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Then, you can go and meet her in her office. The House cannot discuss it.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat what is the problem. what to happening.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Sir, my notice is admitted. So, I want to be allowed to raise it.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. I did not know that the matter is *sub judice*. Since the matter is *sub judice*, it will not be appropriate to discuss it here. We will deal with it later on some time.

[*English*]

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: When did you get the information?

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: That is the way how private parties are trying to avoid. ...(*Interruptions*)

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Just one by one. This is not the way.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a matter which is very much pending before the hon. Supreme Court of India. How can they comment on this?

...(*Interruptions*)

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. What is this?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I want to raise an issue which is not *sub judice*. The matter is entirely different from the matter which is *sub judice*. Can I raise that? ...(*Interruptions*)

...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: A point has been raised.

MR. SPEAKER: Do not put questions to me. This is not a good thing. I am not here to answer all your queries.

...(*Interruptions*)

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, it is a question of corruption. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. I wish I had been told that it is a matter which is pending before the Supreme Court.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: In this matter, almost all the people of our State are much interested, irrespective of political colour. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are aware of the significance of the matter being *sub judice*. Are you or are you not?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, what I raise is not a question of matter which is *sub judice*. It is entirely different from what is *sub judice*. I am raising the question of corruption which I am entitled to.

MR. SPEAKER: Not without permission. I am not giving any permission.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Not one word will be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)*

12.37 hrs.

MOTION RE: TWELFTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Twelfth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 11th May, 2005."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Twelfth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 11th May, 2005."

The motion was adopted.

...*(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record it.

...*(Interruptions)**

12.38 hrs.

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT BILL, 2005^o

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD): Sir, I beg to move that leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for facilitating the promotion and development and enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for facilitating the promotion and development and enhancing the competitiveness and small and medium enterprises and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

[Translation]

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also given a notice. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What was the topic of your notice?

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ: For Zero Hour. ...*(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

^oPublished in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 12.05.2005.

MR. SPEAKER: You should read a little about rules. Zero House has not commenced yet. You should remain a little alert.

12.38¹/₂ hrs.

**TAXATION LAWS (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2005***

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a bill further to amend the Income-Tax Act, 1961, the Customs Act, 1962, the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, the Central Excise Act, 1944 and the Central Sales Tax Act, 1956.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Income-Tax Act, 1961, the Customs Act, 1962, the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, the Central Excise Act, 1944 and the Central Sales Tax Act, 1956."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I introduce** the Bill.

12.39 hrs.

**HIGH COURT AND SUPREME COURT
JUDGES (SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF
SERVICE) AMENDMENT BILL, 2005***

[English]

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1954 and the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and

Conditions of Service) Act, 1954 and the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958."

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I have an objection. I may be permitted to raise it.

MR. SPEAKER: It does not arise. You cannot question Speaker's ruling. You can only raise a question.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have to listen to me first.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not record anything.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You have no right. You have a right to object only.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is very unfortunate.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, I have a right. You can disallow it. That is another matter. ... (Interruptions) I have a right to raise it as per rule 72. You can disallow it. That is another matter.

Therefore, I have raised an objection on this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. you are such an expert of the rules, but let me read the rule please.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, if I remember correctly it is rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure and conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

MR. SPEAKER: Let Me read the rule.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not behave in an irresponsible manner.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Kindly listen to me first, and then raise your point.

...(Interruptions)

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 12.05.2005.

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to read the rule. It states that:

"Notice to oppose introduction of a Bill shall be addressed to the Secretary-General specifying clearly and precisely the objections to be raised and given by 10.00 hours on the day on which the motion for leave to introduce the Bills is included in the list of business."

It further states that:

"Provided that where a motion is opposed on the ground that the Bill initiates legislation outside the legislative competence of the House, the Speaker may permit a full discussion thereon: ..."

So, it can only be on issue of legislative competence. What is the legislative competence that you have to raise on this Bill?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, I would like to read the rule. It states that:

"Notice to oppose introduction of a Bill shall be addressed to the Secretary-General specifying clearly and precisely the objections to be raised and given by 10.00 hours on the day on which the motion for leave to introduce the Bills is included in the list of business."

I would like to state that I have done it.

MR. SPEAKER: Have you done it while keeping in mind the legislative competence?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I have done it. I have given the notice before 10 o'clock. All these points are getting satisfied in my case.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Please read the next line in it.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Now, this is the rule with regard to this issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I can only express my great sorrow.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I am reading the amendment:

"Notice to oppose introduction of a Bill shall be addressed to the Secretary-General specifying clearly and precisely the objections to be raised and given by 10.00 hours on the day on which the motion for leave to introduce the Bills is included in the list of business."

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a lecture room. It is also mentioned in the rule that:

"Provided that where a motion is opposed on the ground that the Bill initiates legislation outside the legislative competence of the House, the Speaker may permit a full discussion thereon: ..."

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: It is stated that I should give the notice before 10 o'clock, and I have given the notice before 10 o'clock. I have given it.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, tell us about it. What is your objection?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: What is the use of the Rules of Procedure, and the use of raising an objection if it goes on like this?

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. Please, do not lecture. Please say whatever you have got to say on this issue. You can raise your point.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Thank you very much. I am very much indebted to you. I respect you very much.

Now, the point is that I do not want to oppose the enhancement in the salaries of the Supreme Court judges in spite of the fact that cases are pending in lakhs. This is not the contention. My contention is the way in which this Bill is being introduced in the House. This is an old Bill, and the hon. Minister is bringing an amendment about the salary of the judges. It is a well-known fact, and we all know that the House will be adjourned *sine die* tomorrow. I have not objected to the Bill introduced by Shri P. Chidambaram, the hon. Finance Minister, but I am objecting to this Bill because he is the Law Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. P. Chidambaram is lucky.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): The Law Minister should not do anything illegal.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: The Law Minister cannot violate the law. The Law Minister is seeking to amend the Bill, and I am entitled to oppose it. I am entitled to two day's notice, and it is crystal clear in the rules. I know that the hon. Speaker is supreme in all these matters. I admit it, but here is a case where the hon. Minister is very well aware that the House will be adjourned *sine die* tomorrow, and there is no doubt about it.

This matter regarding enhancing the salary of the judges is pending for a long time, and it is not a new development. It was already there. The reason given by the hon. Minister for doing this is that he could get the recommendation of the hon. President only yesterday. This is not a valid reason. The Government, especially, the Law Minister ought to have sought the recommendation of the hon. President sufficiently in advance, and this Bill ought to have been circulated among the Members so that we could have got an opportunity to study the implications involved in Bill. This right has been denied by not an ordinary Minister, but by the Law Minister himself.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, he is an extra-ordinary Minister!

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: He is a very important person. Therefore, I am opposing it.

MR. SPEAKER: Have you finished mentioning about your objection?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Of course, I admit that the Speaker can do anything, but I have a right to raise an objection.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you not get exhausted?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I have a humble right to raise this objection before you, and you are at full liberty to take a decision on it.

In the instant case, I have to point out one thing, and the House can take any decision as per the rules. Here is a case—in the absence of the Opposition—where the right of the Members is involved. They are absent from the House, and we are all taken by surprise.

MR. SPEAKER: Have you finished making your point? You are repeating all that you have already mentioned.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: The Opposition is not there. In the absence of the Opposition, the right

of the Members should not be denied. Therefore, I am opposing the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: You were yourself a Speaker of a State Assembly at one time. I do not know what happened in the Kerala Assembly. But hon. Member, you should be aware that the hon. Minister could not have come and moved it without my permission. I have relaxed the rule.

Therefore, your raising this point is challenging the decision of the Speaker which amounts to a breach of privilege. I am not taking any privilege action against you. So far as the point that you have raised is concerned, it is rejected.

The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1954 and the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, child marriages are still in practice in the country especially in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Radhakrishnan, unnecessarily, you have wasted five minutes of valuable time.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: When some people approached the National Human Rights Commission to complain about this, the Chairman NHRC Justice A.S. Anand wrote to all the Chief Secretaries and Chief Ministers of the States informing that yesterday i.e. on 11th May on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, large scale child marriages take place in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The State Governments should take steps to stop these child marriages. Through you, I would like to

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

say that in district Dhar alone in Madhya Pradesh 60 percent of marriages are child marriages. There is gross violation of Sharda Act. Recently, 23 minor children tied the nuptial knot in Rajasthan. The most agonising fact is that a local minister attended the child marriages which took place at Dabra in Madhya Pradesh. If the persons who are supposed to discourage or stop the practice of Child Marriage, attend the same, it will promote and encourage the people involved in this practice. The local SDM got information that child marriage had take place in a village there. ...*(Interruptions)* The most important fact is that when an Assistant Women Development Officer Ms. Shankuntala Varma went there to gather information in this regard, both of her hands were amputated. ...*(Interruptions)* This is a very serious case. The State Government was aware of the that child marriages would take place on the 11th May yet the State Government did not take any action to stop it despite the NHRC had written letter to the State Government to this effect. The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh says that. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is a state matter. Do not get excited. Tell me how the Centre is involved, and I will allow you. It is a law and order matter and a very serious matter.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: The National Human Rights Commission has written a letter. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You make we understand, I have not denied it.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: My submission was that the women officer who went there for inquiry, her both hands were chopped off. The district administration did not take cognisance of the case. ...*(Interruptions)* The police did not reach there. When this incident was brought to the notice of the Chief Minister of the State, he said that what could he do, even Mahatma Ghandi could not do anything in such cases. This is a very serious case. Child Marriages are still being practiced in our country on a large scale and senior officers and the Ministers attend these marriages. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want protection from you. I know that this is a state matter but at the same time this is also a national issue, because until we

resolve to fight this social evil, the problem is not going to be solved. It was extremely saddening to see the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh on T.V. Channels and reading his statement in the News Papers wherein he said that he was not able to do anything in that regard. If it is so then what is the purpose of his being there in the office of the Chief Minister. If the Government cannot do anything than it has not right to remain in power even for a minute. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: They are not here.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is very unfortunate. Please sit down for a second; I am on my legs. Nobody pays any attention to the Chair. Please sit down, otherwise everything will be deleted from the records. I am extending full support to the point that you are raising.

[Translation]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government should seek a report from there. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Sir, we are grateful to you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: There is no need to be grateful to me.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: We want that the Central Government should seek a report in this regard. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please, you listen, let me speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Whoever is responsible, the matter is of extreme seriousness and should be condemned, no doubt about it. However, the question is, "Can every State Government matter be brought here or can the Centre intervene in any State Government matter?" We do not want that. Therefore, I can only appeal to the Government

to find out from the appropriate authorities of the State Government and, if necessary, they can tell us what is the situation because it involves the women of our country.

They should be properly respected and properly secured. I congratulate you for raising that matter.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Sir, you please direct the Government. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have directed.

[*English*]

I have already given a direction. How do you expect an immediate response? If they agree to do and give an immediate response, I do not object.

Mrs. Ingrid Mcleod, your issue is the same. It relates to some other State. But since you want to make a maiden intervention, you can do it.

MS. INGRID MCLEOD (Nominated): Thank you, Sir.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I wish to raise the issue of the security of welfare workers in the country. A Women's Welfare Supervisor Shakuntala Verma working in the Women's Welfare Department was attacked and her hands were cut off, in Dhar District in Madhya Pradesh. It is a serious matter of concern. The welfare worker was creating awareness amongst rural masses against child marriages and was trying to prevent a child marriage from being solemnised on the eve of *Akshaya Tritiya*, a day which was considered auspicious for child marriages. This only expresses the seriousness of the situation the welfare workers are facing.

Through you, Sir, I would request the hon. Home Minister to ensure that these attacks are not allowed to continue. The welfare workers will be demoralised if strict action is not taken against the culprits. The hon. Minister should take this incident very seriously.

MR. SPEAKER: The children of our country are involved. Serious complaints are being made. These incidents are to be condemned. I compliment you for raising this Mrs. Mcleod. I am sure some action may be taken. At least, the House may be informed.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Please permit me to only mention a word. Mrs. Gijja Vyas, the chairperson of the National Women's Commission is going to Indore tomorrow. Kindly permit us to take up this matter thereafter again.

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Sir, there is a cooperative sugar mill in my Constituency called the Amaravati Cooperative Sugar Mill. The mill gets sugarcane from the neighbouring villages Udumalpet, Pollachi, Dharapuram, Palani and Palladam, which are notified areas.

Nowadays the private mill owners are entering into the notified areas and getting the sugarcane by paying higher rates than the Government rates. This is a violation of the existing rules whereby the cooperative mill is in trouble due to lack of raw materials for smooth running of the mill. There is a tendency for closure of the mill also. So, on behalf of *Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* headed by Mr. Vaiko, I urge upon the State Government, which is as usual, sluggish and slow, to come forward and enforce the prevailing laws and prevent the private buyers and allow the smooth running of the cooperative sugar mill. I am urging that the Centre should direct the State Government to take initiative in running it smoothly.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): I wish to associate with the Member on this issue, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Your name will be recorded.

SHRI T.K. HAMZA (Manjeri): I would like to raise certain important points. I rise to invite the attention of the House regarding the grievances of the casual workers engaged in various airports in the country, especially in Calicut airport. I am the Chairman of Airport Advisory Committee there and that is why I know the real position. These casual workers are employed there for the last fifteen years. Now, the management is appointing certain contractors which is breaking the backs of workers who are actually doing the work there. They are engaged in the work and doing the work for the management. So, I request that they be kindly allowed to continue to work there and some regularisation may kindly be made. The Minister may look into the matter and pass orders accordingly.

MR. SPEAKER: You please that if you wait patiently, you will get your turn. If you get up at an inappropriate time, it does not help. You only waste the time of the House. You should learn.

[Translation]

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Today thousands of Muslims are staging dhama and demonstration at Jantar Mantar the banner of Muslim Reservation Movement. Muslims have come from all parts of the country and their contention is that Muslims have been deprived of reservation due to which they are lagging behind and they are far far backward from the education point of view. Today even after fifty eight years of our independence justice is not being done to Muslims. As per data I have with me the population of Muslims is at least thirty crores in the country and their ratio in government jobs is less than two percent whereas this ratio was 37 percent before independence. When this law was enacted in the country relaxations were provided to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes and dalit Muslims were not included in this category though dalit Hindus were categorised for benefit of reservation, Muslims were deprived of benefit of reservation. They are not getting benefit of reservation. Therefore, I want to say that, I have also participated in the dhama staged by Muslims, the facilities or relaxation available for Hindu dalits should also be extended to Muslim dalits according to population of muslims. Without reservation Muslims will always remain poor and backward in this country and will not be able to make progress. Therefore, I request the Government to look into this matter and do justice to the Muslims.

MR. SPEAKER: All right, you have made your point.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also endorse this. My name also be associated with it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Your name will be associated.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please cooperate. Every hon. Member has important issues to raise. If only we think of ourselves and not of other hon'ble Members, how do we conduct these proceedings? Let us be brief. Let us come to the point and help each other.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH (Farrukhabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, after green revolution use of chemical

fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides has increased a lot. Though production has also increased considerably but a lot of problems have also cropped up before us. Production has been stationary for the last five years successively and population is increasing but agricultural production is stagnant. I would like to tell one thing to this august House and to the Government that due to the use of chemical fertilizers in a haphazard way and excess use of pesticides and insecticides ground water has also become contaminated and environment too has got affected to some extent.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We had a ten hour debate on agriculture. You have brought all these points and the hon. Minister has fully replied. Now, you are again raising this issue.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: It is true but if we do not consider this problem right now the entire land will turn unfertile in the time to come and ground water will no longer remain potable.

13.00 hrs.

It will affect the environment as well. Therefore, through you I would like to request the Government to formulate such a policy so that the quality of ground water may not deteriorate further in future.

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Sir, it is an unfortunate matter that the Burns Standard Company Ltd. and Burns Works are not getting the orders from the Railways Department. The Railway Minister had also assured that the BSCL and BW would get the order. Now, they are giving the tenders to the Bharat Wagons which is an organisation under the Railways. The BW have manufactured 50 BOBRN wagons. In spite of the fact that they have got the lowest tenders, the Railways are not awarding the order to them. The inputs like bogie and couplers which are given to the private sector are not given to the public sector, though they have assured. If BSCL/BW are not given orders for wagons by the Railway Department, they may not survive.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH (Aligarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this very important issue.

Sir, the land of this country has been full of sages, saints and renouncers. I want to draw attention of this House towards such a serious incident. I want to draw your attention towards news item published in the 'Punjab Kesari' of 6th February, 2005 which relates to Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia. Some time back Indian Haj delegation visited Jeddah, Makka and Medina in Saudi Arabia. Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia misbehaved with Hazi Rasoolan Bibi, the widow of Paramvir Chakra recipient Abdul Hamid. The hon. Prime Minister selected Haji Rasoolan Bibi, the widow of Paramvir Chakra winner Abdul Hamid for the Haj delegation 2005 and gave her his good wishes for the Haj pilgrimage and he also threw a farewell tea party in honour of the Hajjis. Haj Cell of the Ministry of External Affairs issued an executive Class ticket of Air India to Rasoolan Bibi but when she boarded the plane from Jeddah to Delhi a third class seat in economy class was allotted to her. Her grandson expressed his resentment on it and also brought this matter to the notice staff under Indian Ambassador in Saudi Arabia Shri H.M. Farooqui. She was allotted a seat in economy class without regard to her ill-health and old age. If this sort of treatment is meted out to the widow of a recipient of Paramvir Chakra, you can well imagine what sort of treatment they might be meting out to a common man. Not only this a number of Haj pilgrims from Raebareilly, Aligarh and other districts of Uttar Pradesh are also subjected to the same type of ill-treatment.

Sir, through you, I request hon. Minister to take immediate action against those officers of Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Embassy at Saudi Arabia who were entrusted with the responsibility of visit of Goodwill Haz Delegation 2005 and who misbehaved. I want to say that the work done by Abdul Hamid in 1965 war was an example of patriotism. The incident of misbehaviour with Reasoolam Bibi has hurted crores of people throughout the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Right, you have raised a very important issue.

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH Sir, I ensure the such incidents are not repeated in future, Government

must take cognisance of the incident and take action against the culprits.

[English]

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR (Ottapalam): Sir, the Central Government should take immediate steps to protect the services of 1.5 lakhs of licensed Railway porters and more than seven lakhs of catering service workers.

In 1999, the NDA Government imposed the policy of privatisation. Is this Government also going to continue and adopt the policy of the previous Government? If this happens, the poor workers will lose their jobs.

On the one side, the hon. Minister for Railways announces some benefits to the licensed porters, on the other, the Railway Board issues orders not only preventing the work by the licensed porters but also abolishing the parcel bookings in a number of stations. They have deputed the contract labourers for that job. This has resulted in loss of employment to licensed railway porters. In the same manner, the job of more than seven lakhs of workers is at stake in the catering industry.

Therefore, I am persistently pleading for a review of the existing policy of privatisation and contractisation in respect of Licensed Railway Porters and employees of Catering Service and for the setting up of a Joint-Parliamentary Committee to look into these aspects. The Government should intervene in this important matter and take immediate favourable steps and withdraw this policy.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, I also associate with him.

MR. SPEAKER: Those hon. Members, who have already raised one matter each this week, it has been agreed that their turns will come afterwards. Therefore, please have patience.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA (Banaskantha): Mr. Chairman, Sir a serious issue has come to the force. Fake currency of Rs. 500 denominations has been confiscated there. Such currency has been recovered from my constituency, areas around Radhopur and also from Rajasthan. It is feared that BJP workers are involved in this. But no action is being taken there by the state government in this regard. I request that CBI should conduct an inquiry into this incident and stern action be taken against those involved in such anti-national activities.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to make submission about the national memorial of Bharat Ratna Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar. The then NDA Government had declared that the memorial of Baba Saheb Ambedkar would be built at 26, Alipur Road in Delhi. The place where Baba Saheb died, was purchased by Jindal. But NDA Government acquired it at a cost of Rs. 15 crore and decided to construct an Ambedkar Memorial at this place. One year has elapsed since the UPA Government came in power. The Government is thinking over it. I demand that the memorial of Baba Saheb Ambedkar be constructed there at the earliest using the amount of Rs. 50 crore sanctioned by the Central Government for the national memorial of Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: From the next Session, if I am here, all these matters cannot come under this 'Zero Hour'. None of them is important; none of them is urgent. I mean, most of them were not urgent.

For example, tamarind is having an effect on fluorosis. It is known to scientific people. Would it be known to the people at large? I believe, it could be helpful to the community greatly. This way, we can have list of many issues. Particularly, new developments in the fields of medical research, agricultural research, fishery and many others, the science and technology and the regular traditional development of our scientific activities, production activities, etc. could be better communicated, in a modern way, to the people at large through a dedicated channel.

I would urge upon the Government to take up this matter from that end.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): Sir, shall I respond?

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to respond, it is entirely for you.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: The hon. Member has made a suggestion for a dedicated channel; it may not be financially feasible. But what we are trying to do is to see that the practical uses of science and technology are made known to the people through various channels. In fact, it is another dimension.

He has referred to our traditional knowledge which is with our tribals and others. We are trying to preserve and conserve that in digital form. The point is well taken, except that the suggestion for a separate channels, which is not financially feasible.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: It might be the that the Lok Sabha channels could be used. That is my point.

MR. SPEAKER: We shall do that. I have noted it. Already it is one of the suggestions. Thank you for your suggestions.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. President, Sir Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha channels are not telecast through cable, stern action should be taken in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: We shall take stern action. But please you observe remain here.

13.07 hrs.

SUBMISSION BY MEMBER

Re. Need to have an exclusive TV Channel on Science and Technology

[English]

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (Jadavpur): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the chance for raising an important matter for your consideration and the consideration of the Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, the hon. Minister is here, he may listen; hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting may listen.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: Sir, this relates to setting up of a dedicated television channels for the dissemination of our fruits of scientific and industrial research to the common people, rural people, womenfolk and all others.

Sir, in fact, in our country, there is a vast pool of scientific community. Everyday, formally many research organisations are doing huge amount of work. Other than this also, non-formally—not in the research organisations but in the field itself—maybe in the field of agriculture, in the field of fishery or even small industries, newer and innovative actions are taking place everyday. But, their fruits are not communicated to the people at large.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, how can I show power before you.

SHRI SITA RAM SINGH (Shechar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bihar is a backward state and Motihari is one of the district of this state, it is the place from where Mahatma Gandhi launched the fight for freedom and our country became free. Today the same district is in trouble and affected by floods. The other district adjacent to it is Sitamarhi which is the birthplace of Maa Janki and it is also a victim of the scourge of floods. As these districts do not come within the purview of Government run 'food for work' programme and Sam Vikash Yojna, labourers have no employment. They are migrating to other states for employment. Sir, I would like to request the Government to bring areas like Motihari, Bettiah, Sitamarhi and Madhubani under 'food for work' and sam vikas schemes.

[English]

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the devastation caused by floods.

MR. SPEAKER: You did not give notice in time. But in view of the importance, I am allowing you to raise it now. Please take note of it and take care of it in future.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Thank you, Sir.

The devastation caused by floods in Bihar, Assam and other parts of the country is known to all of us. The Central Government intervened in time and extended some assistance from the Central Government's CRF and NCCF and also through other mechanisms.

I am not aware of other parts, but in Assam, so far as rehabilitation of the flood-affected people is concerned, more than 5,000 people are still on the roads and embankments. The amount released from the Central Government towards the special component of IAY for building dwelling houses, did not reach the beneficiaries. One lakh metric tonnes of rice which was delivered by the Central Government in the month of December is yet to reach the beneficiaries. I hope that the Union Government will intervene in this particular issue, because it is a life and death question for them.

Moreover, the reconstruction of roads and bridges as also the embankments which were damaged during floods is yet to take off. Adequate money was provided by the

Central Government. It is more than Rs. 400 crore-CRF and NCCF combined. It is unfortunate that the implementation agency is yet to receive the grant which has gone from the Central Government.

For this year, the rainy season is going to start very shortly. For one year, it is unfortunate that the State Government has miserably failed to rehabilitate those people and to extend relief that was desired.

A declaration in regard to setting up of a task force on flood and erosion was made by the Prime Minister. The amount envisaged for the control of flood under the task force project is yet to be sanctioned. The Ministry of Water Resources has not finalised a concrete action plan to implement the task force report. The utilisation of amount allocated for the protection of Majuli Island is very slow. Restructuring of the Brahmaputra Board, which was declared by the hon. Prime Minister, is also yet to take off. The Central Government may monitor and intervene in the relief and rehabilitation work, especially in Assam so that the affected tribal people living in the embankment of the river get the benefit of the Central assistance.

13.16 hrs.

[SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL in the Chair]

Under special SGRY one lakh MT of rice was allocated for the flood-affected people of Assam in December last year, but not a single Kilogram has been delivered to them.

Sir, with your permission, I urge upon the Government to make a statement on what work has been done in the flood-affected States of the country, especially in Assam. A statement showing the utilisation of money allocated by the Central Government under CRF, NCCF and such other assistance should be tabled in the House.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (Dibrugarh): Sir, I associate myself with it.

[Translation]

DR. RAJESH MISHRA (Varanasi): Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on such an important issue related to Uttar Pradesh. Sir, Rajbhar is the most backward caste in Uttar Pradesh. For the first time, Uttar Pradesh Government had written to the Central Government on 16 June, 1994 recommending to include

[Dr. Rajesh Mishra]

Rajbhar caste in the list of Scheduled Castes and the last letter in this regard was sent by the Uttar Pradesh Government on 19 March, 2004. In these letters, it is recommended that Rajbhar caste be included in the list of Scheduled Castes. For the first time, the Committee on Petitions of the Legislative Assembly in their report had recommended for inclusion of Rajbhar/Rajbar caste in Uttar Pradesh in the list of Scheduled Castes. The Report of the Commission for the backward classes came on heels thereof.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rajeshji, you please do not read it out. You can not sum up the matter just by reading it out.

DR. RAJESH MISHRA: Sir, I am quoting a line from the report, I am not reading out. In the report of the Commission for the backward classes, it is observed that there is analogy between Chamar of Rajbhar caste and Pasi caste so it should be included in the list of Scheduled Castes. Presently, Rajbhar Caste is placed under 'independent' category. There are 19 independent castes in Uttar Pradesh. Out of these 19 castes, 18 have already been declared as Scheduled Castes leaving only Rajbhar as an independent castes. The Director of Uttar Pradesh Commission for the backward classes got a survey conducted in which it was reported that 63 per cent people did not accept water touched by Rajbhars and 82.5 per cent people of the caste were illiterate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you please conclude. I am calling the next name.

DR. RAJESH MISHRA: Sir, I urge upon the Government to consider the reports sent by the then Congress headed Uttar Pradesh Government and the previous U.P. Government respectively in 1984 and 2004 regarding inclusion of Rajbhar caste in the list of Scheduled Castes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I request everybody that the hon. Speaker has especially said that everybody should put up his point briefly in a minute or two. Few Members are being given the opportunity to speak.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah): Mr. Chairman, Sir, is my name there in the list?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can read out the names on the list if you so wish. Shri Yerrannaidu, Shri Hannan Mollah, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav, Shri Roopchand Pal. You please be seated.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not the way. You may put up your views tomorrow or give it to him. The hon'ble Speaker has decided the names of these Members by exercising his discretion. I have the list.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am calling the names of the Members from the list. You please take your seat and let Shri Hannan Mollah speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have two issues and out of those two you are talking about one relating to Wakf Board.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to a very serious problem faced by the Wakf Boards of the country. In all the States, the Wakf Boards are facing serious problem because of many deficiencies in the Wakf Act, 1995. Many amendments are required in that Act because it does not clarify many things. The functions of the Chairman are not clarified there. To remove encroachments, the SDM is mentioned but in the cities, there are no SDMs.

The persons who are encroaching upon the Wakf property should be punished. Not only those who encroach upon the Wakf property should be jailed but those who purchase the Wakf property should also be jailed. Otherwise, 2,40,000 Wakf properties all over the country are being encroached upon and looted by unscrupulous people.

There is a provision of three years' lease for development but nobody is ready to take a lease for three years. There are many more problems. There is a Parliamentary Committee which has also recommended many things. On the basis of that, the Wakf Act, 1995 should be amended immediately so that the sufferings of the Wakf Boards could be set aside.

So, I would request the Government and the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment to bring adequate and proper amendments to the Wakf Act, 1995 immediately.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the matter which I am raising relates to the plight of the tobacco farmers of Andhra Pradesh. The Tobacco Board has authorised Andhra Pradesh to produce 118 million kilograms of tobacco for the year 2005. Due to the failure of the monsoon, no other crop could be produced during this year. The farmers are producing nearly 150 million kilograms of tobacco. The average cultivation cost has also increased this year from 15 per cent to 20 per cent. Last year, the farmers sold tobacco at an average price of Rs. 39.66. Till yesterday, out of 150 million kilograms of tobacco, the farmers sold only 52.8 million kilograms. Even this year, the average price is Rs. 38.66 which is lesser by Re. 1 So, in this context, the farmers are agitating. Day before yesterday, in Prakasam and Guntur districts, the farmers came on roads. They were agitating as they are not getting remunerative price. The tobacco is also not sold.

In this regard, we requested the hon. Minister of Commerce many times. The TDP Parliamentary Party and even the Congress MPs met the Minister of Commerce several times. We have Rs. 100 crore with the Tobacco Board. We asked the Ministry of Commerce to direct the Tobacco Board to intervene in the market and purchase tobacco. Even after repeated instructions by the Minister of Commerce, the Tobacco Board is not reacting. They are not purchasing the tobacco. That is why, the distress farmers are committing suicides in Andhra Pradesh. This is the reality. The kith and kin of the farmers who have committed suicides also came on the roads. Now they are agitating as they are not getting even the compensation.

In this situation, I would request you to ask the Government to intervene in this matter. For the last five years, the farmers are agitating. You could ask our colleagues. This is a very important issue. This is a burning issue in Andhra Pradesh. You could ask this from our colleagues on that side. Therefore, the Government should intervene in this matter. I would request you to direct the Government to intervene. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH (Kanakpura): You also mention the plight of the farmers in Karnataka. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not speak like this.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: They are also facing problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have a big support. The following hon. Members also associated themselves with the matter raised by Shri Yerrannaaidu.

- (1) Dr. M. Jagannath
- (2) Shrimati D. Purandeswari
- (3) Shri K.S. Rao
- (4) Shrimati Tejaswani Seeramesh
- (5) Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy
- (6) Shri D.K. Audikesavulu.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the whole country is concerned by the manner in which saffronisation of education has been started by the Secondary Education Board in Rajasthan. Now, Akbar will not be called great in history but it will be Maharana Pratap. Similarly, the great men in the history who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the country will not be visible. The study of thought of Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya, Golwalkar and the present Sar Sangh Chalak will begin from the next July session. Such kind of news have appeared in many magazines in Rajasthan and in the country.

I want to demand from the Government and urge the Government and Human Resource Department in particular to see that the history of the country is not tampered with. The names of the Congress leaders who had sacrificed their lives for the country are also being removed. There has been no participation by any leader of the RSS of BJP in the history of the freedom struggle of the country but their names are being included. The Government should, therefore, see to it otherwise other kinds of controversies will be created in the country.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this issue is very serious and history is the heritage of India. Therefore, in the events of history. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You also want to associate yourself with this issue?

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also associate myself with this issue.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, about 5,000 small scale manufacturing units in the country, a source of employment for more than nine lakh people with a turnover of approximately Rs. 4200 crore, have been contributing immensely to the growth of our economy.

But in a recent notification dated 12th July, 2004, the Government proposes to bring about a change in the Schedule M in the Drugs and Cosmetic Act which would mean ringing a death knell to these five thousand odd small scale units in the country which produces good quality, effective medicines at affordable prices.

I have made a comparative study between the MNC branded products and the products that are produced by these small scale units. The small scale units are producing the goods almost at one-fourth the price of the MNCs. Moreover, the MNCs are getting their products manufactured by these small scale units.

Sir, I demand that such a thing should not be done and a Review Committee should be set up with representatives from the small scale units. They should be taken into confidence and their interest should be protected. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, my party also associates with this cause.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Matters under Rule 377 listed for the day shall be treated to be laid on the Table of the House.

13.27 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

- (i) **Need to rename one train each running between Delhi-Jammu and Jammu-Ajmer routes as 'Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Express' and 'Ajmer Sharief Dargah Express', respectively**

[English]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine is a famous holy Shrine. It has emerged as an important tourist destination also in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. More than 6 million devotees have darshans of the Holy Deity every year

and a large number of people also visit Ajmer Shrief Dargah. To tap the vast tourism potential, many trains are playing between Delhi-Jammu. I, therefore, request the Railway Minister to name one train plying between Jammu-Delhi after Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Express, and on train name after Ajmer Shrief Dargah. It will not only boost the morale of the people but shall also attract a large number of tourists to both the States.

- (ii) **Need to Shift toll tax plaza from National Highway No. 1 at Karnal, Haryana to any other place**

[Translation]

DR. ARVIND SHARMA (Karnal): Sir, a toll tax plaza under Central Scheme was established at the National Highway No. 1 in Karnal, Haryana by the Road Transport Ministry during the regime of the previous Government. The common men, poor farmers, agricultural labourers, businessmen and urban and rural citizens of Karnal, Indri, Nilokheri and Tarawadi are facing not only much difficulty but also financial burden since its inception. The poor farmers and labourers of the area where this toll tax plaza is situated commute daily to farms by vehicles like tractors etc. and the businessmen of the city also use this road for routine work for their business in the area so that they have to give toll tax every time. This is leading to unnecessary financial burden on the common man.

I had met and urged the hon. Minister Shri T.R. Baalu to shift this toll tax barrier from Karnal to Samanabahu so that the poor public of the area and people of urban area are spared of the unnecessary financial burden. The hon. Minister, through his letter No. NHA/13013/50/03.04/MP/(26) dated 22 September, 2004 had assured me in writing to remove this toll tax plaza. I congratulate the hon. Minister for it. But, no action has been taken so far in this regard. Toll tax is being charged as in past and has not been removed as yet. Besides, new construction is also going on.

I urge the hon. Minister once again to shift the toll tax plaza from Karnal to Samanabahu with immediate effect as the people's complaint has not been addressed so far.

- (iii) **Need to grant citizenship to refugees of 1947 settled in Jammu and Kashmir.**

SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA (Jammu): Sir, the condition of the refugees of 1947 living in Jammu and

*Treated as laid on the Table.

Kashmir is very pathetic. Till date, they have not been granted the right to the citizenship of India. They cannot purchase land, neither do business, nor take up job. They do not even have the basic right of voting. They have got assurance from time to time from the Government but the assurances have not materialised so far. All of them have reached the point of starvation today. The refugees residing in other parts of the country have got all the rights.

I am grateful to the hon. Prime Minister who offered consolidation to them during his Jammu-Kashmir visit.

I urge the Government to understand their plight and grant them citizenship and also proper compensation be paid to them keeping in view the problems borne by them so far.

[Translation]

(iv) Need to enquire into alleged mining in Aravali Hills in Faridabad district, Haryana

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA (Faridabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw attention of the Union Government towards Aravali Hills adjoining Delhi and Haryana. Honourable Supreme Court has restricted mining work in this area keeping in view the safety of the environment, but various large hills of the Aravali range have been substantially damaged due to illegal mining work in Khori Jamalpur Sirohi in Faridabad District, in addition to thousands of animals and birds, hundreds of workers have lost their lives due to caving in of these mines and because of these activities, the water table of Delhi and Haryana is depleting day by day.

Recently, this illegal mining was telecast on the television channel 'India TV' but till date no action has been taken to check this activity. I demand that an enquiry into the illegal mining work in the area should be conducted by the Union Government and immediate necessary steps should be taken to save the environment.

(v) Need to improve the mobile phone connectivity of BSNL in Balsad Parliamentary Constituency, Gujarat.

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL (Bulsar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has set up 46 towers in my parliamentary constituency Bulsar, but there is not a single tower which serves more than one kilometre of range. Mobile phones lose their connectivity even within

vicinity of one kilometre of range or less which has resulted in trouble to more than 500 subscribers. The subscribers are regularly complaining to the concerned officials in this regard, but their problems are not being solved.

Sir, I am very grateful to the honourable Minister who on my request helped set up three towers in Wagai, Ahawa and Vasda. Even in these three towers, everything was in order for the first one or two months when they started operation but after that the problem of connectivity started creeping in and the subscribers are in the State of trouble now.

Sir, the subscribers of other private mobile service companies operating in my parliamentary constituency do not face this type of problem. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I request the Government to conduct a thorough enquiry of this issue and to find out the reasons for problems of mobile connectivity to the subscribers and action should be taken against the guilty officials.

(vi) Need to permit other selected categories of persons to run telephone booths on railway stations besides handicapped persons in Tamil Nadu

[English]

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Sir, during the year 1999, throughout Tamilnadu, the railway authorities selected handicapped persons, unemployed youths, SC/ST youngsters, NGOs and war widows to run STD/ISD/PCO/Fax booths in all the railway stations in the State. Initially, they have given three year's permission. Thereafter, they have extended it for one more year and that period expired on 27-04-05. But, now, unfortunately, railway authorities extended the period only to handicapped persons. This has not been extended to other categories of persons and the authorities have abruptly closed rest of the booths on the same day whereas it seems that in other parts of the country, there were allowed to function for a period of ten years more. Those booths were used to function all the 245 hours in the railway stations. Now, because of the closure of the booths, throughout the State, the passengers are very much suffering for making their phone calls from the stations and at the platforms. The above request is genuine.

Hence, I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister of Railways to immediately direct the authorities concerned to permit

[Shri S.K. Kharventhan]

all the unemployed youths, SC/ST youngsters and war widows to continue to run the above booths without any delay and to render justice and livelihood to them.

(vii) Need to release the balance amount of grants due to the Government of Karnataka under Teachers Education Programme

SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI (Gulbarga): The Karnataka State Government had submitted a proposal regarding Sanction of Grants under Centrally sponsored Scheme of Teachers Education for 2004-05 to the State of Karnataka-establishment of 7 new DIETs and upgradation of CTE, Gulbarga as IASE in the State *vide* Reference No. F44-8/2004/EE-9 dated 22.11.2004 to the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The Government of India had sanctioned Rs. 1266.71 lakhs as Central assistance under the Teacher Education Scheme, and approved the establishment of 7 new DIETs for 7 revenue districts of Chamarajanagar, Gadg, Haveri, Koppal, Bijapur, Chitradurga and Udupi of which Bijapur, Chitradurga and Udupi are through upgradation of existing elementary teacher training institutions.

The Government of India made certain observation *vide* their letter No. 44-8/2004/EE-9, dated 3 December, 2004 which was replied by the Government on 10.1.2005.

The State Government informed the Government of India that separate C&R rules have been framed for DIEFs/CTEs and DSERT.

Government of India released grants for 20 existing DIETs and one existing IASE. The Grants has not been released so far to nine existing CTEs (out of which 5 are Government CTES), 7 new DIETs, upgraded IASE at Gulbarga and assistance to DSERT for preparation of materials.

I therefore, urge the Government of India to kindly release the grants immediately.

(viii) Need to restore Dhubri-Fakiragram railway line

SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN (Dhubri): The Dhubri-Fakiragram railway line was closed in 2002. About 17 lakhs people of Dhubri district have been thus kept isolated from the National Railway link, causing great damage in respect of communication, trade, commerce besides educationally, socially and culturally. Dhubri district is most backward in the country. 72% of the population

is still Below Poverty Line (BPL). Naturally, restoration of the Dhubri-Fakiragram Railway line deserves utmost attention of the concerned Ministry. But adequate attention has not been paid to this matter. Although gauge conversion works have been taken up but practically nothing has so far been made and budget allocation has been specified.

I earnestly request the Hon'ble Minister for Railways to restore Dhubri-Fakiragram railway line and bring Dhubri district on the Railway map of India.

[Translation]

(ix) Need to formulate a national plan for rehabilitation of Gujar Community in Uttaranchal and other parts of the country

SHRI K.C. SINGH 'BABA' (Nainital): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to apprise honourable Minister of Environment and Forest that a large number of persons belonging to Gujar Community reside in forests and hilly areas of Uttaranchal. The condition of people belonging to this community is very miserable. I had requested the Government for their rehabilitation earlier also.

Sir, their rehabilitation will improve their social, financial and educational status and they will be able to utilise the common facilities such as roads, schools, hospitals, post-offices etc. It will also ensure better future of people belonging to this community.

In the first place, a national level scheme for all round development of the people of Gujar Community of Uttaranchal should be formulated so that their educational, financial and social development can be ensured. It will be possible only when a national level campaign for rehabilitation of the people belonging to the Gujar community is undertaken and the forests are saved from being destroyed to keep the balance of the environment intact.

Honourable Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to request honourable Minister to make an arrangement for immediate rehabilitation of Gujar families living in forests.

(x) Need to formulate an action plan for regular dredging of the silt and sand deposited in the catchment area of Damodar and feeder canals of Durgapur barrage

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): In order to save thousand of acres of agricultural lands in the districts of

Bankura and Burdwan on the bank of Damodar River in the year 1957, with an object to store water in the rainy season and to distribute water for irrigation in the dry season. But since its inception, no action, whatsoever, has been taken to drag the silt in the catchment area of Damodar river. As a result, the holding capacity has gone down to great extent. In the last week of September, 1995, villages namely Kuldaha, Pingrui, Madhapur, Napara, Metali under Maliara G.P., and again in the year 1999 September, we witnessed that right channel of Durgapur barrage which has a symphonic system to pass the water from Maliara G.P., the channel was completely washed out as a result land of Metali village was again submerged. So symphonic system should immediately expand for flow of water. The Government of West Bengal has come out with a limited resource. Some portion of land of Rangamati area where refugees have been rehabilitated, were submerged into the river.

I demand immediate action plan for regular dredging of silt and sand, deposited for years in the catchment area of Damodar and feeder canals of Durgapur barrage.

- (xi) Need to make railway siding yard at Jalpaiguri operational with a view to safeguard the interest of workers engaged in unloading foodgrains at Jalpaiguri Railway Station**

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri): Traffic department of Northern Frontier Railway, Maligaon has decided to make the siding yard at Jalpaiguri town Railway Station inoperative for reasons best known to them. It is also reported that they have stopped booking of FCI foodgrain w.e.f 31st March, 2005 without consulting the District Administration of Jalpaiguri, West Bengal, though unloading of FCI foodgrains at this railway siding has been operating smoothly since long. Foodgrains for schemes like SGRY. Cooked Mid Day meal, Antyodaya Anna Yojana, BPL rice/wheat are meant to cater to the needs of large number of ST & SC population. Recently Government of India has sanctioned a scheme known AGPLM for Jalpaiguri district. The requirement of foodgrains to be lifted at Jalpaiguri town to implement the above noted scheme including the PDS is approximately 1,10,000 MT of foodgrains per annum.

Moreover, about 500 people and their families will face utter financial crisis with the loss of about 2000 mandays annually. Closure of foodgrains operation directly affect adversely on the persons engaged like transport owners/transport workers in particular and also effect the

economic and social life of the common people. Some minor problems can be sorted out easily for the benefit of the common people.

I urge upon the Government to look into the matter so that decision to make railway siding at Jalpaiguri inoperative is revoked in the interest of public.

- (xii) Need to set up a National Circus Academy for promoting the circus industry**

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI (Badagara): The circus industry in our country is on the verge of death due to certain reasons. Though a popular entertainment medium like circus is being gainfully utilized to create and sustain children's interest in observing, learning new things, information about wild life and physical skills etc. it is not getting proper encouragement by the authorities. We know that the education and entertainment have undergone a sea change with modernisation and globalisation.

The situation has caused a very bad impact on the circus industry. Though the Central Government has been recommending to the State Governments for extending concession like exemption of entertainment tax and for provision of suitable ground for holding circus shows at concessional rent. Yet, the circus industry as a whole is in a pathetic state with new law on animal protection. Hence, the circus industry of our country is likely to have a natural death under the pressure and competition from the modern media and legislations that are brought in the name of protecting animals. Comprehensive reformation to this industry is needed by way of encouraging the talented circus artists while giving pensions to them and protecting their interests.

Formation of a National Circus Academy to conduct training and research on circus art is highly essential for the sustaining of the circus industry of our country.

I request the Government to look into the matter.

- (xiii) Need to increase honorarium of vocational Teachers in the country**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Sir, on the recommendation of the Kothari Commission the Ministry of Human Resource Development implemented centrally sponsored employment oriented education programme at +2 level in all secondary schools of the country in 1989 which contained the provision of payment of Rs. 15

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

hundred per month as honorarium to teachers at lecturer level. Teachers continued to get this honorarium till the year 2003-04 but in this year honorarium for year 2004-05 has not been paid. In the beginning of this scheme it was provided that 75 per cent contribution will be made by the Centre and 25 per cent by the State Government. This ambitious scheme, which aims at providing self-employment and technical education to poor students in rural areas, is continuously in operation in Uttar Pradesh but it is regrettable that State Governments are not getting required co-operation from Central Government and despite repeated requests of the Government of Uttar Pradesh the outstanding amount of honorarium of teachers to the tune of Rs. 3 crore 75 lakh has not been released so far by the Central Government. It is also known that Government of India wants to carryout some amendments in vocational courses in vogue in secondary schools of the country. The results of this vocational education are quite encouraging. My demand is that this unpractical honorarium of vocational teachers be increased. The Government of India should immediately release this year's due amount of Uttar Pradesh and if any change is affected in the service conditions after and type of amendment in this vocational course, first of all arrangements should be made to adjust these vocational teachers who are in service since 1989.

(xiv) Need to solve drinking water problem in Lalganj Parliamentary Constituency

SHRI D.P. SAROJ (Lalganj): Sir, through this House, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the problem of drinking water in my constituency Lalganj, district—Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh. Though some rivers flow through my constituency, water table has gone so low that all the hand pumps installed there have been rendered useless and my constituency has become a victim of severe drought over the years. Ponds have dried up and consequently not only cattle but human beings are also not getting water. Menhanagar, Nizamabad, Mubarakpur, Mohamadabad and Lalganj are densely populated areas in my constituency. The Government has announced that arrangement of drinking water will be made in each area. I also request the Government that proper arrangements should be made for water harvesting through drains and ponds in all the Legislative Assembly constituencies under my Parliamentary Constituency to ensure water for Cattle and to prevent further deterioration of water table. I have already written letter to the Minister of Rural Development for the renovation of drains and ponds.

I request the Government to take action on above problems at the earliest.

(xv) Need to formulate a master plan for Gaya, with a view to improving the drainage system in the city

SHRI RAJESH KUMAR MANJHI (Gaya): Sir, my constituency is a tourist place of international repute and also a sacred place of pilgrimage for Hindus and Budhists. A Rajgir and Nalanda, two tourist places of international importance, are located at some distance from here and the tourists who go there have to pass through Gaya. Gaya town is the headquarter of Gaya district and Magadha Commissionary and also the main trading centre of several districts adjacent to Gaya viz. Aurangabad, Navada, Nalanda, Jahanabad, Arwal, Chatra, Kodrama (Jharkhand) etc. Two important grand cord railway lines and G.T. Road-2 (P.M. quadrilateral scheme) pass through Gaya. It is also adjacent to Jharkhand state and to enter Jharkhand one has to travel through this place.

In spite of all this the entire sewage system of Gaya city is lying useless. There is a need to formulate a master plan and implement it within the stipulated period of time.

Therefore, I through this House demand the Central Government to get a master plan formulated and implement it within a fixed period of time.

(xvi) Need to construct roads under Rural Development Schemes in Sultanpur district, Uttar Pradesh

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR: Sir, in Sultanpur district of Uttar Pradesh repair and renovation work of main roads connecting rural roads and national highways has not been carried out for several years. The Union Government spends crores of rupees every year on road projects but rural roads have not been constructed for the last several years. The roads in this area are in a very bad condition even today. The Union Government constructs roads under the Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana and Rural Development Schemes but it is not ensured that how much length of roads in kilometres should be constructed and repaired in each district every year. The Union Government should formulate a policy in this regard and conduct a district-wise survey. I would like to know as to what is the total length of roads in kilometres that has been constructed in a phased manner in each year so far? Sultanpur is a large district and construction of roads

in this region should be completed early for the convenience of the people of the state.

(xvii) Need to provide additional grants to the Government of Maharashtra for completing the on-going irrigation projects in the State

(English)

27613 →

SHRI S.D. MANDLIK (Kolhapur): Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I wish to bring this to the notice of the House that Bachachavat commission regarding sharing of water of Krishna River allocated 560 TMC of water from Krishna River to the State Government of Maharashtra with the stipulation that the quantity will be utilized by the end of the year 2000. The State Government could not complete the project on time due to paucity of funds.

The Central Government then initiated accelerated irrigation benefit programme (AIBP) under Central Loan Assistance (CLA). An amount of Rs. 229.49 crores was allocated to Maharashtra which works out to 4% of the total grants over a period of five years. In my State a larger area being drought prone, the financial assistance should have been at par with other states and in no case it should be less than that given to other States. Thereafter the Central Government introduced National River Grid Programme with an outlay of Rs. 5.60 lakh crores to be completed by the year 2016. In order to raise funds for this project the Government is going to raise loans and levy additional taxes. This step will again put the State of Maharashtra in a disadvantageous position.

I, therefore, request the Central Government that in the absence of any share of water of this project, the Government of Maharashtra may be compensated with additional grant of complete its ongoing projects. The quantum of grant may be Rs. 5000 crores annually as also relax the conditions laid down by the Bachhavat Commission.

(xviii) Need to implement the policy of reservation in employment to most backward class of Pondicherry

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): The people in the Union Territory of Pondicherry have not got the benefits to reservation and social justice as far as the people of other backward classes are concerned. While the neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh have been extending the facility of

reservation in employment and education since independence, the same benefit was not extended to Pondicherry because it was directly governed by the Government of India. It was only in 1996, in the wake of Mandal Commission recommendation that reservation in jobs of 27% was made to OBCs. Reservation in education was not given. Although the Government of Pondicherry had identified most backward classes among the OBCs, they were not considered for this facility. After prolonged correspondence with the Government, a few months back Government of Pondicherry announced reservation to Most Backward Classes only in education. Reservation in employment is not yet announced. This is a great anomaly and injustice to the large number of people in Pondicherry. Since the Union Government has the overall responsibility for administering the Union Territory of Pondicherry, the Government of India may immediately issue orders to implement the policy of reservation in employment to Most Backward Class of Pondicherry.

(xix) Need to clear the proposal of the Government of Karnataka for implementation of Metro Project in Bangalore

SHRI M. SHIVANNA (Chamrajanagar): The population of Karnataka State capital city Bangalore has reached 70 lakhs. The number of moving vehicles on the roads of the Silicon city is 22 lakh. Everyday 900 new vehicles are being registered. The number of accidents are increasing daily. More than three persons are being killed everyday and the number of persons who are injured everyday is twenty. The only solution for this perennial problem is Metro Railways.

The project is ready 33 KM from North to South, 78 Km from East to West underground tunnel. The rest of the metro rail line will be on the ground. It would require about 5 years for completion. The Planning Commission has already given its approval. It requires Rs. 5600 crores. The State is ready with its share money. This long pending project is before the Hon'ble Union Finance Minister. I urge upon him to clear this project immediately.

(xx) Need to provide adequate funds for repair/maintenance of National Highway No. 52 linking Arunachal Pradesh and Assam

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur): The NH-52, which is the lifeline to Arunachal Pradesh and Northern Assam linking Chinese border, is in dilapidated condition due to utter negligence of concerned authorities during last 25 years. Till now 196 km of this 550 Km road is

[Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma]

single-lane have 21 wooden bridges with an average speed of vehicles running on this road as less than 20 Km/h particularly in certain stretches of Dhemaji district due to pot holes and not-existent riding surface. There is regular report of rolling down of vehicles due to dilapidated shoulder maintained far below the level of the road unable to hold two crossing vehicles. In absence of a road bridge on Simen river the railway bridge is being used for movement of vehicular traffic. It is surprising that no specific allocations were made for improvement and repair of this road to BRO during 10th Plan. I therefore, urge upon the Planning Commission and PMO to ensure immediate allocation for repair, widening and strengthening of the road-cum-shoulder along with construction of a road bridge over Simen River to achieve minimum standard of NH. I also appeal to implement the construction of Lakhimpur bypass taken up during 1991 and construction of the bridge over Jiabharali to reduce the length of NH-52 by 25 km.

13.29 hrs.

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THEIR DELIVERY SYSTEMS (PROHIBITION OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES) BILL, 2005

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House would now take up item no. 25: Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Bill, 2005.

Shri K. Natwar Singh.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to prohibit unlawful activities, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

As the House is aware, a basic tenet of India's foreign policy since Independence has been the pursuit of global nuclear disarmament. India has been a consistent proponent of general and complete

disarmament and has advocated that highest priority be given to nuclear disarmament as a first step towards this objective. We were among those who advocated an international non-proliferation agreement under which nuclear weapons purposes and move towards reducing and eliminating their nuclear weapons while other countries would refrain from developing or acquiring such weapons. Unfortunately, the nuclear weapon powers were not willing to accept even this limited commitment and the Non-Proliferation Treaty as it eventually emerged was an unbalanced instrument which India did not join. In 1978, India proposed negotiations for an International Convention to prohibit the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In 1988, at the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament at New York, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi put forward a comprehensive action plan based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and a balance of obligations for phased elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.

India's status as a Nuclear Weapon State does not diminish its commitment to the objective of a nuclear weapon free world and we aspire for a non-violent world order, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament. This is and continues to be an important plank of our nuclear policy. Our adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is evidence of our commitment to global disarmament regimes which are universal and non-discriminatory in character.

India is fully committed to safeguard its security as a Nuclear Weapon State. Our nuclear policy is characterized by responsibility, transparency, predictability and a defensive orientation. We are committed to building and maintaining a credible minimum deterrent. We have declared a posture of no first use. We continue to observe a voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

At the same time, India's policy has always been not to assist, encourage or induce any other country to manufacture nuclear weapons. As a responsible nation, India has never passed on its proven technological capabilities to anyone. India will not be a source of proliferation of indigenously developed sensitive technologies. We will remain faithful to this approach as we have been for the last several decades.

India will continue to ensure that WMD-usable materials, equipment and technologies do not fall into

the wrong hands whether of States on non-State actors, and in particular of terrorists. Our system of export controls is under continuous review; we continue to update these controls where necessary.

Over the years, India has enacted a corpus of legislation dealing with activities of direct or indirect relevance to weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials, equipment and technologies. It has also institutionalised administrative mechanisms to prevent unlawful access to such weapons and their delivery systems.

Conscious of its responsibilities, India has been exercising controls over the export of Weapons of Mass Destruction-usable materials, equipment and technologies.

It is now considered desirable to introduce an overarching and integrated legislation to prohibit unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and to build upon the regulatory framework related to controls over the export of WMD-usable materials, equipment and technologies, especially in view of India's status as a Nuclear Weapon State.

The rationale for the proposed Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Bill, 2005 is based on the same policy tenets that have guided the country over the past several decades, which are reflective of the nation's commitment to safeguard India's national security, to deepen its autonomous scientific and technical capability for meeting our security imperatives and development goals and to the objective of global peace and security. These tenets are based on continuity and are underpinned by a national consensus cutting across party lines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to prohibit unlawful activities, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

We shall continue with the discussion after launch.

13.36 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Thirty-Five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.42 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Forty-Two minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THEIR DELIVERY SYSTEMS (PROHIBITION OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES) BILL, 2005—*contd.*

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up item no. 25:

Shri Rupchand Pal.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this is a very important Bill to us, to the international community and, I think, it is an umbrella legislation, an integrated, overarching piece of legislation, incorporating the earlier Acts which we had already passed in conformity with our commitment, with our goal, with our objective, that is, comprehensive, total, non-discriminatory disarmament.

Sir, I believe, there is some urgency in bringing this Bill towards the fag end of this particular Session, with the Prime Minister's proposed visit to the United States, our campaign for our membership in the United Nations Security Council and the other three claimants, namely Brazil, Germany and Japan being members of the NPT, which we consider as discriminatory etc. There are other urgencies also with regard to our nuclear energy programme, national energy security and also with the change in the mindset of some powers after seven years of Pokhran nuclear tests. Those powers seem to be more inclined to grant us our just dues, which have been civilian use of nuclear energy, and, maybe, some private companies will have to be involved in such an exercise.

We are committed, as a nuclear weapon State, to use nuclear energy for peaceful means and we have made it amply clear in our nuclear doctrine that our main purpose is defensive and our whole programme is aimed at peaceful use. As a legacy of our independence struggle, we have always been holding the opinion that we shall have the pursuit of nuclear power for peaceful purposes only.

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

There had been several compulsions in 1972 and 1998 that we had to go for such a measure, such an exercise, like the Pokharan one. But immediately after that, not as a result of the sanctions imposed by those who are indulging in hypocrisy telling something to the world and themselves doing something else, on our own, we have an impeccable record that even without being a party to NPT, we have been abiding, we have been sincerely following, in letter and spirit, what should be done, while others, who have been technically subscribing as a member to the NPT, have been openly, sometimes in a clandestine manner violating it.

Very recently, a new emerging situation, an emerging challenge about proliferation has arisen wherein a nuclear scientist of our neighbouring country, with whom we are improving our relations, has violated this. I am not commenting on it. But there is this dual attitude of the most powerful hegemonistic power in the world that they have been turning a blind eye to the proliferation in spite of the NPT and sometimes making absurd cases, like preparation of report, and even after that the Chairman of the WMD Commission coming out saying that they have never stated about a particular country, say, for example, Iraq was occupied on the simple plea that they are possessing weapons of mass destruction, which ultimately proved to be a grand lie of the Century and the occupation continues because they wanted to have control over their oil wells.

There are umpteen number of such cases of hypocrisy by the hegemonistic power in the present world. For seven years, our own scientists were not allowed visas. I can name some of them. They were given only after seven years, as if they can do whatever they like, surreptitiously doing something, clandestinely doing something, turning a blind eye to open violations of NPT, proliferation, black market, working hand in glove with the underworld and all that. In such a situation, our track record to the international community is really praiseworthy.

The NCMP has clearly stated on the basis of a national consensus that our Foreign Policy should be independent. I congratulate the hon. Minister of External Affairs and the hon. Prime Minister that, in conformity with the commitment in the NCMP, they are trying their best to pursue an independent policy, be it in the matter of improving our relations with China, be it improving our relations with all our neighbours, including Pakistan. Historic developments can take place, I shall come to that later on when we take up another debate.

With regard to earlier doctrine, we are doing it *supra motu* that we are a responsible nuclear State, nuclear power. We have our urgency about convincing that we have all along been continuing in a very consistent manner to follow what we have stated. In the backdrop of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, we want to state in advance that our abiding interest although is in total disarmament, our goal is peace and security and we want to use nuclear energy for developmental purposes.

Now, I am happy that this umbrella legislation has been there in a very balanced manner without compromising our security and our autonomous right to pursue our own goals for development by scientists and others. We have shown to the world, to the international community, that we are fulfilling our obligations and we are telling the world that we are responsible and we are bringing this legislation. This is in addition to the seven or eight Acts, that are there. We are a party to the Chemical Convention, to the Biological Convention, to the Toxin Convention and to many other conventions. In our own way, we can fulfil more and more stipulations of NPT although we consider NPT to be discriminatory and we have not subscribed to that as a member. On CTBT also, there has been a continuing pressure; we know how the previous Government had been on the verge of surrendering in this very House. We are happy that we have been holding the position that there should be a nuclear weapon-free world. There should be equal rights. Even yesterday, there was a debate in the United Nations and the non-aligned countries have come out saying that the Middle-East should be considered. There are countries that demanded nuclear-free world. The NPT review is continuing. Even in the NPT review, this hypocrisy is being marked again and again. The non-aligned countries—there are 161 of them—are very right in claiming that in the Middle-East, such and such area should be considered. But, They are not listened to. It is a good development that our country is advocating multilateralism and is trying to win back our neighbours as partners of progress and development. In such a situation this commitment will go a long way to create a situation that India is committed to. India had been continuing a consistent policy even after being a nuclear power. It is not indulging in any sort of irresponsible act. It is a responsible nuclear power. This is a good thing.

I found in some paper that the NDA Government—I think the Leader of the Opposition—has yesterday stated that this Government should not depend on the view of

the Left regarding foreign policy. We can claim and we have been all along very much consistent, that foreign policy should be based on a national consensus; and it should be based on a legacy of our freedom struggle. We cannot couch to the pressures of any hegemonistic power which they have been doing. They have been sermonising to the Government within Government that they should be cautious about the Left's views. We have been talking about better relationship with Pakistan—now it is being done—and better relations with our neighbours. Let the 21st Century be the century of Asia. Let India's prestige and image be enhanced. This piece of legislation also will go a long way in this regard. I have already mentioned about our nuclear programme. Russia is prepared to help us with some additional reactors etc. The civilian parties will be involved in our nuclear energy programme. I have a doubt also. I would like to know whether it is also in the Government's mind that private companies will be involved in a big way in our Defence sector. The Defence Minister may also be here. We will have to be very careful about the opening up of the Defence sector for the private companies, multinational companies and big companies.

As far as the nuclear programme is concerned, the command and control system, no-first-use etc. are well known. Still, today, there are certain areas where the nation needs to be convinced.

What is that? Our nuclear programme is defensive in nature and it is for our own security. We are not going to interfere with other's sovereignty because these days there is nuclear blackmailing. But according to a study by a very important organisation, there cannot be any nuclear war. It will be a balance of forces only. One country having the nuclear weapon can only have the strength of balance political balance and regional balance. In such a situation, in our region through co-operation, how best can we build up a programme for the use of nuclear energy and nuclear power for better, purposeful uses? Even after the improvement of relation that is taking place with Pakistan, this is one area which we should keep in mind. If we have to progress in our bilateral relations or in our trilateral relations, then we have to keep this in mind.

I am giving you one example. We had a very important meeting. After the visit of the President, there is improvement in a number of areas like soft border, bus movement, train movement, Joint Economic Council, Business Council and all these things. But both India

and Pakistan have a serious shortage of power. They have a serious shortage of energy. Can there not be an understanding? It will lead to the other way round. Economic co-operation can lead to a better political understanding, so also energy understanding. I know and we know that there will be interference. I am giving one simple example. When both India and Pakistan are undertaking an exercise about the gas pipeline from Iran *via* Pakistan to India, they are coming to sabotage it. They are rather pressuring. India is not succumbing to that pressure. I believe that Pakistan also will not succumb to that pressure.

Similarly, in energy development and in energy security, joint co-operation in mutual interests should be another area which will lead, in a different manner, to our better understanding.

Now, I am coming to the present infirmities in the NPT. We know how a particular nuclear scientist has done what and what not. On the basis of that, so many things happened. What America has been doing in the name of checking proliferation, what they are speaking about Iran and what they are speaking about North Korea, as I have already stated, are an exercise in hypocrisy, they themselves are indulging in. There are umpteen number of people. But this does not mean that the terrorists or the non-nuclear States having no access to nuclear weapons will not get it.

If I am not mistaken, there are 100 incidents in the world. There are 100 incidents of pilferages in black-market by the underworld, of passing nuclear knowledge or for that matter nuclear material or for that matter nuclear delivery system or nuclear equipment. They have been transferred to some powers. If that is so, in some cases, there are also reports that America is indulging in encouraging a section. Why? They are very vocal about certain other hypothesis, imaginary cases, as it has happened in the case of Iraq. They are making this plea with the motive of occupation only.

India should be cautious about these proliferation challenges. The hon. Minister has correctly stated in a recent seminar that they are inadequate and sometimes the powers that be are very permissive. The US approach is very lenient in some cases. But there is a great market for the nuclear trafficking. How to handle this? It is because the underworld people and the drug peddlers are now different underworld people. What the United Nations says about a particular underworld hero of the

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

world or about the underworld operation is a different thing. But how to deal with it?

15.00 hrs.

The Government says that it shall set up a Committee; or, for that matter, the Government itself would set up an Authority and delegate the power. It requires a sort of Authority that would be capable enough. It cannot be done through the rules.

While the Authority is being set up, my concern and apprehension is that it could be misused by some interested people as it happened in the case of POTA. Here, I would give one example. Clause 20 (2) says:

"Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company, every person who at the time the offence was committed was in charge of, and was responsible to, the company for the conduct of the business of the company as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty..."

This is too complicated because there might be people who are working in the company but who do not know anything; nor would they know about what is happening at the upper strata, at the laboratory level for everyone in the company to be held guilty. I think, there must be a rider to protect the interests of the innocent citizens who, for their bread, for their livelihood, have joined the company.

Next, I am coming to clause 15 (2). It says:

"Any person who, with intent to aid any non-State actor or terrorist, attempts to contravene or abets, or does any act preparatory to contravention of sub-section (1), shall be deemed to have contravened that provision and the provision of sub-section (1) shall apply subject to the modification..."

What happened in the case of POTA? A ten-year-old child was put behind the bars. One who has nothing to do with terrorism and who has no idea what is terrorism and what is not terrorism was put behind the bars. So, I want to know what are the safeguards here.

We fully support this Bill relating to proliferation of nuclear knowledge, equipment, delivery systems, radioactive materials and all these things because nuclear terrorism is a reality. There was an article that I was reading where it was stated that be it terrorism based on

religion or any other kind of terrorism, the way the hegemonistic power is behaving, depriving the people of the world of their sovereign rights, occupying their countries on the basis of a grand plan and depriving their democratic and human rights, naturally, it is going to give birth to new terrorism. A generation is growing up with such a mistrust, distrust and hatred for this super-terrorist power that in such a situation, I think, while we are fulfilling our international commitment, we should be very careful that this is not misused as in the case of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, in our domestic situation.

We have had the experience of misuse of POTA. I could give one or two examples of misuse in respect of things mentioned here. I am not going to go into the details but I think, when the hon. Minister replies to the debate, he would reply to the points that I raise.

The Resolution on suppression of nuclear terrorism, I think, would come up in September; 22 countries would have to subscribe to it; and 13 such Resolutions on global terrorism would also come up in the United Nations. We shall be a party to it. I think, this piece of legislation would help us a lot to convince the international community that we are committed to our own security, our basic goal of total disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy. We believe in our autonomy and in our own right to make progress in science and technology and atomic energy but at the same time we are careful that we would not allow anyone to transfer, export or proliferate the energy, equipment and material.

I am concluding. This is a very important Bill. This is an umbrella legislation, integrated and overarching, including all the provisions. While I welcome it, we should have been given more time to look into the several provisions between the lines. But, unfortunately, the Bill was given to us on 8th of May which was a Sunday. I came on Sunday and on the very day I got it, I wanted to draw the attention of the Government that at the fag end such an important Bill should not be brought. I know the urgency. I admit the urgency. It should have been brought earlier. We could have been given more time and we could have contributed more to enrich this piece of legislation.

With these words, I conclude supporting the Bill.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, when we take up for discussion in this House the Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their

Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Bill, 2005, we are aware of the danger that looms large over the world today. At present there are an estimated 34,000 nuclear weapons in existence with over 50 countries with varying degrees of nuclear power or capabilities. We here have always believed, and that is the Indian ethos of peace and goodwill, that proliferation can only bring greater instability. However, at the same time, one cannot find fault with countries which may seek to develop nuclear weapons if they see that the existing nuclear powers are not making good faith effort to divest themselves of their own arsenal.

It is in this context that I would refer to Shrimati Indira Gandhi who displayed here characteristic courage and leadership when she conducted the nuclear test at Pokharan in 1974. It was not an expression of any military ambition but the assertion of our right to safeguard our sovereignty and Independence at any cost. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, as the young dynamic leader who toiled to take India to 21st century as an important global player called for total disarmament and the elimination of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. He mobilised world opinion in support of this crusade and pointed out the inequities in the approach of some major nuclear powers.

As the hon. Minister of External Affairs pointed out in his introductory remarks, Shri Rajiv Gandhi highlighted the discriminatory nature of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and refused to become a party to it reiterating all the while India's principal stand on such issues and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It is this legacy of Shri Rajiv Gandhi which is seen across this Bill today.

It is our experience that weapons are generally introduced into conflict areas from outside. It is in this scenario that the International Atomic Energy Agency has also lamented the inadequacy of the weapons export and import control regimes to prevent an extensive illicit market for fissile materials and equipment.

Through this Bill, the UPA Government, while reasserting our status as a nuclear weapons State, has undertaken to legislate against misuse of such weapons and their delivery systems.

Sir, our concern is only to safeguard and strengthen our national security. We are not and we do not expect any other person, any other country to be a merchant of

death. Under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the non-nuclear States are obliged not to acquire nuclear weapons in return for an assurance by the nuclear weapon States that they would negotiate the elimination of all their nuclear weapons and also that developing countries would be transferred nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes. Unfortunately, they have not lived up to this assurance. Nuclear weapon States again gave such an undertaking at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. It is unfortunate that though the next review conference is slated, if I am not mistaken, for this month only, what is in evidence today is a total disconnect between a series of dangerous trends in the world and the adoption of disarmament and arms control instruments that would enable the world to counter them.

The last year's UN Security Council Resolution 1540 requires all States to adopt measures to criminalise assistance to non-State actors to acquire weapons of mass destruction and to put in place domestic controls to prevent the global proliferation of such weapons. Also, the First Committee of UN last year passed a Resolution titled "Towards the Nuclear Weapons Free World: Accelerating the Implementation of Nuclear Disarmament Commitments". Through this Bill, we have once again expressed our firm belief in and commitment to check and prohibit unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction which include nuclear, chemical, biological and toxin weapons. The UPA believes that good governance of security sector means that besides safeguarding the nation's security interests, we must also comply with domestic and legal standards at national and international level. The United Nation's Development Report of 2002 also called for such an approach.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, I think, I have not yet taken even ten minutes. How much time would I have? I will accordingly make my points.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have taken more than eight minutes. You conclude within two minutes.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: While I compliment the hon. Minister for ringing forward this important piece of legislation, in view of the time constraint that you have imposed upon me, I would very briefly refer to two points made by Shri Rupchand Pal relating to clauses 20 and 15 of the Bill.

[Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal]

Sir, I have tried to go through these clauses once again and I do not really find anything amiss about those or anything that could call for an amendment thereto. When he refers to the employees of any company joining that company for their livelihood, they will not be affected. Kindly permit me to read clause 20 (1) once again. It reads:

"Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company, every person who at the time the offence was committed was in charge of, and was responsible to, the company for the conduct of the business of the company as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty..."

They will be held liable. It is not that every employee of the company; it is an employee who is responsible to the company for conducting the business and that company will be guilty of offence. Only that individual will be held guilty. I suppose that is necessary. Otherwise, the provisions of the law would become futile.

Similarly, Clause 15 (i) states that:

"Any person who, with intent to..."

There is no question of any penalty being slapped on a child of 10 years as he had mentioned. Perhaps, it may have been done in some cases relating to POTA, but I am sure that it can never be done here.

To conclude, I would refer only to the very pertinent statements made by the hon. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, who during his very first Address to the nation on June 24, 2004 *inter alia* said that:

"India is a responsible nuclear power, and we will continue to work to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, we remain committed to the goal of universal nuclear disarmament."

The hon. Prime Minister expressed similar sentiments in his Address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) last year, and again on October 2004 in his speech at Kalpakkam on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee function of the Department of Atomic Energy. The hon. Prime Minister had reiterated that:

"We are fully conscious of the immense responsibilities that come with the possession of advanced technologies, both civilian and strategic..."

India will not be the source of proliferation of sensitive technologies. We will also ensure the safeguarding of those technologies that we already possess..."

Sir, this Bill takes care to see that there is no tinkering with our nuclear policy, and there is no constraint whatsoever on our nuclear programmes—civilian or strategic. India is determined to utilise advanced technologies for its security and for the welfare of its people, and for meeting the nation's development requirements. Nobody anywhere needs to have any doubt about it. This is a piece of legislation, which reiterates firmly India's commitment to peace, and to see that the technologies developed by us for our good—both for our defence as also for peaceful purpose—are not leaked out. It ensures that no non-State actor or anybody else is able to take any advantage whatsoever that might be going on elsewhere in the grey market, as Shri Rupchand Pal pointed out during his speech. India will not be the place available to such people.

With these words, I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

[*Translation*]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal): Sir, in view of the international scenario prevalent at a time when this Bill is being brought before the House. I rise to support this Bill. The whole world knows that whenever any such incident takes place involving issues like mass destruction or the issue of weapons or something else, the entire world converges at a single platform to find a solution.

After the first world war, league of nation came into existence. It is an irony that the, American Senate did not ratify the Warsaw treaty under which it came into existence. The league of nations proved to be a failure. After the second world war, the world community felt the need of setting up such an organisation which could prevent destruction and in this way the United Nations Organisation came into being. Subsequently, the United Nations Organisation set up the Disarmament Commission. Thereafter, a lot of things came to the fore. Forest, non-proliferation treaty was formulated and then came the comprehensive test ban treaty and this process went on. But the countries possessing weapons of mass destruction, or the nuclear power countries didn't legally permit any other country to join the nuclear club. The countries which went nuclear had to face lot of problems and several restrictions ere imposed on them. Our

scientists were not permitted to go to America. Visas were not granted to them for decades together. It was done because India had become a nuclear power. But after the discussion we have had and the explanation given that after bringing in this Bill, our activities will not be affected adversely and it will not have any adverse impact on our relations with our friendly countries. I think when the Government is bringing in this Bill in the national interest, we ought to support this Bill.

Late Shrimati Indira Gandhi and Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi were the prominent leaders of the country. When America asked India to sign the comprehensive test ban treaty, our then Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai told that we will sign the treaty but first they should dump all their weapons in the pacific ocean. It is not justified that one country can possess weapons and other countries cannot produce such weapons. The sense of superiority in the minds of some countries is decaying gradually. India did not ever try to pass on relevant technology openly or clandestinely to any country of the world. This reflects the character of India. The whole world knows as to what the scientists of our neighbouring country did in many countries in this connection. I will congratulate you if no hurdle crops up in achieving the target before the country. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I now give the floor to Shri Nikhil Kumar with a request that he may complete his speech within four to five minutes.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (Aurangabad, Bihar): Sir, I stand here to speak on the Bill and to support it.

We all know and it has been pointed out by the previous speakers, that there is tremendous danger, in fact, a massive danger and threat to peace from weapons of mass destruction. When we say, 'weapons of mass destruction', I would like to first explain what these weapons are. These weapons could be nuclear, they could be biological and they could be chemical. As far as the biological weapons are concerned, they pose as much of a threat as the nuclear weapons or for that matter as the chemical weapons. What is really very horrifying is, God forbid, if any of these or, worse, if all of them are used together, what would be the magnitude, the scale of damage caused, or the devastation caused all over the world. It will be much more in excess of the damage caused by the Tsunami disaster. It is, therefore, very

necessary that we take stock of the danger and do something to see that the danger is prevented from actually facing us, and that the weapons do not go into the wrong hands.

There was a statement made by our hon. Member, Shri Rupchand Pal, about the danger from weapons of mass destruction. Before I come to that, let me just very briefly say as to what kind of danger these biological weapons pose to the world in general.

In fact, if these weapons fall into the hands of terrorists, of which there is considerable danger, the devastation will be of extreme magnitude. New information that we have got shows that it will be possible to attack even plants, animals and human beings.

In order to produce such biological weapons, all that is necessary is a laboratory set up at a cost of merely 10,000 dollars. It will be of the size of a small room. It will produce agents that will mutate, reproduce, multiply and spread over a very large terrain. This can go through wind, water, or for that matter any kind of flora or fauna. This can, in due course, lead to DNA and cloning technology which can mass produce these biological weapons. So, we have to be aware of this threat of biological weapons leading to biological terrorism.

Similarly, the danger from chemical weapons is that how to use these chemical weapons is being taught to militants and to extremists. Their training camps will help to teach them all about chemical warfare. These training camps are in Afghanistan and elsewhere. They are more likely to use chemical weapons which can also be attached to conventional warheads. Incidentally, it may not be possible to transport the biological weapons through warheads but it will be possible to do so with the chemical weapons at our disposal.

Some of these chemical weapons are very easily available in the form of gases and in the form of chemical agents. Just to cite one instance, way back in 1994, a Japanese underground organisation called the Aum Shinrikyo had released sarin nerve gas in a Tokyo subway and killed 12 people and injured over 120 persons. Incidentally again, sarin fumes were found in a town of Japan where seven people died and 200 were taken sick. The evidence is that members of this cult, the Aum Shinrikyo, had undertaken a 300 million dollar research project into a variant of a toxin. All this was in an effort to equip themselves to launch a biological warfare.

[Shri Nikhil Kumar]

In the entire 19th century, nearly 500 million people were killed with the help of biological and chemical agents. When you do not know if there is a determined attempt to use these weapons, we can only imagine the magnitude of the damage that will be caused and that will be mind-boggling.

So, what do we do to prevent all this? Is it possible to transfer such technology to people of undesirable character and antecedents? It surely is. We have before us the incident of A.Q. Khan of Pakistan who stole some drawings regarding enrichment of uranium plant and sold them for big consideration.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Kindly allow me a little more time.

He has in turn become very rich, so rich that it is difficult to describe the amount of wealth that he has gathered. We are not discussing A.Q. Khan's riches now, but the type of character that he is. It is people like him who can transfer such technology and sell it.

Today, it is possible for North Korea to pose a serious threat to the whole world because there have been instances, there has been evidence, to show that indeed North Koreans have nuclear weapons.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If you want to speak for more time, I will not allow other speakers from your party.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: I will take only two minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No, conclude in one minute.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: So, the threat that we perceive today from the North Koreans is real. We would be failing in our duty if we did not take adequate steps to see that there is some kind of legislation which will prevent the passing of such technology into wrong hands.

With the background, this Bill has been brought. I fully support the Bill and compliment the Minister of External Affairs and the UPA Government for having thought of it and brought it here. This bill, as was explained by my colleague, Shri Bansal, does not in any way interfere with the India's nuclear concern, it does not in any way reduce its nuclear capability and it does not in any way compromise its nuclear position or power. On the other hand, it support India's stand that it is a

very responsible nuclear power. It will be advantageous to us to go to the whole world, to say before the whole world that we are a responsible nation. This law will help us to support our claim. Therefore, I feel that it is a very timely Bill as it has been brought just in time. I support it.

[Translation]

SHRI SITA RAM SINGH (Sheohar): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, it is the Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Bill, 2005'. We are Hindi knowing. It is clear from the name given to the Bill that this Bill is proper, justified and appreciable in today's international situation and, therefore, I support it. I have read the objectives of the Bill. I believe that among all the democratic countries, India is the foremost peace loving country. Even after having all the power, our history shows that the citizen, rulers and the Government of this country never had an evil eye on other countries.

You have told me to complete within 4-5 minutes. Whatever I have read in it I am afraid of one thing that some people are competing with each other in the arms race and some people are acting as a bully in the world. As hon. Member Shri Ram Gopal has said that there are some countries which want their hegemony in the world and many people including ourselves or anyone else who wants to bring this up as member of the Sangh have faced much difficulty. There have been many instances recently of powerful countries dominating weak countries through unfair means without any reason. If it is proper, then I can say that a country like America has not only interfered forcibly in the internal matter of a country but has worked towards destroying them. There is no problem in bringing this Bill if it will not pose any conflict for our country. This Bill will prove to be beneficial to the country.

I would like to say that in view of the prevailing arms race in the world there should be no obstacle or ban on the production of any kind of latest arms and ordnance in India through this Bill. I am happy that since the UPA Government came to power its foreign policy and relations with the other countries have improved. With these words, I support the Bill.

[English]

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): Sir, I stand to support The Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Bill, 2005.

Sir, I congratulate the Minister for bringing forward this Bill at this time. It was just a few days ago that our hon. Minister along with the Prime Minister attended the 50th anniversary of Bandung Conference. That Conference, fifty years ago, represented the aspirations of the entire newly independent countries whose desire for peace, whose desire for development and whose desire for creating a better world order was most important. Those were the noble objectives for which they met there. Even in those days of our freedom struggle, India, as a country, was committed to peace, to humanness, friendship and solidarity. These are some of the hallmarks of our freedom struggle.

Today, if you look at the whole world, it is almost like sitting on an arsenal of deadly weapons—nuclear, biological and what not. Then it is the sophisticated delivery system that can take these weapons across the ocean to different continents. So, we are living today in a dangerous world. That is why, India, from the very beginning, took a stand of complete and general disarmament including nuclear disarmament. It is in tune with that that we are bringing forward this Bill.

Though, for the security of our country, for the defence of our people, necessary arms and armaments will be ensured, yet at the same time, we are making ourselves committed to it. We are also fulfilling the commitment towards the world community by saying that we will not be a partner to arms race or nuclear arms race for that matter.

There are countries that are sermonising about peace, about nuclear disarmament and all that. When they sermonise other, they are actually sitting on the heap of it. They tell us that we should not do it, as that is bad and all that. We will not believe in that kind of sermons. As a country, when we are committed to this, it has another aspect also—our aspiration for a better life and development.

There is a statistics which I was going through. If three per cent of the weapons of mass destruction kept by countries all over the world are destroyed or if those countries decide not to create those weapons—not by hundred per cent but to the extent of three per cent—that will provide enough money for mankind to completely provide literacy, higher education, total health care, better communication system and to create a world that will be much better than what it is today. Through this Bill, when we are committing ourselves to the obligations

internationally, we are also trying to go forward with our aspirations of development.

I am concluding by giving one suggestion. Now, we had a meeting of the 50th anniversary of the Non-aligned countries. I will request the Government to take an initiative to call a meeting for disarmament from the platform of the non-aligned countries and discuss how arms race could be stopped, countries could live in a peaceful atmosphere and the money thus saved could be used for better development of the world. If that is done, that will be one of the great contributions that India could do at this juncture.

With these words, I support the Bill. I hope, I did not take much time.

DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla):
 Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Bill, moved by Shri K. Natwar Singh, our hon. Minister of External Affairs. I compliment the hon. Minister.

It is a very important piece of legislation that has been brought out in this august House for consideration by the UPA Government with the blessings and guidance of Shrimati Sonia Ji and under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh ji.

As has been brought out by the hon. Minister of External Affairs in the Bill, India remains committed to safeguarding its national security as a nuclear weapon State. Our stand in this regard, as was brought out by Dr. Manmohan Singh recently in various international fora, is very clear on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Our military and nuclear doctrine has always been and will continue to be, for the (i) prevention of war and armed conflict; (ii) comprehensive, durable and integrated peace at national, regional and global levels; (iii) safeguarding the territorial integrity and (iv) in case deterrence fails, an ability to conclude war at the earliest opportunity on terms most favourable to our national interest.

It is India's policy not to assist, encourage or induce any other country to manufacture such weapons which have the capability of mass destruction and nuclear explosive devices. We, as a nation, have internationally acclaimed commitment to fulfil it under the Chemical

[Dr. Col. (Retd.) Dhani Ram Shandil]
Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin
Weapons Convention.

The most important facet of this legislation is that it is against terrorist groups. We have seen that. The history is replete with examples. Time and again these weapons which can cause mass destruction have been falling in the wrong hands. It has been, in fact, a historical and logical phenomenon that outlaws, through the ages, have always had access to and also have used the latest technology, particularly relating to weaponry in committing crimes.

Today, most of the terrorist groups are in possession of such weapons which are not even in the possession of the most advanced armies of the world. Some of them are known to have acquired even the guided missiles and other high-tech equipments. We have seen that through some rouge States, some such weapons are being passed on in the past. As was brought out by Shri Nikhil Kumar, Taliban made use of that in 1990s. These weapons were used in our neighbourhood also.

The British Airways have plans to equip its jetliners with missile-evading devices and it is only a matter of time that most of the international airlines will be fitted with such devices.

The present Bill has catered for an administrative mechanism. It has a provision for imposing a fine of up to Rs. 5 lakh; it is praiseworthy. Imagine, what horror it would create, if such headless terrorists are in possession of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, particularly biological weapons! As was brought out by various Members, it just needs a single room worth of a laboratory. It is easy to manufacture, inexpensive and easy to carry. The biggest advantage is that there is no launching pad required; it could be right on the bag and the adversary cannot take any defensive action either. You can well imagine how dangerous these weapons can be. To give you one example, the Japanese cult used Botulinum and Anthrax. The Anthrax scare following the 11th September strike is well known. You can well imagine the shape of things to come.

The Bill provides safeguard against pilferage and thefts from military arsenal falling into the hands of anti-national and irresponsible persons. The Bill, as brought out by the hon. Minister, is an over-arching legislation to prohibit unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction.

Sir, another area of threat of mass destruction lies in the existing nuclear and other plants producing toxic agents. A skilful sabotage on the lines of Chernobyl or Bhopal gas leakage can play havoc with the population. You can well imagine the horror it can create on the society.

Time is a constraint. I will not take much of the time of the august House. I would only like to say that the common people could identify the definition of terrorism or the definition of these dangerous weapons but literate and civilized people, the section of the population who become policemen really do not understand what horror it can play on the human life. I feel, today, the Bill has come just in right time, at a time when India is emerging as a nuclear nation state. We are not only emerging as a nuclear nation state but as a world power and it is right time to show to the world as to the right way of using these weapons.

[Translation]

I want to say that the old glory and greatness of our country was that we used to guide all the people. The same time is arriving and the whole world is watching us. I think that this Bill is being brought at a very good time. This Bill is not only for the safety of our country but of the mankind of the world and, therefore, I support the Bill. I fully support the Bill.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): Thank you, Sir. May I, to begin with, thank all the hon. Members who have participated in the discussion and made very valuable suggestions? I also deeply appreciate the support each one of them has given to the bill that I have placed before the House to be passed today.

Shri Rupchand Pal, raised a question about the urgency and he himself has said that it is because of Resolution 1540, which was passed by the Security Council last year. Resolution 1540 is mandatory under Chapter seven of Charter of United Nations. I do not want to take the time of the House by reading the details from the Charter but we have no other option but to accept this and to report to the Security Council as to what steps we have taken. The first report was submitted to the Security Council in October, 2004 and the next report will be sent very shortly.

The Resolution calls upon the States, under Chapter seven of the Charter of UN, to adopt national rules and regulations, where it has not been done, to ensure compliance with their non-proliferation commitments. Further, to counter a threat posed upon all States in accordance with their non-proliferation commitments. Further, to counter a threat posed upon all States in accordance with their national legal authorities and legislation in consistence with international law, to take cooperative action to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials.

A reference, of course, was made to section 9, 15 (1), (2) and (3) and 20. If hon. Members who have raised the questions read the totality of these sections 9, 15 and 21, their fears will be allayed that any action will be taken which will be prejudicial to innocent people who are in no way connected with this.

Now I am very glad that Shri Nikhil Kumar mentioned the name of Mr. A.Q. Khan. He is in our neighbourhood. It is essential for us that this legislation, which the Government has placed before the House, is adopted. From what I heard of the debate today, I just want to say that I feel greatly encouraged.

I thank Shri Rupchand Pal, Shri Bansal, Shri Nikhil Kumar, Dr. Shandil, Shri Ram Gopal Yadav, Shri Sita Ram, and Shri Chandrapan. Then, I thank all of you for the support that you have given to this Bill.

I would once again reiterate that India is committed to safeguard its security as a nuclear weapon State and to deepen its autonomous scientific and technical capability for meeting our security imperatives as well as our developmental goals. India is and will remain a responsible nuclear power. We have adopted the most responsible policy on sensitive and dual-use nuclear and missile related technologies. We are committed to ensure that these do not fall into the wrong hands, especially the terrorists and non-State actors. India has an impeccable record in this regard; and India will continue to work to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

I would request the august House to pass the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to prohibit unlawful activities, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery

systems and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 27 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 27 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula, the Preamble and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted.

15.54 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Statement made by Hon. Prime Minister regarding visits of Chinese Premier and President of Pakistan to India

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up Item No. 29 regarding Statement made by the hon. Prime Minister on 20.4.2005 regarding visits of Chinese Premier and the President of Pakistan to India.

Hon. Members, two hours have been allotted for discussion on this subject.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): The Prime Minister made a statement on the two historic visits—one by the Chinese Premier, Mr. Wen Jiabao and other by the

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf in April. We can call it a great leap forward in our relations with our important neighbours. In this 21st century, the old mind set is changing. World over people do not care for how much military hardware you do have.

Today people are not bothered about how much a country is spending on her Defence Budget, or on the war of words that continue between nations. But today, in this new millennium, people are more bothered about how a country is able to make partners of progress to achieve the Millennium Development Goal in the 21st century. This is more so for the Asian countries. It is being said that if the twentieth century was for the developed world, that is for the European countries, then the twenty-first century is for the Asian countries. If that is so, then we would have to forget old enmities. Old mindset would have to be changed. The people world over, particularly the peoples of Pakistan, China, India and such other countries are looking forward as to when we can purposefully and meaningfully co-operate with each other forgetting old hostilities.

Sir, I not only welcome the statement by the hon. Prime Minister but also the visits by the premiers of China and Pakistan to India. We take a little pride in the fact that we all along have been advocating for such developments to take place and that we should try and upgrade our relations with those countries.

Sir, first let us take up the visit of the Chinese premier to India. After long years, in the post-1960 era, the ice was first broken by the late Rajiv Gandhi. History is a testimony to this fact. After that, through intermittent hiccups, we have been progressing on settling issues like the border issue, giving recognition to Sikkim, about China's global perspective and also about tackling a conspiracy by imperialist powers who wanted to use India to contain China. Naturally, a lot of misconception was there in our relations. It was the responsibility of India not to become a strategic partner of the hegemonistic powers who have been hatching a conspiracy against China and also to dispel the misconceptions that were there. Now, this Government—in keeping with its commitment in the National Common Minimum Programme for an independent foreign policy, for a multi-polar world, without being cowed down by the pressures of the hegemonistic powers and without subscribing to the philosophy of unilateralism—is progressing well. Therefore, we welcome this initiative of visit of the Chinese premier. It has not only helped in removing a number of

hurdles in the way of improved relations between two nations, but also has helped in dispelling a series of misconceptions that were there which were a blockade to move forward.

The first issue is about the borders. A Committee looking into this aspect was already in place and a host of Confidence Building Measures were also taken by the Government to see how to settle this issue amicably, peacefully and satisfactorily. This visit of the Chinese premier has contributed effectively to this cause. We have eleven, if I am not mistaken, agreements covering areas of social, economic political, cultural and also on border area co-operation, WTO and about bilateral trade and also about having a trilateral relationship between India, China and Russia.

I believe that this qualitative improvement and upgradation in our relations with China are based on the accepted guiding five principles of Panchsheel. These guiding principles have been worked out for over a long period of time to solve our problems including our boundary question in the context of overall long term interests of both India and China and to deal with the problem of population between both sides of the border; and the historic thing of handing over a map to the Government of India containing Sikkim clearly delineates that Sikkim is a part of India.

15.59 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

There is no confusion any more. I think the most important thing is the vision of our trade going up to 20 billions by the year 2010. For example, I will give you one example of partnership which has been emphasized by the Chinese Premier. They are going stronger and stronger by their hard work and we have our own strength in our software. If you converge these two in this new world order and in this knowledgeable society, then China and India can work wonders in IT. Co-operation by hardware from China and co-operation by software from India can work wonders. The Chinese Premier very correctly and aptly had chosen to visit Bangalore so that he can have a first hand knowledge about the development that we are making in our software.

16.00 hrs.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: In Delhi too.
...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Yes. Both Delhi and Bangalore. We have developed software in many other States apart from Bangalore. Bengal is not lagging behind. You must be knowing it. We are not giving much publicity about it. That is a different story. The agenda was set in the deliberations on how we should work together in the 21st century.

I believe the hon. Minister would explain two or three things. They are about the three areas of trade. The first is the border trade. How is the Government proposing to developing infrastructure? For example, the new Government's policy is 'Look'. the Eastern part of India has been lagging behind for various reasons. I am not going to the details of all that. The Government of West Bengal and some other State Governments of the North East are eagerly waiting for necessary infrastructure for the development of border trade. I would like to be enlightened about how the Government is proposing to develop border trade between China and India. How is it going to be done because it is an old thing?

Secondly, the two countries have proposed joint ventures. What are the areas of joint ventures apart from IT where China and India can collaborate and move forward jointly in the global scenario?

Thirdly, we are in a new world scenario and, at the WTO level, our country and China are collaborating very closely although China is a late entrant in WTO. But they are moving very fast. They are having their own areas of interest. There may be, here and there, areas of conflict also and that is a different story. But fields of convergence, commonality and common interest at the WTO level are one of the major areas where we can work together.

How does the Government propose to achieve, in concrete terms, the goal of achieving \$20 billions by 2008? What are the areas or sectors in which our business community and their business community going to cooperate? How is the Government proposing to involve several State Governments in concrete terms? We would like to be enlightened about the economic progress that we propose to make. What kind of collaboration are we proposing at the international level, especially in the new unipolar world, where hegemonistic pressures will be mounted on us, as stated by the Chinese Premier? How do we propose to build a relation against unjustified and unwarranted pressures being mounted or may be mounted by the hegemonistic power against trilateral relations, apart from the bilateral relations?

There is time constraint. I have been told not to take much time because this debate should be completed within two hours, that is by 6 o'clock.

So, let me hurriedly go to the visit of the Pakistani President. It is historic, to say the least. An invitation to a cricket match has been converted into one of the historic diplomatic engagements, resulting in historic development on the question of border, which has been the bone of contention, as a soft border, building people to people contact, more cooperation in the areas of travel and tourism, bus service etc. Yesterday I was reading that there is much development and much progress. I congratulate this Government. Vast developments are taking place, in terms of bus service, like Amritsar-Lahore bus service. I think there are already three bus services.

They have their own contention and apprehensions. In the comprehensive dialogue, they consider Kashmir to the central problem. The President is answerable to his own people or to the military, or whatever you call it. Is it a change of heart or change of mindset? I was reading two articles written by one BJP leader, questioning and doubting whether there is really any change of heart or not. I am not going into that. It is because their mindset has not changed. They have been trying to use this relationship to raise the communal temper. When they want to go to their constituencies in a communal way, they want to use this relationship. This insincerity and inconsistency has caused much loss to our country.

I congratulate this Government that they have boldly ceased the opportunity. A cricket match has been converted into an engagement in various important areas, like border, LoC to be converted into international border or soft border, increasing the trade, pipeline from Iran through Pakistan to India, economic cooperation and bilateral trade. We are having trade, but unfortunately it is through a third country, that is Dubai. Otherwise, it is through smuggling through States like Rajasthan etc. Due to this both the countries are losing. It would be better if we cooperate with each other. We have common culture, we have linguistic commonness; great heritage; and people's aspirations. Some people have been asking how it could be possible. After all we had Agra Summit and Kargil War. They ask: How do you believe that this is going to be irreversible, in the language of the hon. Prime Minister? It is going to be irreversible because it is a new world. The people-to-people contact through all these periods has converged to such a level that it is never possible either for the Government of India or for the Government of Pakistan to back out. The emotional

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

bondage is there. We have seen people meeting each other in spite of the terrorist attack on the Tourist Centre. How can any political authority, any political power separate these people who are so eager to have economic bonds?

Correctly, the hon. Prime Minister has stated about the pre-partition bondage. There is a reference to it. We can call it, after the cricket diplomacy, as the film diplomacy. The President of Pakistan has been referring to the 1950 Bollywood film. The story was something like this. The two children separated. After that, they met and they became lovers and all that forgetting the past. Forgetting the past, they met each other. It was really very much inspiring to learn that the President of Pakistan was making reference to the Bollywood film. This only confirms the emotional bondage. No one can wish away the people-to-people contract and the aspirations of the people.

We take a pledge because we have all along been advocating friendship, peace process. Let us be partners in progress. You are spending such a huge amount on Defence for guarding the borders, for the military positioned in Siachin. All these things are there. The New World Order and the people of the 21st Century have a new mindset. They want to see you to go together in a cooperative manner as partners in progress, to a new Millennium Development Goal. That is a commitment we have made. Pakistan has made and all others have made at the United Nations. I believe that this will be irreversible.

The Kashmir problem is there. For the first time, we hear that a final settlement is possible. For the first time, we hear that why a final settlement is not possible. If in Europe two countries, fighting with each other for hundreds of years, can come together, they can have a common currency, have a common outlook in spite of such differences, why can we not settle? We have our own problems. I am illustrating only one because of time constraint. Only today, in the morning, the hon. Speaker was referring to water as one of the most sensitive issues. Some people think that the future war will be fought not because of nuclear issue and all these things but because of water. So, the hon. Speaker wanted to set up a Parliamentary Forum to find out how the rain water can be harvested, how the ground water level can be improved. Water is a problem. So, Pakistan had demanded some changes about the dam saying that they are being deprived of water. They had approached the World Bank. Only yesterday it came in the newspapers

that the Swiss engineer would be coming. We should have faith in him. If we look at the Indus Water Treaty, some people say that politically Pakistan may have some interest. Of course, they have interest in the Jammu and Kashmir Valley. But the Chenab water issue is there. They are deficit in water. Pakistan's water problem is such that water can be an area of friendship.

In the course of the other speech, I was mentioning about cooperation because we are having shortage of energy, nuclear energy. Their nuclear energy for peaceful purpose and ours can together help. It will help us both. So also water. If we can have a common strategy, a common understanding of sharing of the water, it is good. It has been stated that Shri Mehta suggested that India is open to changes in the dam design. It appeared in the newspapers on Sunday. I noticed this. The deliberations and discussions are going on. The Commissioner, Indus Water Treaty, Shri D.K. Mehta is reported to have suggested that India is prepared to accept the changes in the dam design.

If they agree, it will be better for both of us. There are areas of mutual interests like water, energy, border trade etc. They have their own market, we have our own market and if we can work together at the international level, at the WTO level and at the bilateral level, it will be beneficial for both of us.

Lastly, we have seen how the American Secretary of State came here and sermonised us as to why we should have the gas pipeline from Iran via Pakistan and we see how Pakistan is being pressurised. When a peaceful understanding is growing between India and Pakistan, they are offering F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan, they say that they would waive this or waive that and they are giving them the confidence that Pakistan is a permanent element in their overall global strategy. This kind of a game is going on. We believe that in the new situation Pakistan would not succumb to such pressures. We should be cautious about it. We are cautious about it. We have an independent foreign policy as per our commitment given in the NCMP. But a signal should be given to Pakistan that they should not succumb to such pressures as we are not succumbing to American pressures. We are pursuing an independent policy. Of course, Pakistan has its own compulsions like the Army and many other things. They have their own problems in the Provinces and they have the problem of democracy also. I am not elaborating on this point because in a very congenial atmosphere, when things are improving, it

is not proper to make any such observation. But we should be cautious not only to protect our own national interests, but also to ensure that no third party interferes in the peace process that we have sincerely started.

The peace process with China also should be made irreversible. Russia is our friend and we can develop new friendship with other countries. The new peace process that we have with Pakistan is successful and it should be made irreversible with a goal of final settlement of irritants like Kashmir and all these things.

This Century is going to be Asia's Century. With this goal in mind and with the millennium development goals in mind, with enough precautions, we should sincerely pursue what we have achieved so far and also what we are yet to achieve.

Sir, I once again, congratulate this Government, the Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister for pursuing a policy of developing a good relationship with Pakistan, for not having a chauvinistic approach to problems, but for trying to settle the issues with a common goal as partners in progress and for pursuing an independent policy which we have all along been demanding and advocating. I hope we shall continue this policy to have improved relationship with Pakistan, to have a qualifiedly high level of relationship with China, not only bilaterally, but also to have a trilateral relationship between India, China and also Russia.

SHRI K.S. RAO (Eluru): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wholeheartedly congratulate our hon. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh ji, our UPA Chairperson Sonia ji, our External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh ji for the confidence that they have built up between India and China and between India and Pakistan. This is not only our feeling, but even the Chinese Premier has felt that this is a historic development.

Sir, I only wanted to say that the days have gone when muscle power or the number of horses or the number of elephants or the amount of traditional weapons was the indication of strength.

Now, no Kingdom, no country, can ever think that it can overtake any other country by virtue of the strength or muscle power or any weapons today they have. Wisdom must prevail on the leaders of every nation that more by development, by improving the quality of the people of their nations that they can take their nations forward and not by their ego or their strength.

This is proved a few decades back when certain nations through that they are very strong. The strongest nations fought with small nations for years together, but they could not win over them. Recently, a nation, which is supposed to be the number one with its wealth, with its weapons, shivered for a single person. That means, it is visible that no nation, however strong it is, irrespective of the number of weapons it has, can ever think in terms of dominating other nations these days. What is required is a goodwill, what is required is a good understanding, more particularly between the nations which are adjacent to each other.

It is very unfortunate that for several decades, this trust was lacking between the two nations, be it China or be it Pakistan. Today, we, not only the politicians but even the people, are very happy that the relations have softened. They could understand us and we could understand them. They could understand that we have no intention of violating the boundaries or they should not think that they can do any more. The role played by our hon. Prime Minister in this aspect by his simplicity, by virtue of his being an academician, by virtue of his thoughts, is praiseworthy. He has brought a change. Possibly, he could convince those leaders in the same way.

So, with the science and technology developing very fast, with the globalisation accepted world over, now we must concentrate more on cooperating each other, supplementing and complimenting our strengths. As Shri Rupchand Pal was telling us that if China and India were to come together with open hearts, cooperate with each other in development, I will not be surprised that these two nations, put together, will dominate the 21st Century and then prove that we are more competent than any of the nations outside. This impression is already spread in the entire world. So, we must safeguard more the relationship, which they have built up now, the trust and confidence which they have built up between our nations, and see to it that it should not be disturbed by others. We should not go for ego. At regular intervals, the leaders must be in touch with each other, explaining the misconception, if there is any, created by others, and then explain how it is beneficial for both of us to be together, to interact with each other, to exchange the abilities, the confidence, the technological advances, the resources and all that.

As he was telling us that if China and India were to cooperate fully, both the nations can work, can manufacture goods at a very cheap rate compared to

[Shri K.S. Rao]

Western countries. The reason being, the manpower cost is less and we have got values, we have got traditions behind us. We work round the clock, we have hardworking, disciplined and sensible people and more particularly we have an added advantage of communicating in a language, which they are lacking. They are also discipline and hardworking. So, if these two nations come together, we can work for the mutual benefit of not only these two countries but even for the third world countries.

Sir, I do not want to repeat whatever he has said. Our Prime Minister is making a statement here. All that I can say is that the relations which we have established, and the confidence that has built up between these two nations will not only last for two days, it will be remembered for generations to come. We have got the history behind us. When a king in kingdom heard that the other king was going to attack him; with the mere rumours, wars used to be there. Today, that kind of a situation is not there, and that kind of thinking is also not there. We have to send our delegations to them. We must interact with them, and we must send our industrialists to them. We must even send our citizens to those nations. We must encourage even tourism. I am very happy that a lot of Indians are going in big delegations even from small towns to China. Similarly, Chinese exchange of culture also will help us a long way. Even the barriers of caste, religion and region will get evaporated. People are ready to go and live anywhere. People are ready to marry anybody whichever nation he belongs to. With this type of thinking, the barriers of nations are also going away, which is a very good indication for mankind.

I can proudly say that in the field of science and technology we are far ahead of the other two nations. We can transfer some of the technologies, more particularly in the areas of pharmaceuticals, IT and in healthcare. In these areas, where we are very good, we can even encourage our people to take up some ventures in China and Pakistan; and we can attract them to come and work here in the areas where they are good, thereby the relations between the citizens will be established; the goodwill will also be established.

We are living in a democracy. Chinese also have changed their approach. So, the common intention of either China or India, or Pakistan or India is already improving the quality of the life of the people of these countries. If these were to be the end goals, I am very

sure with this present line of thinking and under your leadership the relations will strengthen and both the nations will prosper.

If we see the Budget provisions in the last couple of decades, we would find that thousands of crores of rupees were spent on the Defence Budget. What for they were spent? Is it that China can win over us any time or we can win over China or Pakistan can win over us? It is not so. It is merely because of lack of trust. Only because of lack of trust we are spending the intelligence, the resources of the nation and the people on Defence today. The day this trust is there we do not need to use or waste our resources for this. We can divert them to development. In no time, within a decade this nation and those two nations can compete with most of the developed nations of the world. This thinking must be there with them also. I am confident that those people will also change in the same way. The misunderstanding about Jammu and Kashmir or some of the outstanding issues will not come on our way. As you said, the day the understanding grows, the people and the nations realise the benefit of understanding each other, cooperate with each other in economic development, then all these difference will disappear. There will never be an occasion or a need to discuss those issues. I am very confident that day will come very soon when they will forget all these issues, and they will concentrate on how to increase the wealth and the living standards of the people over a period of time with cooperation between both these nations.

I also do not want to take a long time on this. But, Sir, I am very happy and very proud that under your leadership, we will prosper. More particularly, when there is common interest between India and Pakistan who are brothers, who fought for the freedom together, who have the same linguistic thinking, culture, genetics, appearance, abilities and in every respect we are one, there is no reason to think in a different manner. Our working method is also the same.

If we were to go and see the Gulf countries, it is only the Indians and the Pakistanis who are responsible for the development of the entire Gulf countries. Maybe, the oil is responsible for their wealth, but transforming them into wealthy nations is only because of these two nations. It is because of their hard work, nature, their skills and their abilities, they are wealthy. When they could be responsible for the development of those nations, why can we not utilise the same skills, same knowledge, same

hard work in our nation and then bring this nation to a much better position?

As my friend said, water is also going to be a big issue. I am very confident that the water which is going waste into the sea, passing through the nation, also can be put to us for the betterment of both the nations. I am sure, Sir, as you said in the statement mentioned earlier a couple of days ago, you can also take up these issues. If you take up some of these issues, bring them on a common table, understand each other and construct some projects, it will prove that this kind of amity, unity and understanding will be of use in many respects. They will also realise that they must forget all the outstanding issues and think in a different manner which will lead to prosperity of these two nations.

Once again, I congratulate the Prime Minister, Shri Natwar Singh, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and even our UPA allies who have co-operated with us in establishing the relations and bringing the right kind of understanding.

[*Translation*]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (*Sambhal*): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Prime Minister's *suo-motu* statement regarding the visit of the Chinese Premier and the President of Pakistan and the things stated by the hon. Rupchand ji and other hon. Members are true that better the relations, the better it is. Nobody can oppose their statements. But, while signing agreements, one thing is always remembered that how much the party with whom one is entering into agreement, can be relied upon. Its intent can also be gauged from its past. The ongoing dialogue is fine and relations should improve as there can not be anything better than this. But, the hon. Prime Minister, Sir, with regard to two points of the ongoing discussion here, through the hon. Chairman, I would like to remind the whole House that our first Prime Minister was cheated two times by these two countries. At that time, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the leading politicians in the world. He had a pious and liberal mind. At the time of Chow-en-Lai's visit to India I was studying in the sixth class and the slogan of Hindi-Chini, Bhai-Bhai were reverberating in the whole country. Few days after that we cannot forget Pt. Nehru's address to the nation in which he spoke with a heavy heart:

[*English*]

"Comrades and fellow countrymen, I am speaking to you on All India Radio in this hour of emergency when our neighbouring country has shamelessly attacked us."

[*Translation*]

Talks of Panchsheel were held, agreements were signed and after that our country was not only attacked but even today 38,000 kms. our land is occupied by China, all our scriptures mention Kailash and Mansarovar. Is it on our land? Now, our people go there and bring mud, sand and water from there. Today, it is not in our possession. It is not with India. I do not want to say that you should not sign agreements, it is good but I want about the character of a country. The Vietnam, which had signed a major treaty with China, had also attacked on the same day while our Foreign Minister was present there. This has been the situation so far and that is why I want to say that the Government should never neglect the borders and land of our country on the day of signing an agreement. China occupied Tibet on the day of attack on it. I remember that Dr. Lohia had said that it is an infant's murder. Had India opposed that property, there would have been a Buffer State in between and this problem would not have arisen.

Hon'ble Natwar Singh ji is sitting here, who is a learned person and conversant with foreign policy. The entire world knows that in the context of any country, its foreign policy implies supreme national interest. When the National interest is supreme, the principles and all other things go in the background. The entire communist world knows and all of us have also read that as per communists theory whenever the people's movement is against the power, the communists always oppose the power and support the people's movement. But at the time of liberation movement of Bangladesh, the then East Pakistan, China stood in support of Yahiya Khan lead Pakistani Government in the United Nations Organisation. It was then supporting a dictator Government and extending its support against people's revolution. Therefore, I would like to caution that whenever China had improved its relations with anyone it implied danger for the people. So, there is a need to remain cautious.

I have nothing to say about Pakistan. Peoples of Pakistan and India want unity and agreement between the two. Despite routine terrorist activities there is not so much of distrust on our part as it exists across the border. So far as distrust and trust is concerned it is very difficult to win the trust of even one person. There may be many more difficulties before us in winning the confidence of a nation. When I was talking about policy, I remembered what General Washington had once said. We cannot accept that as principle of our policy but America has always followed it.

[Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav]

[English]

I am quoting General Washington and he said: "to be prepared for war is one of the most effecting means of preserving peace".

[Translation]

The day when other people will feel that India is the weak nation no matter whatever you may talk or the number of agreements you may sign. You cannot feel secure. First make the country strong then no matter how many agreements it signs, all will follow. If it remains weak nobody will listen to it. The efforts made by the Govt. are good. People want good relations between India and China and also between Pakistan and India. I know that there are so many divided families where one brother lives in India and the other in Pakistan. I know the agony of that brother who cannot attend the funeral of his real brother died in Pakistan. You have given some relaxation in such cases. I would like to congratulate hon'ble Minister of External Affairs and Prime Minister.

Some relaxation has been given in this regard and I would like to congratulate hon'ble Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs for this. People will always remember you for this. In addition to it, I would also like to thank you for other relaxations. There are some incidents when somebody dies and his dead body cannot be sent due to complicated procedure of getting visa etc. The government has relaxed provision in this regard which is a very good step. I shall not deliver speech here any more on what progress will be made in our relations and what not. I know if there is mental peace everyone progresses and if there is no peace even a family cannot be run properly so that to say of a country. If you are good at heart and managing the things properly such as strengthening the country strategically, economically and from each point of view only then neighbours will talk to you properly otherwise not.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, that is all I want to submit. I would like to thank you for permitting me to speak.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, the time allotted for this discussion is two hours. Hereafter the hon. Members who are speaking may confine themselves to five to six minutes each so that many Members can

participate in the discussion and the hon. Prime Minister will have to give the reply. The business will have to be completed today.

Shri Hannan Mollah to speak now.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join my earlier colleagues in expressing my sincere praise and thanks to the UPA Government and the hon. Prime Minister in their effort of upgradation of our relations with our neighbouring countries, specially the two most important neighbours—China and Pakistan.

In spite of the old stories mentioned by my friend Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav, I would say that we should stress on the future and try to build a new world in the 21st century and now the situation is ripe for it. As our relations with Pakistan are improving by the efforts of this government, the situation after 9/11 has also changed. The President of Pakistan himself said—'Last time, in 2001, when I came, it was a situation of acrimony, we were killing each other; but now there is an atmosphere of peace and friendship'. Qualitative change is there in the situation. We have to make use of it. This is a situation in which both the countries have made it clear that LoC cannot be the basis for permanent solution of the problem and there is no question of re-drawing of the boundaries also. Both have agreed. Now the question is, how can we build relations between both the countries in which the border will play a historical role.

Access to the people of each country to those of the other is the main question that the government has taken up. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus route is the proof of it. These are the positive steps and air in the correct direction. I also give importance to the point to the realisation of President of Pakistan when he said that there cannot be any military solution to our problem. If we realise all these things, it will lead us to the betterment. He also stressed on the point that from conflict management we should go for a conflict resolution.

These are some very positive indications of thinking. If we have a correct thinking, it will lead us to a correct path to follow. He also exhorted us for magnanimity in comparison to smaller countries.

I think, we have enough strength and we have the capacity to show magnanimity to our neighbouring

countries so that there is no fear to our neighbouring countries from India and we remain their friends and strengthen our friendship with them. This signal has been sent correctly. I hope, it will help us all.

My friends have raised other problems. I am not going into them. I am glad that we have come back to our basic independent foreign policy. We were afraid of losing it in the past for some time, but when the question of India-Iran-Pakistan oil pipeline came and we all agreed unanimously, ignoring the American reservations, this was an indication of our independent foreign policy. I think, our Government has also agreed that we should also take the people—centric approach to settle the problem because people of both the countries—India and Pakistan—have marched ahead and therefore, the Government cannot lag behind. Many delegations are going there. Day after tomorrow, another big delegation consisting of 33 Members of Parliament and a large number of journalists is going to Pakistan. Fortunately, I have also been asked to go there. We are carrying our message of friendship and they are also bringing such messages. In this way, we hope that the situation is improving and this people-centric approach is helping the Government to reach the correct conclusion. As it has been said that the peace process is irreversible, I think, our effort will lead to that.

Irritants are there and they will be there. We have to be cautious. We have our accepted policy and Parliament's direction about how to keep this accepted policy to solve our basic problems. We should solve them on the basis of that, but we should not lag behind in advancing the peace process and co-operation in economic, cultural and other spheres.

I want to say a few things about China. Regarding our effort to improve relations with China, it has already been said that it is a historic effort and with this upgradation of our relations with China, we are entering into a new era. These eleven agreements and all these things need courage and political will. I hope that courage and political will have been mustered by our UPA Government and the hon. Prime Minister. With that strong political will, we hope that we will be able to overcome whatever irritants are there. So, this "partners, not rivals" slogan will be implemented with utmost sincerity with China and in that way, our relations also will improve. Only certain things are there. Regarding free trade, I want to know what is the roadmap. Regarding boundary issue, I think, advancement is there. What is the situation

now? What is the roadmap regarding energy sector? Regarding energy sector, our trilateral relations will also help. What is the roadmap to improve energy sector co-operation with China, Pakistan, Russia and other neighbouring countries?

China is supposed to be getting the status of an Observer of SAARC. What is our understanding on that? Nuclear co-operation among these neighbouring countries is also a matter we have to keep in mind while improving our relations.

Finally, I think, the Government has taken a correct course and the Prime Minister is taking correct initiative to solve the long-standing problems between these two neighbouring countries. It is our expectation that the situation will improve. I would like to say that in this context, as a strong, forward-looking and progressive country, India will have to take more advanced steps with regard to our neighbouring countries. We know that there is some problem with Nepal. We have to keep it in mind. We have to see that democracy is restored there. It is our neighbouring country, and if democracy is strong there, then our national interest will be served in a better manner. But if we give them arms, then it will create problems because of the undemocratic force that are active there. So, we must insist that democracy be restored there.

Secondly, another important country with which we have our borders is Bangladesh. We know that there are problems in Bangladesh as the fundamentalist forces are active there. If they remain active and become more aggressive, then it will create problems, especially, for our Eastern Regions. So, we should not allow this to happen.

What is the problem to have friendship with a Government of a country where there is democracy, if we can have relations with a Government in a country where there is no democracy? Democracy is there in Bangladesh, though they are under pressure from the undemocratic forces that are active there. Our Government should take very strong and positive steps to ensure that they follow a correct policy, and we can have good friendly relations with them also. This measure would allow the entire Region to move forward on a new path in the 21st Century.

With these words, I support this policy of the Government.

16.52 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA—*Contd.*
AND
BILL AS PASSED BY RAJYA SABHA

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before I call the next speaker to speak on this issue, I would like to call the Secretary-General to report a message from Rajya Sabha.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:

I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Special Economic Zones Bill, 2005, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 10th May, 2005, has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 11th May, 2005, with the following amendments:

CLAUSE-3

1. That at page 4, *for* lines 24 to 26 the following the *substituted* namely:

"Provided that the Central Government may,—

- (a) after consulting the State Government concerned;
- (b) without referring the proposal for setting up the Special Economic Zone to the Board; and
- (c) after identifying the area,

suo motu set up and notify the Special Economic zone."

CLAUSE-49

2. That at page 20, *after* line 45 the following be *inserted*, namely:

"Provided that nothing contained in this section shall apply to any modifications of any Central Act or any rules or regulations made thereunder or any notification or order issued or direction given or scheme made thereunder so far as such modification, rule, regulation, notification, order or direction or scheme relates to the matters relating

to trade unions, industrial and labour disputes, welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity and old age pensions and maternity benefits applicable in any Special Economic Zones."

2. Sir, I lay on the Table the Special Economic Zones Bill, 2005, as returned by Rajya Sabha with amendments.

16.53 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Statement made by Hon. Prime Minister regarding visits of Chinese Premier and President of Pakistan to India—*Contd.*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Respected Chairman, Sir, the recent trips to India made by the Prime Minister of China and the Pakistani President make it evident that internationally India has gained in stature and respect. India has always followed the policy of friendship and peace. Right from the time of our freedom struggle we have been propagating our foreign policy. I don't want to go into details about the direction taken by independent India in this regard. During the hon. Prime Minister's recent trip to Bandung for its 50th celebrations he was proclaimed to be the Voice of Asia by the Asian Leaders. In many of the editorials the editors had stressed that—

[English]

"He has not only recreated history, the Prime Minister has created history."

[Translation]

It is in this context that I would like to talk about the two visits that have been mentioned by the Hon. Members in their statements. China and Pakistan are two of our important neighbours. For the past many years we had not been able to develop the kind of relations that we wanted to have with them due to the prevailing circumstances. Now that the relationship is moving forward and improving, I think that the doubts being expressed here, that I don't want to repeat, are utterly unjustified. Undoubtedly, we should always maintain a position of

strength. However, this does not mean that we have to anticipate that a country which is extending a hand of friendship would backstab us at some point of time. Even when there is such a precedent we need not make it a reference point for our future actions. There is a vast difference between the India of today and the India that was. Today India has become powerful through its own efforts and this power has been built-up gradually from 1947. When the Hon. late Rajiv Gandhi had visited China in 1988 it had been considered an important visit. At that time dialogue between the two countries had virtually ceased but after that visit even the leadership of China was forced to claim that he is the grandson of his grandfather, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had established 'Panchsheel' and we have recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. We do have to learn lessons from the past but we also have to move forward with confidence. This confidence is reflected in the steps taken by the Hon. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The whole world acknowledges this fact. India has always wished to maintain cordial relations with Pakistan. Earlier also some initiatives were taken and some progress was made, but I am somewhat surprised that the party-men of the previous ruling party are making a hue and cry that they had taken the initiative to improve relations with Pakistan. They are putting a question mark on the present initiative. I would like to say that it is undeniable that they had taken good steps, yet the measure of success achieved on behalf of India by the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus-service far surpassed the success of the Wagah border-Lahore bus-service. The passengers in that bus were our politicians whereas this bus is enabling the people of both the countries to get together. The strong desire of the people who had been separated fifty years earlier to meet each other had been a point of consideration earlier too. However, it has become possible to fulfil this desire only after the present initiative by the UPA Government. It has been decided to allow people from both the countries to visit the religious places situated across the border. Has not this inter-mingling of the people bridged differences and brought about a change in feelings? Did not General Musharraf say during his recent visit that, General Musharraf of Agra is not General Musharraf in Delhi? Wasn't there a great change in his attitude and views? Should we not move forward with confidence to strengthen these steps in the national interest? Don't we all know how much money is wasted on defence in India and Pakistan? Both the countries are aware that the actual enemy that they have to combat with is poverty, ill-health and illiteracy. Recently, I had not an opportunity to visit Pakistan. I saw how emotionally those people meet and welcome us.

A sense of change is pervading the country. We have to further strengthen this feeling. The Hon. Prime Minister and General Musharraf discussed many issues. Of course, the talks were related to bilateral trade and people's visit to each other's country but we shall have to accept that those were not small measure but were huge strides. In this context, I would like to say this much only that I do believe and hope that this beginning would take us ahead. On this occasion, I would like to invite the attention of one and all that several Indian citizens are lodged in Pakistani jails and the people living in border areas tell that they are languishing there for long and have lost their mental balance and do not recognise even themselves. We will have to make all out efforts to get them out of the jails because no purpose will be served if they continue to languish there. We have to make efforts to get them out of the jails and unite them with their families here in India.

17.00 hrs.

Secondly, I would like to say that the tourists want to visit each other's country to watch sports, to visit relatives and also to explore trade opportunities besides tourism.

Under the Visa regulation regime in place, visa is issued only for one city but we should give visas to each other's citizens for entire country like it is given to the citizens of other countries. There are certain areas where there are restrictions for the citizens of all countries and I am not asking you to withdraw them but we can allow our citizens to visit to other places in each other's country. Meetings held by our Prime Minister with his counterpart and President of Pakistan has facilitated in creating good atmosphere for future. After a long time, our relations with China are again on tracks. I have observed that many Chinese delegations have recently visited our country. This will also help in improving our mutual relations.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Sir, through you, I would like to congratulate the honourable Prime Minister, the Minister of External Affairs and the UPA Government with whose efforts meetings of our Prime Minister and President have been held with Pakistan and China which have yielded positive results. India has been a peace loving nation and it has never followed a policy which could create troubles or damage to other countries. India has always led Asia and with its leadership, it has created

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

its separate identity among Asian nations. It was misfortune for both India and Pakistan that they got separated. Earlier, both were the same nation but after independence both got separated unluckily. Problems of both countries are also similar. Also poverty and backwardness besets both the countries. The circumstances in both the countries are more or less similar yet both are marching ahead on the path of development. There is one country in the world which tries to create tension between both the countries because it has got its own vested interests. As long as there are disturbances in small or big countries, the situation of war cannot be created and in that situation, these countries cannot make huge profits by selling weapon to such countries. Therefore, such countries keep India, Pakistan and China engulfed by clouds of war so as to do their politics and serve their interest.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is the reason that their policies keep the atmosphere volatile in both India and Pakistan. There has been apparent improvement in the relations of India and Pakistan in recent times. I am glad that the UPA Government is committed to make peace in both the countries and take the country on the way to progress and prosperity. Our Prime Minister has tried to improve the mutual relation through dexterous diplomatic moves as a result of which relations between both the countries are improving.

Sir, in the last few years, relations between both the countries had plummeted to their lowest ebb and both the countries had moved far off from each other. Earlier after cricket match between both the countries, a lot of bickering used to be seen among the people but after taking over by the UPA Government, relations between both the countries are fast improving.

This is the result of message of love and peace given by our hon. Prime Minister that today when teams of both countries play with each other the atmosphere of peace and harmony prevails and players of teams are cheered up.

Sir, our country cannot make progress until we spent our resources and major portion of our budget for welfare of poor, farmers and labourers. By saying this I do not say that we should not meet our defence requirements. To strengthen security of our country we must purchase the required arms and ammunition. We should not think of any sort of compromise with the security of our country rather we should accord priority to it. If our relations with our neighbours improves and bitterness with them

subsides, the funds spent on procurement of defence equipments can be utilized for betterment of poor, farmers and labourers in the country. We can spent that on power generation, providing of potable water to our people and construction of roads which will lead our country towards development.

Sir, our Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs made efforts due to which bus service between India and Pakistan has been started. It has started process of cordial relations between the two countries. A bus journey prior to this was also started. The Prime Minister of the National Democratic Alliance also undertook a bus journey but it turned into Kargil conflict. It appears that policy and intention of both countries was not clear. That is why the result of that bus journey came to the fore in the form of Kargil conflict but the policy and intention of the United Progressive Alliance government is quite clear. We want to improve relations with our neighbouring countries and it is the result of efforts, our Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs that friendship between the people of India and Pakistan is increasing. We have had our own foreign policy since the day of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru which could not be continue after death of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru but in the efficient leadership our able Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs, an atmosphere is being created to regain our old identity in this field and we have created a specific place for ourselves in the world through our foreign policy.

Sir, we are improving relations with Pakistan. Bus service had started and trade relations will also improve gradually. Similarly our relations with China are also improving. Bitterness between India and China due to border dispute and controversy over line of control has receded. The Chinese Premier visited India and India made her stand clear to him. I am hopeful that relations between India and China will also improve and both countries will make a headway. Mr. Prime Minister, Sir, go ahead, the one hundred crore population of the country is with you, entire House is with you and I am sure that in your able leadership everything will be settled and our relations with neighbours will improve. The fund being allocated for defence will be curtailed and we will be able to use the same money for betterment of poor and farmers of the country.

I once again express my gratitude towards the hon. Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh and Foreign Minister Shri Natwar Singh of UPA Government. You have rightly said that we should extend our special thanks to

Chairperson of UPA Shrimati Sonia Gandhi as our country is making headway under her able leadership and guidance and our relations with neighbours are improving.

With these words, I thank you for giving me time to speak.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Sir, at the very outset, I must congratulate our hon. Prime Minister and our hon. Minister for Foreign affairs who have made remarkable and glorious strides in this present scenario. Now, we are discussing about the visit of the Chinese Premier and the President of Pakistan to India.

When we had given the notice for discussion, at that time, our hon. Prime Minister visited Moscow for attending the ceremony of the 60th anniversary of the victory over Fascism and Nazism. We should not only have discussion on China or Pakistan, but we should also have a discussion on Russia. I must say that the country witnessed two quick visits of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and the President Pervez Musharraf. It indicates the foreign policy of our country, indicates the foreign policy of the Government of the day. These two events are the indications of the positive development in the context of our foreign relations, particularly the relations with Pakistan and China.

In this context, we may recall the days of the NDA rule. Before 14th Lok Sabha, the nation had experienced the bitterness with neighbourly countries specially the bitterness with Pakistan and China. We have witnessed the Kargil chapter. We can just recall that sort of atmosphere when some political forces even in the House itself tried to pressurise the Government to declare war against Pakistan. We can recall the situation when all forces wanted to dislodge the relations between the peoples of both the countries, Pakistan and India. They had even launched one programme to damage the cricket ground as a mark of protest after inviting the cricket team of Pakistan to India. Now, the situation has developed to such an extent that the Pakistani cricket team came to India and played a series here. The Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf himself was invited to watch a cricket match here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: I just started the preface.

With regard to China, the former Defence Minister identified China as India's enemy number one and the former Prime Minister wrote to the US President that India's nuclear tests are response to the threat posed by China. Now, again, the situation has developed to such an extent that our hon. Prime Minister told the Media, after signing the Agreement for Strategic Peace and Prosperity, that India and China could, together, reshape the world order.

We have learnt the lessons from Agra Meet, which was without any agenda. But this time, there was more preparation from both the sides. The Chinese delegation presented the Indian Government with the newly printed official map which showed Sikkim as a part of the Indian Union and on the other hand, New Delhi, on its part, had recognised, before the Chinese leader's visit, the Tibetan Autonomous Region as a part of the Chinese territory. When Jiabao repeatedly stressed that India and China are partners and not rivals.

It has appeared in the Media that in his address to the students of the IIT, Delhi, the visiting Prime Minister quoted from the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore and Amartya Sen, and ended his speech with a slogan 'Hindi-Chini-Bhai-Bhai'. The joint statement clearly signals that China and India both want to go forward in enhancing trade relations. It has appeared in the Press that China supported India's claim to play an active role in the UN, for India's candidature in the UN Security Council's seat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: I will take only two minutes and not more than that.

The major outcome was the agreement on the political partnership and guiding principles for settlement of border disputes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. You are having a lengthy script. You may hand it over, and conclude your speech.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: I am just concluding.

So far as Pakistan is concerned, the relationship since partition has had ups and downs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. The Prime Minister has to intervene at 5.30 p.m.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: I understand the constraints of time; but let me be allowed to conclude in a minute.

China is the most populous country of the world and India is the second most populous country of the world. I feel that India and China can come together. I am very much optimistic that even Russia can come together with us. If this is done, the world order can be reshaped.

I again feel here that India, China and Pakistan have the major water resources—Sindh, Ganga and Brahmaputra. So, with this, we can manage everything. We are strong in software and China is strong in hardware. We have enormous potentials and China also has enormous potentials.

So far as Pakistan is concerned, we have spent more than Rs. 80,000 crore.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, you may conclude. Prof. Ramadass may start his speech now.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Together, we can develop our friendship; we can develop our social, economic and political relations. Then, much money can be saved and that can be used for the betterment of the country.

So this endeavour is most welcome. I welcome our hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of External Affairs. We do hope that in the coming future, India, Pakistan and China's relations will be more closer and will go ahead. If our relations go ahead, I am confident that the other Non-Aligned and Third World countries will come to us and we will lead the process.

With these words, I conclude.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Respected Sir, I am delighted to participate in the discussion on the Statement made by the hon. Prime Minister. As you know, by tomorrow, the UPA Government and the 14th Lok Sabha will be completing one year of their office. I take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. Prime Minister and the UPA Government for all the splendid work that it has done in the short period of one year. Our hon. Prime Minister has done much more than what any of the earlier Prime Ministers could do within this short span of time. An evidence of this is shown in the Statement made by the hon. Prime Minister with regard to the visits of the Chinese Premier and the President of Pakistan.

The Statement made by the Prime Minister details various agreements and the points of strategies that are

being entered into between these three countries. By the inference of this Statement, we are able to see the mastery skills of the Prime Minister to arrive at and to buy peace that is required for this country.

Now, the most important advantage of the agreements that have been signed is that it would help India to emerge as a major global player in the emerging globalisation era. As we know, China, India and Pakistan are the three important countries. If there is amity and friendship between these three countries, they can emerge together as a major and strong partners who can dictate terms to the rest of the world. Therefore, within South Asia, this friendship will help us to show our strength.

As regards WTO, we are talking about adverse terms of conditions in India. Now, if Pakistan, China and India can share their identical interest in WTO, the disadvantage in the WTO can be converted into an advantage in favour of India. These two agreements with these two countries signal this kind of favourable advantage of India in the WTO context also.

The third important advantage that I see is that India's role in UN has been acknowledged by the Chinese Premier. They said that India should play a vital role in international affairs. On April 12, the Chinese Premier said in India that China reiterates that we attach great importance to the important role of India in international affairs. We fully understand and support the Indian aspirations to play an even bigger role in international affairs including in the UN. China has assured that it would be happy to see India at the United Nations Security Council. Now, with this assurance, India has the support of four permanent members of the Security Council. So, the day is not far off when India is going to be a member of the United Nations Security Council. That day will be the greatest day for our Prime Minister and for this country.

Fourthly, the border problem is now nearing a solution. China has agreed that Sikkim is an inalienable territory of India. There is going to be a comprehensive economic cooperation in the field of trade. With regard to China, our trade is likely to increase from 13.6 billion dollars to 20 billion dollars per year by 2008 and to 30 billion dollars by 2010. These are all formidable advantages of trade that we have had with China.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, we have achieved a lot. Though we have lost in Cricket, we have achieved

in terms of peace, in terms of economy and in terms of friendship with that country. We have moved from a situation of a suspicious relationship to a relationship of trust; we have moved from a stage of conflict management to a stage of conflict resolution, and Kashmir will not be an obstacle in determining the various issues of economy and development between these two countries. As a final word, terrorism will be curbed.

Sir, therefore, to sum up, I must say that we have achieved a lot on account of these two visits by the two leaders of India and China. This has enhanced the status and image of India in the comity of nations. Not only that, it has enhanced the image of the hon. Prime Minister and has made him a strong Prime Minister of India. He has done much more than what many other stronger Prime Ministers could do. I would only conclude by saying what has been written in one of the Paper only yesterday. I quote:

"Dr. Singh has succeeded in demonstrating that a leader's civility and decency can be formidable assets and can help him overcome the politics inherent capacity for conflict and confrontation. Weak or strong, "leaders job is to help society discover its creative impulses. Dr. Singh has done just that." This is not a mean achievement. This is the best balance sheet of Dr. Manmohan Singh in the last one year."

Sir, I feel personally happy because he happened to be a professor of Economics who delivered excellent lectures in various universities and now he is emerging as an international leader through this historic Agreement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Mistry, you can speak only for five minutes.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Sir, I hope that you would not have to shout at me to close down my speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other Members have eaten up your time. You can now speak only for five minutes.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Sir, at the outset, I would like to congratulate the hon. Prime Minister and the UPA Government—for adding one more feather to the successful working of the Government in the last one year—for the visits of the two premiers of China and Pakistan respectively to India.

After this Government came to power, POTA has been repealed. It was a landmark achievement. Only a

few days back, this House has passed the Right to Information Bill and also we have now reached a new height in our relationship with China and Pakistan, with the visits of the premiers of those two countries, from a position where once the then Defence Minister of the NDA Government declared before the country that China was our number one enemy. From that stage, today, we are moving towards building a mutual relationship by removing suspicious and by entering into various agreements to open up new avenues of development between these two countries.

Sir, when I look at the historical ties between India and China, I strongly feel that a country cannot build a good relationship with another country based on suspicions. We will have to open our country to visit by the Chinese people and also the Chinese Government would have to open its doors for visits by Indian people. I must say that we, particularly the new generation, know very little about the great history of China and perhaps know much more about the Western countries. There is already a proposal mooted to have collaborations in matters of sports and medicines with China.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may please conclude now. The hon. Prime Minister has to reply at 5.30 p.m.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: This would be a great learning process for us besides easing tension on the borders which would help us in cutting down our Defence expenditure and utilise the money so available for the development of our country.

As far as the visit of the President of Pakistan is concerned, there are a number of issues which the Government has taken up besides starting a railway line between Khokharapar and Munnabao as well as the bus service. I request the Government to think of starting a new road route along the border of Gujarat, from Banaskantha to the other counterpart in Pakistan. Srigamin to Nagar Parker was a traditional route and we should open up that as well.

I was just talking to the Prime Minister last night. There is a great potential in the whole trade relationship with our old neighbour. Why can we not have one bloc, remove the trade barriers between us and learn of the great potential between these countries which share a similar culture and a similar history? I feel that the entire Indian sub-continent as well as China and Russia can develop its own trade relationship in order to enhance and improve the quality of life of their own people.

[Shri Madhusudan Mistry]

Again, I congratulate the Prime Minister as well as the Chairperson of the UPA, all the colleagues of the UPA Government besides all those people who are lending support to the Government. Perhaps, we have been able to prove as one of the important nations in this global world, when the world is becoming one and the political barriers are becoming more or less redundant—I do not say redundant but it would not be keeping much of the importance in this economic world in which we have to support and cooperate with each other.

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the subject.

The initiative taken by our hon. Prime Minister in bettering the relationship between the neighbouring countries is very appreciable, particularly the recent visits of the Heads of Pakistan and China. The entire country felt happy seeing the initiative taken to better the good relationship between the three countries. The people of Pakistan, China and India felt happy by these visits as we are neighbours for historical reasons. We have been having good relationship but due to misapprehensions and certain other reasons, it has deteriorated and for long, people wanted to have long lasting peace. The frequency of visits by dignitaries as well as teams have always received much attention. It is a good opportunity for leaders of both the sides to sit together and sort out our problems. By confrontation, no problem can be solved. Take the history of the entire world into consideration. You may see that nothing had been resolved by confrontation. Only by sitting together and discussing, these problems have been resolved. You see the way terrorists wanted to disturb the idea of the bus service introduced by our Prime Minister between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. Any other Prime Minister would have gone back. But it is because of the strong will power of our Prime Minister that the bus service was successful. Barely two days before the bus service, there was a big attack by the terrorists at the base camp threatening the people there. I must congratulate the people who travelled in that bus. It is because of the confidence given by our Prime Minister and the leadership of India that it went on very well.

Likewise, the other initiative taken for rail and bus routes is appreciative. A couple of months back, hon. Members of Parliament had been to Pakistan. The people there really treated us as their brothers and wanted to have long lasting peace. Exchange of views between

people to people will pave the way of understanding each other. Then it will be followed by the visits of leaderships of both countries and then it will ease up tensions and relationship will improve. Likewise, they also wanted to extend their relationship in the areas of trade, education and technology. In the recent past, a number of Pakistani children were treated in India and given a new life as they were unable to bear the cost of medical treatment there.

This is very much appreciated. They were saying that it is better to come to India instead of going to countries like England and America because poor people cannot afford it. Pakistan is also like us a poor country. They were with us. But for some reasons it got separated from us. They cannot afford to go for costlier medication. They were so happy that they are getting treated in India. They were given good treatment free of cost. The exchange of sportsmen is also good. Sportsmen are treated as unappointed ambassadors of the country. The entire world knows that. This will give our players to go and exhibit their talent and vice-versa. This should be increased. If these efforts are increased, the relationship will improve and normalcy will be achieved. Strained relations will directly have an effect on our economies. Both the countries are developing countries. We are spending more on defence rather than on developmental activities. If the relations get better, we can as well reduce the expenditure on defence, which could be spent on the developmental activities.

The visit of the Chinese Premier gave a good signal to the entire country. For a long time there was no dialogue and there was no appreciable negotiations between China and India. This has paved the way towards that end. I wish and my Party, the Telugu Desam Party, wishes that this will go a long way in having peace between India and China.

Finally, peace negotiations or peace talks is one aspect. Our experience of the past shows that on the one hand when the peace initiative was going on, on the other hand we were attacked, both by China and Pakistan. So, my appeal to the hon. Prime Minister is that let us not be complacent. It is a good effort that is being made. But we should be always alert. Soon after the Pakistani President Musharraf came here or Agra Summit, India was attacked and Kargil War took place. Previously, we had that kind of an experience with China also. That is why we should be always alert. On the one hand, they are going on with the peace process and on the other

hand they are going on with developing nuclear arms. The way Pakistan coming out with missiles which can hit any part of our country is alarming. It is an alarming situation. That is why I would request the hon. Prime Minister that we should keep in mind the situation that is developing. I wish the initiative taken by the Prime Minister will go a long way in getting long lasting peace in the region.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Due to paucity of time I would limit myself to the visit of Pakistani President, while welcoming the visit of both the dignitaries.

Since the formation of the UPA Government, numerous steps have been taken to build peace with our neighbours, especially with Pakistan. In June 2004, the first round of composite dialogue took place. The important achievement of the first round of composite dialogue was the Joint Statement on the nuclear Confidence Building Measures. What we have seen is that South Asia is no more a nuclear flash point. It is because you have two nuclear powers. With the issue of Joint Statement, South Asia is no more a flash point for nuclear power. In June-July we had talks on Siachen, Tulbul navigation project; Sir Creek, terrorism and drugs; in March-April 2004 meeting with Director General of Pakistan Rangers; in June 2004 expert level talks on nuclear CBMs; in June 2004 Committee on Drug Trafficking; in September 2004 meeting of the Foreign ministers in New Delhi. According to our External Affairs Minister, India's foreign policy has graduated from an event-oriented approach to process-oriented approach. It is not based on careful consideration of the contemporary challenges facing the country. The visit of the Pakistani President created a new benchmark for political interaction between two countries. The tone and tenor of interaction was exceptionally positive. The two sides managed to generate specific outcomes on a number of issues. The important point is that, despite negative pressure brought on by the USA on the proposed India-Iran gas pipeline, both the countries had reiterated their intention to pursue the strategic project. I congratulate the Prime Minister and also the Pakistani President for that.

The Prime Minister is right when he reiterated India's position that there can be no re-drawing of boundaries but made an important point. He pointed out that the removal of restrictions on the boundaries could help make the problem lesser and lesser. That is what the Government has been doing.

Another important point is this. The third point, in my opinion, is that we have to maintain this momentum on the current upgradation of bilateral relations. India and Pakistan need to generate concrete outcomes in the area that can make material difference in the lives of the people, especially the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has also realised one thing. In the past, whenever the CBM topic was raised, Pakistan always thought that it was a trap for it to compromise on its core issue. I do not want to mention it here. But now it has realised one thing. The President of Pakistan has realised the importance of the enhanced economic, cultural and political interactions which go a long way in enhancing the whole peace process. But, at the same time, we have many issues which are yet to be resolved. For example, the Baglihar issue is there. An arbitrator has been appointed. I would like to point out to the Government, through you, Sir, that in no way should the work be stopped in respect of the Baglihar river because it is in the interest of development of Jammu and Kashmir.

History tells us that when it came to the Tulbul Navigation Project on the Jhelum, it was Pakistan which requested us to stop this work for three weeks. For 17 years, this project was stalled. I feel the work has to continue. I also feel that in this atmosphere wherein so much has been done, there was no need on the part of our neighbouring country to go to the World Bank. Anyway, the work has to continue.

The world is in a state of flux with the core achievements of the United Nations being undermined by unipolarism. In such a situation, the world requires the leadership, especially the great leadership of this Government headed by the hon. Prime Minister. The very challenges are there. The US is the sole super power. But, at the same time, India needs to act in a concerted way with the other nations and other powers to build an international system that is genuinely multipolar.

Lastly, this is my suggestion to the Government, through you, Sir, that though the people-to-people contact is taking place, yet an important thing is happening here. Many Pakistanis, especially those who migrated in 1947 and who are now citizens of western countries, want to come to India in this present atmosphere. Their visa applications are before the Indian Government. Before the visas are granted to them, at least, it requires three or four months. It requires RAW clearance, intelligence clearance etc. I would request the Government to take

[Shri Asaduddin Owaisi]

some steps. Some steps need to be taken so that their visas can be given immediately. Also, the people-to-people contact should continue. But my humble suggestion to this Government is that you require more Muslim religious, social and political leaders to go to Pakistan because there is some misconception in the minds of the Pakistanis that the Indian Muslims are persecuted here. I do not deny that. It happened during the NDA rule. It is a fact. But now when a new dispensation is there, when a new Government is there, there is an immediate need for more minority leaders to go to that country. There is a lot to explain to them saying that the rights are guaranteed to us. We have to explain what kind of a political leadership is here, what kind of atmosphere is here.

Lastly, I thank you for giving this opportunity.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am expressing my gratitude to the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Foreign Minister, Shri Natwar Singh ji because they have been instrumental in making our relations cordial with China and Pakistan. The President of Pakistan, Shri Musharraf visited Agra during the regime of the NDA Government. The then Prime Minister Shri Vajpayeeji had held talks with him but our relations with Pakistan became more bitter than friendly. But when Musharraf visited India recently, his talks with Dr. Manmohan Singh ji were very cordial and Dr. Singh also reciprocated in the same terms. Thus it's a beginning of friendship between the two countries. We started bus service between the two countries but Advaniji took out Rath Yatra out of sheer politics. But let him do so. We always wanted friendship with Pakistan. I want to remind you that when a delegation of 7-8 MPs visited Pakistan, I was also a member of that delegation. The people of Pakistan love the people of India and want friendship with us. Shri Pawan Bansal was also with us. Chandigarh is near to Wagaha border and on the one side of this border is India and on the other is Pakistan. Ours and their land is also the same. Similarly, the people of both the countries are also the same. What I mean to say is that the friendship between India and Pakistan has taken momentum. Musharrafji came here, thus he become instrumental in taking the bonds of friendship further but the team of India was defeated in the cricket match. ...*(Interruptions)* Manmohan Singh ji had also extended his hand of friendship to him. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramdas Athawale, please conclude with cricket.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: I am not talking about enmity ...*(Interruptions)* I am rather talking about friendship, so I need your support also. I do not want to take much time. Our friendship with Pakistan has further developed, it is a good thing but this friendship should be lasting one.

So far as Jammu-Kashmir is concerned let there be peace and order. I want to request Musharrafji that our land which is occupied by Pakistan should be returned to us. We have already given autonomy to Jammu-Kashmir. I want to appeal to the people of J&K and the terrorists there that they should live in harmony with us and terrorism should come to an end there. We extend our hand of friendship to them. You have given a special package to J&K and a train service is also to be inaugurated there. I want to appeal to the Prime Minister Manmohanji that J&K should be given maximum funds. The people there should not feel that development is not taking place there. ...*(Interruptions)* Mr. Chairman, Sir, should I sit down? If I sit down, there will be no friendship. Manmohan Singhji has become the Prime Minister of India. Now I recite a poem:

Bharat ke Pradhan Mantri ban gaye hain Manmohan Singh,

Islie Sonia Gandhi Majboot ban gayi hain wing,

Bharat ke Videsh Mantri ban gaye hain Natwar Singh,
Pakistan aur China ke saath aage dosti bar rahi hai ring,

Kyonki Manmohan Singh hain, Bharat ke King,

Mein Natwar Singhji ko Pakistan ki yad dilaata hyun,
Mein China aur Pakistan ke saath dosti chalaata hyun,

Mein apne dusmanaon ko jalata hyun,

Aur Bharat-Pakistan ke Langon ko apas mein milvata hyun.

I also need your support to bring the people of both the countries closer. If I go alone, then I cannot do so. So I need your support too.

The President of China came here and Musharrafji also came here. So I am sure that our friendship would

be further strengthened with these countries. We will work in this direction in the ensuing four years.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this friendship should be strengthened, therefore, I fully support this discussion. Our Government will do very good job in the next four years and we will again come to power for the next five years. We will have to move forward together. With this, I extend my full support to the hon. Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing after that shall go on record.

...(*Interruptions*)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the hon. Prime Minister.

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH): Sir, I wish to thank all the distinguished Members who have commented on the *suo motu* Statement I had made on 20th April 2005 on our relations with China and Pakistan. There have been fresh developments since then in our external relations, which I will attempt to share with the House.

However, at the outset, let me express my deep satisfaction over the continuing and strong consensus that characterises the conduct of our Foreign Policy. This was reflected in the several observations made by the hon. Members cutting across the political spectrum.

Sir, there is unanimity in this House regarding the importance of our relations with China. As I said in my Statement, our Government attaches great importance to the development of our relations with China. There is great scope for expansion of our economic interaction with this great neighbour of ours. With regard to the resolution of the boundary question, I acknowledge the complexity of this issue. But in this context, the agreement we have reached with China, setting out the political parameters and guiding principles for the resolution of the boundary question, assumes considerable significance.

Overall, Sir, in the recent past, there has been steady forward movement in our bilateral relations which are now characterised by expanding areas of cooperation and growing mutual understanding. I do not look at our relations with China as those between rivals, but as between partners engaged in promoting peace, security and development in Asia and in the World as a whole.

Sir, Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav is not here. He made certain statements. I do recognise that we are dealing with issues, which have great contemporary significance. There are risks, but I think, these risks will not deter us from moving forward, though we shall do so mindful of all the elements that go to influence this complex situation which we have to deal with.

With regard to Pakistan, I am very glad that all Members have stressed the importance of the normalisation of our relations with Pakistan. We sincerely desire to find mutually acceptable solutions in all outstanding issues. The hon. Members have rightly emphasised the need for a complete cessation of cross border terrorism, including the dismantling of terrorist training camps and launch pads across the LOC.

I myself pointed out to President Musharraf that I will not be able to take Indian public opinion with me in carrying forward the current composite dialogue process and our quest for abiding peace, if there continue to be repeated terrorist acts against innocent men, women and children.

We welcome the pledge made by President Musharraf not to allow terrorism to impede our bilateral peace process. Sir, both of us are committed to making the peace process truly irreversible, facilitating the resolution of all outstanding issues between our two countries. Of course, much will depend on the actual situation on the ground, with regard to cross-border infiltration, particularly after the snow-bound passes in Kashmir open up in summer. We have to remain alert because terrorist and extremist forces are still active. There will be no relaxation of vigil on this score.

Sir, thanks to the comprehensive security measures put in place, there have been no further incidents involving the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service and the positive impact of the service on opinion on both sides of the Line of Control (LOC) is there for everyone to see. We are already engaged in technical talks with the Government of Pakistan on the opening of a new bus service between Amritsar and Nankana Sahib. We hope to operationalise these services in the near future. I take note of the desire of hon. Member Shri Madhusudan Mistry about opening up the new routes linking Gujarat with Sind. This we shall also take up.

There has been some comment on the process initiated by the World Bank to appoint a neutral expert to

*Not recorded.

[Dr. Manmohan Singh]

examine differences between India and Pakistan on the Baglihar issue. There is no question of stopping work on this Project. Hon. Members should appreciate that under the terms of the Indus Water Treaty of 1960, the World Bank is obliged to appoint a neutral expert even if only one of the parties makes a representation. We had felt that a reference to the World Bank was premature because further technical discussions between our experts could have led to a narrowing of differences. I had myself conveyed to President Musharraf that if Pakistan could come up with convincing and technical verifiable objections to any aspect of this project, we would be willing to consider appropriate design modifications. We are now preparing to provide all the information and technical details that may be required by the neutral expert to make a comprehensive evaluation. I wish to state categorically that India has never violated the Indus Water Treaty, which has stood the test of time for the last 45 years. We intend to adhere to the Treaty in letter and in spirit.

17.58 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

Sir, Several Members have expressed anguish over the continuing detention of Indian fishermen and the other Indian citizens in Pakistan. Thanks to the effort of our Government and our Foreign Minister Shri Natwar Singh, a large number to these prisoners have been released and no effort is being spared to obtain the release of those remaining in Jails in Pakistan. We are also in touch with the Government of Pakistan on the release of fishing boats impounded by Pakistani authorities so that our fishermen can resume the earning of their livelihood.

With Bangladesh, we share traditional ties of friendship, reinforced by cultural and historic links. It remains our sincere desire to work with the Government and people of Bangladesh to tackle the basic common challenge of poverty, ignorance and disease. I take very seriously the point raised by Shri Hannan Mollah. We will make—and we have been making—sincere effort in this regard. We do have concerns regarding the territory of Bangladesh being used by Indian insurgent groups. However, I sincerely hope that our two countries can work together jointly to resolve these issues and promote jointly peace, security and development. Development is the biggest challenge that both of us face, and we must do so together to win the race against time.

18.00 hrs.

Sir, we have every reason to take pride in our excellent relations with the King and the people of Bhutan. The King of Bhutan is a wise monarch and under his guidance Bhutan has made rapid social and economic progress. We take pride in the accelerated development of Bhutan and we are very happy to be partners in their progress.

Sir, an hon. Member had made a reference to the situation in Nepal. We have a vital stake in the security and development of Nepal, with which we have centuries old ties of culture and civilisation. Our only concern is that Nepal should approach the new era of modernization with a strong commitment to the twin pillars of Nepal's nationhood, namely constitutional monarchy and multi-party democracy. As Nepal's neighbour, and in view of our special relations, we do have concerns regarding the situation in that country.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please wait a minute. We have to extend the time of the House after the reply of the hon. Prime Minister. We have to take up the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005. So, if the House agrees, should I extend the time of the House for one hour?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: All right.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOU HANDIQUE): You extend it up to seven o'clock.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House is extended up to seven o'clock.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the MPs of the RJD have to attend an urgent meeting. I, therefore, request you to kindly introduce this Bill right now and the discussion on it be held tomorrows.

[*English*]

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: It is our sincere desire to find pathways to a future of co-operative interaction to promote peace, security and the well-being of the people of Nepal.

We have been steadfast in our traditional strong commitment to the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. We do hope that through meaningful negotiations all sections of Sri Lankan society, including the Tamil minority, will be able to evolve durable co-operative structures which enable them to lead a life of dignity and self-respect.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, South Asia must work together to emerge as a major powerhouse of economic creativity and enterprise. For that, it is very essential for all our countries to work together to maintain cordial relations with each other. It is with this perspective that we have extended our hand of friendship and co-operation to all our neighbours.

April has been an extraordinarily intense period for our external relations. Following my last *suo motu* statement, we have played host to Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan and the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Another landmark event was the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the Afro-Asian Conference in Jakarta and Bandung in Indonesia from April 22 to April 24, 2005. I have also just returned from Moscow, where I participated in the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the victory over Fascism and Nazis. I used this opportunity to review with President Putin the state of our multifaceted bilateral relations. Both of us agreed to work together to expand areas of co-operation consistent with our strategic partnership.

Sir, our relations with the United States of America have never been better. The two countries are poised for a major and significant upgradation of these relations in the days to come. I had the opportunity to exchange views with President George Bush both when we met in New York last September and when we saw each other in Moscow earlier last week. During the External Affairs Minister's visit to Washington, an India-US Energy Panel was announced which will enable the two countries to embark on a long-term plan for energy co-operation, including the possibility of civilian nuclear energy co-operation.

Both in the US as well as in other countries, there is a growing recognition of the fact that global energy sources are under increasing strain and that high oil prices are probably here to stay. For countries like India, to sustain the reasonably high rate of economic growth that is required to eradicate poverty, energy cannot be allowed to become a constraint. For us, nuclear energy is an important means to address this challenge. As such, we

intend to maintain and expand our indigenous nuclear power programme. This would also ease the strain on conventional energy supplies globally. Since India's record on non-proliferation is impeccable and acknowledged to be so internationally, the current restrictions on co-operation in nuclear power production with India have become anachronistic and counter-productive. During my meeting with President Putin in Moscow, I expressed satisfaction at India-Russia co-operation in this field, as well as in other areas of bilateral concern and hoped that areas of co-operation between India and Russia would grow in the years to come. I would be visiting Washington at the invitation of President Bush in July this year, when I intend to continue our dialogue on energy co-operation, which we also touched upon during our brief meeting in Moscow.

The visit of Prime Minister Koizumi to India in April 28 and 29 marked the beginning of a sustained and productive engagement between our two countries. Despite the close political relations and shared values of democracy and culture, India-Japan economic relations have remained far below their potential. It is this aspect of our relations that received the greatest attention during the visit and I am happy to say that we took a number of decisions to upgrade our relations. Japan has agreed to consider assisting us in establishing a high-speed rail freight corridor between Mumbai and Delhi and Delhi and Kolkata. Japan would also extend facilities for Japanese language training in Indian educational institutions to help our IT industry serve the large and growing software market in Japan.

Hon. Members would recall the historic contribution made by the Afro-Asian Conference of 1955 in hastening the end of colonialism, forging a sense of solidarity among the newly emerging nation states of Asia and Africa and in paving the way for establishment of the Non-aligned Movement. The key role played by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in that Meeting fifty year ago was acknowledged in my meetings with several leaders during this Conference. India was given the signal honour to speak on behalf of the Asian countries and our voice was heard with respect by the extraordinary gathering of leaders from all over the world. Sir, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Conference has rekindled the sense of solidarity and close affinity among the developing nations with a keen determination to translate these sentiments into a practical programme of co-operation, leveraging each other's strengths and using our considerable collective bargaining power to usher in

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a more equitable international political and economic order. Sir, I urged the leaders present to devise instrumentalities to deal with imbalances built into the functioning of the international political and economic order, to expand the constituency supporting the process of globalisation. I drew attention to the fact that we have our own distinct perspective on measures to combat international terrorism, which has emerged as a major global problem. This perspective is based on the need to initiate and sustain a meaningful "dialogue among civilisations" instead of subscribing to the theory of the so-called "clash of civilisations".

My meetings with Asian leaders in Bandung also gave me yet another opportunity to reiterate India's commitment to the 'Look East Policy' and to closer relations with the countries of South-East and East Asia. We are committed to work with ASEAN and with East Asian Countries to make the 21st century a truly Asian Century.

Sir, I am happy to report to the House that the countries of this region reciprocated this sentiment when they decided to invite India to the East Asian Summit to be held later this year. We are also making determined efforts to intensify our cooperation with the developing countries of West Asia, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America.

We have also moved forward in rejuvenating our relations with the European Union through our new "strategic partnership". The forthcoming visit in September of Prime Minister Tony Blair as President of the European Union will provide us another opportunity to give concrete meaning and content to our strategic partnership with both the EU and the United Kingdom.

I also took forward to the opportunity to participate in an outreach meeting of the G-8 at Gleneagles in Scotland this July. This will help strengthen our interaction with our global partners. India's participation in this meeting is an important recognition of our place in the global community and the world economy as a whole.

This brings me to India's efforts, in close collaboration with other friendly countries, to bring about a comprehensive reform of the United Nations. The visit to India by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, on April 25 and 26, 2005, provided us an opportunity to review current developments at the United Nations and to reassess our strategy. The Group of 4, comprising of India, Brazil,

Germany and Japan, continue to work very closely together in pursuit of our shared objective of mobilizing a more than two-thirds majority of the UN General Assembly, in favour of a significant restructuring of the United Nations, including the Security Council. We believe that India, with its large population, dynamic economy, long history of contribution to international peace-keeping and other regional and international causes, deserves to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council. We also believe that reform of the UN should make it more democratic and more capable of effective multilateral decision-making and action.

Of course, we are conscious of the fact that the situation is extremely complex and there is resistance to change among several powerful countries. However, this is the first time in many years that a certain momentum has been built up for thorough going reform of the United Nations. It is a window of opportunity we must make every effort to take advantage of as developing countries.

Hon. Members, we are living in a world that is undergoing rapid transformation, with new challenges emerging daily and demanding attention. India's own emergence as an economic power house has expanded our circle of interaction and engagement with the rest of the world. For us, the main challenge of our foreign policy lies in creating and in maintaining a regional and international environment which would enable us to sustain a high rate of economic growth, create more opportunities for Indian entrepreneurship and enable India to realize its vast, latent potential as a major economic power in the world. Consequently, in the past year, our Government has given the utmost priority to our relations with our neighbours, in particular our relations with China and Pakistan. We have focused our attention on economic diplomacy, with a particular emphasis on energy diplomacy. Our search for energy resources has led us to make large investments in countries as far as Sudan and exploration in Central Asia. Politics and economics must now go hand in hand in the service of India's overall interests as a nation.

Sir, let me pledge that while we remain faithful to the abiding principles of foreign policy laid down by Jawaharlal Nehru and followed consistently by our country since then during the past half a century and more, we are, nevertheless, alert to the compulsions imposed upon us by a rapidly transforming world order and we have the capacity, capability as a nation to respond successfully to the newly emerging challenges that confront us. It is

a tribute to India's high standing in the world today that our country has emerged as a compulsory destination for world leaders from across the globe. This image of India as a confident and united nation derives greatly from the continuing political consensus that has all along been the hallmark of our foreign policy.

Sir, I do believe that it is also a recognition of what India has come to stand for in the comity of nations. Our steadfast commitment to democracy, to building a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-cultural democracy based on respect for fundamental human rights and the rule of law gives us a unique place in our era. All nations of the world, I believe, will one day function on these very principles of liberal and pluralistic democracy. This enjoins upon us the obligation to nurture these roots of our nationhood. I commit our Government to work earnestly to realise this vision of India's tryst with destiny.

I would like, once again, to thank this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for extending to me as Prime Minister of this great nation its whole-hearted support and guidance in representing India on the world stage.

18.17 hrs.

PRIVATE SECURITY AGENCIES (REGULATION) BILL, 2005

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, we will take item no. 26, Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005. I request hon. Shri Shivraj V. Patil to move the Bill for consideration.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the regulation of private security agencies and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

As the hon. Members are aware that in recent years, there has been proliferation of private security agencies in India. This is due to the expansion in the number of business establishments, growing incidents of gruesome crimes and increasing demands for security. The resources of the police are limited and they cannot meet

the demand for security services on the scale required. While private security agencies have helped meet the need of business establishments for security of their personnel and property, yet there has been growing concern about their functioning. Many of these agencies conduct their operations without consideration of proper standards and, if left unchecked, can have adverse security implications. There is also the danger of private security firm employees encroaching upon the duties of police by way of wearing uniforms which resemble those of the police and using weapons in an illegal manner.

The Government proposes to introduce a legislation for regulating functioning of private security agencies. As would be noticed, the main objectives of the Bill are to set proper norms for functioning of the private security agencies in the country and also to bring uniformity, as far as possible, in regulation of private security agencies.

The salient features of the proposed legislation include *inter alia* that no person shall engage in the business of private security agency supplying security guards unless he is a holder of a private security agency licence issued by the controlling authority in accordance with the provisions of the Bill and the rules made thereunder. The licence will be valid for five years and is renewable. Any existing private security agency, which has been operating before the commencement of this Act, shall also obtain a licence and also ensure the required training to its security guards and supervisors, within a period of one year from the date of such commencement. The private security guards, may be with or without arms and armoured cars/vehicles, can also be provided by the private security agencies for security of movement of bank's cash and other valuables.

Licensing Authority: The State Government shall designate an officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary in the Home Department of the State or an equivalent officer to be the Controlling Authority, for the purpose of the Bill.

Persons not eligible for licence: A person shall not be considered for issue of licence under this Act if he has been convicted of an offence in connection with the promotion, formation or management of a company—any fraud or misfeasance committed by him in relation to the company—including an undischarged insolvent; convicted by a competent court for an offence, the prescribed punishment for which is imprisonment of not less than two years; keeping links with any organisation or association, which is banned under any law on account

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

of their activities, which pose threat to national security or public order or there is information about such a person indulging in activities which are prejudicial to the national security or public order, or dismissed or removed from the Government service on grounds of misconduct or moral turpitude. A company, firm or an association of persons shall also not be considered for issue of a licence under this Act, if it is not registered in India or having a proprietor or a majority share holder, partner or director who is not a citizen of India.

Training: Imparting of prescribed training to the security guards/supervisors have been stipulated in the Bill.

Cancellation/suspension of licence: The licence can be cancelled/suspended by the Controlling Authority on violation of the provisions of the Bill. However, the opportunity will be given to the licence holder to present his case before the licence is cancelled.

Appellate Authority: The Bill provides for preferring appeal against refusal to grant licence and cancellation of licence. The home Secretary of the State shall be the Appellate Authority.

Offences/penalties: Penalty of fine/imprisonment has been provided in the event of the security agencies violating the provision of the bill.

Sir, with the above words, I am sure that the private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005 will be welcomed by all sections of the House. I recommend this Bill for consideration and passing by this August House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the regulation of private security agencies and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Now, Dr. Rajesh Mishra to speak on this Bill. Please be brief.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Bill should be taken up tomorrow because today we have a meeting of Consultative Committee with the hon. Minister. Since we have to attend the meeting today, it will be a favour to us if this is taken up tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA (Barh): If you take up this tomorrow, it will be a great flavour. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: We want to participate in the debate and give some suggestions also. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have extended the House upto 7.00 pm for now, rest we can see later.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: We have an urgent meeting at 6.30 pm ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, we have got other Business slated for tomorrow. We will have to complete this Business today itself, otherwise other Business will get affected.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Sir, now, the Home Minister is convenient with it but on behalf of my party, I want to tell you what inconvenience we have. We have a meeting of the Ministry of Rural Development regarding roads slated at 6.30 pm, so the Members of our party will have problem in taking part in the discussion on this Bill. The hon. Members are interested in expressing their views on this Bill, therefore, nothing of the sort should be done by which they miss an opportunity to express their views. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House has been extended upto 7.00 pm. We will consider it after that if it is possible.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Rajesh Mishra, please be brief. Please give only your suggestions on this issue.

[Translation]

DR. RAJESH MISHRA (Varanasi): Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005. So far as this Bill and its concept is concerned, with the changing circumstance in the country, this concept first come up in the Police Science Congress organised in Agartala in 1974.

Subsequently, the Bureau of Police Research and Development conducted a study on it the report of which was presented in the year 1977. The draft report was prepared during the period from 1979 to 1983 and this Bill was first introduced in Rajya Sabha on 14 December, 1994 which was later withdrawn.

I want to say that the companies and other organizations in the country have started engaging these private agencies for their security. Gradually, this has become a big business. Such agencies spread their business by setting up their offices and branches in other parts of the country out of their district and State. For this only, the present Bill is needed. Generally, the ex-servicemen are engaged as armed security men. The people who have licensed arms are also engaged for security and gradually this has emerged as a big business in the country.

Sir, I welcome this Bill. An authority will be constituted in the States for the first time through this Bill. An officer in the rank of Joint Secretary will monitor and govern this body. There is a provision of qualification also, whoever fulfils the qualification criteria, will be enrolled in the companies. The member of these companies should not be an absconder, an insolvent and any criminal case should not be pending against him. Like this, it is an attempt to make it a legal phenomena. A licence fee has been prescribed for such companies. If they wish to operate within a district, the licence fee will be Rs. 5000 and Rs. 10,000 for 5 districts and if they wish to operate in the whole state the said fee will be rupees 25000. This will be subject to renewal after 5 years. Character and antecedents of the guards engaged by the company should be verified. Authority concerned has been empowered to issue licence. They will also have the power to cancel the license if they think that it is being misused.

18.26 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: There a number of speakers, and we will have to complete this discussion by seven o'clock positively. If you want to speak for a longer time, we would not be able to complete it today.

[*Translation*]

DR. RAJESH MISHRA: Sir, I have spoken only for two or three minutes.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Member, you must realize that this is your necessity also because we do not get time tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

DR. RAJESH MISHRA: This authority will conduct inquiry also and renewal will also be done by the said authority. Besides these will be registered. There will be a file for it and the authority will have to enroll their members in the said file indicating the total number thereof. I think all the provisions required for legislation of such companies have been made for by the Government through this Bill. I would like to draw attention of the Government on two-three points. He has not included the Jammu and Kashmir region in this Bill.

Hon'ble Sir, a doubt arises as to why Jammu and Kashmir has been left out. An apprehension has crept in the minds of the people of the country on leaving out Jammu and Kashmir. Companies all over India are being legalized and channelised, their functioning is being channelised with the Government governing everything through its officers. That being so, there are companies in Jammu and Kashmir also whose security aspect needs to be taken care of through private security agencies. I request the Government that if Jammu and Kashmir has not been included in it then there should be a discussion on the reasons therefore and make it clear as to why it has not been included in it.

This matter is related to Jammu and Kashmir particularly and there are outsiders in the State which creates a doubt that if it has not been included due to presence of outsiders in the State then outsiders can go to other States also and as such other States too will have to be excluded.

Through this Bill the interests of security guards of these companies should also be watched. Practically it has been seen that private security providers pay a monthly salary of Rs. 2000 to 2500 to their guards whereas they charge at the rate of Rs. 5000 to 10,000 per person from the borrowing companies. I earnestly feel that Labour Act needs to be involved therein somewhere. Their pay should be fixed. They deserve to be given all the benefits on health grounds. Their service conditions should be spelt out clearly. For example it has been provided in it that they should not be more than 60 years of age and it should also be considered here that

[Dr. Rajesh Mishra]

if they serve up to 60 years, what the company can give to them additionally.

With these suggestions I welcome this Bill.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005. In the context of the growing number of private security agencies all over the country, it has become necessary to define the service and to regulate it and guide it through a proper Act. This Bill will serve that purpose.

About 40 lakh people are currently engaged as guards under private security agencies all over the country. Their growth rate is very high at about 20 per cent. Every year, five to six lakh people are joining these agencies. Ex-Servicemen, ex-policemen and other people are joining these agencies. They are doing a good job in meeting the growing necessity of providing security in the country. Because of that, this Bill is necessary, and I support this Bill.

However, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to certain deficiencies. Probably, the Bill was prepared in a hurry. One of the deficiencies is that the Bill seeks to appoint a Controlling Authority who would be of the rank of Joint Secretary or an equivalent rank. It is proposed to be a one-man controlling authority. It is a very dangerous provision because no complaint will be possible against him. He is immune from everything. He can take a dictatorial attitude and that can create problems. I think there should be three sides represented in this body—the provider, the industry and the guards. All the three sections should be represented in a body and such a body should look into the matters. The Joint Secretary may become a Member-Secretary but a one-man Controlling Authority is not advisable. This point can be taken into consideration. This is provided for in clause 3(i) of the Bill.

There is another area which comes under clause 7(iii), wherein the District and State level organisations have been referred to. If there is a bigger organisation which might operate beyond the borders of a State, what will happen to it? That is not provided for in the Bill.

In clause 13, there is a provision that if one single guard commits a mistake, the services of the entire agency will be cancelled. For a fault of one person, a

large number of people working in the organisation would be suspended or rendered unemployed. I think, it is not proper. I request the Minister to look into this aspect.

Regarding clause 14 also, my request is that instead of only one Home Secretary, I think, there should be a national Board which can take care of these services all over the country.

Regarding clause 23, controlling officer is given indemnity. There can be no suit or complaint against the controlling officer. This is a matter of security concern. There should be some provision otherwise any officer can commit a mistake or do some wrong or there will be some complaint against him but he will go unpunished.

Another area is that a foreigner can open a private security agency in India but Indians are not permitted to open office abroad. I do not know as to why it is so. This service is growing. Unemployed young boys and girls are participating in this service, both inside the country and outside. Why not allow such companies to establish here and export the services to other countries where it is necessary?

There is no provision for the protection of employees or guards, their service conditions, their rights and their pay. Protection of guards is not mentioned in the Bill. These are certain weaknesses. These are grey areas in the Bill, which are not properly taken care of. All these things should be taken care of in the Bill. I request the hon. Minister to consider all these things. I think, this Bill is formulated hurriedly. I request that all the issues should be considered properly. Only if these issues are properly taken care of, this Bill would be effective. With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Private Security Agency (Regulation) Bill, 2005 which has been introduced by hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs. It is correct that there should be some kind of control over private security agencies and there should be some service condition for issuing licence to them. It was essential. I think, it is a meaningful initiatives on the part of Government in this direction.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is true that it is a big source of employment generation. There are 50 lakh security guards and the poor, landless labourers who have got employment in this sector. The Government has no

economic contribution in it and if a sector provides jobs to those people, it is certainly a big step. I am happy that as per the service conditions laid down in it, people who have worked in army, navy, airforce or any other armed service or in police or home guard will be accorded priority in giving employment as security guards. It is a good effort. We welcome it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to make the same request as Hannan Mollahji made a short while ago. You talked about making a controlling authority. The State Government, by a notification will designate an officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary from the department of Home Affairs, or equivalent officer for the purpose of this act.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the fact is correct in itself that the same people will issue licences to these agencies, renew their licences and cancel their licences. I would like to request hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs that the power which is concentrated in one hand, had it been divided among 4-5 people it would have ensured collective responsibility and proved better in my view. I would also like to request that as per the clause of the Act, a single guard, out of the guards made available by private security agencies, is found drunk or involved in any criminal activity, the licence of the concerned security agency will liable to be cancelled. I would like to submit that there are thousands of guards with a security agency and if one guard out of them is of criminal nature or a habitual drinker that should not be the basis to cancel the licence of a security agency. I think this is not just. To punish the entire organisation for one person, I think there is a need to think over it and there is no licence system at national level. ...(*Interruptions*) I am concluding.

As there is a provision of national permit for transport business, there should also be same permission in this regard. If any security agency is operating in Delhi it would have no right to function in cities like nearby Gurgaon, Noida and Gaziabad. There is a need to think over it. I would also like to request that company cannot impart training at several places. Army, also, imparts training at a single place. The place where security guards will be deployed, they will have to impart training at local level. I think there should be provision for security agencies to impart training at a single place as per the convenience. It is a good effort. I would like to request hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs to clarify the practical problems raised by me in his reply, only then the law will achieve its objective.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: My dear Ram Kripalji, please be brief.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): You are like my father.

[*Translation*]

Sir, I would like to express my thanks for the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005 brought by the Hon. Minister. This is a good step taken by you. There are nearly 10,000 private security agencies operating in the country as a whole and almost 50 lakh people are employed thereunder who have nearly one to one and a half crore families dependent upon them. This sector is providing means of livelihood to such a large number of people. The second point put forward by the Hon. Home Minister is that we don't have enough forces to man the security requirements of the country in an effective manner. Therefore we should extend our support to and encourage the private security personnel and the private security agencies. In my view, there are many clauses in this Bill that will create problems for the private security agencies and will hamper their independence.

Sir, my suggestion is similar to the suggestions given by the Hon. Members. The provisions proposed under this Bill have raised certain doubts in the minds of the people. Many Hon. Members have said that the licence of the employer agency should be revoked in case any of its employees does anything wrong, say eats tobacco, consumes liquor or gets involved in any wrong doing. I think this would be unjustified. This would mean punishing an innocent person for another's folly. In case a security personnel is involved in any misdeed, he ought to be punished. But to penalise the whole agency or its owner or the person running the agency for the fault of one person is unjustified because thousands of people work in one agency and it is not possible for the owner to keep an eye on each employees actions in his private life.

Sir, my second suggestion is that from the democratic angle, it is wrong to hand over complete control to any one officer of the rank of Home Secretary or a Joint Secretary who will be posted in the state. The number of controlling officers should be four to five. Alternatively, representatives of security agencies could also be included so that justice could be done when such cases are brought before them and the accused security personnel

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

is dealt with justly and not that the words of an officer should be treated as final and binding and he should be allowed to do anything as per his whims and fancies.

Sir, a large number of people belonging to poor section, unemployed youth and retired armed forces personnel are engaged in this work. They are getting employment through this sector. I would like to point out that out of the 40 to 50 lakh people engaged in this work, as many as 40 to 50 per cent people belong to Bihar. Many of the unemployed youth are doing this work. Hence, it is my request that you should consider this issue.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have covered all the points. Please conclude.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. After all, it is a simple Bill. Why are you worried?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am not such an intelligent person that I could continue to speak even when you interrupt. I get derailed when you interrupt me. Please consider my request.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are supporting the Bill. If you are opposing it then I can understand.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I would like to say that there are many companies in our country which are doing good work but you have kept a provision in this Bill that these companies would not be allowed to offer their services abroad. You are giving an opportunity to foreign companies to work here but there is no provision to enable our companies to provide services abroad. I think that from the important suggestions given by me and other Members of the House it can be seen that there are many provisions in this Bill that are certainly required to be reconsidered. Therefore, I would like to request you that this Bill should be returned to the

Standing Committee for reconsideration so that an amended Bill is brought before the House which could be passed after due consideration in the House. I request you to consider it.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome this Bill but I would also like to submit certain suggestion for the consideration of Hon'ble Home Minister. Hon'ble Minister's objective and intention are noble but it appears that the bureaucrats have very cleverly drafted this Bill so as to keep their dominance. It has been stated that the Joint Secretaries would be its head in the State and at the Centre. Additional Secretaries would be heading it. I would like to ask the Hon'ble Ministers as to why he did not set up a board for this purpose. In today's age, collective working is in vogue. It would have been more proper if the govt. had set up board with eight or nine members. Later, the composition could have been changed, the number of members could be increased or decreased. It would further strengthen the democratic set up. It is not proper that one Joint Secretary should look after the entire state. An agency does not work at one place only, it has got its branches in several states and it functions there. If the licencing authority lies with one person only then to how many persons will he reach and look after the work, it, therefore, needs to be looked into.

As far as I understand a very large number of people get job through private security agencies. Most of the people of hilly areas of Jammu and Kashmir join armed forces and police. After retirement, they get jobs through these agencies. They get jobs of Rs. 2000 or Rs. 3000 per month and this amount is enough for people of hilly areas otherwise they are compelled to work on a salary of Rs. 500. I mean to say that the Govt. needs to pay attention to it. Only one officer has been appointed in the licensing authority, it should be thought over and a board should be set up. I hope, you would proceed in this direction. Today, the organisations working in this field have to pay from their own pocket as there is tender system. This is one lapse which this Bill has sought to remove. This Bill will also lessen the exploitation. But the moot question again is as to why the proposed authority is to be headed by one person. An eight or nine member board should be set up. It would check the exploitation as well.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is scarcity of time, therefore, I am not saying so many things and I conclude here.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Sir, I broadly support the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 2005. While supporting this Bill, I must express some reservations and apprehensions. I also want to give some suggestions for the consideration of the hon. Home Minister.

In the prevailing globalisation scenario, it is a fact that State after State is shedding its responsibility of providing security. There are many private agencies coming up to take care of the security needs of individuals, institutions, factories, business establishments, houses, etc. These private security agencies earn huge profits. The main motive of the private security agencies is to earn as much profit as possible but they try to pay the lowest possible amount to their personnel. Their working conditions are worst. On an average, the employees have to work for more than 12 hours a day. There is no provision of provident fund. There is no provision of providing housing facilities, medical treatment and so on. So, this is the condition. I think the Minister should think over it.

Apart from this, I want to suggest some more points.

Sir, I am in favour of having a broader multi-member committee of State level licensing regulating bodies, if possible by including renowned trade union leaders in that Committee.

Clause 14 seeks to grant district and State level licences. What about granting licences to national level agencies who are operating in different States? Nothing has been specified in this regard. Something should be mentioned about such agencies in the Bill itself.

Sir, clause 14 dealing with appeals provides for only one appeal laying with the State Home Secretary. My suggestion is that there should be a provision to appeal against the decision of the State level Boards and this opportunity to appeal against them should lie with the National boards.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You appear to be tired and you should conclude now.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Sir, clause 19 deals with delegation of powers to the controlling officer. This clause should be deleted, otherwise it would lead to Inspector *raj*. The controlling officer can become a dictator and the very idea of regulation would get diluted.

Sir, about FDI and foreign agencies, my question is whether they would abide by the law of the land, or they would act according to their whims. This should be mentioned in the law itself.

These are a few suggestions I would like to put before the hon. Minister. I welcome this Bill and I hope, all these points would be covered in the Bill.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Members for supporting this Bill. Almost all the Members have said that this Bill should have been passed before and that it is a good Bill. But then they have pointed out some clauses which, according to them, should have been different.

One of the points made was, should a Joint Secretary be the controlling authority? This law is very simple. What has to be done to provide licences to agencies is explained in this Bill. When a gun licence is required, a person can make an application to the Collector of a district and he gets the gun licence. Now, here we are providing what has to be done if a licence is to be given to an agency which is likely to collect some people who could be used to provide protection to individuals or to an industry, or to any other organisation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Licence with control.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Today, anybody is providing security. One does not know whether that agency, which is providing the security, is genuine or not; whether they have the kind of security guards who could be relied upon or not; whether they would really provide security to the persons to whom security is required to be provided or not. This is happening today. In order to stop these things from happening, it is provided that there should be private agencies but those private agencies only will be allowed to provide security which have obtained the licence.

19.00 hrs.

They have to make their application to one of the officers in the Government and that officer should not be below the level of a Joint Secretary. He can be above the level of a Joint Secretary and it is not for laying down any policy as such. It is just to accept or reject the application given by the agency. When the application is rejected, the person whose application is rejected can go to the higher authority in appeal and can say that these are the conditions under which licence should have been

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

given to him, he has fulfilled these conditions and licence should be given to him. Over and above that, the writ jurisdiction of the court is always there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the House to extend the time till the business is over?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The time of the House is extended till the business is over.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Thank you, Sir. I will not take a long time.

So, there is an appeal provided against the order given by the controlling authority and cases can be taken to higher courts under ordinary law and under the constitutional law also. This is such a law. So, this is a very simple matter and we have said that the officer should not belong to the rank lower than that of a Joint Secretary. He can be an officer above the rank of a Joint Secretary but not below the rank of a Joint Secretary. This is a simple law and I do not think we should unnecessarily complicate it in having a multimember authority coming from different walks of life and then giving power to that authority. If it is a policy making body, then it is all right. It is just an implementing authority. They have to only find out whether the conditions are fulfilled or not and they have to say whether the licence can be given or not. That is why, there should not be any objection to this agreement.

There is some misunderstanding about cancellation of licence given under clause 13(k)(i). I will just read out the relevant portion. It speaks about the cancellation of licence and under what conditions it can be cancelled:

"(k) that there have been repeated instances when the private security guard or guards provided by the private security agency—

(i) failed to provide private security or were guilty of gross negligence in not providing such security;"

The purpose is that the security should be provided. Those persons who are given the responsibility of providing security go to the protectee or his house but they do not discharging their duties. This happens not once but repeatedly. There is an agency which is functioning and is expected to provide security and repeatedly, it is not providing security. It is neglecting to

provide security and it has committed mistakes in not providing security. Then what should be done? In such cases, it is said that the licence should be cancelled. I will read it again.

"that there have been repeated instances when the private security guard or guards provided by the private security agency—

(i) failed to provide private security or were guilty of gross negligence in not providing such security;"

It is not simple negligence, it is gross negligence in not providing security. So, the objection taken to this provision, I think, is not correct and is unnecessary.

Now, a question was asked whether the licence will be given for a district or a few districts in a State. This law is going to be valid, to the States only. If there is any agency which is wanting to go to some other State, it can go to the other State and can obtain the licence from the other State and that State can also provide licence to it.

Then, Sir, a question was asked when we are allowing foreign companies to come here and provide security, why we are not allowing these agencies to go to foreign countries to provide security. We are not saying that these agencies should not go to foreign countries and provide security there. What we are saying is that if these agencies which are obtaining licences from here have to go to foreign countries, they can do so after informing the Government of India and after obtaining permission from the Government of India. It is because if they go to foreign countries and in the process of providing security to the protectees in foreign countries, if the security guards themselves get killed or get injured, someone has to take the responsibility for that. We know what is happening in some of the countries. The guards are getting killed there. Who will take the responsibility for that? The Government of India will take the responsibility for that.

One more question was asked about the protection which will be provided to the security guards. The Schedule which is attached to this Bill provides the laws which will be used in providing protection to the security guards. There are some laws which are mentioned in The Schedule. They are: The Payment of Wages Act, 1936; The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; The Minimum Wages Act, 1948; The Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952; The Payment of

Bonus Act, 1965; The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970; The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972; The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976; and The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979. All these laws which provide protection to the labour in the industry will provide protection to the persons who will be working here. So, there cannot be any objection to this.

An objection was taken to the delegation of powers in clause 19. Our country is a very big one. The Controlling Authority will be the Joint Secretary in the capital of the State. Supposing it becomes necessary for somebody to go to a place which is away from the capital of the State and examine the place where the security is provided, who will do that? So, the law provides that such a job can be done by some other authority to whom the power will be delegated by the Controlling Authority. Otherwise, the Joint Secretary will be travelling from one place to another. If the security agencies are coming up in the district, it will not be possible for the Collector of the district to find out whether that agency is working properly or not. That is why this power is allowed to be there. We have accepted the principle of delegating the power or decentralisation of power. It will not be always possible for one person to provide all that is required to be done.

So, this is very simple Bill. It is a Bill which is being enacted to provide protection to the persons who need security. This is to regulate the working of the agencies. There should be no objection to this Bill. May I submit that we are not passing this Bill in a hurry? This Bill has been pending before the House since 1994. For eleven years this has been pending. That is why I was requesting that this Bill should be passed today because tomorrow is the last day. If this is passed on the penultimate day, it will be good.

I am grateful to the hon. Members for supporting this Bill. I am grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, for giving time to see that this salutary Bill is passed by the House.
...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: What about the nationwide agencies?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: We will take care of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the regulation of private security agencies and for matters connected therewith

or incidental thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 25 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 25 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

19.11 hrs.

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES BILL, 2005

Amendments made by Rajya Sabha

2768

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, one more item is there. There is a Supplementary List of Business. The hon. Minister may move that the amendments made by the Rajya Sabha in the Bill to provide for the establishment, development and management of the Special Economic Zones for the promotion of exports and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.

This Bill was passed by this House. It was sent to the Rajya Sabha. In the Rajya Sabha, two amendments were made. The Bill has been referred back to us. We

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would have to adopt the amendments. The matter is not so serious. We will do it. The hon. Minister may move the amendments now.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVA): I beg to move:

"That the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to provide for the establishment, development and management of the Special Economic Zones for the promotion of exports and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration:

Clause 3

Procedure for making
Proposal to establish a
Special Economic Zone

1. That at page 4, *for* lines 24 to 26, the following be *substituted*, namely:—

"Provided that the Central Government may,—

- (a) after consulting the State Government concerned;
- (b) without referring the proposal for setting up the Special Economic Zone to the Board; and
- (c) after identifying the area,

suo motu set up and notify the Special Economic zone."

Clause 49

Power to modify provisions
of this Act or other enactments
In relation to Special Economic Zones

2. That at page 20, *after* line 45, the following be *inserted*, namely:—

"Provided that nothing contained in this section shall apply to any modifications of any Central Act or any rules or regulations made thereunder or any notification or order issued or direction given or scheme made thereunder so far as such modification, rule, regulation, notification, order or direction or

scheme relates to the matters relating to trade unions, industrial and labour disputes, welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity and old age pensions and maternity benefits applicable in any Special Economic Zones."

These are the two amendments made. All of us, in this House, said that the Bill should be amended on these lines. This Bill has been amended in the Rajya Sabha. We had a discussion for quite a few hours in the Lok Sabha also. So, just to satisfy all the hon. Members and to make the Special Economic Zones Bill as a safeguard for the labour and also to safeguard the State Governments' rights, to assert themselves, the amendments have been made. I would request the House to adopt these two amendments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to provide for the establishment, development and management of the Special Economic Zones for the promotion of exports and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration:

Clause 3

1. That at page 4, *for* lines 24 to 26, the following be *substituted*, namely:

"Provided that the Central Government may,—

- (a) after consulting the State Government concerned;
- (b) without referring the proposal for setting up the Special Economic Zone to the Board; and
- (c) after identifying the area,

suo motu set up and notify the Special Economic Zone."

Clause 49

2. That at page 20, *after* line 45, the following be *inserted*, namely:—

"Provided that nothing contained in this section shall apply to any modifications of any Central Act or

any rules or regulations made thereunder or any notification or order issued or direction given or scheme made thereunder so far as such modification, rule, regulation, notification, order or direction or scheme relates to the matters relating to trade unions, industrial and labour disputes, welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity and old age pensions and maternity benefits applicable in any Special Economic Zones."

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, these two amendments were made by the Rajya Sabha. When we were discussing the Bill in this House, we were insisting upon the Government that these two amendments also should be accepted. We are happy that the Government has agreed to the amendments. They will serve the purpose which we asked for.

With these few words, I support these amendments. I think they can be taken into consideration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to provide for the establishment, development and management of the Special Economic Zones for the promotion of exports and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration:" —

Clause 3

1. That at page 4, *for* lines 24 to 26, the following be *substituted*, namely:

"Provided that the Central Government may,—

- (a) after consulting the State Government concerned;
- (b) without referring the proposal for setting up the Special Economic Zone to the Board; and
- (c) after identifying the area,

suo motu set up and notify the Special Economic Zone."

Clause 49

2. That at page 20, *after* line 45, the following be *inserted*, namely:

"Provided that nothing contained in this section shall apply to any modifications of any Central Act or any rules or regulations made thereunder or any notification or order issued or direction given or scheme made thereunder so far as such modification, rule, regulation, notification, order or direction or scheme relates to the matters relating to trade unions, industrial and labour disputes, welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity and old age pensions and maternity benefits applicable in any Special Economic Zones."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the amendments made by Rajya Sabha.

I shall put the amendment nos. 1 and 2 made by Rajya Sabha together to the vote of the House.

The question is:

Clause 3

1. That at page 4, *for* lines 24 to 26, the following be *substituted*, namely:—

"Provided that the Central Government may,—

- (a) after consulting the State Government concerned;
- (b) without referring the proposal for setting up the Special Economic Zone to the Board; and
- (c) after identifying the area,

suo motu set up and notify the Special Economic Zone."

Clause 49

2. That at page 20, *after* line 45, the following be *inserted*, namely:

"Provided that nothing contained in this section shall apply to any modifications of any Central Act or any rules or regulations made thereunder or any notification or order issued or direction given or scheme made thereunder so far as such modification, rule, regulation, notification, order or

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direction or scheme relates to the matters relating to trade unions, industrial and labour disputes, welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity and old age pensions and maternity benefits applicable in any Special Economic Zones."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGO VAN: I beg to move:

"That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I congratulate the Government for accepting the amendments. The House now stands adjourned till 11 a.m. tomorrow.

19.15 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, May 13, 2005/Vaisakha 23, 1927 (Saka).

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