

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Seventh Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, March 9, 2006/Phalgun 18, 1927 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI (Chittorgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a book titled 'Hakikat', authored by Shri M.G. Mathew, has been published recently in which some objectionable remarks have been made against the Hindu Gods and Goddesses...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will hear you after the Question Hour.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will also hear Kiranji but please go to your seats first. Let the Question Hour commence.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will think over it. I will give you an opportunity.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: The people are agitating...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Let me conduct the House. It is not proper to speak while sitting on your seat.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are such a helpful member.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is very unfortunate. It is 11

O'clock now. I am assuring you that I will allow you at 12 Noon. Can you not wait for an hour?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? You may express your annoyance if you are not allowed to speak.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 262, Shri Ramji Lal Suman.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Deora, let me see your maiden effort.

...(Interruptions)

11.01 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Allotment of Oil Blocks under NELP

*262. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has allotted new oil blocks under the New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP);

(b) if so, the number of the blocks allotted so far and the estimated oil reserves found therein;

(c) whether any time limit was set for the commencement of production from them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the blocks from which production has started?

[English]

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

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Government has so far allotted 110 blocks and signed Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) with Indian companies—both Public Sector Undertakings and Private companies, as well as foreign companies under five rounds of the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

These blocks being exploration blocks, reserve estimates can be made only after assessment of oil and gas is done through exploration efforts. As a result of ongoing exploration efforts in these blocks 30 discoveries have already been made. The in place reserves from 16 discoveries for which reserves have been assessed in estimated at 510 Million Metric Tonnes of oil and oil equivalent gas. Reserve estimation from discoveries is an ongoing exercise and such reserves are normally estimated every year.

(c) and (d) A period of up to 8 years has been provided for exploration under these contracts. If any discovery of hydrocarbon is made, the respective PSCs provide the time frame for the announcement of a discovery, its appraisal, declaration of commerciality and submission and approval of development plan by the Management Committee. The Management Committee also approves the period for implementation of development plans and commencement of commercial production.

From PSCs signed for NELP under the first five rounds, commercial production of gas has commenced in one block CB-ONN-2000/2 (NELP-II round block) from Bheema and North Surat (NS) fields in Gujarat.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in his reply, the hon. Minister has said that the Government have so far allotted 110 blocks and signed Production Sharing Contracts with Indian companies—both Public Sector Undertakings and Private companies, as well as foreign companies under five rounds of the New Exploration Licensing Policy.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please maintain silence. We have sufficient noise yesterday. So, let us work peacefully today.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: ONGC has invested Rs. 20647 crore during the period from 2002 to 2005 but production during the said period was only 26 million tonnes. It means that despite investment production did not increase during the period. The production remained stagnant between 32 to 34 million tonnes during the period from 2002 to 2005. May I know the efforts made to increase production?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has rightly said that oil production did not increase during these few years because old oil wells have gone dry and it will take time to use new technology for oil production from them. We will ensure that maximum quantity of oil is produced under the New Exploration and Licensing Policy adopted by ONGC and other bodies.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, India imports huge quantities of crude oil. Have the Government set any target to become self reliant in oil? Apart from this is the Government formulating any policy in regard to day by day increase in the prices of fuel and what measures are being taken to check increasing prices of fuel?

[English]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, what the hon. Member stated is correct. As far as the energy basket of India is concerned, after coal, imported oil plays a dominant role. Today we are importing more than 70 to 72 per cent of the total oil requirement. We are importing 95.86 million metric tonnes of crude oil, while we are domestically producing only 34 million metric tonnes. So, the Government is now making more efforts in this direction.

Some of the steps that the Government are taking are: First, focussing on domestic exploration and production. As per the NELP VI, we will have new exploration contracts; second, importing oil and gas from

various countries and we are trying to lay more pipelines also. Third, acquiring equity in oil and gas assets in other countries, like Sudan, Russia, Vietnam, etc. where we have purchased oil fields and we are trying to see that more and more of oil is explored and transported to our country.

MR. SPEAKER: I compliment you.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN: Sir, gas is like gold. We need a definite discussion in Parliament in this regard. We also need a definite policy on the gas allocations. Krishna-Godavari basin has got rich resources of gas. Some foreign and private companies are coming here and taking away the gas.

In this context, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how much of gas the Government is allocating to the State of Andhra Pradesh, how much the Centre is taking and how much the private and foreign companies are taking.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is about the allotment of oil blocks.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: It is true that gas which is found in the Krishna-Godavari basin is explored by the contractors. As per the NELP, it is the right of the bidder to take the gas, distribute and sell it in the market. Unfortunately, I cannot do much in this regard. This cannot be given to the State.

[Translation]

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Gujarat Petroleum Corporation Limited is a state level public sector enterprise of Gujarat which is engaged in exploration, distribution and management of natural gas and petroleum. I would like to tell the hon. Minister that ten per cent price preference or purchase preference is given to the public sector enterprises in business under the recently formulated New Exploration Licensing Policy. There are many such petroleum corporations in the country. Is there any policy for allotment of various fields to the indigenous companies in order to promote competition with foreign companies in the field of exploration.

Second thing that I want to know from the hon.

Minister is how much gas was found in the oil field for which a contract was awarded to Gujarat Petroleum Corporation in Andhra Pradesh and what is the Share of Gujarat in it?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: That is totally separate question. The Minister may deal with the first part of this question.

[Translation]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: It is true that a contract of exploration block in Krishna-Godavari basin has been awarded to Gujarat Petroleum Corporation but it is not known how much gas has been found there so far. He knows how much controversy was created by the statement issued by the Chief Minister of Gujarat. Till date we are not in a position to say how much gas has been found there.

His second point was about giving preference to the State Government owned company. Contracts are awarded through the international competitive bidding (ICB) tenders. As per these tenders, the conditions are the same for all, be it ONGC or any company, of the Government of Gujarat. Therefore, there can be no preference.

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, jatropa plant is being cultivated on a large scale all over the country.

MR. SPEAKER: You have diverted the question.

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA: Sir, I am coming to the question. The Government are also encouraging its cultivation. I want to know whether there is any arrangement to extract diesel from jatropa in the country? If not, whether the Government has any policy of licensing for such plants and what are the arrangements Government propose to make, in future, in this regard?

[English]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, I need separate notice for that.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, you are right. It is justified.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister because the belongs to Mumbai.

MR. SPEAKER: Ours is a vast country.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, since Shri Murlidhar Deoraj has recently been appointed as Minister, therefore, I do not want to create more trouble for him. I only want to ask that gas in Mumbai high...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He is not a Maratha.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Sir, he used to be the Mayor of Mumbai. He has friendship with our boss....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are divulging many secrets.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: No, Sir, everybody knows it.

[English]

He is a very nice person.

MR. SPEAKER: It is very nice to have some laughter in the House. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a sum of Rs. 15000 crore have been spent for exploration of gas in Mumbai High, North High, South and North. It has further been said that 28 blocks have been identified. But where is the oil? Had richest produced from these blocks, then the prices of diesel, petrol, and crude oil would have come down but that has not happened. I only want to know as to where is the oil from the blocks identified by the Government?

MR. SPEAKER: The oil is under ground.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the local oil production is being shown to be about 34 million tonnes.

It is true that there was much oil when oil exploration work started 30-31 years back in Mumbai High but, unfortunately, the quantity of oil has decreased there. That is why new wells are being dug up.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, where does our country's money go? He is a new Minister. I want that he should enquiry with it....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not punish me with so many questions.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MD. SALIM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister predecessor had promised and announced last year in this very House that there was possibility of finding oil in Sunderban off Bay of Bengal coast and in the beginning of the year 2006 he would announce the positive results of the exploration that took place there for finding oil and gas deposits. Therefore, tenders are being invited for the blocks one by one. In view of the announcement of his predecessor, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to when he would announce that oil and gas deposits have been found in Sunderbans off coast?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I need a notice to reply to this question because it is not related to N.E.P. I promise him to send a written reply to his question within three-four days.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Prabhunath Singh.

No other matter will be allowed today.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, exploration is a general process through which oil deposits are identified. During the course of a discussion in the House, the then Minister had stated that exploration work has also been started in the Purnea and Betia regions in Bihar. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether

Purnea and Betia areas are included in the list of 110 blocks allocated for exploration and expected to have gas and oil deposits. If not, whether these areas, which are expected to have oil and gas deposits, will be included for exploration when next agreement will be signed?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell the hon. Member that two blocks of Bihar are also included in the list of blocks allocated for exploration. We are trying to see that its bidding is done under NELP. I will pray God that oil is found there as you know that it is a matter of chance whether oil will be found there or not. It involves a great risk, but both the blocks of Bihar are included in it.

[English]

Export of Defence Items

*263. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total value of exports made by various ordnance factories and the Defence public sector undertakings during 2004-2005 and 2005-2006;

(b) whether the Government has formulated any action plan for increasing the export of items produced by the various ordnance factories and the Defence public sector undertakings;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken or being taken to implement the action plan?

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

Statement

The total value of exports made by Ordnance Factories and Defence Public Sector Undertakings was Rs. 318 crore during 2004-2005 and about Rs. 252 crore up to February 2006 during 2005-2006.

While no specific action plan has been formulated for increasing exports of our defence products, various

initiatives have been taken to improve export of items produced by Ordnance Factories and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). Defence Attaches posted in Indian Missions abroad are actively involved in identifying export opportunities and Defence Exports Promotion has been included in their charter of duties. Further, nodal officers have been appointed in Defence PSUs and the Ordnance Factory Board for better co-ordination between production units, Ministry of External Affairs and Service Headquarters. In consultation with the Ministry of Defence, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade carries out periodic reviews of non-lethal low tech items, which do not need a "No Objection Certificate" from the Ministry of Defence. Directory of Indian Defence Products and CD ROMs have been distributed through our missions abroad. Biennial international exhibitions, viz. Defexpo India and Aero India, are organized in India to help improve defence exports. Defence production units also participate in international exhibitions to showcase their products and capabilities. The Defence Procurement Procedure 2005 has incorporated a new Offset Policy under which capital acquisition contracts of Rs. 300 Crore or more must have offset clauses amounting to 30% of the indicative cost of the contract.

[Translation]

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the first part of my question was about the total value of exports made during the year 2004-05 and 2005-06. But the hon. Minister has not answered it in his statement.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to know as to what is the quality rating of India's defence products in the international market and the names of the countries competing with it in this regard?

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, so far as the first part of the question is concerned, I have already given the information in the very first paragraph itself. In respect of 2004-05, the total export was to the tune of Rs. 318 crore and in respect of 2005-06, up to the month of February, the value of the export was to the tune of Rs. 252 crore. These are the two years' export figures he wanted to know and I have given those two figures.

So far as the exports are concerned, they must be competitive because when you are exporting your products outside your country, there your products must satisfy the test of quality and price-wise, it must be competitive. Otherwise, nobody is going to buy it.

[Translation]

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: The most important thing is that the Arjun Tank developed by the DRDO has been rejected by the Army itself. Air Force has returned the Dhruv helicopter. In view of this, how can we make exports when the quality itself is not good?

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: It is not correct to say that either the Air Force has rejected the Advanced Light Helicopter Dhruv or the Army has rejected the Arjun Tanks. These are the products which we are manufacturing, a considerable part of it is from our own indigenous research and development work and a part of it is from the imported components and equipment. Any product, in any part of the world, when we first introduce, there may be some snags. When the users point out those snags, those snags are rectified by the manufacturer and it is put into operation. What happens in certain cases of Arjun Tanks is that certain snags were identified. In the case of the Advanced Light Helicopter Dhruv, one rotator came out of it. These were the defects pointed out by the users and, as pointed out, necessary rectifications and corrections were done.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has just said that the quality of exports should be good. Keeping this in view, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the previous Government had allocated Rs. 900 crore at the rate of Rs. 300 crore for each for the three Ordnance factories. The ordnance factory in Madhya Pradesh was one of them, but it has not been mentioned in the reply? This money was provided for modernization and for increasing exports. Why this allocation has been cancelled and if not, the time by which the allocation is likely to be made?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is a different question.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: This is a totally different question....(Interruptions) So far as modernisation is concerned, I told the hon. Member about it. ...(Interruptions) Please sit down.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Mr. Minister, money was allotted to boost the exports of the Ordnance Factories....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. You have made your point. Everything is connected with exports. That does not mean that he should give answers to all the questions.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: It was meant to boost our exports. You have cancelled that allotment. Why?...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please, sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: So far as modernisation is concerned, every rupee for the modernisation, either of the Ordnance Factories or of the Defence Public Sector Undertakings is being utilised. Last year's figures are available to the hon. Member. Regarding this year's figures, you will find it from the detailed Demands for Grants which we have laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: You have cancelled that allotment. Why?

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry. Please take your seat. Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: It is a fact that the Indian Ordnance Factories have been supplying weapons of 12 bore revolvers to the Indian markets. They are also

supplying the cartridges for 12 bore revolvers of .32, .22 calibre. As the hon. Minister has very rightly said, in the international market, you have to be very competitive to get the export orders. Is it not a fact that we are not competitive because of the quality? My question is this. All these years, we have not been able to improve the quality. That is why, in the case of trap shooting, Rajvardhan and all these boys never use the cartridges made by the Indian Ordnance Factories for sports or even for practice. They have to import such items for even practice. So, that means, our competitiveness, our quality is really bad. What is the hon. Minister doing about the improvement of the weapons made by the Indian Ordnance Factories when we have been in this business for very many years?

MR. SPEAKER: Let us not belittle our achievements.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is correct in respect of certain categories of weapons and, especially, for the trap shooting, the cartridges and others. We are not up to the international standards. But, the basic point, which the hon. Member is missing, is that our ordnance factories and our Defence Public Sector Enterprises are not highly export-oriented because as a nation we never encouraged that India would participate in a very large way to capture the world's arms market. Our basic objective of establishing the ordnance factories and the Defence Public Sector Enterprises is to meet our requirements. Surely, we are also not going to make compromise on the quality when we ought to meet our requirements. This is an exercise, which is constantly being reviewed, and whatever upgradations are necessary are being done. But, at the same time, we must admit that there are some very limited companies all over the world, which are in the arms export over the years. You will not find more than four to five or six countries, which are producing very sophisticated weapons. We are also trying to catch them. But, surely, there is a gap and this is our exercise to bridge the gap as fast as possible.

Loss to Tourism Industry due to Natural Calamities

*264. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tourism industry suffered due to floods and natural calamities;

(b) if so, the total damage caused to the tourism industry during each of the last three years;

(c) the Central assistance provided to the States for the purpose during the above period; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to boost the foreign as well as domestic tourism in the respective States?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Although, overall the foreign tourist arrival did not suffer significantly on account of Tsunami which hit the Andaman, Nicobar, Lacchadives groups of islands, and southern coast of India the tourism industry was affected in these parts in a localized manner. Similarly other natural calamities like flood, excessive snowfall and earthquake do have temporary effect on both domestic and foreign tourist traffic.

Government of Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory Administration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands reported damages to tourism properties due to Tsunami of December 2004.

(c) During 2004-05 Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned a project for restoration of Tamil Nadu tourism facilities damaged due to Tsunami for an amount of Rs. 499.50 lakh.

(d) Promotion of tourism in the overseas markets is a continuous process. Ministry of Tourism promotes the places of tourist interest/sports through its 20 Indiatourism offices located in India and 13 overseas, as also in the electronic, print and online media through the "Incredible India" campaign. During the last three years, a significant increase of foreign tourist arrival has been registered as under:—

Sl. No.	Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (in Million)	Percentage Increase	Foreign Exchange Earnings (in Crore)	Percentage Increase	Foreign Exchange Earnings (in billion USD)	Percentage Increase
1.	2003	2.73		16429		3.5	
2.	2004	3.37	26.8% increase	21603	31.5% increase	4.8	35% increase
3.	2005	3.92	13.2% increase	25172	16.5% increase	5.7	20% increase

As regards domestic tourist numbers, there were 309.00 million tourists during 2003, and the figures were 387.6 million tourists during 2004 recording 19% increase. Special domestic publicity campaigns have been launched during 2005-06, besides giving assistance to the State Governments to improve tourism infrastructure and other tourism products in their States.

SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Sir, as per the reply given by the Minister, the Union Government has not given any assistance to the State Government of Karnataka. There is no allotment of funds from the Tourism Department to the Government of Karnataka for restoration of tourism facilities in Karnataka damaged due to floods. I would like to know from the Minister whether the Union Government is considering to increase the amount to the State Government of Karnataka. If so, to what extent and by that time the balance amount is likely to be released?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, in the written reply I have mentioned the amount of assistance given by the Central Government to all those States which were affected during Tsunami, to the States which were affected during heavy rains and floods, and also during earthquake. As far as Karnataka is concerned, it did not figure for any request. I have Statewise requests for properties damaged, specially, regarding the Tourism Ministry, which I can provide to the hon. Member if he wants to have them. But, as far as Karnataka is concerned, no specific requests were made there because as far as Tourism Ministry was concerned, no damage was reported regarding the tourists industry.

SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: There is a large scope for tourism in Karnataka, especially, the Chitradurga Fort, which is a historically famous fort. There is no development in the Fort. There is also a tank called Sulekere, which is now called Shanti Sagar. This is located in the Davangere district of Karnataka. It is very near to Chitradurga. It is one of the Asia's biggest tank. Apart from these, the Hampi, which is a World Heritage Centre, and Badami are also very good domestic as well as foreign tourist spots. These places need development immediately to attract domestic as well as foreign tourists.

Sir, I would like to know from the Minister that whether the Union Government is having any proposal to improve these tourist spots. If so, what is the assistance being given to improve these tourist spots in Karnataka and by what time this financial assistance will be released?

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot ask any supplementary which has nothing to do with your main question. If you want to oblige him, you can reply.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, the second supplementary has, almost, nothing to do with the original question, but the Member is most welcome to my chamber here and I will give him all the details of various schemes being developed from the point of view of tourism and also from the point of view of world cultural heritage in Karnataka.

MR. SPEAKER: You are very obliging to him along with a cup of tea.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as you know, the economy of Jammu and Kashmir is dependent on tourism industry but heavy snow and devastating earthquake in the region last year not only took a toll of life and property but also proved to be a huge set back for the tourism industry. The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has asked the Union Government and the Ministry of Tourism to make an evaluation of the losses suffered by the tourism industry and requested for grant of assistance. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you, the amount of help asked for by the Jammu and Kashmir Government and the amount of funds granted to tourism department of the Jammu and Kashmir Government for this purpose.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, the recent heavy snowfall in Jammu and Kashmir and the subsequent earthquake which shook the region on 8th October, 2005 undoubtedly caused heavy losses and more than three thousand people lost their lives. Baramulla, Poonch, Kupwara and Srinagar were also affected by the earthquake. The House is aware of these facts. The UPA Government have released a huge grant to Jammu and Kashmir Government for carrying out reconstruction work, out of which nearly Rs. 800 crore have been earmarked for tourism-centric projects. Besides, Moti Mahal, Riyasi Soth, and Heritage School building situated in Poonch and all the other earthquake-affected areas have been provided funds by the Government and the Ministry of Tourism. I have assured them that the UPA Government and the Ministry of Tourism are ready to meet any further requirements as well.

[English]

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is immense possibility of development of tourism in the State of Kerala, but the assistance given to the State of Kerala to improve tourism infrastructure and other tourism projects is considerably less when compared to the need and the possibility of tourism development of the State. I would like to know from the Minister whether any proposal from the State of Kerala has been received by her Ministry regarding tourism infrastructure development

in Kerala and whether an increased allocation will be provided to the State.

MR. SPEAKER: This question pertains to loss occurred to tourism industry due to natural calamities.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may recollect that you said that if anybody asks a question relating to Andaman and Nicobar Islands you would give time. So, you have to give me time.

MR. SPEAKER: My accommodation has to be on the basis of a relevant intervention. Your intervention is irrelevant and I reject it.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, even though the hon. Member's supplementary is not really connected with the original question, I would still like to inform the Member and the House that this is constantly being reviewed.

MR. SPEAKER: There will be another visitor to your chamber.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: The State Governments send proposals for projects for various destinations and they are being funded by us. Very recently four projects were sanctioned, two were to be inaugurated and two foundation stones were to be laid in Ernakulam in the State of Kerala, but due to the announcement of elections, they have been deferred. This is an ongoing process. As and when demands come from the State Government or from individual Members for projects to be sanctioned, they are considered appropriately.

MR. SPEAKER: In future, unless the supplementary is related to the main question I will not allow it.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, through you, whether apart from evaluating the loss suffered by the tourism industry as a result of the said natural calamities has the Government made any assessment of the annual financial loss suffered by the country when the tourists decide not to visit India in view of the various problems they encounter in the country? Has the Government established any monitoring mechanism to overcome such problems?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Government cannot stop natural calamity.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I said that the tourists do not want to visit again because they have to face various inconveniences. Has the Government made any scheme in this regard?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This question relates to natural calamities.

[English]

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. There are so many beautiful and very attractive tourist spots in our State, Orissa, which are affected by super-cyclone. Also the most important places of tourism, namely, Puri, Konark, etc.; and very beautiful lakes, like Chilika and Nandan Kanan Zoo are several times affected by the natural calamities.

I want to know from the hon. Minister what kind of steps have been taken in this regard and how much allocation has been provided.

MR. SPEAKER: For Orissa!

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, as far as natural calamities, which recently took place in the country are concerned, Orissa was not affected as there were no reported casualties....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please, this is not right. You are a senior Member. Please take your seat.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: There were no reported casualties of even people living in villages and offshore. But after having said that, I would like to tell the hon. Member that there are several tourist destinations, which are being developed and encouraged, both by the print and electronic media, and which are undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism. For special destinations like the Konark Temple, we have a new publicity campaign to encourage tourism and that includes very important spots

of Orissa of tourist concern, which is called our Eastern Sector.

In the next few days, the hon. Member would look at newspapers, both regional and national, and the electronic media, publicizing and encouraging tourists to visit all the States in the Eastern Sector, more specially, Orissa.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Sir, I come to know from the statement given by the hon. Minister that a sum of Rs. 499 lakh has been sanctioned to the State of Tamil Nadu for damages caused to tourism-related properties. Does the hon. Minister know how far the project restoration work has been completed in tsunami-affected tourist places in Tamil Nadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands? What is the percentage increase of tourists in tsunami and flood affected States—it is not found in the statement—including Tamil Nadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, as far as the tourist inflow into the country was concerned, the overall figures did not show a decrease. But having said that we are aware of the fact that the States, especially, Tamil Nadu, which were affected during tsunami, must have seen some decrease in tourist inflow into those States. We have given a sum of Rs. 499 lakh, that is almost a sum of Rs. 5 crore, to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

I have the details of the each project and the amount which has been allocated, which I can provide to the hon. Member outside. These include Mahabalipuram, Muttukutadu, Mudalikkapakkam, Kanyakumari and all those places. I have there with me all the figures. We have been writing to the Government for an update on the money allocated and how it has been spent.

It is unfortunate that we have not received replies so far. But we are carrying on our efforts to monitor from our domestic tourist offices.

MR. SPEAKER: He mentioned about Andaman and Nicobar Islands too.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, as far as Nicobar Islands are concerned, the House is aware that we have not so far encouraged tourism in the Nicobar Islands.

But there was maximum damage, which occurred in the Nicobar Islands. The damage to tourism properties and Andaman group of Islands has been comparatively less and these Islands have been safe for tourist-related activities. Arrival of tourist declined after the earthquake and tsunami only for some time. However, tourism has revived after one year of tsunami.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Vijayendera Pal Singh, I am sorry your matter has been hijacked.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, Kerala is generally a tourism area. I am very happy that the hon. Minister is doing a great deal to see that tourism efforts are encouraged. During the last floods and also during Tsunami, several coastal areas in Kerala have been washed off. They include many of the tourism centres. I would also like to point out that the amounts granted for flood relief to many States may be used for that purpose but in Kerala it is being used for building roads or for some other purpose in areas where a particular person asks as to what needs to be given.

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly put your question.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: It does not relate to the real need or it does not relate to the real floods. Will the Minister see whether something can be done to see that the really affected tourism centres in the State are given due weightage when you see that the damages are dealt with?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: There were no casualties, fortunately, during the Tsunami in Kerala, although in Alleppey and Quilon districts there were some. No hotels were damaged. As the hon. Member would be aware that private parties are not entitled to Government aid but. I would like to inform the House that Kerala is being developed as one of our principal circuits for tourism industry and it is encouraging tourism in this country. Wellness tourism—Ayurveda and Naturopathy—is all directed towards Kerala. We have taken up a very special campaign popularising the South Circuit which includes Kerala. This is being popularised abroad also to encourage domestic tourism. We are confident that the Southern Circuit, which has other States besides Kerala, will be one of the most popular tourist circuits being undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

MR. SPEAKER: You have gone farther away from natural calamities.

SHRI KIREN RIJIJU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of Tourism and Culture is very receptive of suggestions and she has a very soft corner for the North-East that I have found. I have met her recently.

MR. SPEAKER: Also me; I am allowing you almost everyday.

SHRI KIREN RIJIJU: Every State has a potential for tourism. Everybody knows that, but the share of North-East in receiving their total number of visitors from abroad is very very negligible. It is below 0.5 per cent. The North-East is an area where there is very heavy rainfall for almost six months. There are frequent flood and rains. So, there are roadblocks. All this causes heavy losses in terms of tourist arrivals.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they have any contingency plan to tackle the problems of those tourists who get held up during their visits to the North-East. While going to Tawang, which is one of the popular destinations in North-East; and while crossing Selapass, which is 14,000 feet above the sea level, heavy snowfall causes problem. Is there any contingency plan to tackle this natural calamity in the North-East?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: The North-East is receiving very special attention of the Government. The hon. Member has been kind enough to appreciate the efforts being made by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in popularising tourism in the North-East. We are, at the moment, having an exhibition and a cultural festival here in Pragati Maidan from 8th to 14th of this month especially for the eight States of the North-East. There is a tourist circuit which we are selling under the nomenclature of 'Adventure Tourism' which takes care of natural habitations and wildlife present there. We are selling this especially in foreign countries. Besides that, we have a very important tourism and cultural scheme under the 2550 years of *Mahapari Nirvana*—walk with the Buddha. In that scheme, Arunachal Pradesh, the State of the hon. Member, and other States have been incorporated. I think the Member will have no complaint in another few months about North-East not getting its due share.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 265, Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni—not present.

Now Q. No. 266—Shri Hiten Barman.

Funds under Various Schemes

*266. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government releases funds to the States against their specific programmes for implementation under various schemes;

(b) if so, whether some State Governments have failed to send any proposal for the projects to be implemented under the schemes to the Union Government;

(c) if so, the details of those States who have neither sent any proposal nor availed of funds from the Union Government during the last three years; and

(d) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. State Government submits proposal under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and one Central Sector Scheme (Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan) keeping in view the parameters of the schemes and the provision of their required share of funds.

(c) and (d) The details may be seen in the enclosed Annexure. State Governments are requested by letter, telephone and through periodical meetings to submit proposals so that funds can be released to them. The efforts of the Ministry in all Schemes are to give a fair share to each State Government.

Annexure

Sl. No.	Scheme/Programme	Name of the States
1	2	3
01.	Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes.	Goa, Jharkhand and Kerala
02.	Pre-Matric Scholarship to the children of those engaged in unclean occupations.	Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland
03.	Post-Matric Scholarships for SC students.	Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland
04.	Construction of Hostels for Scheduled Caste Boys and Girls.	Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan
05.	Coaching and allied assistance for weaker sections including SCs and OBCs.	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal

1	2	3
06. Implementation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955.		Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura
07. Upgradation of Merits of Scheduled Caste Students.		Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Uttaranchal
08. Assistance to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations.		Assam, Bihar, NCT of Delhi, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and West Bengal
09. Pre-Matric Scholarship for OBC students		Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, NCT of Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Maharashtra
10. Post-Matric Scholarships for OBC students.		Bihar, Chhattisgarh, NCT of Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland
11. Construction of Hostels for OBC Boys and Girls.		Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, NCT of Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland
12. Scheme for Prevention of Control of Juvenile Social Maladjustment.		Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur and Uttaranchal

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Sir, it is very unfortunate that many of the States have neither sent any proposal nor availed the funds during the last three years for specific programmes in respect of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and other backward class people. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the steps taken by the Ministry to implement various schemes in these States.

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: Sir, the funds that we provide to various States for the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and one Central Sector Scheme depend on the proposals that we receive from the various States. I have given a list of the States from where we have not received the proposals or the utilisation certificates or where the funds that we have given in the previous years have not been utilised and they are lying unspent. As

soon as we get the proposals and the utilisation certificates, we will give funds to these States.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Sir, a large number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are living in North Bengal. May I request the hon. Minister to give more funds to North Bengal for these schemes?

MR. SPEAKER: This is a suggestion for action.

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: Sir, I welcome this suggestion and I will take care that we provide necessary funds to West Bengal for these schemes. I will be grateful if all the utilisation certificates and the proposals for various projects in these schemes are sent to us.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Ramdas Athawale, you please utilise the time. It must be a relevant question.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Law Minister...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You raise your hand in a reflex action.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Sir, previously the Government have many times announced a special component plan for economic development of SCs/STs. In 1976, when Smt. Indira Gandhiji was the Prime Minister of the country, she had announced that the budgetary allocation of the Union and State Governments would be made proportionately and the basis of SC/ST population for carrying out economic development of the said communities. Now the UPA Government have shouldered the responsibility of ensuring the development of SCs/STs. The NDA Government had failed to take any steps in this direction due to which the present Government have come to power...*(Interruptions)* I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether or not the Government now propose to make budget allocation under the Special Component Plan?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Madam, you say: "I will consider your suggestion."

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: Sir, SCA to SCP is very important for the economic development of the Scheduled Castes. I am very glad that the hon. Member has raised this issue. We take special care to ensure that funds are provided in time to various States.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shrimati Maneka Gandhi. Have I pronounced your name correctly?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Yes, Sir.

The District Rehabilitation Centres were small centres meant to serve the disabled and they were set up in a large number of constituencies a few years ago.

They were meant to be funded by the Centre. In

the last six months, there has been a policy decision taken, I am told, that the States will fund them instead of the Centre or they will apply to the Centre for money. In Uttar Pradesh, none of the Centres has received any rehabilitation materials, neither wheel chairs nor crutches nor anything meant for the disabled, from ALEMCO for the last one year. Every time when one asks the Ministry, they puch it on to the State and the State pushes it on to the Centre. Could we know who is funding the DRCs, where the money is coming from and where the material is supposed to come from?

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: So far as this scheme is concerned, we are funding it. I would like to inform the hon. Member that in the State of Uttar Pradesh, we have, during the course of last one year, organised several camps for distribution of aids and appliances for the disabled. However, if there is any specific case, I would request the hon. Member to let me know and we will ensure that the material reaches that place.

DR. M. JAGANNATH: Sir, according to the Statement given by the hon. Minister, the State Governments submit the proposals, and accordingly the funds will be provided to the State Government for a specific purpose like Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan which are specifically meant for the development of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people. Recently, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has diverted Rs. 37 crore from the fund meant for the development of Scheduled Caste people under the Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan. This is nothing but depriving the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people of their share of development.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

DR. M. JAGANNATH: What action the Government of India has proposed to take against such types of States, particularly Andhra Pradesh and also against such types of States where these funds are diverted to some other purpose?

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: We are not in the know of this diversion of funds that the hon. Member has mentioned. But we know that there are three other States...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. This is not right.

Yes, you can go on.

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: However, since he has mentioned this, we will look into it. But so far as SCA to SCP is concerned, there are three other States to which we have not been able to give SCA because there are unspent balances lying there. They have not provided the utilisation certificate. But so far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, if there is any such complaint, we will look into it.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bansagopal Choudhury.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

(Interruptions)*...

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Jagannath, this is not a good practice.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, I will not allow this. It is not to be recorded. It will not be recorded at all. You can go on.

(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY: Thank you, Sir.

Will the Minister be pleased to state the criteria through which the NGOs are disbursing funds to the institutes meant for the physically handicapped people?

MR. SPEAKER: He wants to know if the NGOs are doing it.

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: The Question is about Centrally-sponsored scheme. Regarding funding the NGOs, I want another notice so that I can give a detailed reply.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was the first person to submit slip...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Please have patience.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY: Sir, it is seen from the reply of the hon. Minister that the Government of Tamil Nadu has not availed of the fund under the scheme for providing financial assistance to coaching centres and hostels. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India is contemplating to take any action against it for not taking or availing of the fund for the welfare of the Scheduled Caste people. I would also like to know whether the Ministry is aware of this that not only the Government is diverting the fund but also the NGOs are misusing the funds meant for the Scheduled Caste people. What are the steps contemplated to eradicate this malady?

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: Sir, if the Government of Tamil Nadu has not utilised the funds, what we do is that we do not give further funds. We do ask them repeatedly, we also hold meetings with the Welfare Secretaries or I personally write to the Chief Minister, my Secretary, my officers write to the officers there so that they utilise the funds because eventually it is meant to benefit the Scheduled Castes.

Insofar as the misutilisation of funds by NGOs is concerned, as I have said earlier, I would like to have a separate notice so that I can give a detailed answer.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said in her reply to the question that the States submit proposals keeping in view the parameters of the schemes and the provisions of their required share of funds. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how are the States to send their proposals when no budgetary provision in this regard has been made by her? She may check the expenditure which would reveal that no provision has been made for construction of girls' hostels, boys' hostels and for pre-matric scholarships in the year 2005-2006. In such a

situation, how shall the State Governments submit any proposals? The subsequent budgetary provisions made in the Revised Budget are so meagre that it would be impossible to implement any scheme of the State Governments. Hence, I would like to know whether she would try to ensure that budgetary provision for SCs would continue to be made as per the previous practice?

[English]

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: Sir, I would like to clarify that for Centrally-sponsored schemes for these hostels and other schemes, allocation is made on the basis of the proposal that we receive. We have not, so far, refused. If we have received a proposal, we have never refused it if the proposal is complete, if there is utilisation certificate for the earlier instalments and if the earlier instalments have been fully utilised.

This is not a question of how much we allot. It is a question that as we get the proposal we provide the funds and we have never refused it.

[Translation]

SHRI RAVINDER NAIK DHARAVATH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you, why no improvement in the financial condition of SCs/STs has been effected despite making huge budgetary provisions for this purpose to the state Governments. Is any action taken by the Union Government to fix responsibility for misuse or diversion of the said funds by the state Governments?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: She has replied.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that regular monitoring of utilization of funds is done and inspections are conducted every three months to determine whether the funds are being utilized in a proper manner or not. We are fully vigilant in this regard.

Bilateral Agreements on Tourism

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*267. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has signed/proposes to sign bilateral agreements with several leading foreign countries, particularly with Philippines for mutual co-operation to promote tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the countries with whom such agreements have been signed so far; and

(d) the extent to which it will boost the tourism in the country?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Bilateral Agreements/MoUs are signed with several countries from time to time for promotion of tourism in respective countries. Government of India has already signed forty-two such Bilateral Agreements/MoUs for cooperation in the field of tourism. The latest Agreement in this regard was signed on 4-2-2006 with Philippines.

(c) The list of countries with whom such agreements have been signed so far is enclosed as Annexure.

(d) Bilateral tourism cooperation agreements serve as instruments for marketing and promotion of tourism from the participating countries. These agreements facilitate launching of promotional activities, exchange of travel trade delegations, export-import of publicity materials, exchange of know-how, facilitating investments, human resource development and organizing special promotional events for mutual benefits. These agreements give impetus to the growth of tourism flows between the two signatory countries. Moreover, such agreements also

help in strengthening relations and fostering deeper understanding between the two countries.

Annexure

List of countries with whome Bilateral Agreement on Tourism Cooperation Exists as on date

Sl. No.	Name of the Country	Date of signing
1	2	3
1.	Iraq (Protocol)	25-10-1986
2.	Portugal	29-07-1991
3.	Syria	08-10-1991
4.	Hungary	16-10-1992
5.	Belarus	14-05-1993
6.	Israel	18-05-1993
7.	Uzbekistan	29-07-1993
8.	Republic of Korea (South)	10-09-1993
9.	Singapore	24-01-1994
10.	Bulgaria	26-05-1994
11.	Romania	02-06-1994
12.	Russia	30-06-1994
13.	Turkey	31-01-1995
14.	Iran (MoU)	18-04-1995
15.	Kryghstan	22-09-1995
16.	Mexico	28-03-1996
17.	Seychelles	03-10-1996
18.	Cyprus	07-11-1996
19.	Peru	26-05-1997
20.	South Africa	07-10-1997

1	2	3
21.	Egypt	11-10-1997
22.	Greece	13-01-1998
23.	Mongolia	01-12-1998
24.	Morocco	13-02-1999
25.	Indonesia (MOU)	08-02-2000
26.	Cambodia (MOU)	18-02-2000
27.	Italy	26-06-2000
28.	Tunisia	08-12-2000
29.	Vietnam	08-01-2001
30.	China	14-01-2002
31.	Australia (MOU)	22-04-2002
32.	Kazakhstan	03-06-2002
33.	Ukraine	12-08-2003
34.	Thailand	09-10-2003
35.	Tajikistan	14-11-2003
36.	Sri Lanka (MOU)	23-01-2004
37.	Brazil	25-01-2004
38.	Serbia (MOU)	02-11-2004
39.	Fiji	10-10-2005
40.	Afghanistan	06-12-2005
41.	Philippines	04-02-2006
42.	France (MoU)	20-02-2006

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in her reply, the hon. Minister has, stated that India has entered into bilateral agreements with 42 countries for promotion of tourism. I want to know from the Hon. Minister whether any country has volunteered to enter into any such agreement with India?

MR. SPEAKER: Agreements are entered into by both the countries.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: We have signed agreements with 42 countries and they have also signed agreements with us. It is mutual.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: I want to know as to which country took the initiative for the agreement?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Is there any proposal pending?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think it would not be proper to reveal as to who took the initiative, but agreements are signed for the benefit of both the countries. If both the countries are convinced that agreement will be beneficial to them, they enter into an agreement. The figures are available with me regarding the agreements we have signed with 42 countries which show the extent of benefit likely to accrue to India from these agreements. I shall pass on those figures to the Hon. Member later.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: I would like to know whether the Government of India has made any efforts to enter into any such agreement with the neighbouring countries, Pakistan and Bangladesh?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, it is the priority of our Government to improve relations with our neighbouring countries. So far as tourism sector is concerned, our people visit these countries and we want that visitors in large numbers should come to our country from their side also. As far as Pakistan is concerned, everyone knows that the number of visitors has increased recently. Many delegations from Pakistan have visited our country, and many delegations from our country also went there. We want that it could be improved further, because it is an essential part of confidence building measures.

[English]

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Respected Speaker, Sir, promotion and development of tourism is one of the important tasks of this Ministry of Government

of India. Recently, *Kalachakra* Programme was conducted by His Excellency Dalai Lama in Amravati, Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh and a number of Buddhist priests visited Amravati. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India is serious about developing this place as one of the Buddhist centres in India.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, the Government of India is paying all attention possible to observe 2,550 years of *Mahapari Nirvana*. There is a national committee constituted....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is about bilateral agreement.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Under bilateral agreements, we are doing all these projects to encourage people for coming to India, with China, Korea, Thailand and all other countries. This recent event which took place in Andhra Pradesh is one in the series of several steps which are going to be undertaken to encourage Buddhist travellers.

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Mathura is the birth place of Lor Krishna and I represent that constituency. Mathura is a very important tourist place of the country. I would like to know whether the Ministry of Tourism has formulated any special scheme for promotion of tourism in Mathura? My second question is about Yamuna river.

MR. SPEAKER: This question is regarding bilateral agreements.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Yamuna Action Plan is being implemented by the Central Government for cleansing Yamuna. My question is whether any scheme for cleansing Yamuna in Mathura is under consideration of the Government or not?

MR. SPEAKER: A lot of work is being done on that front.

[English]

This has nothing to do with this question. The supplementary has to be relevant.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in her reply that agreements in tourism sector have been signed with China and other countries. There are many places of pilgrimage under Buddhist circuit in Bihar. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any scheme for development of those places of pilgrimage. Foreign tourists also come to visit these sites like Bodhgaya, Rajgir and Vaishali.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This question has no relevance. I am sorry Mr. Yadav.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: There are many such tourist places in Bihar where foreign tourists comes in a large number. I would request the hon. Minister to develop these tourist sites because there are many countries in the world which are Buddhist. This will increase our revenue and the tourists will also be benefited. I want to ask whether there is any comprehensive scheme for the development of these tourist sites in near future so that Buddhist circuit may become the centre of attraction?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yadav, it has no relevance except the length of question. I am sorry.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, Buddhist-circuit is very important.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister wants to oblige.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, the hon. Member has asked an apt question.

MR. SPEAKER: It may be an apt question but not relevant.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, there are many such tourist places which need to be developed and made more popular. We have specially created Buddhist-circuit,

but infrastructural facilities are still lacking there. We are visiting Bodhgaya, Rajgir, Nalanda and Lumbini with a delegation and I want to invite the hon. Member to accompany us so that we can work together for the development of that place.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It cannot be only to one hon. Member. You will have to invite everybody.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Development of Film Industry

*265. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a sub-committee of the State Information Ministers' Conference was set up to suggest a policy framework for the development of the Film Industry.

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the said sub committee; and

(c) the action taken/being taken by the Government to implement the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) to (c) In the 24th Conference of States and Union Territory Ministers of Information and Cinematography (SIMCON) held at new Delhi on 21-1-2001, such a Committee was set up for the Development of Entertainment Sector, including films, under the chairpersonship of the Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, and comprising State Ministers of Information and Public Relations from 9 States. The Committee was set up inter alia to suggest a policy framework for the film industry. The Committee has held three meetings so far. One of the significant recommendations made by the Committee was to suggest the lowering of ceiling rates of entertainment tax, initially in 2001 to 60% and thereafter in 2003 to at least 45%. The

Committee also suggested measures to counter piracy and facilitate foreign film shooting in the country. Since the subject 'cinema' except 'Sanctioning of Cinematograph Film for Exhibition' is a State subject, the recommendations of this Committee have been conveyed to all the State Governments.

Upgradation of Airports

*268. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the average number of flights being operated in a day from major International Airports of the country;

(b) the steps being taken by the Government to overcome the pressure at major International Airports due to the increase in air traffic;

(c) whether, in light of the decision taken to modernise Delhi and Mumbai Airports, the Government proposes to review the policy on upgradation of other airports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The average number of flights operated in a day from international Airports in the country at present are as follows:—

Mumbai: 452, Delhi: 399, Chennai: 179, Kolkata: 132, Trivandrum: 30, Bangalore: 180, Hyderabad: 129, Ahmedabad: 54, Goa: 39, Guwahati: 40, Amritsar: 12, Srinagar: 11, Cochin: 54, Jaipur: 22 and Nagpur: 13.

(b) Steps taken/proposed to be taken by Airports Authority of India (AAI) to over-come the pressure at major international airports are as follows:—

Delhi—Provision of additional taxi tracks, additional parking stands at domestic and international aprons, additional X-ray machines in security hold area at terminal 2 and refurbishing of a portion of domestic terminal 1B, equipping of all the check-in counters in international terminal with Common User Terminal Equipment (CUTE) system and construction of new domestic and international terminals.

Mumbai—Provision of additional taxi tracks, additional parking stands at domestic and international aprons, modification of domestic terminal 1B, integration of arrival halls and immigration check for arriving passengers of terminal 2A, 2B and 2C, upgradation of terminal 2B and construction of new domestic and international terminals.

Chennai—Provision of additional check-in counters in the departure terminals, modification and integration of existing international departure terminal and additional parking stands at domestic and international aprons.

Kolkata—Construction of new international departure terminal and additional parking stands at domestic apron.

(c) and (d) AAI has decided to modernise 35 non-metro airports to world-class standards in phases upto the year 2010-11 with focus on airside and city side development at the estimated cost of Rs. 4662 crore.

Commercial use of Railway Land

*269. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have identified the sites for commercial use of unutilised Railway land;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the locations thereof;

(c) the extent to which the commercial use of unutilised Railway land would generate revenue to the Railways; and

(d) the measures taken by the Railways for rehabilitation of people living alongside the Railway tracks?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. So far, 61 sites having potential have been taken up over Indian Railways for property development. Bids have been finalized for 9 sites involving a total of about Rs. 21 crore of which, Rs. 6.5 crore has already been realized. The details of the location identified for commercial development are as under:—

Hill Cant Road (Siliguri), Alankar Cinema fly over/ Aga Khan Road (Pune), Kharagpur, Old Godavari Rly. Stn. (Secundrabad), Esplanade Station (Metro Rly, Kolkata), Madan Street (Metro Railway, Kolkata), 24 GC Avenue, (Metro Railway, Kolkata), Shyam Bazar Stn. (Metro Railway, Kolkata), shops at Chintadripet Station, (Metro Chennai/S. Railway), Chandigarh, Katra, Lucknow, Howrah station area, Manninagar (Ahmedabad), T.A. Office Building, Kishanganj (Delhi), Gandhinagar (Jaipur), Coimbatore Jn., Salem, Bangalore Cantt., Nizamuddin Railway station, Nagapattinam (Tiruchirapalli), Pattukkoti (Tiruchirapalli), Villipuram Station (Tiruchirapalli), Gautam Buddha Institute, Gaya, Tetichittapalam (Visakapatnam), Badli (Delhi), Bandra (Mumbai), Nirala Nagar (Kanpur), Salt Golah (Howrah), Borivili, Andheri (East), Delhi Sarai Rohilla, Howbad Colony (Jabalpur), Tolly gung station (Metro Railway/Kolkata), Sealdah (grass siding land), Sealdah existing main station, Uzan Bazar (Guwahati), Thane, Ajni (Nagpur), R.B. Mill road (Pune), Chennai Central, Dispersal building at Chandini Chowk (Metro Railway/Kolkata), Hyderabad, Chavulamadam RUB (Visakhapatnam), Near FA and CAO office complex/ Secunderabad, Gwalior, Madanmahal (Jabalpur), Existing PRS office/Jaipur, Platform Road (Bangalore), Maninagar (Ahmedabad), Panskura, New Delhi Station (redevelopment), Charbagh (Lucknow), Budhlada (Delhi-Bhatinda section), Belgharia (Sealdah), Bidhannagar and Dum Dum (Sealdah), Halishahar (Sealdah), Ballyghat (Sealdah), Kanchrapara (Sealdah), Budge-Budge (Sealdah).

(c) No such study has been done so far. But Railways have vast potential of generating revenue from its land.

(d) Rehabilitation of people living unauthorisedly alongside the railway track is not the responsibility of the Railways.

Setting up of Airports

*270. SHRI TAPIR GAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received proposals from various States for setting up airports, particularly in the North-East;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon;

(d) whether the Union Government proposes to formulate new guidelines which are feasible for North-Eastern region for the construction of airports; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) A number of cities and towns have been proposed by the concerned State Governments including those from the North-East, for construction of new airports. For instance, Pakyong near Gangtok in Sikkim, Chiethu near Kohima in Nagaland, Mopa near Panaji in Goa, Chakan (Pune) and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra, Ludhiana in Punjab, Ajmer in Rajasthan, Devanahalli (Bangalore), Gulbarga, Bellary and Bijapur in Karnataka, Shamshabad (Hyderabad) in Andhra Pradesh, Kannur in Kerala, Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh, Bharuch in Gujarat and Raigunj in West Bengal.

(c) Government of India has accorded approval for setting up of new international airports at Devenhalli near Bangalore, Shamshabad near Hyderabad and Mopa in Goa. Other proposals for new airports are being examined.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Extraction of Oil and Gas from Coal

*271. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

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

(a) whether India has signed an agreement with China for extraction of oil and gas from coal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to set up projects to extract oil and gas from coal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) A Memorandum for Cooperation in the field of oil and natural gas between the National Development and Reforms Commission of the Peoples' Republic of China and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of the Republic of India was signed on 12th January, 2006, which inter alia envisages encouraging cooperation between the companies and research institutions of both countries on enhancing exchange and communication in areas such as Coal Bed Methane (CBM), Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) and gas hydrates. Both CBM and UCG provide for technologies for obtaining gas from coal.

(c) and (d) The Government has already put in place a Coal Bed Methane policy for offering areas for exploration and production of CBM in the country. The Government has already signed 16 contracts for exploration and production of CBM from various coal fields in the country. The Government has also offered another 10 blocks for exploration and production of coal bed methane under the third round of CBM.

ONGC has signed an MOU for technology cooperation with the Skotchinsky Institute of Russia for UCG. However, UCG activities in India are at the R and D stage.

Oil India Ltd. (OIL) with a foreign collaborator has made efforts to convert coal to synthetic crude in the North East. However, the viability of producing synthetic crude from coal on a commercial scale is yet to be established.

Expansion of Telecasting and Broadcasting Network

*272. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:
SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:

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

(a) whether the Government had fixed any targets for expansion of telecasting and broadcasting network in the country during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which the targets have been achieved so far; and

(d) the steps taken or being taken to achieve the targets during the remaining period of the Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) to (c) The targets and the detailed achievements thereof are given in enclosed statement I and II.

(d) As may be seen, most of the targets set for Doordarshan have been achieved. Similarly, A.I.R. has also achieved the targets to a considerable extent except in the case of FM radio expansion. However, the targets achieved are correlated and inter-dependent upon the sanction of the projects and allocation of resources. Many projects are at different stages of implementation and all out efforts are being made for sticking to the schedule of their completion by 31st March, 2007.

Statement-I

A.I.R. National Coverage Targets

National Coverage	Coverage targeted under the Tenth Plan		Coverage existing as on 28-02-2006	
	By % area	By % population	By % area	By % population
A.I.R. Signals				
Medium Wave and Frequency Modulation (combined)	92.92	99.49	91.42	99.13
F.M. only	36.25	49.75	23.79	34.52

Statement-II**Targets and Achievement for Doordarshan under the Tenth Five Year Plan**

Targets fixed during the 10th Plan	Achievements as on 28-2-2006
(i) Launch of Free-to-air DTH Service	Free-to-air DTH Service launched
(ii) New Studio Centres at six places	Studio Centres at 5 places have been commissioned. Installation of 6th studio centre is completed.
(iii) DD1 HPTs at 21 places	HPTs at 9 places have been completed.
(iv) DD News HPTs at 26 places	HPTs at 23 places have been commissioned.
(v) LPTs/VLPTs at 89 places	LPTs/VLPTs at 88 places have been commissioned.

Programmes Broadcast by FM Stations

*273. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has analyzed the programmes broadcast by FM stations in the country;

(b) if so, whether they conform to the mandate given to them;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the corrective measures being taken in this regard;

(d) whether some of these stations have not been permitted to broadcast local or regional news bulletins; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):
(a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) All India Radio Broadcast news and current affairs programmes on its FM Channels. Private FM Stations, as per Phase-I and Phase-II policy guidelines, are not permitted to broadcast News and Current Affairs programmes.

Gas Hydrates Resources

*274. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any assessment regarding gas hydrates reserves in the Krishna-Godavari Basin, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Gulf of Kutch and Gulf of Mannar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is facing any problems and technical difficulties in exploring gas hydrates located 700m below the seabed; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government in exploring oil and gas from these locations?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) No reserves estimate has been made by the Government for gas hydrates. However, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) has identified the presence of gas hydrates in Krishna-Godavari basin, Mahanadi basin, Kerala Konkan basin and Andaman offshore areas.

(c) and (d) World over the Exploration and exploitation of gas hydrates is at Research and Development (R and D) stage. Government of India has formulated a National Gas Hydrates Programme (NGHP)

for exploration and development of the gas hydrate resources of the country. Under NGHP, DGH has taken services from Integrated Ocean Drilling Programme (IODP), USA for collection of core samples and other geo-scientific data. The drilling and coring programme for gas hydrates is likely to commence in April, 2006 in Krishna-Godavari, Mahanadi and Kerala Konkan basins and Andaman Offshore areas. This study will be useful for resource estimation of gas hydrates in India.

MoUs with State Governments

*275. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway had signed MoUs with the State Governments to expedite pending projects in the respective region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these MoUs have been implemented effectively;

(d) if so, the results thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken for effective implementation of these MoUs?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Ministry of Railways to expedite pending rail infrastructure projects.

Following are the projects taken up under these MoUs.

1. In accordance with the MoU signed on 26th May, 1998 with the Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation (MRVC), a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Railways has been formed with equity participation from the Ministry of Railways and the Government of Maharashtra and it is undertaking capacity augmentation and system improvement works in the Mumbai Suburban Railway network.

2. Under the MoU signed with Government of Karnataka on 30th September, 2000, four projects have been identified for execution through a Joint Venture company named Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Limited (K-RIDE). The projects are namely 1) Hubli-Ankola New Line, 2) Solapur-Gadag Gauge Conversion, 3) Hassan-Mangalore Gauge Conversion and 4) Guntkal-Hospet Doubling.

3. Six Railway projects have been identified for execution under the MoU signed on 19th February, 2002 with the Government of Jharkhand. The six projects are:— (1) Ranchi-Barkakana-Hazaribagh-Koderma New Line, 2) Ranchi-Lohardaga Gauge Conversion with extension to Tori, 3) Deogarh-Dumka New Line, 4) Dumka-Rampurhat New Line, 5) Koderma-Giridih New Line and 6) Koderma-Tilaiya New Line (only Jharkhand portion).

4. An MoU was signed between Ministry of Railways with erstwhile Government of Madhya Pradesh (now Government of Chhattisgarh), Steel Authority of India Limited and National Mineral Development Corporation on 2nd April, 1998 for construction of a new broad gauge rail line between Dalli Rajahara—Rowaghat—Jagdapur. This MoU could not materialise as SAIL did not come forward with the committed funds. The MoUs have been by and large effective in creation of Railway infrastructure. There has been some delay in projects implementation in the State of Jharkhand due to delay in timely provision of funds by the State Government. A timeframe of 5 years has been contemplated for completion of projects covered under MoU in the State of Jharkhand. For other MoUs, no time frame has been indicated. Ministry of Railways is following up with the State Government of Jharkhand for effective implementation of the MoU.

New Relay Centres

*276. DR. K. DHANARAJU:

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA:

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

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to set up new relay centres of Doordarshan in the States;

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

(c) the time by which these relay centres are likely to be set up and made operational?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) to (c) Of one hundred thirty-six new relay centres sanctioned for Doordarshan by the Government in various States under the Tenth Five Year Plan period (2002-2007), 120 have been completed and 16 are at different stages of implementation. These are expected to be completed

by 31st March, 2007. Details are given in the enclosed statement.

With the launch of Doordarshan's Ku band (DTH—Free-to-Air mode) transmission service from 16th December, 2004, the areas hitherto uncovered and under-covered have been well taken care of. New relay centres are, therefore, not envisaged to be set up save in the border areas through schemes covered under the Jammu and Kashmir and North-East Special Packages thrust areas.

Statement

TV transmitters set up/under implementation as part of Tenth Plan

State	Location
1	2
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	VLPT Kalighat*
	VLPT Swaraj Gram*
Andhra Pradesh	HPT Mehboob Nagar
	HPT Rajamundry (DD News)*
	LPT Kakinada (DD News)*
	LPT Kolhapur*
	VLPT Madipadu*
	LPT Madugula*
	VLPT Maripadu*
	LPT Miryalaguda*
	LPT Nellore (DD News)*
LPT Talakondapally*	
Arunachal Pradesh	HPT Itanagar (DD News)*
Assam	LPT Satarsal
Bihar	HPT Saharsa
	LPT Bhabhua*

1	2	
	LPT	Darbhanga (DD News)*
	LPT	Gaya (DD News)*
	VLPT	Marhaura*
	VLPT	Masrakh*
Chhattisgarh	HPT	Bilaspur
	VLPT	Devbhog*
	LPT	Pandaria*
Gujarat	HPT	Vadodara*
	HPT	Vadodara (DD News)*
	HPT	Rajkot (DD News)*
	HPT	Radhanpur
	LPT	Bhavnagar (DD News)*
	LPT	Jamnagar (DD News)*
	LPT	Vadodara (DD News)*
Haryana	HPT	Hissar
	HPT	Karnal
	HPT	Hissar (DD News)
	LPT	Fatehabad*
	LPT	Hissar (DD News)
	LPT	Kaithal*
Himachal Pradesh	HPT	Dharamshala
	HPT	Kasauli (DD News)*
	VLPT	Chirgaon*
	VLPT	Kaja*
	VLPT	Phooladhar*
Jammu and Kashmir	HPT	Samba*
	HPT	Naushera*

1	2
	HPT Tithwal*
	HPT Samba (DD News)*
	HPT Naushera (DD News)*
	HPT Tithwal (DD News)*
	HPT Srinagar (DD News)*
	VLPT Arnas*
	VLPT Basgo*
	VLPT Boniyar*
	VLPT Chakroi*
	VLPT Chanani*
	LPT Dharamsala*
	VLPT Doongi Grati*
	VLPT Gujjaron Nagrota*
	VLPT Gulmarg*
	VLPT Jajjar Kotli*
	VLPT Keri*
	VLPT Loran*
	VLPT Manigam*
	VLPT Mohri*
	VLPT Nagrota*
	LPT Patni Top*
	LPT Pattan*
	VLPT Pulwama*
	VLPT Sansaar*
	VLPT Sudh Mahadev*
	VLPT Tatapani*
	VLPT Thathari*

1	2	
	VLPT	Tilal*
	VLPT	Tral*
Jharkhand	LPT	Bokaro (DD News)*
	VLPT	Ramgarh Hill*
Karnataka	HPT	Mysore*
	HPT	Raichur*
	HPT	Mysore (DD News)*
	HPT	Dharwad (DD News)*
	LPT	Bellary (DD News)*
	LPT	Davangere (DD News)*
	VLPT	Huvin Hippargi*
	VLPT	Kudligi*
	VLPT	Sringeri*
Kerala	HPT	Calicut (DD News)*
	VLPT	Erattupetta*
	VLPT	Mundakayam*
	LPT	Thrissur (DD News)*
Madhya Pradesh	HPT	Sagar
	HPT	Chhatarpur
Maharashtra	HPT	Ambajogai (DD News)*
	HPT	Jalgaon*
	LPT	Akola (DD News)*
	LPT	Amravati (DD News)*
	LPT	Badlapur*
	LPT	Dhule (DD News)*
	LPT	Kolhapur (DD News)*

1	2	
	LPT	Malegaon (DD News)*
	LPT	Nanded (DD News)*
	LPT	Nashik (DD News)*
	LPT	Sangli (DD News)*
	LPT	Shirdi*
	VLPT	Vasantgarh*
Manipur	HPT	Imphal (DD News)*
Meghalaya	HPT	Shillong (DD News)*
	LPT	Cherapunji*
Mizoram	HPT	Aizawl (DD News)*
Nagaland	HPT	Kohima (DD News)*
Orissa	LPT	Bahalda*
Punjab	HPT	Bhatinda (DD News)
Rajasthan	HPT	Bikaner
	HPT	Ajmer (DD News)*
	HPT	Bundi (DD News)*
	LPT	Alwar (DD News)*
	LPT	Khajuwala*
Sikkim	HPT	Gangtok (DD News)*
	VLPT	Zorethang*
Tamil Nadu	HPT	Kodaikanal (DD News)*
	HPT	Dharmapuri
	HPT	Tirunelveli
	LPT	Erode (DD News)*
	VLPT	Kanchipuram*
	LPT	Madurai (DD News)*

1	2	
	LPT	Tirunelveli (DD News)*
	LPT	Tirupattur (DD News)*
	VLPT	Tiruvannamalai*
Tripura	LPT	Ambassa*
Uttar Pradesh	HPT	Kanpur (DD News)*
	HPT	Bareilly (DD News)*
	HPT	Faizabad*
Uttaranchal	LPT	Bachher*
	VLPT	Dewai*
	VLPT	Dugadda*
	VLPT	Fata*
	VLPT	Manila*
West Bengal	HPT	Kurseong (DD News)*
	HPT	Kharagpur*

Note: * Commissioned

Uneconomic Railway Lines

*277. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the uneconomic railway lines as on date, Zone-wise;

(b) the loss being suffered by the Railways from these lines during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Railways have decided to close down some of these lines; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) The zone-wise number of uneconomic branch lines is 110 as indicated below:—

Sl. No.	Railway	No. of Uneconomic branch lines
1	2	3
1.	Central	6
2.	Eastern	11
3.	East Central	5
4.	East Coast	4
5.	Northern	13
6.	North Central	5
7.	North Eastern	5

1	2	3
8.	Northeast Frontier	16
9.	North Western	6
10.	Southern	6
11.	South Central	4
12.	South Eastern	2
13.	South East Central	2
14.	South Western	4
15.	Western	21
16.	West Central	0
Total		110

(b) The loss being suffered by Government from uneconomic branch lines during the last three years is as under:—

Year	Loss in crore of Rupees
2004-05	404.82
2003-04	409.94
2002-03	460.77

(c) and (d) In view of the losses being suffered and also based on the recommendation of the Railways Reforms Committee, Railways have been making efforts to close down some of these uneconomic branch lines, with the concurrence of the State Government concerned, but State Governments have agreed neither to the closure of these lines nor to share the losses as proposed.

[Translation]

Irregularities in Supply of Meat and Poultry

*278. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the court of inquiry instituted to enquire into the alleged irregularities in the supply of meat and poultry in the Ladakh sector of the Northern Command has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the findings thereof; and

(c) the action taken against the officers found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A Court of Inquiry was instituted by the Army to inquire into the alleged irregularities in the supply of meat and poultry in the Ladakh sector of the Northern Command. The Court of Inquiry has not yet submitted its report.

[English]

National War Memorial

*279. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has allotted land for the construction of a National War Memorial;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the location thereof;

(c) further steps taken by the Government for the construction of the said Memorial; and

(d) if not, the time by which the Government is expected to get the land allotted for the purpose?

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

(b) to (d) Various options relating to construction of National War Memorial were discussed. A concept plan for the National War Memorial, which envisages location at India Gate Complex, has been presented before Delhi Urban Art Commission (DUAC).

Identification and providing the site for the proposed structure, which involves decision/clearance by various agencies, is not under the control of Ministry of Defence.

LPG Facility

*280. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

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

(a) the number of LPG distributorship being operated by Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) in the country, State-wise/company-wise;

(b) the percentage of population availing LPG facility in the country, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has advised the Oil Marketing Companies to concentrate their future expansion plans on semi-urban and rural areas in the country;

(d) if so, the steps taken by the OMCs and achievements made therefrom; and

(e) The measures taken by the Government to provide LPG facilities in the uncovered areas?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) As on 1-1-2006, four Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) namely,

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) and IBP Co. Limited (IBP) were operating 9213 LPG distributorships in the country. The State-wise/company-wise details are given in the enclosed statement-I.

(b) Through the 9213 LPG distributorships, OMCs are serving about 876 lakh LPG customers covering 44.88% population of the country. The State/UT-wise details are given in the enclosed statement-II.

(c) to (e) OMCs supply domestic LPG through their distribution network and have the freedom to set up LPG distributorships at viable locations as per their commercial considerations. The Government has advised OMCs to concentrate their future expansion plans in semi-urban and rural areas in the country.

As on 1-1-2006, OMCs had set up 1063 and 1163 distributorships in rural and urban-rural areas respectively in the country. OMCs have taken steps such as introducing 5 kg cylinders and setting up community kitchens with a view to enhance the use of LPG in uncovered areas. OMCs have also finalized a common industry marketing plan covering 791 locations for setting up LPG distributorships mainly in rural and urban-rural (semi-urban) locations.

Statement-I*State-wise LPG distributors as on 1-1-2006*

State/UTs	IOC	BPC	HPC	IBP	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh	354	187	300	6	847
Arunachal Pradesh	29	0	0	0	29
Assam	223	15	9	0	247
Bihar	184	63	51	0	298
Chhattisgarh	78	27	41	0	146
Delhi	194	71	45	0	310

1	2	3	4	5	6
Goa	7	17	28	0	52
Gujarat	308	112	120	7	547
Haryana	134	80	55	8	277
Himachal Pradesh	83	13	18	0	114
Jammu and Kashmir	75	16	59	0	150
Jharkhand	84	27	26	0	137
Karnataka	214	111	159	0	484
Kerala	198	100	74	0	372
Madhya Pradesh	289	131	139	0	559
Maharashtra	219	375	399	9	1002
Manipur	30	0	0	0	30
Meghalaya	32	0	0	0	32
Mizoram	25	0	0	0	25
Nagaland	24	0	0	0	24
Orissa	74	37	68	0	179
Punjab	241	98	74	14	427
Rajasthan	202	117	116	0	435
Sikkim	7	0	0	0	7
Tamil Nadu	375	145	101	13	634
Tripura	28	0	0	0	28
Uttar Pradesh	666	273	176	20	1135
Uttaranchal	127	17	16	1	161
West Bengal	283	74	103	11	471
Andaman and Nicobar	4	0	0	0	4
Chandigarh	20	4	5	0	29
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	1	0	1

1	2	3	4	5	6
Daman and Diu	0	0	2	0	2
Lakshadweep	1	0	0	0	1
Pondicherry	8	4	5	0	17
All India	4820	2114	2190	89	9213

Statement-II

State-wise % of population covered by domestic LPG as on 1-1-2006

State/UTs	% population covered by LPG	1	2
1	2		
Andhra Pradesh	57.57	Manipur	52.12
Arunachal Pradesh	48.18	Meghalaya	20.75
Assam	32.52	Mizoram	92.44
Bihar	14.88	Nagaland	35.13
Chhattisgarh	21.12	Orissa	16.61
Delhi	100.00	Punjab	94.37
Goa	100.00	Rajasthan	38.57
Gujarat	49.46	Sikkim	80.80
Haryana	76.96	Tamil Nadu	54.82
Himachal Pradesh	91.58	Tripura	29.89
Jammu and Kashmir	79.15	Uttar Pradesh	35.09
Jharkhand	18.49	Uttaranchal	84.28
Karnataka	46.55	West Bengal	27.71
Kerala	67.79	Andaman and Nicobar	58.26
Madhya Pradesh	32.30	Chandigarh	100.0
Maharashtra	58.66	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	60.69
		Daman and Diu	70.54
		Lakshadweep	29.78
		Pondicherry	96.01
		Total	44.88

Study on Nocturnal Bird Hits

*281. SHRI UDAY SINGH:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India (AAI) proposes to conduct a study on the nocturnal bird hits with planes at night as reported in The Times of India dated February 9, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the AAI has contemplated any steps to prevent birds from coming in the flight path; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Airports Authority of India (AAI) is planning to undertake a study on bird activity at night at Indira Gandhi International Airport. AAI have received quotation from Bombay Natural History Society, which has carried out such surveys in the past.

(c) and (d) To reduce the occurrence of bird hit incidents, Airports Authority of India takes various preventive measures like establishment of Airfield Environment Management Committees, proper collection and disposal of garbage, covering garbage dumps, installation of incinerators, prevention of illegal skinning of animals, establishment of modern abattoirs, prevention of water logging inside the airport, pigeon proofing of hangars, scaring and shooting of birds within the airfield, pilot warning by Air Traffic Controllers, amendment of aircraft approach and departure procedures, reducing of insect population by spraying chemical etc.

Development of Platform at Ajni Railway Station

1987. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to develop 24 coach platform at Ajni railway station in Nagpur city;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the progress made in this regard so far; and

(d) time by which it is likely to be made functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. A work of developing of 24 coaches length platform at Ajni railway station has been sanctioned and the same is likely to be completed by December, 2006.

Listing of Monuments by UNESCO as Danger

1988. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether UNESCO has listed some of the monuments in the country as 'danger';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any meeting was held with UNESCO on the issue;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to protect the sanctity of such monuments in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes Sir, the Group of Monuments at Hampi under the jurisdiction of Bangalore circle of Archaeological Survey of India has been inscribed as World Heritage site in Danger by UNESCO.

(b) Following the construction of two bridges viz., a foot-bridge across River Tungabhadra near Virupaksha Temple and another cable-stayed bridge across River Tungabhadra near Anegundi, the Group of Monuments at Hampi was included under the endangered list by the UNESCO in 1999.

(c) After the inscription of the site in the endangered list, a series of UNESCO Missions have visited Hampi and suggested various measures to be implemented by the State parties for deletion of the Heritage Site from the endangered list.

(d) The major recommendations of the UNESCO include:—

1. Removal of the foot-bridge across River Tungabhadra near Virupaksha temple.
2. Construction of a bypass road along the River Tungabhadra connecting the existing Venkatapura Road so as to curb vehicular traffic into the heritage zone.
3. Constitution of Hampi World Heritage Area Management Authority be exclusively manage the heritage site.
4. Preparation of Integrated Site management Plan.

(e) In accordance with the UNESCO recommendations, the state parties have taken the following action in respect of Hampi:—

- (a) Removed the foot-bridge.
- (b) Constructed a bypass road across River Tungabhadra and erected necessary height barriers.
- (c) Constituted a separate authority viz., Hampi World Heritage Area Management Authority to exclusively manage the affairs of Hampi.
- (d) Conducted Stakeholders Meeting.
- (e) The draft Site Management Plan has been submitted to the UNESCO.

BRO's Workers Killed/Injured

1989. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special allowance is being paid to Border Roads Organisation (BRO) workers posted in hilly areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of workers of the Border Roads Organisation Killed/injured while on duty particularly on the Borders during the last three years; and

(d) the compensation paid to the next kith and kin of deceased workers and to the injured workers during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The following Special Allowances are being paid in Hilly/High Altitude Areas:—

- (i) **High Altitude Allowance** at a height of 9000 feet and above ranging from Rs. 260/- to Rs. 1600/- per month.
- (ii) **Slachen Allowance** to General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) personnel deployed in Nubra Valley (Leh-Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir) ranging from Rs. 1500/- to Rs. 2500/- per month.
- (iii) **Snow Clearance Allowance** at Rs. 150/- to Rs. 300/- pm.

The following allowing allowances are also available to BRO workers in hilly areas as admissible to other Central Government departments:—

- (i) **Composite Hill Compensatory Allowance** ranging from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 300/- per month at a height of 1000 meters or above.
- (ii) **Special Compensatory (Remote) Locality Allowance** in special remote localities of the country ranging Rs. 40/- to Rs. 1300/- per month.
- (c) (i) Number of BRO workers killed during last three years while on duty: **332**.
- (ii) Number of workers injured during last 3 years while on duty: **1062**.

(d) Amount of compensation paid to BRO workers killed/injured: **Rs. 5,15,74,326/-** (Rupees Five Crores Fifteen Lakhs Seventy Four Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Six Only).

[Translation]

Upgradation and Development of Archaeological Monuments

1990. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal regarding upgradation and development of 'Archaeological Monuments and Chhatrasal Museum' in Dhubela in Chhattarpur district of Madhya Pradesh is lying pending with the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for its pendency; and

(d) the time by which the said proposal is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir. No such proposal is pending with this Ministry.

(b) to (d) Questions do not arise.

[English]

Drilling of Horizontal Oil Well

1991. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil India Ltd. (OIL) has successfully drilled the first ever horizontal oil well in the North-East region, by commissioning well No. Makum-17 in Tinsukia district, in collaboration with Newsco Deviation and Horizontal Drilling Services Inc. of Calgary (Canada);

(b) if so, whether the oil wells drilled by this process yield oil many times higher than vertical wells in the same structure;

(c) if so, the salient features of this process; and

(d) the steps being taken to popularize adoption of this process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Oil India Limited (OIL) has successfully drilled the first ever horizontal well in Makum in Tinsukia district in Assam. M/s. Newsco Deviation and Horizontal Drilling Services Inc. was, however, engaged as a contractor only, not as a collaborator. The first horizontal well drilled by OIL in Makum in Tinsukia district, Assam yielded crude oil production which was 2.5 to 3.0 times more than a conventional vertical well in the area.

(c) This is a technique for drilling wells horizontally within an oil/gas bearing reservoir; it provides a longer section and larger drainage area in the producing reservoir leading to improved production from the well. The drilling of such horizontal wells requires special tools, equipment and expertise.

(d) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), OIL and private/Joint Venture companies are drilling horizontal wells depending upon the technical parameters.

[Translation]

Accident of Goods Train

1992. SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of incident when a running goods train was divided into two parts in January, 2006 between Alania and Ranwatha road stations in Kota division on Delhi-Kota-Mumbai rail route;

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

(c) the measures being taken by the Railways to check recurrence of such incidents?

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

(b) The incident of train parting of goods train (58 wagons loaded) destined to Kota Thermal Power plant occurred at 3.20 hrs on 13-1-06 between Ranwatha road and Alania stations on Kota Division, due to breakage of coupler body of one of the wagons.

The coupler body fracture was 100% fresh and there was no apparent manufacturing defect. The train parting took place due to poor enginemanship of Driver.

(c) Following measures are being taken to check recurrence of such incidents:—

(i) Each case of train parting is thoroughly investigated.

(ii) Drivers involved in train parting are being

intensively counseled and retrained to improve their driving skill.

- (iii) Overhauling, maintenance and inspection of coupler, and its components is being monitored closely.

[English]

Cooperation in Petroleum Sector with African Countries

1993. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in its efforts to diversify hydrocarbon reserves, the Government is planning for closer ties with Sub-Saharan African countries in the energy cooperation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India has offered some services help to these countries in exchange of oil blocks; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the future strategy chalked out by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) PSU Oil Companies like Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) through its subsidiary ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), Oil India Limited (OIL), GAIL (India) Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) are actively pursuing acquisition of exploration and production (E and P) acreages abroad, including in Sub-Saharan African Countries, to enhance the energy security of the Country. OVL has planned investments worth US\$ 1158 million in Sudan, Libya, Ivory Coast and Egypt. The IOCL-OIL consortium, which has won two blocks in Libya, is pursuing (E and P) interests in Gabon, Nigeria, Angola, Congo and Sudan. GAIL is pursuing business opportunities in Ethiopia, while HPCL is pursuing one in Senegal.

In the case of Nigeria, the OVL-Mittal joint venture, OMEL, has entered into an MoU with the Nigerian Ministry of Energy to take up economic development projects in

the refining, railways and power sectors, in return for two E and P blocks on nomination basis, a long-term oil contract, and access to LNG when it is developed.

Indian companies will continue to pursue vigorously E and P and downstream opportunities in Sub-Saharan African Countries for future acquisitions and beneficial business ventures.

[Translation]

Task Force on NGOs

1994. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any decision to set up a Task Force for keeping vigil on the working of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);

(b) if so, the details and objectives thereof;

(c) whether two Task Forces were constituted in the past too but they were proved unsuccessful in achieving their objectives;

(d) if so, the difference between the constitution of the present Task Force and the Task Force constituted in the past; and

(e) the composition of the present Task Force and the time by which it is likely to submit its report?

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) and (e) Do not arise.

Expansion/Renovation of Railway Stations in Delhi

1995. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken for expansion/renovation of some railway stations in Delhi to reduce the pressure of passengers on the three main railway stations in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the railway stations that have been identified for implementation; and

(d) the funds earmarked for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Apart from the work of expansion/renovation being undertaken at the three major railway stations in Delhi i.e. Delhi, New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin, the following works have also been sanctioned for other stations, to reduce the pressure on these stations:—

(i) Delhi Safdarjang: Conversion of line no. 1 into common loop and extension of platform at a cost of Rs. 2.28 crore.

(ii) Anand Vihar: Provision of a new terminal at a cost of Rs. 85 crore.

Further, Delhi Sarai Rohilla station is also being used for dispatching and receiving special trains for clearing holiday and summer rush.

[English]

Royalty on Natural Gas

1996. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of natural gas produced from different sources in the country during each of the last two years, State-wise; and

(b) the amount and the rate of royalty paid to each State during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Production of Natural Gas during the last two years State-wise is as under:—

(MMSCM)

	2003-04	2004-05
Andhra Pradesh	1927.00	1708.42
Arunachal Pradesh	42.99	39.59
Assam	2203.85	2248.15
Gujarat	3517.00	3582.00
Rajasthan	168.13	212.74
Tamil Nadu	605.00	678.00
Tripura	508.00	496.00

(b) The amount of Royalty paid during the last two years State-wise is as under:—

(Rs. in crores)

	2003-04	2004-05
Andhra Pradesh	35.48	30.66
Arunachal Pradesh	*	*
Assam	16.32	22.26
Gujarat	74.47	96.42**
Rajasthan	1.39	2.30
Tamil Nadu	11.03	12.60
Tripura	5.94	6.69

* No Royalty is payable to the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh on the natural gas produced in Arunachal Pradesh as the entire quantity of natural gas produced is utilized for internal consumption/flare and no gas is sold.

** This includes royalty arrears of Rs. 17.33 crores in 2004-05.

Royalty on Natural Gas in terms of the provisions of Section 6A of the Oilfields (Regulations and Development) Act 1948 and clause 14 of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules 1959 accrues to the concerned State Governments for onshore areas and to Central Government for offshore areas @ 10% of the value of the

natural gas at wellhead/sale price fixed by Government from time to time.

[Translation]

Educational/Vocational Training to Physically Handicapped Persons

1997. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of centres/institutes imparting educational/vocational training to the physically handicapped persons in the country particularly in Maharashtra, State/Union Territory-wise;

(b) the details of funds allocated/released to these centres/institutes during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;

(c) the details of utilisation of funds by these centres/institutes during the said period, State/UT-wise;

(d) the total number of persons imparted training by these centres/institutes during the said period, State/UT-wise;

(e) whether there has been any instance of withholding grants or taking penal action against any institute by the Government due to irregularities; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The details of financial assistance extended by the Central Government to different NGOs/VOs for imparting educational/vocational training to the physically handicapped children in the country including in Maharashtra during each of the last three years and the current year, State/Union Territory-wise, under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme are available on the website of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment-www. socialjustice.nic.in.

(c) Grant in aid under the above Scheme to an Organisation is released after receipt of utilisation certificate in respect of grant released earlier. Unspent balance, if any, of previous year is adjusted against the admissible grant for the current year. The unspent balance of current year will be taken into account while releasing of grant of next year.

(d) The number of persons to whom training/education has been imparted during the last three years and current year so far, State/UT-wise, is given in the enclosed statement.

(e) and (f) On detection of irregularities in utilisation of funds/implementation of projects, release of further grants to 5 voluntary organisation have been stopped.

Statement

State-wise details of number of persons imparted training/education (physically handicapped) under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme during last three years and the current year i.e. upto 28-02-2006

State/UTs	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	5267	1881	2673	227
Assam	347	238	365	126
Bihar	644	1161	890	240
Chandigarh	107	120	117	

1	2	3	4	5
Chhattisgarh		20	80	0
Delhi	3712	2747	302	1384
Gujarat	124	158	94	53
Haryana	146	159	142	0
Himachal Pradesh	27	19	25	0
Jharkhand	20	20	20	0
Karnataka	1356	1244	679	339
Kerala	455	892	478	20
Madhya Pradesh	252	267	379	97
Maharashtra	1304	367	501	0
Manipur	90	138	141	60
Meghalaya	152	157	0	0
Orissa	474	817	375	110
Punjab	841	730	542	990
Rajasthan	661	747	763	108
Tamil Nadu	1153	625	915	85
Uttar Pradesh	2016	2974	1806	602
Uttaranchal	175	92	104	0
West Bengal	233	466	254	99

*[English]***Media Commission**

1998. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any decision to set up a Media Commission;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be set up; and

(d) if not, the reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) No, Sir.

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

Opening of Inland Container Depots

1999. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Inland Container Depots (ICDs) of Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR) functioning in the country at present;

(b) whether the CONCOR proposes to open more Inland Container Depots (ICDs) in the country; and

(c) if so, the details alongwith the locations thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Presently Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) has 56 container Terminals in the country. Out of 56, 41 are Inland Container Depots (ICDs), 9 are Domestic Container Terminals and 6 are Rail Transfer Facility mainly set up at Port towns.

(b) and (c) Yes Sir, CONCOR proposes to set up the following new rail-linked container terminals in addition to 56 existing container terminals.

- (i) Dhappar (Near Chandigarh).
- (ii) Khemli (Near Udaipur).
- (iii) Madho Singh (Near Mirzapur).
- (iv) Sonipat.
- (v) Suranusi (Near Jalandhar).

Development of 'Bibi Ka Maqbara'

2000. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the state of utter neglect of 'Bibi ka Maqbara' in Aurangabad (Maharashtra) despite recent grant of Rs. 3 crore for its maintenance;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the expenditure incurred on the monument for maintenance during the last three years; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for proper maintenance of the said monument?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Bibi-ka-Maqbara is maintained in good condition. It has also been identified

as one of the monuments to be taken up for comprehensive development and maintenance under Phase II of JBIC (Japan Bank of International Cooperation) Project as per the recommendations of the International panel of experts constituted under the project.

Expenditure incurred during past three years on structural conservation, chemical preservation and environmental development of Bibi-ka-Maqbara is as under:—

2002-03	—	Rs. 17,41,299/-
2003-04	—	Rs. 35,15,124/-
2004-05	—	Rs. 27,31,559/-

Kollam-Virudhnagar Gauge Conversion Project

2001. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether necessary sanction has been accorded to the Kollam-Virudhnagar gauge conversion project;

(b) if so, whether the acquisition of land for this project has been completed and handed over to the Railways;

(c) if so, the progress of work done so far on the project; and

(d) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Kollam (Quilon)-Virudhnagar is a part of Quilon-Tenkasi-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur and Tenkasi-Virudhnagar (357 kilometres) gauge conversion project. Work on Virudhnagar-Tenkasi (121 kilometres) section has been completed and opened for traffic. Work on Quilon-Tenkasi-Tiruchendur (236 Kilometres) is in various stages of progress.

On Quilon-Tenkasi (101 kilometres) section, State Government has handed over the land for Quilon-Punalur (45 kilometres) section. However, land owners are obstructing the work. Quilon-Punalur is likely to be completed during 2006-07.

For Sengottai-Tenkasi (8 kilometres) section, land acquisition is under process by the State Government.

Medical Facilities at Railway Stations

2002. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether adequate medical facilities are not available for the physically handicapped, aged and children at Howrah and Sealdah railway stations and other railway junctions in West Bengal.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the effective measures being taken by the Railways to provide such facilities at the railway stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Adequate medical facilities are available for the physically handicapped, aged and children at Howrah and Sealdah railway stations and other railway junctions in West Bengal.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri Railway Line

2003. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the survey of laying new railway line Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri has been completed;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) the time by which construction work for laying the said line is likely to start; and

(d) if not, the reasons for delay and the time by which the survey is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (d) Updating survey for new line from Bhanupalli-Beti via Bilaspur (63 kms) was earlier carried out in 1994-95. In the budget 2004-05, updating survey for new line from Bhanupalli-Bilaspur was included. This has been completed in February, 2005. As per updated survey report, the cost of 47.65 kms long line has been assessed at Rs. 641.48 crore with a

rate of return as (-) 20.93%. Zonal Railway has been advised to update the survey upto Beri as was done in 1994-95. Updating survey for new line from Bhanupalli-Beri via Bilaspur (63 kms) is targeted for completion by 31-03-2006.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Insurance to Physically/Mentally Challenged Persons

2004. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan/policy for providing insurance to physically/mentally challenged persons;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any guidelines exist for the Government/private insurance companies in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether such guidelines are binding on the private insurance companies; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India offers two plans viz. Jeevan Aadhar and Jeevan Vishwas for the benefit of physically challenged dependents subject to certain restrictions and with extra premium. No insurance policy is offered to minors with mental retardation. For others, insurance cover is allowed on merits of the case subject to degree of mental retardation and other parameters.

(c) to (f) Do not arise.

AIR Station at Macherela in Andhra Pradesh

2005. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the formalities regarding opening of an AIR station at Macherela in Andhra Pradesh have since been completed; and

(b) if so, the time by which the station is likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) and (b) A 3 kW A.I.R. F.M. transmitter with studio facilities is ready for commissioning at Macherela (Andhra Pradesh). However, due to non-sanction of the required staff for operational and maintenance purposes, the same is yet to be commissioned. Efforts are being made to get the approval of competent authority for sanctioning of required Operation and Maintenance staff.

Adventure Tourism Spots

2006. DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the major adventure tourist spots identified and supported by the Government in the country;

(b) whether Wagamon in Kerala has been identified as adventure tourism spot where International Paragliding event is taking place in March, 2006;

(c) whether the Government would consider setting up of a Paragliding Training Institute in Wagamon to promote adventure tourism in the State; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Identification of tourist sports including the major adventure tourism spots is the responsibility of the State Government/UT Administration concerned. However, Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of project proposals prioritized in consultation with them every year.

(b) to (d) No project proposal, complete in all respect, has been received by the Ministry of Tourism nor it has been prioritized for grant of central financial assistance for setting up of a Paragliding Training Institute in Wagamon to promote adventure tourism in the State of Kerala during 2005-06.

However, Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned a project under Beach Tourism Circuit on the sector Shankumugham beach-Cherai beach-Nattika beach-Uzhuppilangadu beach-Payyambalam beach-Meenkunnu beach for central financial assistance of Rs. 798.00 lakh during 2005-06 which included the component of Adventure Sports and beach development at Muzhuppilangadu for an amount of Rs. 245.00 lakh. During 2000-01, a project for Promotion of Adventure Tourism in Munnar was also sanctioned for an amount of Rs. 72.00 lakh.

Railway Line between Kolkata and North Eastern States

2007. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to lay a railway line between Kolkata and North Eastern States via Bangladesh; 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.

Maintenance of Valuables by ASI

2008. SHRI ABDUL MANNAN HOSSAIN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether various historical places like Raj Mahal, Hazarduari, Imam Bara etc. of Murshidabad, former capital of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, have taken over and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), but the various valuable things which are kept there such as ornaments, paintings, armours of Nawab's family are being maintained by State Government;

(b) if so, whether the Government is considering any proposal to bring these valuables under the control of ASI; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The historical places

namely Hazarduari Palace, South Gate, Imambara, White Mosque, Yellow Mosque and Tripolia Gate in Murshidabad Town were taken over from the State Government and are being maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India alongwith valuable artifacts kept in Hazarduari Palace. However, religious objects such as Silver Tajiya, Mahi, Bale, Chand, Hyder-e-Alam, Panja, etc. stored in Imambara are in the custody of the State Government.

Third Phase for Expansion of FM Radio

2009. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATÉL:

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

(a) whether the Government is contemplating the third phase for expansion of FM Radio in small cities in the country;

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

(c) whether the Government proposes to set up a regulator in the broadcasting sector;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):
(a) and (b) Policy for Phase III of FM Radio has not been formulated as yet.

(c) to (e) The Government has decided to set up a Broadcasting Regulatory Authority to regulate broadcasting services in India. A draft Bill is under preparation.

Bilateral Agreement with Thailand

2010. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Thailand has agreed to open up bilateral air links and allow even private Indian carriers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) During the recently held bilateral air services consultation between India and Thailand on 9-10 February, 2006, an MoU has been signed between the two countries, enabling operation of more flights between the two countries, by the scheduled designated carriers of both sides.

(b) As per this MoU, the capacity entitlement for the designated airlines of both sides has been increased to 18671 seats per week in a phased manner upto Summer 2006. Besides, the designated airlines of both sides have unlimited access to/from 18 tourist gateways in India. After this agreement, the Indian as well as Thai scheduled carriers can deploy more additional services on India-Thailand route.

(c) The above arrangement is effective from the date of signing of the MoU i.e. 10 February 2006.

Diversion of Funds of North Eastern Railway Region

2011. PROF. M. RAMADASS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the funds earmarked exclusively for North Eastern Railway Region are diverted to other regions;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the fixation of 14 per cent Internal Rate of Return for projects in North Eastern Region is not very high;

(d) if so, whether the Railways would consider to relax the norms of financial viability for projects in North Eastern Region;

(e) if so, whether the Railways would determine the economic viabilities of a project on a better basis by taking into account the prevailing interest rate and socio-economic considerations of the Region; and

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

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (f) The prescribed cut-off rate of return (14%) being followed in Indian Railways for determining the financial viability of projects constitutes not only the cost of capital but also provision for capital formation, risk factors etc. Besides paying dividend to General Revenue, the Indian Railways are required to make provisions for Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF), Pension Fund and Development Fund (DF). Since railways have initiated a plan to cater to the modernization, operational improvement and through put enhancement for quantum jump in the traffic expected on Indian Railways, it has become imperative that adequate surplus is generated to take care of the requirements of Development Fund (DF). There is a crying need to increase the internal generation of resources for financing projects. Therefore only those projects, which are capable of generating high returns, need to be taken up. To enable selection of such projects, it is necessary to keep the cut off percentage of rate of return (ROR) at sufficiently high level and this justifies 14% ROR as cut off percentage for selecting projects for investment. Railways are conscious of their responsibilities towards socio-economic and industrial development of backward areas not connected by a reliable transport network. Regardless of the benchmark of 14%, many projects on Indian Railways including works on North Eastern region are sanctioned on socio-economic and developmental considerations. At present, 6 new line projects and 5 gauge conversion projects which are not financially viable are being executed in North Eastern region. Jiribam-Imphal Road (Tupul), Kumarghat-Agartala nedw line projects and Lumding-Silchar-Jiribam gauge conversion project have declared as National Projects.

Reservation for Wards of Ex-Servicemen

2012. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any policy of the Government to provide reservation in professional institutions to the wards of Defence personnel including ex-servicemen;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the benefits of reservation in professional

institutions had not reached to the wards of serving/retired Defence personnel; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Different State Governments provide reservation for the Wards of ex-servicemen Defence Personnel in professional institutions. In addition, 27 MBBS and 1 BDS seats are reserved for wards of ex-servicemen/serving soldiers under various categories at all India level coordinated by Kendriya Sainik Board with the Ministry of Health. These benefits are being utilized.

Transportation of Explosives by Terrorists

2013. SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the terrorists have transported a large quantity of explosives during the last two years from Delhi to Kashmir;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to prevent such activities in future; and

(c) the number of terrorists killed/arrested/surrendered during the last one year?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Corruption in Army

2014. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY:

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the widely prevalent corruption in the Army;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to formulate any code of conduct to root out corruption in the Army; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Indian Army is governed by the Army Act, 1950, which has provisions to control corruption and indiscipline in the Indian Army. Further, there is a well-defined Procurement Procedure with built-in checks and balances. For ensuring high levels of transparency in defence deals/purchases, Government have issued orders, in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), for mandatory and time-bound scrutiny of all major procurement/purchase decisions (worth Rs. 75 crores and above), by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C and AG) and, where necessary, by the CVC. Wherever the Government deems it necessary, the case is referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Inclusion of Castes of Uttar Pradesh in SC/ST List

2015. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has requested the Union Government to enlist some castes namely Kashyap, Nishad and Prajapati of Uttar Pradesh as scheduled castes/scheduled tribes instead of other backward classes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The proposal of Government of Uttar Pradesh for inclusion of Kashyap and Nishad communities in the list of Scheduled Castes has been processed in consultation with the Registrar General of India as per approved modalities and referred back to the State Government for additional ethnographic information. Like wise, as the proposal of State Government for inclusion of Kumhar (Prajapati) in the list of Scheduled Castes was not substantiated with requisite ethnographic information, it has been referred back. No proposal of Government of Uttar Pradesh has however, been received for inclusion of these communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes.

[English]

Investment of PIO In Aviation Sector

2016. SHRI SURENDRA PRAKASH GOYAL:

SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM:

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA:

DR. RAJESH MISHRA:

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has considered to allow the participation of Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) in the domestic civil aviation sector through the FDI route;

(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 OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The matter is under consideration.

Beautification of Chaitya Bhoomi Stupa

2017. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in March-2004, the Government of Maharashtra had submitted a plan for redevelopment and beautification of the Chaitya Bhoomi Stupa at Dadar Choupati, Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the plan has since been approved;

(d) if not, the reasons for the delay;

(e) the stage at which the matter stands at present; and

(f) the time by which it is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (f) The development and promotion of places of tourist spots/interest is the responsibility of the State Government. However, the

Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of projects prioritized in consultation with them every year.

On receipt of project proposals, complete in all respects, these are appraised on the basis of inter-se-priority and funds released, subject to availability under the respective heads.

The project for redevelopment and beautification of the Chaitya Bhoomi Stupa at Dadar Choupati, Mumbai was not prioritised for grant of central financial assistance nor has any such proposal been submitted by the State Government.

[Translation]

Scholarship to SCs/OBCs Students

2018. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether scholarship is provided to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes in the Government and recognized schools in all the States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government is aware that crore of rupees of scholarship is being embezzled every year by false registration of students and registering the names of the students in more than one school in certain States;

(d) if so, the names of those States where such cases of misuse of funds have come to the notice of the Union Government during each of the last three years; and

(e) the action taken against the persons found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government is providing scholarships to SC and OBC students under the following schemes:—

(1) Post Matric Scholarships to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes.

(2) Post Matric Scholarships to the students belonging to Other Backward Classes.

(3) Pre-Matric Scholarships to the students belonging to Other Backward Classes.

The details of these schemes are available in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's website.

(c) to (e) A complaint has been received alleging misuse of Government funds under the scheme of scholarship to SCs/OBCs students by opening fake school in Uttar Pradesh. The matter has been referred to Central Vigilance Commission. Besides, two such cases were also reported earlier in the state of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, wherein appropriate actions were taken by the respective State Governments.

[English]

Emergency Landing of Air India Flight at Los Angeles

2019. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India flight had landed in emergency at Los Angeles during December, 2005;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any investigation in the matter;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the follow-up action taken thereon?

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

(b) to (d) As per the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) convention, the incident of emergency landing of Air India's flight at Los Angeles in December, 2005 is being investigated by National Transport Safety Board of United States of America. As and when the inquiry report is received, the necessary follow-up action will be taken there on.

[Translation]

Setting up of Refinery in Rajasthan

2020. SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI:

SHRI BHANWAR SINGH DANGAWAS:

SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL:

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

(a) whether the Government has designated its nominee for purchase of crude oil under the Production sharing Contract (PSC) for block RJ-ON-90/1;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has finalized the proposal for setting up of a refinery in Rajasthan;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the location identified for the purpose;

(e) if not, the present status thereof; and

(f) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has designated Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL), as the Government's nominee for purchase of entire crude oil to be produced from the block RJ-ON-90/1 as per Production Sharing Contract (PSC).

(c) No, Sir. The Government does not finalize any proposal for setting up a refinery in the country as the refinery sector is a de-regulated sector and any public sector unit (PSU) or private company is free to set up a refinery in Rajasthan or elsewhere, depending on its commercial viability and company's strategy.

(d) to (f) Do not arise in view of (c) above.

Opening of Computerised Reservation Centre at Basni

2021 SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any

proposals from the Jodhpur Division for opening of computerized reservation centre at Basni in Jodhpur city;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Railways thereon; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. A request for opening of Passenger Reservation Centre at Basni Railway Station has been received.

(c) and (d) The proposal for provision of Computerised Passenger Reservation Centre at Basni Railway Station has been sanctioned. Its commissioning will be done after the preliminary work relating to installation of computer equipment, obtaining of tele-communication channel etc. and creation of civil infrastructure is complete.

[English]

Tourism Projects of Kerala

2022. SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN:

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA:

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI:

SHRI P.C. THOMAS:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received some projects from the Government of Kerala for the development of basic infrastructure in the tourism sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the financial assistance sought for each project;

(c) whether necessary sanctions for these projects have been accorded;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the funds released for each project; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of projects submitted by the State Government for grant of central financial assistance during 2005-06 are as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of the project	CFA sought (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Revitalization of Munnar Town	500.00
2.	Development of Thekkinkad Maidan, Thrissur	500.00
3.	Development of Elephant Park at Punnathur Kotta, Guruvayoor, District Thrissur	500.00
4.	Destination Development of Ponmudi	500.00
5.	Development of Beach Circuit	800.00
6.	Integrated development of Golf course and Country Club at the Cochin International Airport, Kerala under Large Revenue Generating projects	1000.00
7.	Government of India-UNDP Endogenous Tourism projects at Kaladay (Spice Circuit) Ernakulam	20.00
8.	Government of India-UNDP Endogenous Tourism projects at Anakkara, Idukki, Spice Circuit	33.60
9.	Developing IT based marketing tools for Kerala	50.00
10.	Integrated development of Pilgrim Tourism Circuit	800.00
11.	IT based promotional tools for Kerala	54.00
Total		4757.60

(c) and (d) The following projects were sanctioned and funds released as first installment for the State of

Kerala during 2005-06 till date:—

		(Rs. in lakh)	
Sl. No.	Name of the project	CFA Sanctioned	Funds released as first installment
1	2	3	4
1.	Revitalization of Munnar Town	398.85	319.08
2.	Development of Thekkinkad Maidan, Thrissur	489.00	391.20
3.	Development of Elephant Park at Punnathur Kotta, Guruvayoor, District Thrissur	349.50	279.60
4.	Destination Development of Ponmudi	256.08	204.86
5.	Development of Beach Circuit	798.00	638.40

1	2	3	4
6.	Integrated development of Golf course and Country Club at the Cochin International Airport, Kerala under Large Revenue Generating projects	1000.00	800.00
7.	Government of India-UNDP Endogenous Tourism projects at Kaladay (Spice Circuit) Ernakulam	10.00	8.00
8.	Government of India-UNDP Endogenous Tourism projects at Kaladay (Spice Circuit) Anakkara, Idukki	10.00	8.00
9.	Developing IT based marketing tools for Kerala	7.00	6.30
10.	Integrated development of Pilgrim Tourism Circuit	704.45	563.56
11.	IT based promotional tools for Kerala	21.00	18.90
12.	Integrated development of Alappuzha Heritage Town as Tourist Circuit*	800.00	640.00
Total		4843.88	3877.90

*This project was approved in 2004-05 but funds were released in 2005-06.

(e) Does not arise.

Financial Powers to IOC for Investment

2023. SHRI SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has approached the Government for financial powers on the lines of OVL which allow investment decisions to be approved by the empowered Committee of Secretaries instead of a Cabinet approval for large investments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) With the vision of becoming a diversified and integrated oil major, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has been making forays into domestic and overseas upstream sector as well as overseas downstream sector. They have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the upstream company, Oil India Limited (OIL) to synergise skills and strengths in their respective domains to jointly pursue overseas business opportunities.

Considering the above, OIL together with IOC had requested the Government for either a fast track decision making mechanism, on the lines of the dispensation available to ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), or for a special empowerment to be made available for overseas acquisition of projects which require quick decisions within a limited time frame to meet the different dead lines associated with the transaction process.

(c) The Government have decided to permit OIL to form project specific Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) with IOC to undertake overseas projects beyond their financial powers. All such proposals for Exploration and Production (E and P) projects jointly to be undertaken by OIL and IOC would be brought for consideration before the Empowered Committee of Secretaries (ECS), under the same fast track mechanism as available to OVL. The ECS would then give its recommendations to the Government.

Bus Facilities for Ferrying Passengers

2024. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:
SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some private agencies were given contracts to run private bus services for ferrying passengers from the domestic airport to the international airport in Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the agencies to whom contracts were awarded;

(c) whether any objections have been raised by other parties in this regard;

(d) whether the contracts given to the private agencies have been terminated recently;

(e) if so, the reasons therefore;

(f) whether new tenders have been invited for operation of the said bus services; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has hired three buses from M/s Jet Airways Limited, Mumbai and after observing the passenger growth, the number of buses were increased to four. The contract was awarded on 4-12-2002 initially for a period of three months and the services are being provided under the extension of contract as on date. The contract was awarded for ferrying air-passengers from Terminal-1A, 1B to Terminal-2A, 2C and vice-versa on round the clock basis through airside. M/s Neel-Tej Tours and Travels, Mumbai was awarded contract for running one Air conditioned mini bus for ferrying the air-passengers from Terminal-1A/1B to Terminal-2A/2C through city side round the clock basis. The contract was awarded in September 2000 initially for a period of one year and extendable for a further period of four years as per terms and conditions of tender. The Contract expired in September, 2005 and the services are being provided under extension of contract as on date.

(c) In June 2004 tender was called for operating buses at airside and 3 parties responded/participated in tender action. M/s Khurana Road Lines, Hingoli and Prasanna Tours Private Limited raised the objection, stating that M/s Jet Airways (India) Ltd. have the fleet of

4 buses only and details of 5th bus have not been submitted.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) and (g) Yes, Sir. Tender has been invited for operating bus-service at airside.

Tenders were also invited for the operating bus service at cityside. 3 parties participated in tender action. Tender of one party was rejected as its bus was not meeting the technical specifications as per the tender requirements. The party lodged the case against AAI and the same was rejected by Mumbai High Court. During the tendering process it was observed that the growth of passengers at cityside is very less. Thus, the whole tendering process was cancelled and tendering process is in hand for providing smaller bus for operating at cityside.

Transfer of Ticket Checking Work to Private Company

2025. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are considering any proposal to assign the job of checking of tickets and collecting fines from passengers travelling without ticket/ with improper ticket to some private agencies;

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

(c) the time by which such a system is likely to be made operational?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Defence Cooperation with Philippines

2026. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Philippines have recently

signed an agreement for defence cooperation and security related issues;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which both countries have agreed to help and cooperate each other in defence related matters?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The 'Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Republic of Philippines concerning Defence Cooperation' was signed during the visit of the President of India to the Philippines in February 2006.

(c) The Agreement envisages enhanced defence cooperation in various fields for the mutual benefit of India and Philippines.

Pre-examination Coaching Facilities for SCs and OBCs

2027. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is implementing any scheme for providing pre-examination coaching facilities for SCs and OBCs candidates aspiring for the central services viz. Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service etc.;

(b) if so, the details of grants-in-aid sanctioned under the scheme to the State Governments/NGOs, Universities during 2004-05 and 2005-06 separately;

(c) whether the grants-in-aid under the scheme has been released to the States particularly Karnataka during the said period;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the grants-in-aid is likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of coaching and allied assistance for weaker sections including SCs, OBCs and Minorities for providing pre-examination coaching facilities for recruitment to services under Groups 'A' and 'B' under the Central and the State Governments, Public Sector Undertakings, etc. The details of Grants-in-aid released under the scheme to the State Governments, UP Administrations, NGOs and Universities during the year 2004-05 and 2005-06 are as follows:—

(Rs. in lakhs)

Implementing	2004-05	2005-06 (as on 5-3-2006)
States/UTs	140.05	35.27
Universities	232.17	30.31
NGOs	123.57	71.12
Total	495.79	136.70

(c) to (e) No proposal was received from Government of Karnataka during the year 2004-05 and the proposal received during the year 2005-06 is incomplete. Hence no grant-in-aid under the scheme has been released to the Government of Karnataka during 2004-05 and 2005-06.

[Translation]

Subsidy on Petroleum Products

2028. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state the details of the subsidy given on each of the petroleum products during each of the last two years, product-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): Currently, domestic LPG and PDS kerosene are subsidized products. The average subsidy being provided to consumers from the fiscal budget on these two products during each of the last 2 years is as follows:—

	2003-04	2004-05
Domestic LPG (Rs./Cylinder)	45.18	22.58
PDS Kerosene (Rs./Litre)	1.65	0.82

However, due to the steep rise in international prices of sensitive petroleum products, OMCs have been modulating the price increase in petrol and diesel also besides maintaining the prices of subsidized products like domestic LPG and PDS kerosene. In consequence, they have suffered under-recoveries in the sale of these products as follows:—

	(Rs/crore)	
	2003-04	2004-05 (Provisional)
Under-recoveries		
On PDS kerosene and domestic LPG	9,274	17,842
On petrol and diesel	—	2,304
Total	9,274	20,146

[English]

Auction of Oil and Gas Fields

2029. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT "BACHDA": Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to auction oil and gas fields to domestic and multinational companies;

(b) if so, the procedure to be followed by the Government for the auction of oil/gas fields;

(c) whether the procedure for auction ensure level playing field for domestic companies to compete with their international counterpart;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons for not ensuring level playing field for domestic companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of India, on 23rd February, 2006, has offered 55 blocks-24 deep water, 6 shallow water and 25 onshore blocks under the sixth round of the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VI).

(b) NELP provides for offering of blocks through International Competitive Bidding, wherein domestic and foreign companies can participate. The bid closing date for NELP-VI is 15th September, 2006.

(c) and (d) The NELP provides a level playing field for both domestic and foreign companies. The fiscal and contractual terms and conditions under NELP are the same for Indian and foreign companies. Evaluation of bids is carried out by adopting a transparent and quantitative bid evaluation criteria, which has been made public in the Notice Inviting Offers for NELP-VI.

(e) Question does not arise in view of (c) and (d) above.

Ban on Advertisements of Liquor and Tobacco Products

2030. SHRI K.C. PALANISAMY:

SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA:

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

(a) whether there is a ban on advertisements of liquor and tobacco products on Television (T.V.) channels;

(b) if so, whether the Government is aware that some manufactures of liquor are advertising their brands showing their products on T.V. channels;

(c) if so, whether any T.V. channel has been penalised for this act;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) Advertisement on TV channels transmitted/retransmitted through Cable Network are required to

adhere to the Advertising Code prescribed vide Rule 7 of Cable Television Networks Rules 1994, Rule 7(2) (viii) of the Code provides that no advertisement shall be permitted which promotes directly or indirectly production, sale or consumption of cigarette, tobacco, wine, alcohol, liquor or other intoxicants. Channels distributed through DTH are also required to adhere to this Code.

(b) to (e) The Government on has recently issued show cause notices to 31 TV channels for violation of Rule 7(2) (viii).

Sleeper Plant at Kathua

2031. CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have decided to set up sleeper plant at Kathua in Udampur, Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the progress made in the matter so far; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Railway has planned to set up a concrete sleeper plant at Kathua. No concrete sleeper plant has, however, been planned to be set up at Udampur.

(b) Tender for the same has been opened on 14-3-2005 and offers received are under examination for suitable decision.

(c) As per tender conditions, 18 months time would be allowed for setting up of new plant after the necessary order is placed.

[Translation]

Financial Assistance/Loan Facilities to OBCs for Studies

2032. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the students belonging to Other

Backward Classes (OBCs) are provided financial assistance or loan facilities for their studies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of students who have been granted such assistance or loan facilities during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(d) the rate of interest of the loan provided to such students alongwith the reaction of the Government regarding the rationale behind the said rate of interest; and

(e) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) extends loans to OBC Students whose annual family income is below double the poverty line for pursuing Professional/Technical courses at graduate or higher level under its Education Loan Scheme. The maximum loan limit per beneficiary under this Scheme is Rs. 75,000/- per annum or Rs. 3.00 lakh for the entire course.

Besides, the Ministry also releases funds to State/ UT Governments under the Schemes of Pre-matric Scholarship and Post-matric Scholarship for OBCs for disbursement of scholarships to OBC students whose parent's/Guardian's income does not exceed Rs. 44,500 per annum.

(c) Details regarding number of students granted loans by NBCFDC and number of students benefitted under the Schemes of Pre-matric and Post-matric Scholarships for OBCs during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise are given in the enclosed statement.

(d) and (e) The loan amount to the beneficiary is released through the State Channelising Agencies (SCAs). NBCFDC charges interest rate of 1.5% per annum from the SCA, which in turn charges 4% per annum from the beneficiaries. The rate of interest charged from the beneficiary is lower than the rates being charged by other financial institutions engaged in such activity.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of State/UT	Number of OBC students granted loans/financial assistance during										
		2002-03			2003-04			2004-05				
		NBCFDC's Loan Scheme	Post- matric	Pre- matric	NBCFDC's Loan Scheme	Post- matric	Pre- matric	NBCFDC's Loan Scheme	Post- matric	Pre- matric		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
1.	Andhra Pradesh	581	14,250	1,36,568	452	15,454	96,545	1120	15,454	1,20,000		
2.	Assam	—	711	15,239	—	858	16,459	—	8,580	—		
3.	Bihar	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	—		
4.	Chhattisgarh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	46,000		
5.	Goa	9	—	—	—	400	—	—	285	—		
6.	Gujarat	4	—	—	1	13,000	46,000	—	20,800	59,320		
7.	Himachal Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,197	—		
8.	Haryana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—		
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	—	5,580	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
10.	Jharkhand	—	25,365	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
11.	Karnataka	—	16,395	—	—	16,525	1,59,860	—	18,439	—		
12.	Kerala	314	—	—	229	—	—	270	—	—		
13.	Madhya Pradesh	—	—	2,68,000	—	—	—	1	—	—		

14. Maharashtra	231	—	—	302	—	—	486	1	—
15. Manipur	—	6,040	—	—	—	—	—	8,840	20,790
16. Orissa	—	—	—	—	624	—	—	—	—
17. Pondicherry	45	—	—	93	—	—	86	2,137	—
18. Punjab	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8,266	—
19. Rajasthan	—	15,296	—	—	18,604	87,497	—	—	—
20. Sikkim	—	520	—	—	—	—	1	1,028	—
21. Tamil Nadu	—	20,200	36,000	—	—	—	—	25,120	48,470
22. Tripura	—	22,144	80,016	—	23,934	39,375	—	6,612	54,889
23. Uttaranchal	—	—	—	—	3,669	—	—	7,458	38,141
24. Uttar Pradesh	7	1,08,109	—	—	1,41,321	11,50,000	—	1,02,762	9,00,000
25. West Bengal	5	18,845	50,000	4	—	—	6	—	—
Total	1196	2,53,455	5,85,853	1081	2,34,589	15,95,736	1980	2,27,980	12,87,610

*[English]***Biju Patnaik Airport**

2033. SHRI JUAL ORAM:

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for upgradation of Biju Patnaik Airport is pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to clear the proposal?

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

(b) and (c) Upgradation of infrastructure facilities at Biju Patnaik Airport, Bhubaneshwar has been taken up and planned in a phased manner. The works like strengthening and extension of runway to 9,000 feet for operation of wide-bodied aircraft is in progress and likely to be completed by June, 2006. In addition, consultants have been engaged for preparation of master plan/drawings for terminal building complex and apron etc.

*[Translation]***Destination Development Programme**

2034. SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the Government of Madhya Pradesh on March 16, 2005 and May 9, 2005 under destination development programme for Burhanpur and Indore;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The project proposals for destination development of Burhanpur and Indore have been sanctioned for central financial assistance of Rs. 449.00 lakh and Rs. 482.69 lakh respectively during the year 2005-06.

Theft of Parts from Locomotives and Coaches

2035. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware that a number of railway locomotives and coaches lying along the railway tracks after accidents;

(b) if so, whether parts of these locomotives and coaches are being stolen by the junk dealers in connivance with the Railway officers/employees; and

(c) if so, the remedial action taken or being taken by the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes Sir. 07 coaches and 02 locomotives only were lying on trackside as on 31-01-2006.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Railway Rakes for Transportation of Coal

2036. SHRI D.P. SAROJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the priority of providing rakes for handling of slack coal for brick-works through railway has been withdrawn, as a result of which Uttar Pradesh is not being provided rail rakes for handlings of coal;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has requested the Railways to provide rail rakes for handling of slack coal; and

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Railways in this regard?

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

(c) Does not arise.

Operation of Trains by using Bio-Diesel

2037. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are contemplating to operate trains by using bio-diesel;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent of savings likely to accrue to the Railways by using this fuel?

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

(b) and (c) Preliminary studies including field trials have been done on running Jan Shatabdi express between Lucknow and Allahabad and Amritsar Shatabdi Express trains. In addition to this, Southern Railway operates Diesel/Electric Multiple Units (DEMUs) and Metre Gauge (MG) locomotives for passengers service with a blend of bio-diesel.

It is premature to estimate savings at this stage, as bio-diesel is presently not available in substantial quantities.

Lalitpur-Singroli Railway Line

2038. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the work on Lalitpur-Singroli railway line is being carried out at a very slow pace;

(b) if so, the present status of the project;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be completed; and

(d) the amount spent on this project so far and the amount yet to be spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The work of construction of new broad gauge line between Lalitpur-Singrauli and Mahoba to Khajuraho has been taken up in phases and in the first phase the work on Lalitpur-Khajuraho and Khajuraho-Mahoba are in progress. On these sections, land acquisition, earthwork and bridges are in various stages of progress. 24.99 lakh cubic metres of earthwork, 60 minor bridges have already been completed. Final location survey on Rewa-Singrauli has been completed. The work is progressing as per availability of resources.

(c) The target for completion of the project has not been fixed.

(d) The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 993 crore and an amount of Rs. 51.5 crore has been spent upto 31-03-2005. An outlay of Rs. 25 crore has been provided in 2005-06.

[English]

Rail Tariff Authority

2039. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has asked the Railways to set up a Rail Tariff Authority;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Setting up of Rail Tariff Regulatory Authority was included in the Tenth Five Year Plan Mid-Term Appraisal Document. However, Ministry of Railways is of the view that there is no need for setting up of separate Authority as the proposals for adjustment in Railway fares and freight rates included in the Railway Budget are debated and approved by the Parliament.

**Implementation of Reservation
Policy in NGOs/VOs**

2040. SHRI KIREN RIJJU:

SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA":

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether provision of reservation policy for SCs/STs/OBCs is also implemented in Non-Governmental Organisations/Voluntary Organisations receiving grants-in-aid under various schemes of the Ministry;

(b) whether the existing Rules gave a complete go by for reservation to the persons with disabilities in employment with NGOs/VOs;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether instance of violation of provision of reservation by NGOs/VOs have come to the notice of the Government;

(e) if so, the details of such instances reported during the last one year, till date alongwith the action taken against them;

(f) whether the Ministry has sought the report from all the Ministries on the implementation status of reservation provision on NGOs/VOs receiving grants from the Government;

(g) if so, the response of the Ministries thereto, Ministry-wise; and

(h) the measures taken by the Government for implementation of reservation policy in NGOs/Vos?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The General Financial Rules, 2005 provide for reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes in post and services under Non Governmental

Organisations/Voluntary Organisations as a pre condition to sanction of grants-in-aid that meet the following criteria;

(i) The recipient body employs more than 20 persons on a regular basis and at least 50 per cent of its recurring expenditure is met from grant-in-aid from Central Government; and

(ii) The body is a registered society or a cooperative institution and is in receipt of a general purpose annual grants-in-aid of Rs. 20 lakhs and above from Consolidated Fund on India.

The Ministry has advised all Central Government Ministries/Departments to follow the reservation for persons with disabilities on the lines indicated by the Government of India while sanctioning grant-in-aid to various voluntary organisations working under them.

(d) and (e) In the case of existing NGOs of this Ministry, the position is being monitored and where the number falls short they are being advised to bring the reservation up to the desired level.

(f) and (g) The General Financial Rules are applicable to all Central Ministries/Departments with regard to implementation of reservation policy.

(h) The terms and conditions of the sanction order issued by this Ministry for release of grant-in-aid to the NGOs/VOs invariably includes that the organisations would follow reservation policy.

[Translation]

Tourist Guides at Historical Monuments

2041. SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

SHRI SHISHUPAL PATLE:

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has appointed or decided to appoint tourist guides in all the historical monuments of the country;

(b) if not, the time by which the tourist guides are likely to be appointed in all these historical monuments;

(c) whether the Government is aware that there is spurt in the number of complaints of untoward incidents with foreign and domestic tourists due to the fake guides in such monuments; and

(d) if so, the States where such fake tourist guides are active in large numbers?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Tourism has introduced a 3 tier system of guides at Regional, State and Local Levels.

The Additional Director General of Tourism has been appointed by the Central Government as the statutory authority under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 for framing and issuing guidelines, for issuance of guide license, approval and registration etc. of qualified persons selected through due process to operate in the protected monuments of national importance, vide Government of India Notification No. S.O. 73 (E) dated 24th January, 2003.

(c) and (d) Government is not aware of any increase in the complaints of harassment/untoward incidents with foreign and domestic tourists by fake guides. However, whenever a specific complaint is received action is initiated by the Ministry of Tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism is also holding guide induction courses periodically and inducting as many guides as possible as per market needs so that the problem of fake tourists guides is effectively addressed.

[English]

Teachers for Mentally and Physically Challenged Children

2042. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is running any teachers training institutions for the mentally and physically challenged children;

(b) if so, the details of such teachers training institutions;

(c) the allocation of funds to such institutions during each of the last three years and the current year;

(d) the details of the NGOs involved in giving training to such teachers; and

(e) the steps being taken to meet the requirements of special teachers for the mentally and physically challenged children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government is running courses to prepare teachers to provide education to the children with physical and mental disabilities. Programmes are also organized to equip existing teachers in disability related issues.

Seven National Institutes under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment are also running teachers training courses for mentally and physically challenged children. Details are available at www.socialjustice.nic.in.

(c) Funds allocated to these institutes during the last three years and the current year are given in the enclosed statement.

(d) Details of NGOs involved in giving training to teachers are available on the website www.rehabcouncil.nic.in.

(e) Number of seats in the courses run by Government Institutions have been increased over the years. NGOs providing training to teachers are being recognized according to the norms set by Rehabilitation Council of India depending on the demand. Besides, there is a provision of in service orientation and refresher courses for general teachers under the Scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC).

Statement*BE, RE and Expenditure in respect of National Institutes*

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Institute	2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
		Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan
		BE	BE	BE	BE	BE	BE	BE	BE
1.	National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun	4.00	3.99	6.50	3.99	5.55	4.40	5.00	4.57
2.	National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata	1.80	2.66	3.00	2.66	4.00	2.92	4.00	2.99
3.	National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai	5.80	4.25	7.50	4.25	8.80	4.67	9.00	4.85
4.	National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabd	5.40	2.39	8.50	2.39	9.00	2.63	10.00	2.70
5.	National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research, Cuttack	6.00	3.72	7.00	3.57	6.25	3.92	6.25	4.05
6.	Institute for the Physically Handicapped, New Delhi	2.00	3.72	3.00	3.72	2.50	4.10	2.00	4.20
7.	National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, Chennai, Chennai	2.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	6.50	0.00

Production of Crude Oil

2043. SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY:

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV:

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

(a) whether the production of crude oil has showed any negative growth during 2005-06 as compared to the last year;

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

(c) the steps taken to enhance the production of crude oil in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The production of crude oil in the country during the first three quarters of 2005-06, (April-December '05) was 24.03 MMT as against 25.56 MMT during the corresponding period of 2004-05, a shortfall of about 6%.

This shortfall in oil production was mainly due to the production loss on account of the MHN fire accident

of July 2005 at Mumbai High, and decline in production from Assam and offshore fields, Heera and B-173A, during this period.

(c) Various measures are being taken to substantially accelerate exploratory activities for enhancing domestic oil and gas production. These measures include the following:—

- (i) increasing exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP); Under NELP, 110 exploration blocks have been awarded to National Oil Companies, foreign companies and private/joint venture companies through the International Competitive Bidding process. This includes 20 Exploration Blocks recently awarded in the fifth round of NELP;
- (ii) improving the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes-in particular. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) have taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs. 10,972 crore, which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields;
- (iii) exploring new areas, especially in deep waters and difficult frontier areas, as also the deeper layers of already producing fields; and

- (iv) developing newly discovered fields speedily and stepping up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, stimulation operations, drilling of wells etc. in producing areas.

Train Services

2044. SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all train services which have been announced in Railway Budget 2005-06 have been provided;

(b) if not, the name of train services which are yet to be provided; and

(c) the reasons for delay in this regard and the time by which the same are likely to be provided?

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

(b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) Non-completion of Gauge conversion works and other operational constraints. It may not be feasible to give date by which services on these sections would be introduced as it involves completion of gauge conversion works by certification of Commissioner of Railway Safety.

Statement

The names of the train services announced in the Rail Budget 2005-06 and yet to be provided are as under:—

Introduction

From	To	Nature
1	2	3
Kanpur	Farrukhabad	Passenger
Lucknow	Farrukhabad	Passenger
Kanpur	Farrukhabad	Passenger
Kanpur	Farrukhabad	Express

1	2	3
Thanjavur	Thiruvarur	Passenger
Yesvantpur	Mangalore	Express via Arsikere
Yesvantpur	Mangalore	Express via Mysore
Agra Cantt	Bayana	Main line Electrical Multiple Units

Budget Trains partially provided

From	To	Nature	Remarks
Bankura	Rainagar	Diesel Multiple Unit	Introduced between Bankura and Rainagar
Mangalore	Shravanbelgola	Passenger	Introduced between Hasan and Shravanbelgola
Rupsa	Bangariposi	Diesel Multiple Unit	Introduced between Rupsa and Baripada

Extension

Train No.	From	To	Nature	Extension To
219/220	Howrah	Malda Town	Passenger	Balurghat
1 KA/2 KA	Allahabad	Kanpur Central	Passenger	Farrukhabad
2083/2084	Coimbatore	Thanjavur	Jan Shatabdi Express	Kumbakonnam
4005/4006	New Delhi	Muzaffarpur	Express	Samastipur
874/877	Tiruchirappalli	Thanjavur	Passenger	Tiruvarur
898/899	Tiruchirappalli	Thanjavur	Passenger	Tiruvarur
4723/4724	Bhiwani	Farrukhabad	Express	Kanpur

[Translation]

Losses to IOC

2045. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has been incurring losses due to mismanagement;

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

(c) the details of the amount of expenditure incurred

by the IOC on television advertisements and on the sponsorship of cricket during the said period; and

(d) the details of expenditure incurred by the IOC through different institutions under its social corporate responsibility between 1st April 2003 and 31st January 2006 alongwith the details of such institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has earned a profit (profit after tax) of Rs. 18,011 crore during the last three years, i.e., 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05, year-wise break-up of which is as under:—

Year	Profit after tax
2002-03	Rs. 6,115 crore
2003-04	Rs. 7,005 crore
2004-05	Rs. 4,891 crore
Total	Rs. 18,011 crore

However, IOC's profitability has come down during the year 2004-05 for reasons mainly attributable to huge under-realization on sale of Motor Spirit (petrol), High Speed Diesel (diesel), Superior Kerosene Oil (kerosene) (for public distribution system) and LPG (domestic), consequent to non-revision in retail selling prices of these products in line with international prices.

(c) During the said period, the expenditure incurred by IOC towards advertisements on television and sponsorship of the game of cricket, was as under:—

Year	Advertisement on television (Rs./crore)	Sponsorship of cricket (Rs./crore)
2002-03	20.30	00.31
2003-04	26.01	00.00
2004-05	55.01	16.34

(d) During the period from 1-4-2003 to 31-1-2006, IOC has incurred, through various institutions and also themselves, an expenditure of Rs. 72.44 crore under its Corporate Social Responsibility programme. Institution-wise details of this expenditure are available with the Director (HR) of IOC.

[English]

Flights from Trivandrum

2046. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of International flights of all airlines being operated from Trivandrum International Airport in a week;

(b) whether some private/foreign airlines have approached the Government seeking permission to operate their flights from Trivandrum; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) At present, 76 international flights of all airlines are being operated from Trivandrum International Airport in a week.

(b) and (c) Trivandrum is available as point of call for the designated airlines of Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, South Africa, Maldives, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, UAE (Dubai) and Gulf Air. Therefore, designated airlines of these countries are free to mount services to/from Trivandrum to their respective countries. However, actual operation by any airline including designated scheduled Indian carrier is always guided by its commercial judgement.

Telecasting/Broadcasting on Non-Sponsorship Programmes

2047. SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: Will the Minister of, INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the Doordarshan and AIR are not able to provide well projected

programmes reflecting the Indian Classical Music Dance and other traditional art forms due to non-availability of sponsorship;

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

(d) whether the Government proposes to provide some time slots for Doordarshan and Akashvani for non-sponsorship programmes so that such programmes are telecast and broadcast; and

- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) to (e) Prasar Bharati is a public service broadcaster, as a part of its mandate, constantly endeavors to project and promote the cultural heritage of the country through various programmes of AIR and DD, which include programmes in Indian Classical and Folk Music.

Doordarshan continues to feature "Top" grade and "A" Grade Music and Dance artistes in its National Programme of Dance and Music on its National Network on Thursday (11.30 p.m.) and Saturday (8.30 p.m.). In addition, programmes featuring such artistes are also being telecast regularly by the different regional channels of Doordarshan. AIR has been regularly broadcasting suitable programmes at the Regional and National level reflecting Indian classical, light, folk music and also other traditional art forms. The National Programme of Music is broadcast on every Saturday and Akhil Bharatiya Ravivasariya Sangeet Sabha is scheduled on every Sunday. These programmes feature not only eminent and veterans but also upcoming artistes. Since 1954, AIR has been organizing Akashvani Sangeet Sammelan at various places of the country featuring artists of both Hindustani and Carnatic Music. In addition, AIR has recently introduced Akashvani Sangeet Sammelan of regional Folk and Light Music to project, promote, and propagate the rich folk cultural heritage of the country. AIR has informed that it does not seek sponsorship for its classical and traditional music programmes. DD has informed that marketing of these programmes has not

been an issue as far as promotion of Indian Classical Music and Dance is concerned.

AIR also proposes to start two 24-hour classical music channels on Satellite Radio through Prasar Bharati's DD Direct Plus DTH Service.

[Translation]

Laying of Bilaspur-Mandla Railway Line

2048. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey for laying Bilaspur-Mandla railway line was conducted by the Railways;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Railways on the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A survey was completed during 2003-04 exploring two alternative ways of connecting Bilaspur to Jabalpur—one, by constructing a direct line between Bilaspur and Jabalpur via Mandla avoiding Nainpur and the other, by constructing a new line from Bilaspur up to Mandla Fort only and completing the gauge conversion of Mandla Fort-Nainpur section. As per the survey report, the cost of the first option was assessed as Rs. 1284.11 crore, while the second option as Rs. 736.96 crore, with a negative rate of return (ROR) in both the cases.

In view of non-remunerative nature of the project, heavy throw-forward of ongoing projects and acute constraint on resources, it has not been considered feasible to take up construction of Bilaspur-Mandla-Jabalpur new line wholly or partly for the present.

[English]

DTH Service

2049. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has reviewed DTH service;

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

(c) the number of broadcasters who have applied to the Prasar Bharati for free telecasting of the channels, State-wise; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to strengthen Doordarshan's DTH service, it has been decided to increase the number

of TV channels on DD Direct+ to fifty, from the existing thirty-three.

(c) The list of forty-nine private TV broadcasters who have applied for inclusion of their channels on DD Direct+ as on 1-12-2005, is enclosed as statement.

(d) The equipment needed for expansion of Doordarshan's DTH service is being procured, and will be installed by mid-2006. The exact time-frame cannot be specified at this stage. However, the decision regarding new channels will be taken on merit after the necessary technical infrastructure is in place.

Statement

List of Channels that have applied for inclusion in DD Direct Plus

Sl. No.	Name of Channel	Language/Content	Location
1	2	3	4
1.	7 Star Care	Hindi/English-Health	Mumbai (Maharashtra)
2.	Aastha	Hindi/Religious	Mumbai (Maharashtra)
3.	Amrita Television	Art, culture, news and current affairs	Kerala
4.	Arirang TV	English/Entertainment, music, drama, movies	Korea
5.	Balle Balle	Punjabi/Hindi	Delhi
6.	Channel News Asia	Asian News Channel	Singapore
7.	CMM Music	Hindi/Music	Delhi
8.	CTBUZZ	Business/Shopping-Interactive	Mumbai (Maharashtra)
9.	Channel-7 JTV	News/Current Affairs	Noida (Uttar Pradesh)
10.	Day Star	English Religious	USA
11.	Deutsche Welle	German/English/Ext. Service	Germany
12.	Edusat-IGNOU	English/Hindi-Educational	Delhi
13.	ETC Music	Hindi/Music	Punjabi
14.	ETV Urdu	Urdu Channel	Andhra Pradesh

1	2	3	4
15.	EWTN Global Catholic Network	English/Religious	USA
16.	God TV	English/Hindi Religious	Tamil Nadu
17.	India Vision	Malayalam/News	Kerala
18.	India TV	News/Current Affairs	New Delhi
19.	Jagran (Zee)	Hindi/Religious	Delhi
20.	Jaya TV	Tamil/Gen. Entertainment	Tamil Nadu
21.	Jeevan	Malayalam/Gen. Entertainment	Kerala
22.	Jhankar TV	Hindi/English/Music	Delhi
23.	KBS World TV	Entertainment, Drama, Documentaries, News	Seoul (South Korea)
24.	PEOPLE (Kairali TV)	News and Infotainment	Kerala
25.	Love World	English/Hindi/Regional/Religious	USA
26.	Mana TV (4 channels)	Telugu/Educational	Andhra Pradesh
27.	Muslim TV Ahmedia International	Religious	United Kingdom
28.	Maharishi Channel	Religious	Netherlands
29.	Nepal 1	Nepali/General	Nepal
30.	NE TV	NE languages	Guwahati (Assam)
31.	Punjab Today	Punjabi News Channel	Delhi
32.	Raj Musix	South/Tamil/Music	Tamil Nadu
33.	Sadhana	Hindi/Religious	Delhi
34.	Sahara One	Hindi/Gen. Entertainment	Delhi
35.	Sahara Samay Rashtriya	Hindi/News	Delhi
36.	Sanskar	Hindi/Religious	Delhi
37.	Splash	Children's	Delhi
38.	SS Music	English/Hindi/S. Indian/Music	Chennai (Tamil Nadu)

1	2	3	4
39.	SS TV	(Canadian)/Gen Ent'tainment	Canada
40.	Sur Sangeet	Hindi/Music	Chennai (Tamil Nadu)
41.	Speed Music	Hindi/Regional	Delhi
42.	Suroor TV	Urdu/Gen Entertainment and Educational	Bangalore (Karnataka)
43.	S-1	Hindi/English/News/Culture	New Delhi
44.	TV 5	French/External Service	France
45.	Total TV	Hindi/Punjabi	Delhi
46.	Vyas	Hindi/Eng./Educational	Delhi
47.	Win TV	Hindi/Gen. Entertainment	Delhi
48.	Win TV Kannada	Kannada/Gen. Entertainment	Karnataka
49.	Worldroom Travel TV	English/Travel and Tourism	London (U.K.)

As on 01-12-2005

**Aviation Obstruction Warning
Lights at Airports**

2050. SHRI DHANUSHKODI R. ATHITHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that aviation obstruction warning lights, which properly guide the aircraft, have not been installed at the airports in the country; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government for installation of such lights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Aviation obstruction warning lights and other approach and landing lights required for guidance to the aircraft are already installed at all the airports in the country, as per the requirements of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

[Translation]

Corporatisation of Ordnance Factories

2051. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kelkar Committee appointed by Government has recommended corporatisation of Ordnance factories;

(b) whether the Government has held any dialogue/discussion with the trade unions before arriving at a decision in the matter;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The report of Kelkar Committee is under examination in the Ministry of Defence. A decision would be taken after consultation with all the stakeholders.

Schemes for Older Persons

2052. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT:

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI:

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the present number of older persons and old age homes in the country alongwith the number of older persons living below poverty line, State/UT-wise;

(b) the details of proposals received from various State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and NGOs/VOs under various schemes implemented for older persons during 2005-06;

(c) the funds allocated and released under each scheme during the said period, State/UT-wise and NGOs/VOs wise; and

(d) the details of old age homes/day care centres set up during 2005-06, State/UT-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) As per Census, 2001, the total population of older persons is 7,66,22,321. State/UT-wise number of older persons is available at the website www.censusindia.net and in the book "Tables on Census 2001" published by the Office of Registrar General, India. However, data is not available for the older persons living below poverty line. State/UT-wise number of old age homes receiving grant in aid under the scheme "Integrated Programme for Older Persons" (Plan Scheme) is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) The total number of proposals received from the Non Governmental Organisations under the scheme during 2005-06 is around 720.

(c) Under the scheme, grant in aid is given to Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) directly. Funds released under the scheme to NGOs in various States/ Union Territory during 2005-06 (upto 28-2-2006) is available at Ministry's web site (www.SocialJustice.nic.in).

(d) Six new old age homes have been sanctioned under the scheme during 2005-06 as per details below:—

Name of the State	No. of old age home sanctioned
Punjab	1
Tamil Nadu	1
Orissa	2
West Bengal	1
Manipur	1

Statement

State/UT-wise number of old age homes

Si. No.	Name of the State/UT	No. of old age homes receiving grant in aid
1	2	3
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0
2.	Andhra Pradesh	104
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0
4.	Assam	10
5.	Bihar	1
6.	Chandigarh	0
7.	Chhattisgarh	1
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0
9.	Daman and Diu	0
10.	Delhi	0
11.	Goa	0
12.	Gujarat	2
13.	Haryana	4
14.	Himachal Pradesh	0

1	2	3
15.	Jammu and Kashmir	1
16.	Jharkhand	0
17.	Karnataka	49
18.	Kerala	4
19.	Lakshadweep	0
20.	Madhya Pradesh	9
21.	Maharashtra	9
22.	Manipur	24
23.	Meghalaya	0
24.	Mizoram	0
25.	Nagaland	1
26.	Orissa	45
27.	Pondicherry	3
28.	Punjab	3
29.	Rajasthan	4
30.	Sikkim	0
31.	Tamil Nadu	50
32.	Tripura	3
33.	Uttar Pradesh	35
34.	Uttaranchal	3
35.	West Bengal	39
Total		404

*[English]***Luxury Tourist Trains**

2053. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN:

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of 'Palace on Wheels' like luxury tourist trains presently running in the country;

(b) whether there is any proposal to introduce such luxury tourist trains in some other States;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether proposals in this regard have also been received from some State Governments;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Presently, Indian Railways run luxury tourist trains like Palace on Wheels and recently launched Heritage on Wheels in collaboration with the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) in the Rajasthan sector and the Deccan Odyssey in collaboration with the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) in the Maharashtra sector.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for running a luxury tourist train in the Karnataka Sector has been signed with the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC).

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

*[Translation]***Travelling of Persons in MPs Name**

2054. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the travelling of persons in trains in the name of Members of Parliament;

(b) if so, the number of such persons found travelling during last three years;

(c) the action taken against them;

(d) the measures taken by the Railways to check such practice;

(e) whether the Railways propose to amend the rules regarding free travelling in trains; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Some cases of persons travelling in trains in the name of Members of Parliament have come to notice. However, statistics of such cases is not maintained separately. Action is taken against such persons as per relevant provisions of law.

(d) Apart from regular ticket checking drives, surprise checks are also conducted against ticketless/irregular travel including those travelling in the name of Members of Parliament.

(e) and (f) Rail travel facilities to Members of Parliament are administered by Parliament Secretariat.

[English]

Supply of Domestic LPG Cylinders

2055. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether under the new distribution system, applicable from March 1, 2006, the Government has announced that only 10 cylinders per family per annum will be supplied under LPG domestic supply scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has received representations against the said scheme; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Refill supplies of domestic LPG are being made by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies as per the genuine requirement of the customers.

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

[Translation]

Indian and Foreign Channels

2056. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH:

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state the details of the Indian and Foreign channels functioning in the country as on date?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): The Government has so far permitted seventy one (71) companies to uplink 179 private satellite TV channels from India. In addition, Doordarshan is presently operating 27 TV channels.

TV channels, which are uplinked from abroad, are considered foreign TV channels. This Ministry does not maintain records of channels uplinked from outside from India, which are also available to viewers in India, as on date. However, Government has recently issued downlinking guidelines on 11-11-2005 to regulate such foreign TV channels.

[English]

Refinery at Bhatinda

2057. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status regarding setting up of Guru Gobind Singh Refinery at Bhatinda in Punjab;

(b) the amount spent on the said project so far; and

(c) the target fixed for completion of the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Government of Punjab have signed a Deed of Assurance with Guru Gobind Singh Refineries Limited in August, 2005. About 1,996 acres of land has been acquired at Bathinda for the refinery. Major activities completed within the refinery premises include (i) site

grading of 1,600 acres of refinery land (ii) area lighting system (iii) construction and drinking water system (iv) power receiving and distribution system (v) office building (vi) 31 kms of drain. Raw water channel of 12 kms to the refinery site has also been completed. Road network (internal and external) has been completed. Right of user through the entire length of crude oil pipeline of more than 1,000 kms has been obtained. The Company has acquired 310 acres of land at Mundra, Gujarat for crude oil terminal, and has also secured a tie-up with port authorities.

(b) An amount of Rs. 288 crore (approximately) has so far been incurred on the project.

(c) The project is likely to be completed in the financial year 2010-2011.

Delay of Indian Airlines Flights

2058. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the Indian Airlines (IA) flights from New Delhi to different parts of the country never take off on time even during the clear weather;

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

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure that the flights of IA take off on time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Of about 46.8% flights delayed ex-Delhi during December, January, 2005-06, 3.6% were due to commercial and operational reasons. The remaining delays occurred due to various other reasons like adverse weather, airport restrictions, security concerns, bird hits etc. which were not within the control of Indian Airlines.

(c) All technical delays and cancellations are investigated and remedial action taken immediately. A meeting of the representatives of operating department at the regional level is held every day. At the base station, delays and cancellations are analyzed to identify repetitive nature of snags and special maintenance action is

immediately taken. At the Headquarters level, the punctuality of services is monitored on a daily basis. Regular meetings are also held with the vendors or manufacturers for bringing an improvement in the product and systems. Representatives of Indian Airlines are also deputed from time to time to attend international conferences and seminars to update their knowledge.

Global TV Channel

2059. SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA": Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to launch a global TV Channel for the people of Indian origin;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this channel would start telecasting programmes for the people of Indian origin?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati have informed that the signal of the existing DD-India Channel launched on 14-3-1995 is already available for reception in 146 countries around the world.

[Translation]

Railway Projects of Bihar and Jharkhand

2060. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of pending rail projects in Jharkhand and Bihar;

(b) the reasons for delay in the implementation of these projects; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The details of various ongoing projects falling fully or partly in Jharkhand and Bihar alongwith their anticipated cost and target wherever fixed, is given as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Anticipated cost (Rs. in crore)	Target wherever fixed
1	2	3	4
New Liness			
1.	Koderma-Tilaiya (65 km.)	307.71	—
2.	Koderma-Barkakana-Ranchi (202 kms.)	1033.00	—
3.	Giridih-Koderma (102 km.)	371.36	—
4.	Deogarh-Dumka (60 km.)	180.72	—
5.	Deogarh-Sultanganj, Banka-Barahat and Banka-Bhitiah Road (147 km.)	312.00	Banka-Barahat completed.
6.	Mandarhill-Rampurhat via Dumka (130 km.)	254.07	—
7.	Ara-Sasaram (98 km.)	189.14	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
8.	Sakri-Hasanpur (76 km.)	89.70	Sakri-Nirmali is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
9.	Khagaria-Kusheshwarsthan (42.31 kms.)	162.87	—
10.	Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi (64.51 kms.)	64.50	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
11.	Fathua-Islampur Restoration and new line from Sheikhpura to Neora (171.5 kms.)	406.92	Fathua-Islampur completed.
12.	Hajipur-Sagauli (148.3 km.)	324.66	—
13.	Munger rail bridge on Ganga (19.8 kms.)	921.00	—
14.	Patna-Ganga bridge with linking lines between Patna and Hajipur (19 km.)	624.47	—
15.	Kosi Bridge (21.85 km.)	323.41	—
16.	Rajgir-Hisua-Tilaiya (67 km.)	245.18	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
17.	Hathua-Bhatani (73.6 km.)	200.73	Hathua-Bathua is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
18.	Maharajganj-Masrak (35.49 km.)	104.10	—

1	2	3	4
Gauge Conversion			
1.	Ranch-Lohardaga with extension to Tori (113 km.)	194.07	Ranchi-Lohardaga completed.
2.	Jaynagar-Darbhanga-Narkataiganj (268 km.)	329.81	Jaynagar-Darbhanga is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
3.	Sakari-Laukhabazar-Nirmali and Saharsa-Forbesganj (206.06 km.)	355.81	—
4.	Kaptanganj-Thane-Siwan-Chhapra (233.5 kms.)	320.1	Thane-Sivan completed.
5.	Jogbani-Katihar-Barsoi-Radhikapur (200 km.)	402.98	Barsoi-Radhikapur completed. Katihar-Barsoi is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
6.	Mansi-Saharsa and Saharsa-Purnea (142 km.)	257.01	Mansi-Saharsa completed.
7.	Samastipur-Khagaria and Mansi-Khagaria (94 km.)	122.45	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
Doubling			
1.	Goelkera-Manoharpur 3rd line (Chakradharpur-Bondamunda (40 km.)	186.92	—
2.	Punpun-Tarengna (16 km.)	53.85	Completed but will be commissioned after completion of electrification work.
3.	Taregna-Jahanabad (15.2 km.)	43.62	—
4.	Jahanabad-Bela (27.47 km.)	75.00	—
5.	Bela-Chakand (9.98 km.)	23.19	—
6.	Chakand-Gaya (9.29 km.)	24.09	—
7.	Barauni-Tilrath and Barauni Bypass (14 km.)	15.37	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
8.	Tilrath-Begusarai (8.33 km.)	15.25	—
9.	Begusarai-Khagaria (40.38 km.)	71.31	—
10.	Maheshkunth-Thanaibihpur (31.75 km.)	45.41	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.

1	2	3	4
11.	Thanabihpur-Kursela (33.57 km.)	45.00	
12.	Kursela-Semapur (26.95 km.)	49.28	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
13.	Semapur-Katihar (11.26 km.)	17.23	Completed. Yet to be commissioned.
14.	Chhapra-Sonepur (59.50 km.)	72.43	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
15.	Sonepur-Hajipur including Gandak Bridge (5.50 km.)	53.97	—
16.	Chhapra-Ekma (28 km.)	62.30	The work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
17.	Ekma-Jiradei (43.60 km.)	78.34	—
18.	Kajra-Kiul (16 km.)	23.73	—

(b) and (c) These projects are being progressed as per the overall availability of resources. A number of initiatives have been taken for augmenting resources for expediting completion of the ongoing projects. These include cost sharing by State Governments, Public/Private Partnership, funding from Ministry of Defence and funds for National Rail Vikas Yojana.

Shifting of Western Railway Zonal Office

2061. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any demand to shift the Zonal Office of Western Railway to Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) Demand has been raised by Very Important Persons (VIPs) including Hon'ble Minister, Gujarat State.

(c) The location of the headquarters of a Railway is decided on the basis of operational and administrative requirements consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency and not on regional considerations. Moreover, the shifting of a well established office of Western Railway from Mumbai will also involve large scale transfer of staff resulting in dislocation of their family set-up and other allied problems. In view of these, there is no need for a Railway Zonal Office at Gandhi Nagar or Ahmedabad.

[English]

Upgradation of Tumkur and Tiptur Railway Stations

2062. SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for upgradation of Tumkur and Tiptur railway stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Minimum Essential

Amenities as per norms are already available at Tumkur and Tiptur railway stations. However, upgradation of passenger amenities at stations over Indian Railways is a continuous process and the same is undertaken on the basis of the volume of passenger traffic handled at the station and relative priority of the works subject to availability of funds.

**Financial Assistance under Minister's
Discretionary Fund**

2063. SHRI LALMANI PRASAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provides financial assistance to the societies/associations under the Minister's discretionary fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith procedure to get financial assistance by societies/associations;

(c) the details of societies/associations applied for such assistance and the details of financial assistance given to them during each of the last three years;

(d) the details of societies/associations whose requests are pending for financial assistances under the Minister's discretionary fund; and

(e) the time by which the pending cases are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Institutions doing useful work to promote the Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Socially and Educationally Backward Classes, rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped Persons, victims of Drug Abuse and Alcoholism, Destitute/Orphan Children and elderly persons are amongst the eligible category who can apply to the Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment on a prescribed proforma.

(c) No such application was received.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Does not arise.

Railway Share on Account of Extra Freight

2064. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Container Corporation of India is not passing the railway share on account of extra freight;

(b) if not, the amount of railway share during each of the last three years; and

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

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

(b) During the last three years, Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) has paid the following amounts to Indian Railways on account of Railways freight payable as per haulage rates fixed by Indian Railways.

2002-03 769.92 crores

2003-04 : 913.26 crores

2004-05 988.06 crores

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Explosion in INS Magar

2065. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an explosion took place recently in the Navy war-ship INS Magar;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of people injured/killed in the said explosion; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to prevent recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The Indian Navy ship INS, Magar sailed from Vishakhapatnam on 22nd February, 2006 to dump life-expired ammunition in the sea. There were 224 boxes to be dumped. After the dumping of 220 boxes, one of the boxes caught fire igniting another box at 1702 Hrs on 22nd February, 2006. The resultant fire claimed the life of three sailors and seriously injured 6 sailors who were evacuated by helicopter to the Naval hospital at Vishakhapatnam. Two of the six injured sailors subsequently died. In addition, 13 sailors, who received burn injuries, were admitted to hospital, of whom 7 sailors have been discharged after receiving necessary treatment. The ship did not suffer any structural damage in this accident. Dumping of life-expired ammunition is a standard practice and is conducted according to requirements in earmarked dumping areas. This is the first such incident that has occurred while dumping life-expired ammunition. A Board of Inquiry has been ordered to investigate the reasons of this accident. On receipt of the Report, further remedial measures will be instituted to avoid recurrence of such incidents in future.

[English]

Sabarmati-Khodiyar Railway Line

2066. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction work on railway line from Sabarmati to Khodiyar is going on at a very slow pace;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the progress of work done on the project so far; and

(d) the steps taken by the Railways to complete the work on the project expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Gauge conversion of Sabarmati-Khodiyar metre gauge line has been taken up as a part of Phulera-Marwar-Ahmedabad gauge conversion project. 68% works have been completed. This work is likely to be completed in about a year's time.

Monetary Benefits to Second World War Veterans

2067. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the pitiable condition of the vanishing tribe of Second World War veterans who were demobilized after Second World War without any pension;

(b) if so, whether the Government has made any effort to obtain information and data about these veterans;

(c) whether any monetary assistance is being provided to these veterans;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) to (e) 1. About 83,000 Second World War Veterans are registered with Zila Sainik Boards. Those of them, who did not complete pensionable service, were not given pensions.

2. (a) Financial assistance from the Raksha Mantri's Discretionary Fund to the World War II Veterans, who are in abject poverty, is given for the following purposes:—

(a) Daughter's Marriage Grant	=	Rs. 8,000/-
(b) House Repair Grant	=	Rs. 10,000/-
(c) Medical Grant	=	Rs. 15,000/- (Maximum)
(d) Monthly Grant	=	Rs. 1,000/- p.m. for two years.

Ex-servicemen suffering from serious diseases are given financial assistance for treatment in civil hospitals in case they cannot be treated in Military Hospitals and have not availed similar assistance from any other source, from the Armed Forces Flag Day fund as follows:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (i) Bypass surgery, angiography, angioplasty, open heart surgery, valve replacement, pace maker implant, kidney/renal transplant Stroke, arterial surgery, prostate surgery and total joint replacement. | 90% and 75% of the authorized expenditure in case of JCOs/OR and Officers respectively. |
| (ii) Cancer/spastic paraplegic, dialysis. | Maximum of Rs. 75,000/- per year in civil hospitals. |

Indian Air Force Benevolent Fund (IAFBF) extends financial assistance in deserving cases to the retired airmen, who had served in the Air Force during the World War II, and their widows. Under this scheme monthly grant of Rs. 500/- p.m. is paid for life.

(b) Various state governments extend financial assistance to the World War II veterans at different rates.

Connecting Goods Trains Stations to Passenger Lines

2068. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was any proposal to connect all the goods train stations to passenger lines in Maharashtra; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far in this regard?

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

(b) Does not arise.

High Cargo Rates for Agricultural Products

2069. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cargo rates charged for agricultural products by the State owned airlines are quite high;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Indian Airlines and Air India propose to convert some of its existing fleet into cargo aircraft;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to make

Government owned airlines more competitive to private airlines?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Indian Airlines propose to convert five Boeing 737-200 aircraft presently being operated by Alliance Air (a subsidiary of Indian Airlines) into cargo aircraft. Similarly, Air India also propose to convert its existing two A310-300 passenger aircraft into cargo aircraft by mid 2007.

(e) Both the Airlines constantly endeavor to take measures to improve their product and remain competitive with the private Airlines. Besides, both the airlines are in the process of acquiring modern aircraft in order to revamp their fleet. The Government encourages/reviews the airlines in their endeavour and has accorded approval for acquisition of new aircraft by both Government owned airlines.

Passenger and Cargo Traffic

2070. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total passenger and Cargo at each of the five international airports viz. Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai and Bhopal during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Airports Authority of India has projected any scheme to cater to growing demand of passenger and cargo traffic at these International airports during the current Five Year Plan Period; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The total no.

of passengers (in lakhs) airport-wise for the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 are given below:— Mumbai (122.60, 132.84, 156.66), Kolkata (28.27, 30.91, 34.95), Delhi (90.97, 103.94, 127.83), Chennai (41.61, 45.56, 56.34), Bhopal (0.88, 1.13, 1.28). The total cargo (In tonnes) for the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 are given as under: Mumbai (325751, 342922, 415317), Kolkata (62418, 66248, 73479), Delhi 288813, 308016, 255435), Chennai (139714, 156881, 188856), Bhopal (445, 405, 451).

(b) and (c) Various steps taken/to be taken to cater to the growing demand to passengers and cargo traffic at the metro cities are as under:—

The major works undertaken/to be undertaken in The Tenth Five Year Plan at Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi and Chennai airports were as follows:—

Mumbai: resurfacing of main runway 09/27 (special repairs work), replacement of 4 nos escalators at Terminal-2A, construction of new taxi parking area behind project office at Terminal-2, construction of additional parking bays for domestic apron-4 bays; (Kolkata: Modification of existing (ITB) (Phase-I) Provision of aerobridge, modification of existing car park for International terminal building, construction of new hangar, strengthening of main runway including Cat-II lighting and strengthening of 'D' taxi track;

Delhi: Provision of standby Elevated Transfer Vehicle system at cargo complex, Re-construction of 'C' taxi-track modification and expansion of custom arrival hall at Terminal-2.

Chennai: construction of integrated cargo complex (phase-I) including Elevated Transfer Vehicle, extension and modification of Anna International Terminal, extension of canopy on city side of Domestic terminal.

The major works in progress and proposed to be taken at

Mumbai

(i) Extension and modification of Terminal-1B. (ii) Construction of interim cargo FACT shed. (iii) Widening of flyover at Terminal-2. (iv) Modification and upgradation of intake point for power supply at cargo complex.

Kolkata

(i) Construction of Integrated Cargo Complex. (ii) Reconstruction of bay nos. 11 and 12. (iii) Modification of International Departure Terminal. (iv) Construction of Cargo apron towards Northern side.

Delhi

(i) Provision of standby Elevated Transfer Vehicle system at cargo complex. (ii) Construction of Import Cargo (Phase-III). (iii) Modification and expansion of custom arrival hall at Terminal-2. (iv) Re-construction of 'C' taxi track. (v) Modification and Expansion of Terminal-1B.

Chennai

(i) Expansion and modification to Anna International Terminal. (ii) Construction of Integrated Cargo Terminal (Phase-II). (iii) Construction of warehouse facilities for courier/charter operators. (iv) Expansion of administrative building.

Bhopal

(i) modification of terminal building.

[Translation]

Travelling on Fake Gallantry Pass

2071. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the incidents regarding travelling on fake gallantry pass in the Kota Division, Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the action taken against the persons found guilty;

(d) whether any other instances of travelling on fake passes have come to the notice of the Railways;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps being taken by the Railways to check such frauds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) One Army officer

was apprehended travelling with fake gallantry pass and handed over to Police.

(d) and (e) Cases of travelling on fake passes do come to notice. But no details in this regard are maintained separately.

(f) Regular and surprise checks are conducted to detect ticketless/irregular travel. Besides this, staff are also instructed from time to time to check frauds including travel on fake passes.

Setting up of Coast Guard Stations

2072. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up some new Coast Guard Stations/Centres during the current year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Government has accorded 'in principle' approval on 15th January, 2006 to set up Coast Guard Stations at Beypore, Pipavav, Pondicherry and Karwar, during the current Coast Guard Development Plan 2002-2007. Coast Guard station at Pondicherry has already been commissioned on 10th February 2006.

Railway Link between Khamgaon and Jalna

2073. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been persistent demands to lay railway line to link Khamgaon of Vidarbha region with Jalna of Marathwada region in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have sanctioned the said project; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not starting the work of laying the said rail line?

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

(b) A few requests have been received for laying of a new line between Khamgaon and Jalna.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

LPT, VLPT in Gujarat

2074. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of low-power and very low power transmitters installed in different districts of Gujarat;

(b) whether there is any proposal to install such transmitters at some more places in the State during the remaining period of the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) to (c) Fifty-seven low power and three very low power transmitters are presently functioning in Gujarat. District-wise number of these transmitters is given in the enclosed statement.

There is no proposal to set up any additional LPT/VLPT/Low power FM transmitter in Gujarat.

Statement

District-wise Number of LPTs and VLPTs in Gujarat

District	No. of LPTs	No. of VLPTs
1	2	3
1. Ahmedabad	1	
2. Amreli	3	
3. Anand	1	

1	2	3
4. Banas Kantha	6	
5. Bharuch	3	1
6. Bhavnagar	5	
7. Dohad	3	
8. Gandhinagar	1	
9. Jamnagar	5	
10. Junagadh	4	
11. Kachchh	2	
12. Mahesana	1	
13. Narmada	3	1
14. Panch Mahals	2	
15. Patan	1	
16. Porbandar	2	
17. Rajkot	2	
18. Sabar Kantha	3	
19. Surat	2	1
20. Surendranagar	3	
21. The Dangs	1	
22. Valsad	3	

Pending Cases of Reconstitution of Dealership

2075. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had issued any advice to all the public sector oil companies to clear all the pending cases of reconstitution of dealership by January 31, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of cases pending as on date, company-wise and state-wise; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken for the early disposal of pending cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC) and IBP Co. Limited (IBP), were advised by the Government, on 26-12-2005, to dispose off the pending cases of, inter alia, reconstitution of dealerships of petroleum products, by January 31, 2006, as per the new guidelines to be adopted by them for the purpose.

(c) As reported by OMCs, OMC-wise position of pending cases of reconstitution of dealerships, as at the end of February, 2006, was as under:—

OMC	Number of cases of reconstitution of dealerships pending for decision
IOC	154
HPC	164
BPC	57
IBP	48
Total	423

State-wise details of the pending cases are available with the Director (Marketing) of the OMC concerned.

(d) Approval of proposals for reconstitution of dealerships requires detailed scrutiny and legal vetting. Apart from this, the dealerships, proposing reconstitution, are also required to submit a number of documents like no objection certificates from the legal heirs, proper partnership deeds, documents pertaining to incoming partners, etc. In most of the cases, the decision remains

pending due to non-submission of proper documents by the dealerships. However, efforts are made by the OMCs for expediting decision.

Powers to National Commission for Minorities

2076. PROF. M. RAMADASS: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to give inquiring and investigation powers to National Commission for minorities;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the benefits of conferring such powers;

(c) whether there is any proposal to rotate the post of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Commission amongst members of the five notified Minority Communities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (d) The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment on the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Bill, 2004 and the National Commission for Minorities (Repeal) Bill, 2004 submitted its Report. The recommendations contained therein are being studied. No decision has, therefore, yet been taken on the recommendations.

Nagpur Airport

2077. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Union Government to transfer Nagpur Airport under the Airports Authority of India to Maharashtra Airport Development Company Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of Maharashtra (GOM) has requested to transfer Nagpur airport to Maharashtra Airport Development Company Limited (MADC). The Union Government has advised Government of Maharashtra that before any transfer can be considered for the MIHAN project action for acquisition of land contiguous to the Nagpur airport should be completed and reserved for airport related purposes and the proceedings regarding exchange of lands with the Indian Air Force finalized.

Abolition of Untouchability

2078. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of implementation of the law against untouchability in different States;

(b) whether the Government proposes to introduce a separate subject on 'abolition of untouchability' from Class Fifth as a compulsory subject to spread awareness amongst the children; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The peaching and practice of 'untouchability' is an offence under the protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955. This Act is implemented by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. Due central assistance is also provided to them for effective implementation of the Act. Further, from time to time, advisories are also addressed to them for implementation of the provisions of the Act in letter and spirit.

(b) and (c) The concept has already been integrated across the curriculum in various subjects.

Promotion of Tourism

2079. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by the Government to improve infrastructure in the country to promote tourism;

(b) the details of the funds allocated and disbursed thereof during 2005-2006;

(c) whether the Government has issued any guidelines to State Governments to improve facilities for the use of domestic tourists;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the response of the State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Development of tourist destinations in the country is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments/Union Territories. Department of Tourism extends financial assistance for implementation of tourism projects which are identified and prioritized in consultation with the concerned State Governments/U.Ts subject to inter-se priority and availability of funds.

(b) During the year 2005-06 Rs. 540.18 crore has so far been sanctioned and Rs. 408.09 crore has been released for implementation of 210 tourism projects for various States/U.Ts.

(c) to (e) The Department of Tourism has already instructed State Governments/UTs to make "Tourism Sub Plans" in all their 'Plans' where top most priority should be given to those projects/programmes which are important from tourism point of view. The State Governments have also been asked to bring about coordination among many agencies so that a visible impact can be felt in improving the tourism products and the tourism infrastructure so as to enhance the experience of international as well as domestic tourists. The State Governments/U.Ts have responded positively to these steps.

Replacement of Steel Wagons by Aluminium Wagons

2080. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have conducted any field trials with aluminium body wagons;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether the Railways are now considering to replace the steel wagons with aluminium wagons;

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

(e) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) Ministry of Railways have decided to procure five rakes of wagons with Aluminium Body. Further, induction of Aluminium Body wagons will depend on performance of the five rakes under procurement.

Agreement between ONGC and Shell Oil Company

2081. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has signed any agreement with Shell Oil Company to get stake in overseas projects;

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

(c) the details of possibilities of Shell's participation in ONGC-MRPL refinery and petrochemical complex after such agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) have reported that they have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Shell Exploration Company on 19-1-2006 for cooperation in various business opportunities in the hydrocarbon sector. The areas of cooperation identified therein are the following:—

(i) Investigating specific exploration opportunities within India;

(ii) Joint participation in international upstream ventures out of Shell and ONGC portfolios;

(iii) Improving production by using Improved Oil Recovery methods;

- (iv) Extraction of C2-C3 from imported LNG, downstream of the Hazira facility;
- (v) Evaluating the concept of jointly setting up surface coal gasification facilities in India using Shell's proprietary Coal Gasification Process;
- (vi) Long term oil products supply arrangement with MRPL for a part of its demand in India;
- (vii) Establishing the feasibility of setting up a joint venture bitumen business in India;
- (viii) Evaluating joint business opportunities in the area of marine fuels and lubricants at select ports;
- (ix) Evaluating joint business opportunities in new refinery and petrochemical projects, including, but not limited to, cooperation on product exports and potential Shell equity participation if Shell desires, in green-field refinery, new petrochemical plant and potential other facilities;
- (x) Cooperation in areas of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE);
- (xi) Evaluating joint business opportunities in the area of Coal Bed Methane applications in India;
- (xii) Cooperation in renewable energy sources, such as wind farms and potential Coal Gasification.

(c) The MoU does not specifically make a mention of any particular project.

[Translation]

Leasing of Aircraft by Air India

2082. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the profit/loss position of Air India (AI) during each of the last three years;

(b) whether Air India has taken some aircraft on lease basis to provide air services on international routes;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of the terms and conditions on which these aircraft have been taken on lease basis; and

(e) the measures taken by the Government to meet the growing demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The profit/ (loss) of Air India Limited during the last three years are as under:—

2002-2003	Rs. 133.86 crores
2003-2004	Rs. 92.33 crores
2004-2005	Rs. 96.36 crores

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. Currently, Air India has 22 aircrafts on dry lease in its fleet viz. 6XB747-400, 1X747-400 Combi, 11XA310-300 and 4XB777-222ER. In addition 3xB737-800 aircraft have also been taken on dry lease for Air India Express. These aircraft have been taken on terms and conditions which vary from Lessor to Lessor, aircraft to aircraft condition, age, airframe/engine combination, duration of lease, number of aircraft and lease market conditions during negotiations.

(e) Government have approved the proposal of Air India to purchase 50 aircraft comprising 8XB777-200LR, 15XB777-300ER and 27XB787-8 powered with GE engines for Air India and 18XB737-800W powered with CFM engines for Air India Charters Limited (a subsidiary of Air India), in order to revamp their fleet.

[English]

Discovery of Oil and Gas Reserves in Maharashtra

2083. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

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

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

(ONGC) has found oil and natural gas reserves in Maharashtra, particularly in Chandrapur;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the assessment made by ONGC regarding availability of oil and natural gas; and

(c) the time by which the exploration work is likely to be started therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has not established any hydrocarbon reserves in Maharashtra. However, ONGC has carried out geological, Gravity-Magnetic and Magneto-telluric surveys and 1150 kms of deep seismic sounding in Maharashtra. At present, ONGC does not hold any exploration acreage in Maharashtra. However, one Coal Bed Methane (CBM) block, WD-CBM-2003/II is being operated by ONGC, in which preparatory activities for exploration are in progress.

**Computer Training Centres for
SCs and OBCs**

2084. SHRI TAPIR GAO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Computer Training Centres set up for the Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes in the country, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh during the last three years; and

(b) the number of such Computer Training Centres proposed to be set up in the country particularly in Arunachal Pradesh during 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) 16 new Computer Training Centres have been set up in the country for Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes during the last three years. No Computer Training Centre has been set up in Arunachal Pradesh.

(b) No target has been fixed for setting up of Computer Training Centers during the year 2005-06.

[Translation]

Films on Environment and Forests

2085. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of films being screened on environment and forests;

(b) whether more such films are likely to be screened;

(c) If so, by when; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) During the last six years, Films Division has released the following number of films on environment and forests:—

Year	No. of films released
2000-01	03
2001-02	02
2002-03	04
2003-04	06
2004-05	04
2005-06	04

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Presently, 5 films on environment and forests are under production. After these films are completed and approved by the Central Board of Film Certification and Film Advisory Board as "approved films", the same will be released in theatrical circuits etc. in the country.

(d) Question does not arise in view of (c) above.

*[English]***Joint Naval Exercise with UAE**

2086. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level delegation from UAE visited India during January, 2006 has expressed keen interest in holding exercises with Indian Navy;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been signed between the two countries recently in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other areas in which agreements have been reached between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

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

(d) An agreement on Defence Cooperation between the two countries envisaging military training, military medical services, humanitarian and peace keeping operations and exchange of military experience was signed on 1st July, 2003.

Catering Facilities in Shan-E-Punjab Express

2087. DR. K. DHANARAJU:

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether catering facility has been withdrawn from Shan-e-Punjab Express;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Railways have received any requests/representations from various quarters to re-start catering facility in the said train;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) to (e) Shan-e-Punjab Express Train is running with pantry car. However, Train Side Vending has been permitted on this train.

FDI in Defence Sector

2088. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR:

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether FDI participation in defence oriented production has been minimal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government has considered the Kelkar Committee recommendation in this regard;

(d) whether the Government has taken into account the stiff competition from China in allowing FDI participation in Defence production; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under the liberalized economic environment, investment decisions are taken by entrepreneurs on the basis of techno economic considerations.

(c) No recommendation has been made by the Kelkar Committee in this regard.

(d) and (e) Government has taken into account the geo-political environment in the sub-continent and strategic nature of the Defence sector while allowing FDI participation in Defence production.

New Railway Staff Colleges

2089. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Railway Staff colleges in the country that have been imparting training to Indian Railway officers;

(b) whether there is any proposal to set up some new Railway Staff colleges;

(c) if so, the details alongwith the locations thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There are six Railway Staff Colleges which are imparting training to the Indian Railway Officers, viz. (i) Railway Staff College, Vadodara; (ii) Indian Railways Institute of Electrical Engineering, Nasik, (iii) Indian Railways Institute of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering; Jamalpur, (iv) Indian Railways Institute of Signalling and Telecommunication, Secunderabad, (v) Indian Railways Institute of Civil Engineering, Pune and (vi) Indian Railways Institute of Transport Management, Lucknow.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[*Translation*]

Myanmar-India Gas Pipeline Project

2090. SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

SHRI SHISHUPAL PATLE:

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

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

(a) whether India and Myanmar are considering an alternative route of Myanmar-India gas pipeline due to negative response of Bangladesh on the gas pipeline project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the progress made so far in this regard; and

(d) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The Indian side is exploring various options of importing natural gas from Myanmar, including the option of an onland pipeline via north-eastern territory of India bypassing Bangladesh. GAIL has commissioned a detailed feasibility study to examine the possibility of laying the pipeline through the North-eastern part of India. The detailed feasibility report is expected to be completed by April, 2006, which would inter-alia address the issue of the likely expenditure on the project.

Increase in Capacity of DD and AIR in Hilly Areas

2091. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT "BACHDA": Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action plan has been prepared to increase the capacity of Doordarshan Kendras and Akashvani Kendra in hilly States of the country particularly in the hilly districts of Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the action plan?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Schemes for the establishment of Doordarshan Kendras (DDK) (studio centres) with augmented facilities at Dehradun and Leh and in the hilly States of Uttaranchal and Jammu and Kashmir have been sanctioned and are under implementation. Besides, augmentation of DDKs in Srinagar and Jammu is also planned.

As for A.I.R., the following new Radio Stations have been proposed with the capacity of the transmitters [indicated in the brackets] for the State of Uttaranchal:—

(i) Bageshwar-(5 kW FM)

(ii) Champawat-(1 kW FM)

(iii) Dehradun-(10 kW FM) besides Captive Earth Station

- (iv) Dharchula-(1 kW MW)
- (v) Garisen-(1 kW FM)
- (vi) Haldwani-(10 kW FM)
- (vii) New Tehri-(1 kW FM)
- (viii) Rudra Prayag-(1 kW FM)
- (ix) Low Power 100 Watt Relay Transmitters in remote uncovered areas
- (x) A Captive Earth Station at Almora.

(c) Low power 100 watt FM Transmitters have been installed at Bacher, Bhatwari, Kaithikhan, Nainital, Rajgarhi, Ranikhet, Pratapnagar and Tanakpur. Captive Earth Station at Almora has been installed and it will be installed at Dehradun when the building gets ready.

Sites have been taken over for radio stations at Bageshwar, Dehradun, Garisen and New Tehri for which the building plans have been finalized. Site for radio station proposed at Haldwani has been finalized and payment has been made, but the site is yet to be handed over by the State Government. Suitable sites for radio stations at Champawat, Dharchula and Rudraprayag have been identified and the State Government is being pursued to hand over the sites. The implementation of these schemes will be subject to availability of resources besides the sanction for the staff required for the operation and maintenance purposes.

Electrification of Railway Lines

2092. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total length of electrified railway lines in the country as on date, zone-wise;
- (b) the target fixed for electrification of railway lines in the country during Tenth Five Year Plan, zone-wise;
- (c) the details of the railway lines, electrification of which is behind the schedule; and
- (d) the steps taken to complete the electrification works of those railway lines expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The total length of electrified railway lines on Indian Railway, Zone-wise as on 01-01-2006 is as under:—

Sl. No.	Railway	Route Kilometres Electrified
1.	Central	1796
2.	Eastern	1294
3.	East Central	1380
4.	East Coast	1264
5.	Northern	1088
6.	North Central	1384
7.	North Eastern	19
8.	North Frontier	0
9.	North Western	0
10.	Southern	1652
11.	South Central	1536
12.	South Eastern	2136
13.	South East Central	1209
14.	South Western	157
15.	Western	1148
16.	West Central	1257
Total		17320

(b) During the 10th Plan, a target of 1800 Route Kilometres has been fixed for electrification over Indian Railway. Since electrification of railway routes are not confined to Zonal boundary, Zone-wise targets are not fixed.

(c) and (d) No electrification of rail line is running behind schedule as the targets of completion of electrification projects are fixed on year to year basis

keeping in view the progress of the works and the availability of resources.

[English]

Specification for Runways

2093. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the length and width of runways at some airports in the country is not as per minimum required specification;

(b) if so, the total length and width of runways required at an airport where big aircraft lands;

(c) the details of airports not meeting the minimum required length and width of runways; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure the length and width of runways at airports as per minimum required specification?

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

(b) to (d) The general dimension required for a runway for operation of A320/B737-800 type of aircraft is 7500 feet X 150 feet and for wide bodied aircraft like A300/B767 is 9000 feet X 150 feet. The runway length and width at the airports owned by Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been classified as per International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Aerodrome Reference Code indicating the suitability of runway for operation of particular type of aircraft. However, expansion/extension of runways is under taken at some airports based on operational requirements of particular type of aircraft operated by various airlines subject to availability of land for the purpose. Extension of runway has already been undertaken at Madurai, Trichy, Raipur, Silchar, Jammu, Khajuraho, Dibrugarh, Bhopal, Bhubaneshwar, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Kangra and Cooch Behar. Extension of runway is also planned at Guwahati, Jaipur, Udaipur, Indore, Varanasi and Mysore.

Railway Hospitals in Jammu and Kashmir

2094. CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Railway Hospitals functioning in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) the details of hospitals operating temporarily under tin sheds; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Railways to improve the conditions of these hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There is no Railway Hospital in Jammu and Kashmir. There are two Health Units functioning in Jammu and Kashmir, one is a two doctors Health Unit at Jammu and another is a single doctor Health Unit at Udhampur.

(b) Nil.

(c) Does not arise.

Railway Infrastructure for New Delhi and Chennai Railway Stations

2095. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have proposed a new railway infrastructure for New Delhi and Chennai railway stations to improve the existing facilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the estimated cost of the project; and

(c) the time by which improved facilities would be provided at these stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) yes, Sir. Railway have proposed to enhance infrastructure facility at New Delhi and Chennai Railway Stations to improve existing facilities by developing them into world class mega terminals.

(b) and (c) The following projects have been sanctioned for providing new infrastructure at New Delhi and Chennai Railway Stations:—

(i) New Delhi Building and Passenger Reservation System (PRS) at Ajmeri Gate side: Construction of Station Building is likely to be completed by March '07 and

construction of new PRS building is likely to be completed by March '08.

Development of facilities at New Delhi Station Yard e.g. New Platforms, washing lines, sick line etc: The construction of maintenance facilities e.g. washing lines, sick line shed has already been completed. Construction of island platform and remodeling of the yard are likely to be completed by March '07.

(ii) Chennai Metropolitan City is served by two major railway stations viz. Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore.

A work of 'Chennai Central—Improvement to passenger amenities including beautification works' at a cost of Rs. 3.58 crore has been sanctioned in 2005-06.

A work of "Chennai Egmore—2nd entry arrangements" at a cost of Rs. 5.50 crores has been sanctioned in 2005-06.

Both the works as mentioned above are in progress and are expected to be completed by March, 2007.

Besides, a work of "Chennai Egmore-Improvement of Passenger Amenities including Beautification" at a cost of Rs. 6 crores has been recently sanctioned for 2006-07. This work is expected to be completed by March '08.

Review of Route Dispersal Guidelines

2096. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted a committee to review the Route Dispersal Guidelines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Committee has submitted its report to the Government;

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

(e) the steps taken or being taken to implement the recommendations of the said committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The Government had constituted a committee to review the Route Dispersal Guidelines. The Terms of Reference of the Committee were:—

- (a) Review of routes/locations specified in Category I and II.
- (b) Review of percentages fixed for different categories.
- (c) Examine feasibility of voluntary transfer of obligations by one airlines to another.
- (d) Periodicity of monitoring of the category-wise obligation by DGCA.
- (e) Other suggestions for overall improvement in implementation of the Route Dispersal Guidelines.

(c) to (e) The committee has since submitted its report which is under consideration.

[*Translaion*]

New Civil Aviation Policy

2097. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENG
PATIL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has finalised the New Civil Aviation Policy;

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

(c) the time by which it is likely to be announced and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) A draft of the Civil Aviation Policy is under consideration of Government in consultation with concerned Ministries.

[English]

**Exploration by Public Sector
Oil Companies**

2098. SHRI JUAL ORAM:

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV:

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

(a) whether the public sector oil companies have not performed satisfactorily in exploration during the last one year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government proposes to lay emphasis on exploration activities; and

(d) if so, the strategies being chalked out in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Mainly, two oil PSUs namely Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) are engaged in exploration and production activities in oil and gas in the country. In the last one year, they have implemented exploration programmes and ONGC and OIL have respectively made four and three hydrocarbon discoveries in the year 2004-2005. Exploration of oil and gas involves risk and outcome of exploration cannot be predicted with certainty. Hence, no uniform benchmark is available to gauge the exploration performance of an oil and gas company in the short term.

(c) and (d) The Government has laid great emphasis to enhance exploration activities in the country and has formulated the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), which provides for attractive fiscal and contractual terms to attract companies in the high risk area of exploration. The Government has so far signed 110 Production Sharing Contracts under the first five rounds of NELP. NELP-VI was launched on 23rd February, 2006 offering the largest ever area of 3.52 lakh sq. km. in 55 blocks. Compare to any earlier NELP round.

Import of Gas from Myanmar

2099. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has held any discussions with Myanmar regarding import of gas and pipeline project;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been reached between the two countries in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The agreement has not been reached yet.

(c) Does not arise, in view of the reply to (b) above.

[Translation]

Development of Jabalpur Airport

2100. SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh has provided land free of cost to the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for the development of Jabalpur Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the follow-up action taken by AAI on the project; and

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

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

(b) and (c) State Government of Madhya Pradesh has provided 30 acres of land to Airports Authority of India (AAI) free of cost for the development of Jabalpur airport.

AAI has completed the works like extension of runway from 1372 m to 1982 m for operation of B-737 class of aircraft at a cost of Rs. 11.76 crores, a new Terminal Building suitable for 200 passengers at a time

at a cost of Rs. 7.46 crores and DVOR (Doppler Very High Frequency Omni Range) and DME (Distance Measuring Equipment) have been provided at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.80 crores.

Development of Tourist Centres in Delhi

2101. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Tourism has formulated any plan for the development of tourist centres in Delhi keeping in view the Commonwealth Games 2010 as reported in 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated January 28, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these tourist centres would be established?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Department of Tourism has decided to focus on both development of infrastructure and promotion and marketing of India as a tourism destination for the upcoming Commonwealth Games. The strategy in this regard involves up-gradation of tourist infrastructure of Delhi and surrounding areas and augmentation of tourist accommodation facilities in the region. The Action Plan includes:—

- (i) Improvement of infrastructure around heritage sites/tourist spots;
- (ii) Development/Up-gradation of civic amenities at the historical sites and tourists spots;
- (iii) Improvement and up-gradation of connectivity between Airport to City, hotels, stadias and tourist spots;
- (iv) Organization of evening entertainment/cultural programmes;
- (v) Installation of multi lingual signages;
- (vi) Compilation of data bank of guides/escorts;
- (vii) Organization of art/craft exhibition.

[English]

Referendum of Air India Employees Union

2102. DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has directed to conduct referendum of Air India Employees Union;

(b) whether the Government has conducted the referendum of Air India Employees Union;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) to (d) In October, 2003, it was decided to undertake verification of membership of Unions operating in Air India through secret ballot. However, it could not be held as the matter relating to finalization of voter list and holding of secret ballot elections is before the hon'ble Mumbai High Court.

[Translation]

Market Share of Public Sector Oil Companies

2103. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state the market share of public sector oil companies in percentage in respect of all the petroleum products including petrol, diesel, LPG and kerosene oil during the last three months, till date and the percentage of market share captured by the private sector oil companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): The provisional percentage market share of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and private sector oil companies of diesel, petrol, LPG, kerosene and all petroleum products during the period from November, 2005 to January, 2006 was as under:—

(Figures in %)

Product	Public Sector OMCs	Private Sector Oil Companies*
Diesel	89.5	10.5
Petrol	94.5	5.5
LPG	96.3	3.7
Kerosene	100.00	0.0
All Products	83.2	16.8

*includes imports by private parties.

*[English]***Electrical Engine Repairing Unit**

2104. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up an Electrical Engine Repairing Unit at Kochuvelli under Trivandrum Division;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes Sir. There is a proposal for setting up Electric Engine Repairing Unit at Kochuvelli, under Trivandrum Division for minor attention of electric locos.

(b) The proposed Shed is planned to attend 4 locos, at a time. The drawing of the Shed is under finalization.

(c) The Trip Shed is likely to be functional by June' 2007.

*[Translation]***Railway Recruitment Board Office**

2105. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the norms for setting up an office of the Railway Recruitment Board;

(b) the reasons for not setting up Railway Recruitment Board office in Bilaspur; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) have been established based on territorial jurisdiction of the Indian Railways and not on the basis of State(s), Zones/Regions.

(b) There are already nineteen Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) situated all over the country. These RRBs are able to meet the recruitment requirements of the Indian Railways adequately. In fact, the RRBs freely accept the applications from the candidates all over the country in response to their advertisements and do not make any discrimination on the basis of State, Region or Area. Bilaspur region is catered adequately by RRB/Bhopal. Also, examination centres are arranged in Bhilai, Raipur and Chattisgarh by RRB/Bhopal, keeping in view the number of candidates belonging to Chhattisgarh State.

(c) Does not arise.

Merger of IA/AI

2106. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

SHRI D.P. SAROJ:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to merge Air India (AI) and Indian Airlines (IA);

(b) if so, whether any strategy has been chalked out in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Although the Government's attempt is to ensure better synergy between two national carriers, presently there is no proposal for their merger.

[English]

**Construction of Rail Under-Bridge
Near Rajahansa**

2107. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for construction of a rail under-bridge at the level crossing near Rajahansa in Cuttack-Paradeep railway line is pending for a long time with the Railways;

(b) if so, the reasons for pendency; and

(c) the time by which these projects are likely to be cleared?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Autonomy in Deciding Employees
Remuneration**

2108. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has asked for autonomy in deciding employees remuneration to prevent migration of employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

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

Transfer of Land to Maharashtra

2109. SHRI ANADRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have abandoned narrow gauge railway land between Latur-Harangul Railway

stations after commissioning of the broad gauge line at Latur;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Railways to transfer the said stretch of land to the State Government for public purposes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Due to broad gauge conversion of Latur-Miraj section, about 40 ha of land occupied by narrow gauge line between Latur-Harangull is rendered surplus.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. State Government has requested for transfer of abandoned Railway land under the narrow gauge line for construction of road.

(d) Necessary instructions have been issued to the Central Railway on 01-02-2006 for transferring the land in question in exchange of suitable land of equal monetary value to the State Government as per the extant policy.

Threat to Indian Culture

2110. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the tendency of private television channels to earn more profits is seriously threatening India's art and cultural heritage; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to check this tendency which is seriously threatening the culture of the country?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI): (a) and (b) All the advertisements/programmes of satellite TV channels transmitted or re-transmitted through cable service are required to adhere to the provisions of the Advertising Code and Programme Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder. The Programme Code inter

alia prohibits carriage of programmes which offend good taste or decency, contain anything obscene, denigrate women or children or are unsuitable for unrestricted public exhibition. For violation of the Programme Code action is taken against erring channels from time to time. Prasar Bharati, the public service broadcaster is not motivated solely by commercial considerations. Prasar Bharati telecasts programmes regularly depicting Indians' rich artistic and cultural heritage. Doordarshan runs a channel DD Bharati which is dedicated to programmes which focus on health, children, music, dance and heritage, with special emphasis on Indian way of life. It carries programmes on yoga, meditation, alternative system of medicine, aerobics and other aspects of health care in the health segment everyday. It holds a daily children and youth segment featuring programmes for the young such as cartoons, talent hunt shows, wild life films, news magazines, by and for children, campus scenes, counselling shows, etc. The channel also offers music, dance, travel and tourism shows, programmes on heritage, and literature.

The Government has also constituted a Committee on 03-10-2005 for reviewing the Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder and the Guidelines for certification of films prescribed under the Cinematograph Act, 1952. The terms of reference of the Committee inter alia are to revise and harmonise the CBFC guidelines and Cable Television Programme/Advertising Codes and AIR Code in accordance with contemporary community standards and the laws in force and to amplify the provisions of the Guidelines/Codes with a view to enable the Film/TV/Radio industry to use them for self-regulation and minimise the scope of their subjective interpretation, on the lines of OFCOM/Australian codes.

Preservation and Promotion of Tribal Culture

2111. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has prepared any action

plan for the preservation and promotion of languages, folk dances, art and culture of tribals in the country;

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

(c) the details of the assistance given to various agencies/NGOs by the Government for the purpose during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The Department 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 Cultural Centres and the Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata. In addition, the Department 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) Under Scheme of Financial Assistance for promotion of Tribal Folk and Art, grants given during the last three years is as under:—

Year	(In thousands of Rupees)
2003-04	60,00
2004-05	100,00
2005-06	170,00

[Translation]

Installation of L.E.D. Signal at Stations

2112. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of places where data loggers have been installed in the country, location-wise;

(b) the stations where L.E.D. Signal has been installed; and

(c) the amount spent on these projects during each of the last three years, zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The number of places where data loggers and Light Emitting Diode (L.E.D.) Signals have been installed zone wise is as follows:—

Zone	Data logger	LED Signal
1	2	3
Central Railway	212	53
Eastern Railway	44	10
East Central Railway	36	30
East Coast Railway	21	66
Northern Railway	115	148
North Central Railway	63	0
North East Railway	30	55

1	2	3
Northeast Frontier Railway	94	32
North Western Railway	77	46
Southern Railway	119	35
South Central Railway	201	53
South Eastern Railway	31	14
South East Central Railway	06	18
South Western Railway	89	73
Western Railway	205	65
West Central Railways	61	28
Indian Railways	1404	726

(c) The amount spent on these projects, zone wise is as follows:—

(In Rs. Crores)

Zone	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1	2	3	4
Central	1.31	1.46	1.32
Eastern	0.52	0.39	1.62
East Central	0.9	1.0	1.1
East Coast	0.44	0.68	0.42
Northern	1.24	1.71	3.64
North Central	0.38	0.61	0.49
North Eastern	0.74	1.39	1.14
Northeast Frontier	0.48	1.21	2.46
North Western	1.17	0.66	2.09
Southern	0.32	4.30	0.85

1	2	3	4
South Central	2.47	1.98	1.73
South East Central	—	0.26	0.68
South Eastern	0.28	0.24	0.76
South Western	1.1	1.6	2.08
Western	—	2.54	2.34
West Central	0.38	1.13	0.94
Indian Railways	11.73	21.16	23.66

[English]

**Doubling of Kayankulam-Ernakulam
Railway Line**

2113. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA:

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of doubling of Kayankulam-Ernakulam railway line via Kottayam/Alleppe;
- (b) the progress made so far on the project;
- (c) the amount released and actually spent on the project till date; and
- (d) the time schedule fixed for completion of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) On Ernakulam-Kayankulam line, patch doubling of Ernakulam-Mulanturutti-Kuruppantara, Kayankulam-Mavelikara-Chengannur sections on Kottayam route and Kayankulam-Cheppad-Haripad section on alleppey route respectively have been taken up where works are in various stages of progress. Further, the work of patch doubling of Chengannur-Chingavanam section of Kottayam route has been included in the Budget 2006-07.

(c) An expenditure of Rs. 39.7 crore has been incurred on these projects upto March, 2005.

(d) Doubling of Ernakulam-Mulanturutti and Kayankulam-Mavelikara sections are targeted for completion during 2006-07.

Railway Line for Movement of EMUs

2114. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal to lay a dedicated railway line for movement of EMUs on Ernakulam and Shorur railway section keeping in view the increase in passenger and goods traffic; 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.

[Translation]

Mobilization of Funds by IOC

2115. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian Oil Corporation has decided to

mobilize funds from the open market to make payments for import of crude oil and other petroleum products; and

(b) if so, the quantum of funds likely to be mobilized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Indian Oil Corporation Limited has been regularly mobilizing funds to meet its working capital requirements mainly for purchase of crude oil and petroleum products through bilateral and syndicated loans from both, domestic and international markets and also through issue of bonds in domestic markets.

(b) The quantum of borrowings as on 31st March, 2006 is expected to be Rs. 25,000 crore.

[English]

Demand of Petroleum Products

2116. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any assessment about the requirement of petrol and other petroleum products for the coming years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to meet the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) As per Xth plan estimates, demand for petroleum products for last three years of Xth plan 2004-05 to 2006-07 is as under:—

(Figures in MMT)

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Base Case	113.6	118.7	123.6
Upper Case	120.2	127.6	134.6

The country is self-sufficient to meet the demand

for petroleum products, barring LPG, from indigenous sources of production. The shortfall in availability of LPG is met through imports.

[Translation]

Selling of Islander Aircraft

2117. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:
SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to sell Islander aircraft of Indian Navy to Myanmar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether U.K. has registered its objection on selling these aircraft to Myanmar by India;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) The Government of Myanmar has requested for transfer of Islander aircraft from India for search and rescue operations, medical evacuation and relief operations in the island territories of Myanmar. The Government of India has not taken a final decision on this request so far. The British High Commission had expressed concern over the proposed transfer of aircraft to Myanmar as the British Government has an arms embargo in place against Myanmar. The Indian view point that these aircraft are non-military aircraft and are meant for humanitarian purposes like medical evacuation, airlift of relief supplies and search and rescue operations has been conveyed to the British Government.

[English]

Survey on Minorities

2118. SHRI DHANUSKODI R. ATHITHAN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a national survey has been conducted to ascertain the social and economic condition of the minority communities in the country;

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

(c) the reaction of the government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) Though no national survey has so far been conducted, the Government has already constituted a National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities to suggest criteria for identification of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities and to recommend measures for welfare of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities, including reservation in education and government employment. Further decision would be taken on receipt of the Report.

Construction of Railway Line from Hubli and Ankola

2119. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways had rejected the proposal of Government of Karnataka for construction of a railway line between Hubli and Ankola;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Railways have now received a revised proposal from the Government of Karnataka for the said project; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) As this new line is passing through Reserve Forest, land requirement have been reviewed and revised proposal has been submitted to State Government for obtaining forestry clearance.

Modernisation/Expansion of Railway Stations in Uttar Pradesh

2120. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has sent some proposals to the Railways regarding modernisation/expansion of railway stations in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Railways thereon?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Tourist Spots for Eco-Tourism

2121. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of tourist spots identified in the country for Eco-Tourism, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has initiated any specific measures for the development of Eco-Tourism in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Department of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance to the State Governments/Union Territories for development of Tourist infrastructure and promotion of tourism including Eco-Tourism Products on the basis of the proposals received from them, subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. These projects are sanctioned under "Product/Infrastructure Development of Destinations and Circuits" Scheme. The details of the financial assistance extended to the State Governments/Union Territories during the 10th Five Year Plan for development of Eco-Tourism are given in the enclosed statement. Moreover, Department has also formulated Eco-tourism Policy and Guidelines. These Guidelines aim to preserve, retain and enrich natural resources to ensure regulated growth of Tourism and for achieving sustainable tourism development in the country.

Statement**Projects Sanctioned by Department of Tourism during the Tenth Five Year Plan period for Promotion of Eco-Tourism**

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	Year	Name of the Project	Amount Sanctioned	Amount Released
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2004-05	Destination development of Bhawani Island	500.00	400.00
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	2002-03	Integrated development of Bhalikpung Tawang Tourist circuit	638.00	500.00
3.		2004-05	Eco-tourism huts Changlang	83.24	66.00
4.		2005-06	Destination development of Gaera Lake at Teraso Papum Pare Distt.	373.00	298.00
5.		2005-06	Destination development of Hot Spring Jia at Lower Dibang Valley	262.00	209.00
6.		2005-06	Circuit Development of Dibrugarh-Passighat-Daying Ering Wildlife sanctuary	299.00	239.20
7.	Assam	2002-03	Majuli Island Resort	382.25	325.21
8.		2003-04	Integrated Tourist complex at Agartoli Range	158.00	158.00
9.		2005-06	Circuit development of Manas-Guwahati-Kaziranga	781.00	624.80
10.		2005-06	Proposed Eco-Tourism development at Kodrajhar, Assam	460.00	368.00
11.		2005-06	Development of NE circuit in Assam	280.00	224.00
12.		2005-06	Proposal for development of Adventure Tourism in Kaziranga, Assam	44.95	35.90
13.	Bihar	2004-05	Eco-Tourism Development at Bhimband (Munger)	370.00	296.00
14.	Chhattisgarh	2002-03	Destination Development of Jagdalpur (Bastar)	45.00	37.00

1	2	3	4	5	6
15.		2003-04	Integrated development of tourist circuit Chhattisgarh	800.00	250.00
16.		2004-05	Integrated development of eco-tourism circuit in Chhattisgarh	648.35	518.68
17.		2004-05	Integrated development of Sirpur under destination development	397.91	318.33
18.		2005-06	Infrastructure and destination development of Mainpat Sarguja District	468.41	375.00
19.	Daman and Diu	2003-04	Development of Diu as destination	265.07	239.00
20.		2003-04	Destination development and beautification of Diu	54.58	43.66
21.	Gujarat	2003-04	Work around Somnath Temple	48.81	48.81
22.		2005-06	Development of Theme Park at Adalaj, Gandhinagar	480.00	120.00
23.		2005-06	Dinosaur Fossil park at Balasinor	345.00	100.00
24.	Haryana	2002-03	Development of Tapovan Park (Phase-II)	70.27	70.27
25.		2005-06	Development of Karna Lake at Uchana, Karnal	159.00	127.20
26.	Himachal Pradesh	2002-03	Kulu Circuit	41.80	41.80
27.		2004-05	Integrated Development of Kangra Tourist Circuit	800.00	640.00
28.		2004-05	Development of Sirmour as destination	500.00	400.00
29.	Jammu and Kashmir	2005-06	Development of Infrastructure at Sonamarg	379.46	304.00
30.		2005-06	Development of Chenab river front at Akhnoor	142.00	113.60
31.		2005-06	Development of Golf Course at Pahalgam	432.00	345.00
32.		2005-06	Up-gradation of Golf Course at Gulmarg	200.00	160.00
33.		2005-06	Development of Integrated Jammu and Kashmir Circuit	799.69	639.00

1	2	3	4	5	6
34.		2005-06	Development of Kongdoor as a Ski Destination	435.00	348.00
35.		2005-06	Development of Infrastructure facilities at Patnitop	461.00	369.00
36.	Jharkhand	2003-04	Integrated Development of Jharkhand as circuit	716.00	381.60
37.	Karnataka	2003-04	Development of bannerghatta biological Park	500.00	410.00
38.		2004-05	Integrated Development of South Karnataka circuit	798.50	638.80
39.		2004-05	Development of Chickmaglore wildnerness Bhadra	202.48	161.98
40.		2004-05	Destination Development of Bandipur tiger reserve	195.70	156.56
41.		2004-05	Coorg Golf Links at Virajpet	53.00	15.90
42.		2005-06	Destination Development of Jog Falls	462.52	370.00
43.		2005-06	Development of Golf Club, Chikmagalur	120.00	96.00
44.		2005-06	Development of Attiveri bird Sanctuary	60.00	18.00
45.	Kerala	2004-05	Development of Northern Regional Circuit	795.56	636.48
46.		2004-05	Integrated Development of High range tourism circuit	783.07	626.45
47.		2005-06	Integrated Development of Alappuzha Heritage town	800.00	640.00
48.		2005-06	Beach Tourism Circuit in Kerala	798.00	638.40
49.		2005-06	Integrated Development of Golf Course at Cochin	1000.00	800.00
50.		2005-06	Development of Elephant Part at Punnathur Kotta, Thrissur	349.50	279.60
51.		2005-06	Development of Ponmudi in Kerala	256.08	204.86
52.		2005-06	Revitalisation of Munnar destination development in Kerala	398.85	319.08

1	2	3	4	5	6
53.	Madhya Pradesh	2004-05	Destination development of Amarkantaka District Anupur	489.60	147.00
54.		2004-05	Development of Smhastha at Ujjain	110.66	33.18
55.		2005-06	Integrated development of Tourist Circuits in Madhya Pradesh	461.09	368.87
56.		2005-06	Construction of cottage at Mukki District Balaghat	34.16	27.32
57.		2005-06	Development of Tourist Circuit Gwalior-Shivpuri-Chanderi	800.00	640.00
58.	Maharashtra	2004-05	Development of Mahabaleshwar District Satara	685.87	548.70
59.		2004-05	Development of Mahabaleshwar in Satara	500.00	400.00
60.		2005-06	Destination development of Malsej Ghat in Pune	321.19	116.41
61.	Nagaland	2004-05	Development of Tourist circuit in six places of Nagaland	766.50	613.20
62.		2004-05	Eco-Tourism Conven. Centre of Phiphema	351.00	280.00
63.		2004-05	Destination development of Pftusero	439.24	351.00
64.		2005-06	Development of Mt. Pauna range circuit	250.00	125.00
65.	Orissa	2004-05	Integrated Development of Buddhist circuit at Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Udaigiri and Langudi	740.67	592.52
66.		2005-06	Development of Gopalpur-on-Sea	331.43	265.14
67.		2005-06	Development of Taptapani	500.00	400.00
68.	Pondicherry	2003-04	Development of Bharti Park	245.17	74.00
69.	Rajasthan	2004-05	Integrated Development of Hodoti Region	725.10	580.00
70.		2004-05	Development of Hathi gram at Amber fort	492.18	393.74
71.	Sikkim	2003-04	Construction of Eco-and Adventure Centre Chemchi	494.00	148.00
72.		2005-06	Development of Hot Spring, North Sikkim	20.00	4.00
73.		2005-06	Development of tourist circuit in East Sikkim	355.00	284.00

1	2	3	4	5	6
74.		2005-06	Construction of Rafting/Angling Huts at Mamring	8.00	3.60
75.		2005-06	Trekking trails and tourism infrastructure at Sang-Martam in East Sikkim	418.42	334.73
76.		2005-06	Tourist Developmnt schemes for Rakdong Tintek Belt in East Sikkim	678.30	542.64
77.		2005-06	Development of Tourist Circuit of Rangpo-Singtam etc.	800.00	640.00
78.	Tamil Nadu	2003-04	Development near Five Rathas	43.00	34.00
79.		2004-05	Integrated development of eco-tourism at point Callimere wild life sanctuary Muthupet	368.00	294.40
80.		2004-05	Destination development of Yercaud hill resort	448.00	358.40
81.		2005-06	Destination development of Kodalkanal	470.19	376.15
82.	Tripura	2002-03	Neermahal as a Destination	141.21	42.00
83.	Uttaranchal	2004-05	Integrated development of Badrinath Dham	702.09	561.67
84.		2004-05	Development of Pithoragarh Munsiyari-Berinag In Kumaon	418.60	334.88
85.		2005-06	Development of Nainital-Almorah-Ranikhet tourist circuit	647.51	558.00
86.		2004-05	Development of Pauri-Khishu-Lansdowne as destination	457.92	361.60
87.		2005-06	Development of Nainital-Almora-Ranikhet Tourist Circuit	697.51	558.00
88.		2005-06	Development of Hemkunt Sahib-Ghangharia Valley of Flowers	653.54	522.83
89.		2005-06	Development of Gangotri	481.42	385.13
90.		2005-06	Development of Kedarnath	453.13	362.50
91.		2005-06	Purchase of Water Sport Equipment	134.41	107.52
92.	Uttar Pradesh	2005-06	Development of Dudhwa National Park	312.60	250.08
93.		2005-06	Development of Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary	105.00	84.00
94.	West Bengal	2005-06	Destination development of Darjeeling	201.10	60.00

[Translation]

Uniform Sales Tax on Petroleum Products

2122. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

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

(a) whether the Government has formulated any guidelines for implementation of uniform sales tax on petroleum products in all the States and Union Territories; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) In order to contain the impact of high international oil prices on consumer prices of sensitive petroleum products, the following measures have been suggested to the States by this Ministry:—

- (i) To maintain a Uniform Floor Rate (UFR) of nil sales tax on PDS kerosene as suggested by the Empowered Committee of the State Finance Ministers.
- (ii) To rationalize the sales tax levied by the respective State Governments on domestic LPG, diesel and petrol by levying specific rates of sales tax instead of *ad valorem* taxes to avoid price spikes on account of rising prices of oil in the international market.

Removal of Anomalies

2123. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received representations from various employees' association especially from All India Railways Accounts Employees Union regarding depositing the arrears fallen due as a result of anomalies arising out of the implementation of recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission in the provident fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have removed the anomalies in pay scales arisen consequent upon the Fifth Pay Commission and settled other demands of All India Railway Accounts Employees Union;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) All India Railway Accounts Employees Union is not recognised by Ministry of Railways and no representation has been received from this Union.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Reimbursement of DD Charges

2124. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3468 dated December 15, 2005 regarding reimbursement of DD Commission and state:

(a) whether Oil PSUs are still not reimbursing Demand Draft (DD) charges at actual to the dealers;

(b) if so, whether the Government has received any representations from the Haryana Petroleum Dealers Association in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken/proposed to be taken by the oil companies thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Considering the competitive scenario and the fact that most banks were found to waive demand draft charges owing to introduction of Electronic Fund Transfer facilities, a decision was taken by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to discontinue reimbursement of demand draft making charges, effective midnight of 11-12-09-05. However, on account of serious objection raised by the Federation of All India Petroleum Traders (FAIPT), the OMCs are reimbursing demand draft

making charges, at actuals, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 58/- and Rs. 34/- per KL and for Pay order/Banker's cheque Rs. 29/- and Rs. 17/- per KL for MS and HSD respectively to its dealers incurring such charges, against production of proof of such incidence like bankers charge slip.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The representation has been forwarded to the oil marketing companies for appropriate action.

Air Traffic

2125. PROF. M. RAMADASS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the suggestions made by the Roy Paul Committee to improve the air traffic management;

(b) the extent to which these suggestions have been implemented by the Government; and

(c) the other steps likely to be taken to ease the air traffic flow?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The Roy Paul Committee has made suggestions to decongest the air traffic and enhance the air traffic capacity at Delhi and Mumbai airports, in particular, and some other airports of the country. These recommendations based on short, medium and long term measures range from improving ground infrastructure facilities, technological improvements in Communication, Navigation, Surveillance (CNS) and Air Traffic Management (ATM), Airspace management, Maintenance procedures of airside, organisational structure of CNS-ATM services, separation of Helicopter and General Aviation Services particularly during peak hours, Manpower Planning, recruitment policy, training and skill development etc.

(b) Action has been initiated for implementation of short, medium and long term recommendations made by the Committee. Various recommendations relating to improvement of ground infrastructure facilities, maintenance procedures of air-side, separation of Helicopter and General Aviation services, manpower planning CNS/ATM etc. have been implemented or are

at various stages of implementation. Besides, an Empowered Group has been constituted by the Government under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Civil Aviation to review progress of action taken for timely implementation of various suggestions made by the Committee. Inter-Ministerial consultations have also been made in this regard.

(c) Various steps taken by Airports Authority of India (AAI) to ease air traffic inter-alia include construction of new high speed exit taxiways at Delhi and Mumbai, parallel taxi track at Delhi so as to reduce runway occupancy time and additional parking stands at Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, procedures for simultaneous use of both runways at Delhi, cross runway operation at Mumbai, improved ATC procedures, implementation of Dedicated Clearance Delivery Position, ban on general aviation aircraft at Delhi and Mumbai during peak period, upgradation of ATC automation system at Delhi and Mumbai etc.

Review of Tourism Policy

2126. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has reviewed the Tourism Policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the growth perception of Tourism Industry for the next five years; and

(d) the details of FDI investment approved by the Government in tourism projects during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The present National Tourism Policy was announced in the year 2002. This policy is subject to constant review and change based on the prevailing domestic and international tourism scenario. The Policy provides a framework for development of tourism with the objective of reaping the socio-economic benefits of the sector and to position India as a global brand in order to take advantage of the burgeoning global travel and trade through the vast

untapped potential of India as a destination. It also aims to:

- position tourism as a major engine of economic growth;
- acknowledge the critical role of private sector, with Government working as a pro-active facilitator and catalyst;
- create and develop integrated tourism circuits based on India's unique civilization, heritage, and culture in partnership with states and private sector; and
- ensure that the tourists to India get physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched, spiritually elevated and "feel India from within".

(c) Going by the growth in India tourism in the last three years in terms of tourist arrivals by 14.3% in 2003, 26.8% in 2004 and 13.2% in 2005 and in value terms by 20.9% in 2003, 35.0% in 2004 and 20.2% in 2005, the Indian tourism industry is poised for a high growth in the coming years.

(d) As per the information provided by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the amount of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) approved by the Government during the last three years in the "Hotel and Tourism" Sector is as follows:—

Year	FDI (Rs. in crore)
2003	195.77
2004	94.65
2005	75.96

Scheme of Frequent Travellers

2127. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Scheme of Frequent Travellers (SOFT) for railway passengers has been started;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the scheme is applicable only to 1st, AC, 2AC and AC Chair Car Classes and not to 3rd AC and sleeper classes;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Railways for extending the said scheme for all classes of passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) With a view to improve the patronisation of higher classes, where occupancy level is relatively low as compared to that in Sleeper class and 3-AC classes, a Scheme of Frequent Travellers (SOFT) has been launched in the month of February, 2006, which is applicable to 1st AC, 2AC and AC Chair Car Classes. A Frequent Traveller will get a complimentary train trip after certain number of reward points are accumulated.

(e) Since there is already relatively higher demand in other classes, at present, there is no such proposal under consideration to extend this Scheme to other classes.

Frequency of Samjhauta Express

2128. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of revenue earned by the Railways through goods movement between India and Pakistan through Samjhauta Express during 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) whether there is any proposal to increase the frequency of said train; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There is no goods movement between India and Pakistan through Samjhauta Express. However, in addition to passengers, goods wagons are also attached with Samjhauta Express

to carry parcel traffic. The revenue generated through parcel traffic during 2004-05 and 2005-06 is as under:—

Year	Earnings
2004-05	Rs. 51,96,658/-
2005-06	Rs. 57,66,999/-

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Recruitment in Armed Forces

2129. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state the details of the recruitment made in the three wings of the armed forces during 2005 State and Union territory-wise?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): A statement is enclosed.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the State/ Union Territory	Army (2004-2005)	Navy (2005)	Air Force (2005)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Assam	1160	54	77
2.	Andhra Pradesh	3525	268	456
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	79	—	—
4.	Bihar	3134	391	1492
5.	Goa	3	1	—
6.	Gujarat	1773	5	219
7.	Haryana	2521	327	886
8.	Himachal Pradesh	1846	135	43
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	2359	66	333
10.	Kerala	1645	91	602
11.	Karnataka	2026	28	91
12.	Maharashtra	4932	62	87
13.	Madhya Pradesh	3223	39	216
14.	Manipur	210	45	91
15.	Meghalaya	87	2	1

1	2	3	4	5
16.	Mizoram	145	4	1
17.	Nagaland	415	10	2
18.	Orissa	1647	99	99
19.	Punjab	5380	112	226
20.	Rajasthan	4630	302	719
21.	Sikkim	5	9	6
22.	Tamil Nadu	3120	24	242
23.	Tripura	128	2	45
24.	Uttar Pradesh	9801	608	696
25.	West Bengal	3102	149	161
26.	Chhattisgarh	643	13	124
27.	Uttaranchal	2049	95	432
28.	Jharkhand	1168	29	148
29.	Andaman and Nicobar	—	12	16
30.	Chandigarh	2	—	—
31.	Delhi	1031	38	35
32.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	—	—	—
33.	Lakshadweep	—	—	—
34.	Pondicherry	3	—	3
35.	Daman and Diu	—	—	—
36.	Nepal	722	1	1
Total		62514	3021	7550

Note:—The recruitment figures in the Army are maintained on financial year basis and in the Navy and the Air Force on Calendar year basis.

[English]

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

Railway Lines in Arunachal Pradesh

2130. SHRI TAPIR GAO:

SHRI KIREN RIJJU:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted by the Railways for establishing railway line in Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the outcome and the present status thereof;

(c) the total expenditure incurred by the Railways thereon; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the corrective measures being taken for establishing railway line in the State?

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

(b) to (d) The work of Harmuti-Itanagar, a new line was sanctioned in 1996-97 at a cost of Rs. 156 crore. Later on, Government of Arunachal Pradesh requested twice to change the alignment of the new line firstly from Halem to Itanagar and then from Bedeti to Itanagar. Final Location Survey for alternative alignment from Bedeti to Itanagar has been taken up and is in progress. An expenditure of Rs. 0.02 crore has been incurred upto March, 2005.

An updating survey for new line from Morkongselek to Pasighat (30 Kilometer) has been proposed in the Budget 2006-07.

Central Assistance under Post Matric Scholarship Scheme

2131. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether central assistance under Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for Other Backward Classes has been sanctioned and released to the Government of Maharashtra during the last three years;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) No Sir. No proposal was received during the year 2003-04. State Government of Maharashtra had applied for release of funds to the tune of Rs. 200.00 crore and Rs. 144.96 crore during the year 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively. Keeping

in view the budgetary constraints, Government of Maharashtra was requested to submit a revised proposal which was not received from the State Government. Therefore, no grant-in-aid has been released.

Air India Service to Scotland

2132. DR. K. DHANARAJU:

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any demand for a direct Air India Flight from New Delhi to Scotland and back;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps the Government proposes to take to meet the demand?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Financial Assistance to Professional Groups

2133. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provides financial assistance to professional groups and individuals for special performing arts projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details of assistance provided during 2005-06, till date, programme-wise;

(c) whether the Government has any plan for promotion of fine arts and performing arts at school level;

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

(e) the manner in which it will be helpful to the students?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Tourism and Culture (Department of Culture) is running a Scheme entitled "Financial Assistance to Professional Groups and Individuals engaged for specified performing

Arts Projects". Under this Scheme financial assistance is provided to dramatic groups, theatre groups, music ensembles, children theatre, solo artists and for all genres of performing arts activities. The scheme has the following major components:—

1. Salary Grant
2. Production Grant.

As per latest available records a sum of Rs. 8,48,00,000/- (Rupees Eight crores forty eight lakhs only) has been disbursed for salary grant and a sum of Rs. 1,73,00,000/- (Rupees One crore seventy three lakhs only) has been disbursed for production grant during the current financial year (2005-2006) so far.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. Does not arise.

Rehabilitation of Affected Persons

2134. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons affected by the construction of Talcher-Sambalpur Railway line in Orissa;

(b) whether all the persons affected by construction of the said line have been rehabilitated;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to provide adequate amount of compensation and for proper rehabilitation of affected persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Saudi Aramco's Participation In Visakhapatnam Refinery

2135. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4310 dated April 21, 2005 regarding 'Saudi Aramco's offer for stake in HPCL Refinery' and state:

(a) whether any agreement has been signed between HPCL and Saudi Aramco;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited is not currently engaged in discussions with Saudi Aramco for any of its refinery projects.

Compensation Claims Before RCT

2136. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the time allowed to the claimant to file a compensation claim before Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT),

(b) the number of cases relating to refund of fare and accident compensation claims disposed of by the Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) during 2005-06 alongwith the total amount paid as compensation.

(c) the number of pending cases before RCT till date alongwith the reasons for delay in disposal of such cases; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken for expeditious disposal of pending claims cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Time allowed to the claimant to file compensation claim before Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) is one year in case of accident claim from the date of accident, and three years in case of fare/freight claim from the date of fare/freight paid to the Railway.

(b) During the year 2005-06 (up to 31-1-06), three cases of refund of fare were disposed of and amount decreed was Rs. 3,145, and 149 cases of accident claims compensation were disposed of and amount decreed was Rs. 1.78 crore by the Railway Claims Tribunal.

(c) A total of 25,914 cases were pending before RCT as on 31-1-06. Main reasons for pendency are as follows:—

(i) Adjournment sought by the Applicant/their Counsel for producing evidence, documents, etc.

- (ii) Transfer of claims cases from one Railway claims Tribunal (RCT) Bench to the other, sought by the claimants.
- (iii) Non-availability of heirship title with the claimants in accident compensation claims cases.

(d) To streamline the functioning of Railway Claims Tribunal the following steps have been taken/proposed to be taken for expeditious disposal of cases.

1. RCT (Procedure) Rules have been amended, these cover:—

- (i) An application for accident compensation cases can be filed before the Bench having territorial jurisdiction over the place from which the passenger purchases ticket/obtains his pass, or where the accident or untoward incident occurs or where the place of destination station lies or where the claimant normally resides.
- (ii) RCT to pronounce an order within 21 days after final hearing.
- (iii) Earlier the affidavits were attested by Notary Public. For the convenience of claimants, the Registrars of RCT have also been empowered to attest the same.
- (iv) The Registrar of the Tribunal has been empowered to monitor and see that the payment of compensation award is made expeditiously to the claimants by the Railway Administration.

2. Chairman, Railway Claims Tribunal is empowered to depute a Member of one Bench to the other Bench for holding Circuit Bench to clear the backlog in case of vacancy in that Bench.

3. Following administrative measures are also taken:

- (i) An Accident cell is set up at each zonal Head quarter to provide assistance for filing accident compensation claim and monitor them till the satisfaction of decree in the Railway claims Tribunal.
- (ii) After the decree has been passed, payment of

accident claims compensation is made at the earliest.

4. Computerization of Railway Claims Tribunal has been sanctioned for the year 2005-06 which will provide the facility of on line registration and checking of status of the claims cases pending with Railway Claims Tribunal.

[Translation]

Subsidy Policy

2137. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether public sector oil companies are formulating their own economic policy due to lack of transparency in the subsidy sharing policy;

(b) if so, the details of subsidy sharing policy of public sector oil companies;

(c) the amount of subsidy being borne by ONGC, GAIL and IOC; and

(d) the basis on which subsidy and price fixation policy is formulated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) No, Sir. The policies of public sector oil companies have been aligned to the subsidy sharing policies of the Government.

With the declared intention of moving towards market-determined pricing for petroleum products, Government had announced the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) effective 1-4-2002. Since PDS kerosene and domestic LPG are fuels of mass consumption and largely consumed by the economically vulnerable sections of the society, it was decided that subsidies on these two products will continue on a specified flat rate basis to be met from the fiscal budget. The Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were to adjust the retail selling prices of these products in line with international prices. However, in deference to Government directions, the OMCs did not increase the prices of PDS Kerosene and Domestic LPG commensurately, resulting in under-

recoveries in respect of these two products. In October 2003, Government decided that the OMCs would make up about 1/3rd of their under-recoveries on these two products from the surpluses in petrol and diesel and balance under-recoveries would be equally shared by the upstream companies and the OMCs.

However, there has been an unprecedented, sharp and spiraling increase in international oil prices, particularly since late 2003, combined with considerable week-to-week and even day-to-day volatility. Notwithstanding the steep rise in international prices of sensitive petroleum products, OMCs were modulating the price increase in petrol and diesel also besides maintaining the prices of subsidized products like domestic LPG and PDS Kerosene, in consultation with the Government. In consequence, they

have suffered under-recoveries on sale of petrol and diesel as well. Therefore, Government, in June 2004, elucidated the principles which would govern its policy of containing the burden of increase in international prices on consumers of these sensitive petroleum products. It was decided that the burden should be equitably shared by consumers, the Government and the oil companies. Accordingly, from 2003-04 onwards, Government introduced the subsidy sharing mechanism in which, after taking into account the subsidy provided for from the fiscal budget, the balance is shared by the upstream and the downstream companies equitably.

The share of the upstream companies which is proportionate to the quantum of under-recoveries, is as under:—

	(Rs. Crores)		
Contribution by Upstream oil companies	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06 (Apr.-Dec. '05)
ONGC	2,695	4,104	8,549
GAIL	428	1,137	526
OIL	—	706	676

As far as IOC is concerned, after adjusting subsidy from Government and the upstream companies, IOC would bear under recovery of about Rs. 8,108 crores during April-Dec. 05.

In order to formulate a long-term pricing policy, the Government had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister to examine different aspects of pricing and taxation of petroleum products with a view of stabilizing/rationalizing their prices, keeping in view the financial position of the oil companies, the investment needed in the sector, the need to conserve petroleum products, and establishing a transparent mechanism for the autonomous adjustment of prices by the oil companies. The Committee submitted its report on 17-2-2006. The report of the Committee is being examined by Government.

[English]

Anti-Collision Device

2138. SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status in regard to installation of Anti-Collision Device (ACD) on North-East Frontier Railway (NFR);

(b) the expenditure incurred on said project so far;

(c) whether the Railways have made any progress in regard to installation of ACD on other routes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Konkan Railway

Corporation Ltd. (KRCL) has installed the Anti Collision Device (ACD) system, on Malda-Katihar-Guwahati-Dibrugarh broad gauge route of Northeast Frontier Railway covering a total route of 1736 kms. The performance of the system is being evaluated.

(b) Rs. 55.61 Crore has been incurred so ar.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) ACD network covering 760 Route kms on Konkan Railway has been installed and is undergoing validation tests.

Survey has been completed as per following details:

Sl. No.	Railway	Route Kms.	No. of Stations
1.	Northern Railway	80	11
2.	South Central Railway	368	47
3.	South Western Railway	565	70
4.	Southern Railway	706	87

The expenditure incurred by KRCL so far on ACD project being commissioned on Konkan Railway is about Rs. 26.00 Crores.

The expenditure incurred on ACD survey work on additional routes other than Northeast Frontier Railway is about Rs. 2.7 Crores.

Charging of High Air Fare by Airlines

2139. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received complaints that Air India as well as Air India Express levy heavy air fare from the passengers from Kerala to Gulf countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and

(b) Requests have been received to reduce charges to and fro flights between Kerala and Gulf Countries.

(c) Fares on any sector are based on seasonality, demand, fares offered by competition and market condition. In spite of offering direct flights from Kerala to Gulf and spiralling costs, Air India have provided competitively low air fares to meet the requirements of Gulf passengers. Air India have also introduced a low cost budget airline, Air India Express, which has a web-based reservation system with dynamic fares offering discounts ranging from 50% to 15% on prevailing market fares.

Re-Development of Oil Fields by ONGC

2140. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE:

SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

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

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has identified some locations in its ageing oil fields on the West coast for re-development;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ONGC has assessed the production feasibility of these locations before re-development;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the amount sanctioned for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (e) Improved oil recovery (IOR) and enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) projects, namely, Mumbai High North, Mumbai High South and Additional Development at Heera Part-II are being implemented by ONGC in the west Coast areas of the country. Incremental oil of 63.225 Metric Million Tonnes (MMT) and 20.893 Billion Cubic Million (BCM) of gas in expected from these projects by 2030. The total cost of implementation of these IOR/EOR projects will be about Rs. 11,298.28 crores.

**Package from Japan for Maintenance of
Heritage Monuments**

2141. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any aid or package from Government of Japan for restoration and upkeeping the national and international heritage monuments; and

(b) if so, the details of the monuments covered under the said aid/package, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Through UNESCO, Archaeological Survey of India has received financial assistance to the tune of US \$ 500,000 under Japan Funds-in-Trust Project for documentation, excavation, revival of ancient tanks, providing tubewells, and afforestation of hill at Sanchi and also for restoration of stupas and environment development of Buddhist site at Satdhara, both situated in the Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh.

Regularisation of Temporary Employees

2142. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3562 dated August 18, 2005 regarding regularisation of temporary employees in Railways and state:

(a) whether the information has been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay?

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

(b) The number of temporary employees (under the nomenclature of casual labour) working in the Railways Zone-wise is 'Nil'.

(c) Does not arise.

Induction of BrahMos Missile

2143. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether multi-role supersonic cruise missile BrahMos has been inducted in Navy;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to induct BrahMos missile in Army and Air Force; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Indian Army has accepted induction of the road mobile complex of BrahMos missile. Development of Air Force version of BrahMos missile is in progress.

Agreement between India and France

2144. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the President of France has visited India recently;

(b) if so, whether any discussion was held with French delegation in regard to defence cooperation; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The President of France visited India in February, 2006.

(b) and (c) During the French President's visit to India, discussions were held between the two countries on defence cooperation. An Agreement on Defence Cooperation was signed between India and France with the purpose of providing a framework and guidelines indicating the broad areas in which increased defence cooperation is envisaged.

Modernisation of Railway Stations

2145. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent some proposals to the Railways regarding modernisation/expansion of Railway Stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of Maharashtra have requested for expansion of Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus at Mumbai. Railway have already undertaken the work of remodeling of Mumbai CST main line complex involving development of terminal facilities towards Carnac Bunder. Further, the work of new station building and circulating area to develop D'Mello road side entry, has been sanctioned. This will help in decongesting the present terminal. Apart from this, in order to examine the feasibility of developing modern world class station at Carnac Bunder (second entry to CSTM station), market feasibility study has been entrusted to Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation Limited (MRVC) in September 2005.

Demand of Conveyer Belts and Trolleys

2146. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the air traffic in Delhi and other metropolitan cities has increased manifold during the last few years;

(b) if so, whether the Conveyer Belts and Trolleys are not available in sufficient numbers at the airports to cope with the demand of the increasing number of passengers and the passengers are put into great hardship; and

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

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

(b) Conveyer belts and Free Passenger Baggage Trolleys are available in sufficient numbers. However, sometimes due to bunching of flights, inadequacy of conveyer belts and trolleys may be experienced.

(c) At the new terminals which are proposed to be constructed at Trivandrum, Chennai and Kolkata airports, sufficient nos. of conveyer belts incorporating latest technologies are proposed to be provided. Total number of Baggage trolleys available at airports throughout India

is 30,231. Further Airports Authority of India has ordered 9615 trolleys for airports throughout India.

Modernisation of Retail Outlets

2147. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the public sector oil companies have spent crore of rupees on the modernization of a few retail outlets in the country and are giving higher amount of commission to these dealers;

(b) if so, the reasons for such discrimination and criteria of selection;

(c) whether the Government proposes to conduct any enquiry in the matter;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken/proposed to be taken to stop additional payment of dealers commission to those dealers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) make investment on modernization of their Retail Outlets (ROs) to improve appearance and to provide appropriate facilities/convenience to the customers with a view to facing competition in the deregulated scenario. The criteria for selection of ROs for modernization is primarily based on location, current sales, future potential. The payment of dealer's commission for sale of petrol and diesel is uniform for all dealerships. No higher commission is paid to dealers of modernized ROs.

(c) to (e) Do not arise, in view of the reply to parts (a) and (b) above.

[Translation]

Recognition of Madhyama Certificate for Examination

2148. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'Madhyama' Certificate equivalent to Matric, from Bihar Sanskrit Education Board has been de-recognised for the recently held Indian Railways' Group 'D' recruitment examination and also for other recruitment examinations of the Railway Recruitment Boards thereby affecting thousands of students;

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

(c) whether the Railways propose to recognise 'Madhyama' certificate for Indian Railways' Group 'D' examination and other examinations of the Railways; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The Madhyama Certificate awarded by Bihar Sanskrit Education Board, Patna is not recognized for the purpose of recruitment on Indian Railways.

(b) Bihar Sanskrit Education Board, Patna and the certificates awarded by it are not recognized by Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, which is the nodal Department for such purposes.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Recognition/de-recognition of an educational qualification does not fall in the purview of Railway Board and the same lies with the nodal department i.e. Department of Personnel and Training.

[English]

Pricing of Petroleum Products

2149. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted a meeting recently on pricing of petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken thereon;

(c) whether any action plan is being prepared by the Government in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The Government had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister to examine different aspects of pricing and taxation of petroleum products with a view to stabilizing/rationalizing their prices. The Committee submitted its report on 17-2-2006. The report is under examination of the Government.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts in Railways

2150. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:
SHRI JUAL ORAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of posts are lying vacant in different Groups particularly in Group 'D' category in the Railways;

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

(c) whether the Railways have started or propose to start any recruitment drive to fill up these posts;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which these posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The Group-wise posts lying vacant as on 31-12-05 on the Indian Railways are approximately as under:—

Group 'A' and 'B'	Group 'C'	Group 'D'
1045	139330	44537

(c) No special drive has been launched for recruitment of staff on Indian Railways.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Filling up of posts is a continuous process and they are filled up through open market recruitment, compassionate appointments and through promotions. While recruitment in Group 'A' posts and various Group

'C' posts are done through Union Public Service Commission and Railway Recruitment Boards respectively, recruitment in Group 'D' posts is being done by Zonal Railways themselves.

[English]

Nanded Railway Division

2151. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any representations/demands from the public representatives as well as from various quarters regarding attachment of Nanded Railway Division to the Central Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) Representations/demands have been received from the public representatives as well as from the Chief Minister of Maharashtra regarding attachment of Nanded Railway Division from South Central Railway to Central Railway.

(c) While going-in for issue of Notification for operationalisation of new Zones and Divisions, it was

decided to retain Nanded Division on South Central Railway instead of Central Railway. This was done keeping in view the geographical contiguity of the Divisions forming a Zone; smooth movement of traffic operationally; to provide better control and improve efficiency of the system. Further, the decision to place a particular Division under a specific Zone is taken purely on operational/administrative requirements and not on regional considerations.

Funds for On-going Projects

2152. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the funds allocated to East Coast Railways during each of last three years against various on-going projects;

(b) the progress made so far on these projects;

(c) whether any of these projects is likely to be completed during 2005-06 and 2006-07; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The project-wise progress alongwith the budget allocation provided during 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 for various ongoing New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling projects under the jurisdiction of East Coast Railway is given as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Present Status	Budget outlay provided during 2002-03 (Rs. in crore)	Budget outlay provided during 2003-04 (Rs. in crore)	Budget outlay provided during 2004-05 (Rs. in crore)
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1	2	3	4	5	6
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New Line

1.	Daitari-Banspani (155 Kms)	The project has a high operational priority and is being implemented by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) under the National Rail Vikas Yojana	40.00	75.00	83.00
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1	2	3	4	5	6
		(NRVY). The line from Banspani to Keonjhar (57.44 Kms) has been completed and commissioned. On the balance Keonjhar-Daitari (Tomka) (98 Kms) section, formation works are in advanced stage of completion and contracts for track linking work have been awarded. The entire project is targeted for completion by March 2007.			
2.	Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh (56 Kms)	Land has been acquired partially. In phase-I, work has been taken up from Lanjigarh to Bhawanipatna (31 kms), where earthwork and bridge work are in progress. No target date of completion of the project has yet been fixed.	2.00	5.00	8.00
3.	Khurda Road-Bolangir (289 kms)	Final Location Survey (FLS) has been completed. Land has been acquired partially. Earth work and bridge work are in progress from Khurda end up to 36 kms of project length. No target date of completion of the project has yet been fixed.	5.00	15.00	15.38
4.	Haridasput-Paradeep (82 kms)	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS has been completed. Soil investigations of bridges and embankment and land acquisition have been completed partially. The project has been found bankable and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) has been signed among RVNL and Government of Orissa, Pradeep Port Authority, and M/s Jindal Steel Ltd. on 24-05-2005. The project is targeted for completion by March, 2008.	5.00	20.00	6.00
5.	Angul-Sukinda Road (98.7 kms)	FLS and soil investigation along the alignment have been completed. It is proposed to implement the project through	1.00	2.00	2.00

1	2	3	4	5	6
		SPV and the financial structuring may be decided after bankability studies and discussion with the beneficiaries. The bankability study report is under finalization at the RVNL. Further planning about this project, including the allocation of funds, would be feasible once the findings of the bankability study report are gone through.			
6.	Talcher-Bimlagarh (154 kms)	Work included in the Supplementary Budget 2003-04. FLS has been completed. Preparation of plans and estimates has been taken up. No target date of completion of the project has yet been fixed.	0	0.01	5.00
Gauge Conversion					
1.	Naupada-Gunupur (90 kms)	Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress. No target date of completion of the project has yet been fixed.	10.00	15.00	15.00
Doubling					
1.	Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghnathpur (43 kms)	The project has been completed and fully commissioned in 2005-06.	10.00	15.00	15.00
2.	2nd Bridges on Mahanadi and Birupa (3 kms)	The 2nd bridge over River Birupa has been completed and commissioned. Work of the 2nd bridge over River Mahanadi is being executed by RVNL under NRVY. Contract for the work has been awarded and the work is in progress. The work is likely to be completed during 2007-08.	20.00	20.00	11.00
3.	Lanjigarh-Titlagarh (47 kms)	Kesinga-Noria Road-Lanjigarh (34 Kms) segment has been completed and commissioned. Kesinga Road-Titlagarh (13 Kms) section is likely to be completed during 2006-07.	15.00	16.00	20.00
4.	Rajathgarh-Barang (20 kms)	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS and geo-technical investigation of all major	5.00	10.00	15.00

1	2	3	4	5	6
		bridges have been completed. Work is in progress for the bridge on the river Mahanadi and 5 other major bridges. The work is likely to be completed during 2007-08.			
5.	Khurda Road-Puri (Phase-I) (15.3 kms)	At present, doubling of Khurda Road-Delang (15.3 kms) segment is sanctioned, where earthwork and bridgework are in progress. The work is likely to be completed during 2006-07.	5.00	5.00	10.00
6.	Sambalpur-Rengali (22.7 kms)	Work included in the Budget 2002-03. FLS has been completed. Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress. Sambalpur-Sarla (7 kms) is likely to be completed during 2006-07.	0.50	2.00	10.00
7.	Jharsuguda-Rengali (25.6 kms)	New work included in the Budget 2005-06. Preparation of plans and estimates has been taken up. No target date of completion of the project has yet been fixed.	—	—	—
8.	Cuttack-Barang (12 kms)	Work included in the Budget 2003-04. The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS has been completed. Work of substructure of Kuakhai Bridge is in progress. The work is likely to be completed during 2007-08.	—	10.00	20.00
9.	Khurda Road-Barang 3rd line (35 kms)	Work included in the Budget 2003-04. The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS has been completed. Land acquisition is under process. The work is likely to be completed during 2007-08.	—	10.00	10.00

(c) and (d) At present the entire Daitari-Banspani (155 kms) New Line, Kesinga Road-Titlagarh (13 kms) of Titlagarh-Lanijigarh Doubling, Khurda Road-Delang

(Phase-I) (15 kms) of Khurda Road-Puri Doubling and Sambalour-Sarla (7 kms) of Sambalpur-Rengali Doubling projects are likely to be completed during 2006-07.

ONGC Report on Discoveries/Explorations

2153. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI MITRASEN YADAV:

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

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has submitted any report regarding their Discoveries/Explorations to the Government;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) the amount spent by ONGC on drilling of nine oil wells during the last financial year;

(d) the quantum of oil and gas reserves explored by ONGC during the said period; and

(e) the quantum of oil and gas likely to be extracted from the said reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) normally reports oil and gas discoveries in the Quarterly Performance Review Meeting for nomination blocks. Discoveries made under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) regime are to be reported as per the provisions of Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs).

(c) During 2004-05, ONGC drilled 25 oil/oil and bearing wells. The amount spent on drilling these 25 wells during the year 2004-05 was Rs. 235.75 crore.

(d) during 2004-05, ONGC has accreted 87.01 million metric tonnes (MMT) in-place of oil including condensate and 50.33 billion cubic metres (BCM) in-place of gas.

(e) The ultimate reserve accretion during the year 2004-05 is 20.62 MMT of oil including condensate and 28.78 BCM of gas.

**Doubling of Trivandrum-Kanyakumari
Railway Line**

2154. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of doubling of Trivandrum-Kanyakumari railway line;

(b) the progress of work done so far on the project; and

(c) the time schedule fixed for completion of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A survey for doubling of Trivandrum-Kanyakumari railway line has been taken up.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Procurement of Second Hand Harriers

2155. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to procure second hand harriers from UK;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the purpose thereof;

(c) whether any team of Indian Navy has visited UK recently to inspect these harriers;

(d) if so, the finding thereof; and

(e) the expenditure involved in procurement of second hand harriers?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) A proposal for the procurement of second hand Sea Harriers from UK for enhancing the operational capability of Navy has been initiated.

A team of officers was deputed to the UK to inspect the Sea Harriers to ascertain their suitability. The team has since made its recommendations. No final decision has, however, been taken on the proposal.

Illegal Cancellation of NOC

2156. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Haryana had sought one month time for submitting the details on the subject

of illegal cancellation of NOC of running petrol pumps in Haryana.

(b) if so, whether the Government has received the final reply from the Government of Haryana;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. With regard to the notice for a question that was proposed to be asked in this House on 8-12-2005, regarding alleged illegal cancellation of 'no objection certificates' (NOCs), issued for operation of retail outlet dealership (petrol pumps) in the State of Haryana, the Government of Haryana had sought for one month's time for collection and compilation of requisite information.

(b) Yes, Sir. A reply has now been received from the Government of Haryana.

(c) Information as furnished by the Government of Haryana is given in the enclosed statement.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement

Information furnished by the Government of Haryana with regard to alleged illegal cancellation of no objection certificates issued for running of retail outlets (petrol pumps) in the State of Haryana.

(a) Representation from Haryana Petroleum Dealer's Association regarding illegal cancellation of 'no objection certificates' (NOCs) for running petrol pumps in the State of Haryana was received.

(b) In terms of the Petroleum Rules, 2002, an NOC granted under the Rule shall be liable to be cancelled by the District Authority or the State Government, if the District Authority or the State Government is satisfied that the licensee has ceased to have any right to use the site for storing petroleum; provided that before cancelling the NOC, the licensee shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard. Further, a District Authority or a State

Government cancelling an NOC shall record, in writing, the reasons for such cancellation and shall immediately furnish to the licensee and to the licensing authority concerned, copy of the order cancelling the NOC.

(c) Show Cause Notices have been issued by the District Magistrates concerned in 572 cases to such petrol pumps where permission from the forest department was not obtained. In addition, the District Magistrate, Kaithal suspended 18 NOCs for petrol pumps out of which in one case the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court has quashed the suspension order passed by the District Magistrate, Kaithal and one case is pending in appeal before the competent authority. In two other cases, NOCs for petrol pumps have been withdrawn by the District Magistrate, Kaithal, out of which one case is pending in appeal before the competent authority.

(d) Rule 6 of the Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2004 prescribes a maximum period of 90 days for the State Government for processing the cases under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and 60 days for the Central Government to grant approval, but the said rules have been stayed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in their order dated 23-2-2004. Once the public sector undertaking/user agency submits complete case in the office of the District Forest Officer concerned, it is usually processed within a month and then it takes above 4 to 6 weeks to process the case at the level of the Forest Department/State Government and another 3 to 4 weeks with the Government of India.

(e) A total of 832 proposals from the oil companies/user agencies are in process at various levels for permission under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980. In about 600 of these proposals, oil companies/user agencies have been asked to complete the requisite documents and to submit the complete cases. In about 120 proposals, violation of the said Act has been made by the user agencies by either starting the petrol pumps or by way of construction of buildings. A policy is being framed by the Government to take decision in such cases for violation of the said Act by the oil companies/user agencies.

(f) Under Section 2 of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, no forest land can be diverted for any non-forestry purpose without prior approval of the Central Government.

The oil companies/user agencies shall, therefore, obtain necessary clearance before installing any petrol pump or starting construction of the building. However, cases of violation have come to the notice of the State Government and in order to deal with such cases, suitable policy guidelines are being framed by the Government.

Collection of Entry Fee

2157. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of amount collected from tourists as entry fee from protected monuments during each of the last three years;

(b) whether there is any proposal to reduce the entry fee for protected monuments;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the manner in which the Government monitor the process of entry fee collection?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The details of revenue earned through sale of entry tickets on centrally protected ticketed monuments during the last three years is as under:—

2002-03	Rs. 30,51,03,896
2003-04	Rs. 43,59,88,152
2004-05	Rs. 52,89,47,370

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) The sale of entry ticket is monitored by the supervisory staff of the respective field office and the counter foils of the sold tickets are tallied with the revenue collected at the end of each day.

Accidents of Trainer Aircraft

2158. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of trainer aircraft particularly HPT-32 aircraft which met with accidents during each of the last three years and the current year so far;

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

(c) the steps taken to minimize such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A total number of six (6) trainer aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) have met with accidents during the last three financial years and the current financial year so far. The details of the loss of life and property in these accidents are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) A continuous and multi-faceted effort is always underway in the IAF to enhance and upgrade flight safety. Measures to enhance the quality of training to improve the skill levels, ability to exercise sound judgement and situational awareness of pilots are being pursued. Spetial disorientation simulators are also used for better training. Besides, stringent actions are taken whenever violation of procedure and indiscipline are observed.

Statement

Sl. No.	Year	Type of Aircraft	Place	Date of Accident Service	Loss of life		Loss of Civil Property
					Civilian	(in Rs.)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	2002-2003	HPT-32 Bamrouli/ Allahabad	AF Stn	11-10-2002	Nil	Nil	Nil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		HPT-32 Hyderabad	AFA	21-11-2002	NII	NII	1000
2.	2003-2004	HPT-32 Station, Tambaram	Near AF	18-5-2003	NII	NII	6000
		Kiran Hakimpet	AF Stn	6-11-2003	2	NII	NII
3.	2004-2005	HPT-32 Hyderabad	AFA	4-3-2005	1	NII	NII
4.	2005-2006 (till February 2006)	Kiran	Bangalore	27-12-2005	NII	NII	NII
Total			6		3	NII	16000

**Amendment to Press and Registration of
Books Act, 1867**

2159. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to make some amendments in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1967;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the amendments are likely to be made in the said Act?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Since Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 is very old, various provisions of the Act are proposed to be amended to bring it in line with the present times. No specific time for the proposed amendments can be given since, it is to be processed at various stages and passed by the Parliament.

Conservation of World Heritage Sites

2160. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) The financial assistance received from UNESCO for the conservation of World Heritage sites in the country during each of the last three years and the current year, monument-wise;

(b) the details of amount spent and works taken up during the said period;

(c) whether the Government has forwarded a list of new places of Heritage sites to UNESCO for giving them World Heritage status;

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

(e) the response of UNESCO in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No financial assistance

has been received by the Archaeological Survey of India for the conservation of World Heritage sites in the country during the last three years.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has nominated Majuli Island in Assam for consideration of inclusion in the World Heritage list in 2006 and the nomination dossier for Red Fort has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre for consideration for inclusion in the World Heritage list for 2007.

(e) Nomination dossier for Majuli Island has been examined by the World Heritage Centre and an expert from ICOMOS, and advisory body of UNESCO has completed the site visit. Decision of the World Heritage Committee will be known in the ensuing meeting to be held in June, 2006.

Wage Revision

2161. SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demands for wage revision of the employees of Indian Airlines and Air India are pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons for pendency; and

(c) the action being taken by the Government for settlement of wage revision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Wage revisions upto 31-12-1996 in respect of all categories of employees in Indian Airlines had been completed in 2001. Further, Productivity Linked Incentive (PLI) had been introduced in 1994, revised in 1996 and further revised in respect of all categories of employees from the year 2001. There has been substantial increase in emoluments consequent to payment under the PLI Schemes based on improvement in pre-determined productivity parameters. The PLI settlement in respect of non-technical categories of employees was last signed on 23-04-2004.

Indian Airlines had taken a decision in December, 1999 that considering the financial position of the company and increasing competitive pressures, there was no

justification for increase in wages at that stage. The position still remains the same. As such, no time-frame can be set for further revision of wages. However, there has been a substantial increase in emoluments consequent to payment under the PLI schemes which are in a way surrogate wage revisions.

As regards Air India, the Management had signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Air India Employees' Guild, Air India Employees' Union, in respect of ground categories of workmen-technical and non-technical, numbering about 8000 employees, revising their wages effective 1st January 1997 for a period of 10 years.

The Wage Revision in respect of the other categories of employees is in process.

[Translation]

Examination by Railway Recruitment Board

2162. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether lakhs of candidates were deprived of taking examination for recruitment to the Group 'D' posts in the Railways recently and only fifteen per cent candidates out of five lakh candidates from Delhi were allowed to take the said examination.

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

(c) whether the Railways have received complaints in regard to irregularities in issuance of admit cards and other irregularities committed by Lajpat Nagar Railway Recruitment Board;

(d) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard;

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

(f) the action against the officials found guilty?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. All Admit Cards were dispatched well in time. Dates were notified in Newspapers and on Railway

Websites for candidates who had not received their admit cards to collect duplicate from Railway Office. It was also advertised in the newspapers that if the candidates have any complaint regarding discrepancies/deficiencies in the admit cards, they can write to/submit their complaint/appear in person in Railway Recruitment Cell. Duplicate Admit Cards were issued by the Railway to the candidates who represented.

(d) to (f) Do not arise.

[English]

Construction of Road Over Bridges

2163. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent proposals to the Railways for the construction of road over bridge in the state;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps have been taken by the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. 5 firm proposals duly fulfilling the preliminary pre-requisites as per extant rules for construction of road over bridges on cost sharing basis have been received from the State Government of Maharashtra for inclusion in the Railway's Works Programme of 2006-07.

(b) (i) Road Over Bridge (ROB) at Mangalwadi Bazar in lieu of Level Crossing (LC) No. 297.

(ii) ROB at Warora at LC No. 28.

(iii) ROB at Nanded Station Yard on LC No. 356A.

(iv) ROB at Tumsur station on LC No. 532.

(v) ROB between Ballaharshah and Manikgarh in lieu of LC No. 96.

(c) All these 5 proposals have been included in the Railway's Works Programme on 2006-07.

12.01 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI):

I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, for the year 2003-2004, together with Audit Report thereon.

(iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, 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 3807/2006]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, for the year 2004-2005.

(ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, for the year 2004-2005, together with Audit Report thereon.

(iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, for the year 2004-2005.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing

reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3808/2006]

- (5) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Press Council of India, New Delhi, for the Year 2004-2005, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3809/2006]

- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Children's Film Society, India, Mumbai, for the year 2004-2005, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Children's Film Society, India, Mumbai, for the year 2004-2005.

- (8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3810/2006]

- (9) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Film Development Corporation, Mumbai, for the year 2004-2005.

(ii) Annual Report of the National Film Development Corporation, Mumbai, for the year 2004-2005, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

- (10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3811/2006]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following statements (Hindi and English versions) showing action taken by the Government on the assurances, promises and undertakings given by the Ministers during various sessions of Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and Fourteenth Lok Sabha:—

Tenth Lok Sabha

1. Statement No. XXXVI Ninth Session, 1994

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3812/2006]

Eleventh Lok Sabha

2. Statement No. XXXIV Second Session, 1996

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3813/2006]

Twelfth Lok Sabha

3. Statement No. XXXVI Third Session, 1998

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3814/2006]

4. Statement No. XXXIV Fourth Session, 1998

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3815/2006]

Thirteenth Lok Sabha

5. Statement No. XXXIII Second Session, 1999

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3816/2006]

6. Statement No. XXXIV Third Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3817/2006]

7. Statement No. XXIX Fourth Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3818/2006]

8. Statement No. XXXVIII Fifth Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3819/2006]

9. Statement No. XXXVII Sixth Session, 2001

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3820/2006]

[Shrimati Suryakanta Patil]

10. Statement No. XXXV Seventh Session, 2001
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3821/2006]
11. Statement No. XXII Eighth Session, 2001
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3822/2006]
12. Statement No. XX Ninth Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3823/2006]
13. Statement No. XVII Tenth Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3824/2006]
14. Statement No. XV Eleventh Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3825/2006]
15. Statement No. XIII Twelfth Session, 2003
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3826/2006]
16. Statement No. X Thirteenth Session, 2003
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3827/2006]
17. Statement No. IX Fourteenth Session, 2003
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3828/2006]
- Fourteenth Lok Sabha**
18. Statement No. VII Second Session, 2004
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3829/2006]
19. Statement No. V Third Session, 2004
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3830/2006]
20. Statement No. III Fourth Session, 2005
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3831/2006]
21. Statement No. II Fifth Session, 2005
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3832/2006]
22. Statement No. I Sixth Session, 2005
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3833/2006]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (English and Hindi versions) of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 3834/2006]

12.02 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS
Eleventh Report

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): I beg to present the 11th Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Public Undertakings on 'Health Insurance—A Horizontal Study'.

12.02½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS
One Hundred and Eighteenth Report

[Translation]

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY (Bellary): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the One Hundred and Eighteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Home Affairs on the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2005.

[English]

MR SPEAKER: Item No. 9, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar—not present.

Item No. 10, Shri Shibu Soren

12.03 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

- (i) **Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 8th report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel pertaining to the Ministry of Coal**

[Translation]

*THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI SHIBU SOREN): I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Eighth Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal and Steel in pursuance of direction 73 A of the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha issued vide Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II, dated September, 01, 2004.

The Eighth Report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel (14th Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on 26-04-2005. The Report relates to the examination of Demands for Grants of Ministry of Coal for the Year 2005-06.

Action taken statements on the recommendations/ observations contained in the report of the Committee had been sent to the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel on 25-07-2005.

There are 24 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 Annual Plan Outlay, under utilisation of funds, judicious utilisation of the Internal and Extra Budgetary Resources (IEBR), review of on-going projects, mechanisation and modernisation of mines, implementation of projects, execution of projects, linkage, exploration of coal and lignite, allotment of captive blocks, developments of roads and railways in coal mine areas, community development in Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited (NLC), infrastructure facilities, utilisation of funds for sand stowing and protective work, R and R Policy and R and D activities.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee is indicated

*Laid on the table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 3838/2006.

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 all the contents of this Annexure. I would request that this may be considered as read.

12.04 hrs.

COMPETITION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2006*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Competition Act, 2002.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Competition Act, 2002."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: I introduce** the Bill.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we come to Matters of Urgent Public Importance after the Question Hour. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI (Udaipur): Sir, please allow me to speak....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will definitely give you a chance to speak. Please have patience. I am requesting one of the most senior-most Members, who is very very cooperative. I wish to recognise his co-operation.

Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr.

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II Section -2 dated 9-3-2006

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

[Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava]

Speaker, Sir I am raising a very important issue. There is hailstorm and heavy rains in many parts of the country. This rain might have caused heavy loss all over the country. The crops of mustard, wheat, barley, grain and mushroom are ready for harvesting and the mustard stored in godowns by the farmers who have harvested it has turned black. I think, the farmer would not get adequate cost of mustard crop-lying in the godowns.
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: There is too much of noise going on and this is not the place for it. What is happening here? Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava, please continue.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Therefore, I request through you, that the Government should send its team there and make an assessment of the loss caused by heavy rains. Sir, you are also a supporter of great Gadgil formula, so I request you that Rajasthan should get more financial help under your protection beside the assistance provided to it under Gadgil formula. I would also request to provide relief in other parts of the country where crops have been damaged due to heavy rains. The crops of wheat, barley and gram—all have been destroyed. It is a very important issue. I hope that you will certainly give directions to the state government and I demand that Rajasthan should be given some financial assistance so that relief could be given to the farmers.

[English]

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA (Rajkot): Sir, I associate myself with what Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava has stated just now....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I will give opportunity to every one, you please have patience.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI (Chittorgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the entire country...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have called Shri Ganesh Singh to speak. It is the same and an important subject so I have called him to speak.

[English]

will you kindly take your seat, Shri Srichand Kriplani? This is very unfortunate.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What is this going on.

[English]

Now, I would not allow anyone to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to know from the hon. House whether everybody can speak at the same time, that is at 12 noon?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I have called your member to speak. He wants to speak on an important subject.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: He may speak later on...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Malhotra, I am appealing to you to control your members.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: How can I ask everybody to speak at 12 noon?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: How all members can speak at 12 noon.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am calling your member.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the country it is a...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that I will call Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari also.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Then, I will have to adjourn the House.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request you that....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I request you to kindly occupy the chair.

[English]

I will request Prof. Malhotra to come and sit here and then regulate his Members.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very important matter.

[English]

It is a very important issue. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Have I denied that? I have called one Member and I am going to call the names of other hon. Members one after another. They are also raising

*Not recorded.

important issues. If you want him to speak, then you have to give me a list.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that I would call him. I have already called the name of Shri Ganesh Singh.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not try to pressurise me like this. Important issues are being raised. I have allowed Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava. Shri Ganesh Singh wants to raise a similar issue. After that, let me decide who will speak next. I am going to call Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari. Do you have any objection to that?

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, You can expel me, if you wish, from the House. ...(Interruptions) You have the right....(Interruptions)

SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA (Sikar): You have said that you will give us an opportunity at 12 noon. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: I am not challenging your right....(Interruptions) It is a not a small thing....(Interruptions)

SHRI GANESH SINGH (Satna): Will you please give me two minutes to speak? This matter pertains to my constituency so I want to speak on it. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Only Shri Ganesh Singh's statement will be recorded.

(Interruptions)*...

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to thank you for allowing me to raise this very important issue. ...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Your members have shown displeasure on calling you to speak.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Nobody is annoyed with you. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Kriplaniji, is it your seat? Please go to your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you very much for allowing a discussion here in the House on the loss caused due to natural calamities in various parts of the country. The vagories of nature have once again wreaked havoc on ripen crops of the farmers in many parts of the country. Last week there was heavy hailstorm in seventeen districts of Madhya Pradesh. The crop of Red Lentil sown on fourteen thousand hectares of land under my constituency has been damaged due to vagories of weather and disease about which I had already informed the House, but, no central study team had reached there till date. Day before yesterday on 7th of March Madhya Pradesh again received heavy hailstorm due to which ripe crops of Wheat, Gram, Mustard, Raye and Arhar of the farmers in villages Maiher, Amarpatan and Ram Nagar Tehsils alone, under my constituency, have suffered major damage. Similarly several other districts of the state have suffered damage to crops. The state government has started survey in this regard. I demand that a central study team should be sent there immediately to take stock of damage caused to the crops of the farmers and compensation should be paid to them accordingly. There is a provision under the RBC Act to provide nominal relief to the farmers whose crops have been damaged due to natural calamities. Though the Central Crop Insurance Scheme is there in place but the farmers are not getting benefit of the said scheme. There is a provision of Insurance unit at Tehsil level whereas it is not necessary that natural calamity will occur in the entire Tehsil. It may be that only 2-4 fields are affected by the natural calamity in a particular area. I request if the benefit of the Crop Insurance Scheme is actually to be provided to the farmers, then the fields of the farmers should be taken as a unit so that the loss suffered by the

farmers due to natural calamities could be compensated. I once again request the Union Government to dispatch a Central Study Team there to conduct a study and provide full relief to the farmers at the time of grave crisis caused due to natural calamities.

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI (Udaipur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you very much. I request that...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The matter pertaining to the farmers and poor of the country is being raised, will you not allow it to be raised? In what manner do you want to run the House?

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very important issue pertaining to the farmers of the entire country and the people of Rajasthan, but before coming to this point I would like to deal with an important matter about which you had said during the Question Hour to raise it during the Zero Hour.

Shri Kriplaniji has requested you to allow this matter to be raised during Zero Hour. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will call him also.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow him to raise it. If you want to raise your issue, do so.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Your speech will not be recorded. Better you do not say anything.

...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari, do you want to speak on your issue?

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: I though I could request the leadership of the party! I have called the first four names from your party and this is the type of interference and reflection on the Chair.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: You had assured me to call me to speak at 12 noon. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I had not said that I will call you exactly at 12 noon.

[*English*]

During this time. It is for me to decide. All these are very important issues concerning the poor people of the country. Do not try to browbeat me. It will be wrong on your part to do that.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Through you, I want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that confusion regarding the quantity of wheat available to APL and BPL is prevailing in the whole country. On the one hand, the Government claims that it is providing 35 kg wheat per family per month for APL while on the other hand when a question was asked in this regard, it was replied that this quantity had been reduced to 20 kg from 35 kg. Today, wheat is not available anywhere for APL. Not only that, BPL was getting 35 kg wheat per month earlier which has now been reduced to 20 kg per family per month. Today, the Government is not making wheat available for every BPL family every month. The Government is not able to supply wheat to the people living below poverty line. The very people in the whole country who always used to say "the hand of the Congress is with the poor", I want to draw the attention of the Government towards this. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the time to make speeches but to raise important matters. This 'Zero Hour' will go.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: The Antyodya Scheme "Food for Work" was started. The famine relief

work under the scheme has been started. The Government is not able to provide foodgrains for work under the famine relief work and is distributing slips. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Alright. What is this?

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: The poor people working there, who should get food for work are not getting the food but only slips. I, therefore, want to draw your attention that the Government should pay attention to it. The BPL families or the poor families who used to get wheat from the Government are not getting it....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats, hon. Members. Let there be some order in the House. You should conclude it.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: It is an important matter. The Government should pay attention to it. The Government which makes claims should give a reply here as to why the BPL families are not getting wheat? ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, are we doing justice to ourselves? I would like to humbly ask the hon. Members. It is a matter for raising issues. I am allowing the hon. Members. There are interruptions all the time. Within a reasonable time, we have to conclude this. This is not a debate. Are we utilising this important time? I am appealing to all of you. Somebody has to be there to regulate the proceedings of the House. You are trying to impose all your decisions on the Chair. Who will speak and when? Whether one will speak or not? Everything is being decided by yourselves?

...(*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What is happening here? I have allowed you to speak. You should conclude this quickly. It is not the time to make long speeches.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: The Government should give a reply as to when it will give wheat to the people. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You will not get reply now. Shri Srichand Kriplani.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You should also take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: In many State Assemblies in the country, hon. Members are being expelled or suspended. Something like that has to be done.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Government. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You should have little patience. You are a hon. Member of this House. Behave like an hon. Member. I have been saying that I would allow you. You are disturbing your own Members.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not disturb...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Did you not disturb? I will send you its cassette.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Srichand Kriplani, you should

apologise to the Chair. He should tender his apologies to the whole House.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am requesting you. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will send you the cassette. If you happen to see it, you will be ashamed.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: I am very sorry, Sir.

[Translation]

I beg your pardon. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please speak.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you do not look good when you are angry...(Interruptions) There is an organization in my parliamentary constituency by the name of Emanuel Mission where international activities are going on for the last 21 years. I want to request you only in this connection. But, before this, I want to say that recently a book published by this mission and written by M.G. Mathew...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You should take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: You should listen to me first. ...(Interruptions)

In this book, against the Gods and Goddesses of Hindus...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Only Shri Kriplani's statement will go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not make any allegation against any other community.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: I am not making allegations against anyone...(Interruptions) You should listen to me. I want to tell him also that this book...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You please tell us.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Please listen to me. Not only Hindus have registered their protest against this book but Christians, Muslims and all other people have also objected to this book. The Christians have given memorandum against this book and have demonstrated before the Collector. The Muslims have burnt effigy of the writer of the book there and there is already widespread resentment among all Hindus over this book. ...(Interruptions) Sir, there are so many objectionable remarks made in this book. But I would like to quote five or six lines from this book here...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, not now.

[English]

That cannot be done.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: This book contains objectionable remarks against Lord Rama, Shiva, the holy river Ganges, Sai Baba, Lord Mahaveera, Swami Vivekanand, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Arya Samaj, Kumbh Mela etc. Not a single great personality, God or Goddess has been spared in this book...(Interruptions) I request that...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? You are disturbing him. What is this?

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: (Interruptions) It has been written in this book...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It has become a new method.

[English]

You are disturbing him. An hon. Member of your party is speaking and you are disturbing him.

[Translation]

This is a new method we are coming across. Please sit down.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Sir, I am on a point of order. How is he reading the book here without permission. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order during 'Zero Hour'. Please sit down. I have been requesting and very humbly submitting that nobody is bound by anybody's statement. If that were so, it would have been a different situation. Every Member is arguing with another Members. Here is the Oppositor and here is the Ruling Party. There are other Members also. There are different perceptions, different policies and programmes. How can anybody say something which must be accepted by everybody? We must learn the art of listening. Otherwise, if you want an opportunity according to the rules, I shall give you that opportunity. Nobody is prepared to listen.

[Translation]

Please, be brief.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: This type of thing should not be spoken. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: This book contains some remarks against Hindus. ...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: When some one writes something against Muslims, then the entire world is united to protest...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: It has been written in this book ... * ... This book contains objectionable remarks against Lord Shiva, Rama, Krishna, Swami Dyanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand, Mata Amrita, the holy river Ganges, Kumbh Mela etc. and not a single God or Goddess has been spared. Therefore, I request that ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL (Kota): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very serious matter. I associate myself with it. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The members notices are here, hence I will associate the names of all these hon. Members to it.

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Please, let me finish. I want to say that Immanuel Mission Society ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The names of Shri Subhash Mahariya, Shri Pushpa Jain, Shri B.S. Dangawas, Shri Nihal Chand Chauhan, Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari, Shri Mahaveer Bhagora, Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava, Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat, Shri V.P. Singh, Shrimati Sushila Bangaru Lakshman, Shri Jaswant Singh Bishnoi and Shri Raghuvveer Singh Koshal are being associated with this matter.

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: I request that the Government of Rajasthan be directed to impose a ban on this book and to destroy copies of the said book...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: This book must be banned.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He has made his submission. Other hon. Members who have given notices on this, will be associated. The names of all the hon. Members who have given the notices, will be associated.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I have already said it.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If you are not prepared to work, let us then adjourn the House.

12.25 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Srichand Kriplani and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Kriplani jee, this is not fair, you please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, you cannot do that.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: the House stand adjourned to meet again at 2.00 p.m.

12.25 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.00 hrs.

The Lok Sabha reassembled at fourteen of the Clock.

14.01 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKERS in the Chair]

- (ii) **Final Report of the High Level Committee Constituted under the Chairmanship of Justice U.C. Banerjee on the Incident of fire in coach No.S-6 of 9166 Up Sabarmati Express near Godhra Station of Western Railway on 27-02-2002.**

[Translation]

*THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on 27-2-2002 due to the

incident of fire in 9166 Up Sabarmati Express near Godhra Station of Western Railway, 59 lives were lost, 24 persons were injured and railway property was damaged. Under Section 114 of Railway Act 1989, statutory enquiry was not done by Commissioner of Railway Safety. To get to the bottom of truth, to ascertain the actual cause of fire, and to find out the related issues, the UPA Government, vide Ministry of Railway notification dated 4.9.2004 constituted a High Level Committee under the Chairmanship of Justice (Retired) U.C. Banerjee. With a view to empower the Committee to carry out its work properly, a Notification was issued on 2-12-2004 empowering the Committee with the powers under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Committee had submitted its Interim Report on 17-1-2005 which I have already laid in both the Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the above mentioned High Level Committee has submitted its Final Report to the Railway Ministry on 3-3-2006. In the Special Civil Application No.16500/2005 filed by Shri Nilkanth Tulsidas Bhatia, the Gujarat High Court on 26.10.2005 had ordered that if the High Level Committee submits any report, it will not be implemented by the Railway Ministry without the permission of the Court. On 6-3-2006, Hon'ble Members had demanded to place the report of Justice Banerjee Committee on the Table of the Sabha. In this connection, Hon'ble Gujarat High Court was requested on 7-3-2006 to allow laying of the report on the Table of the Sabha but it was not permitted. Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat on 7.3.2006 has again directed not to give any further publicity to the U.C. Banerjee report and not to further act upon the Report in any manner by Railway administration or any body till the final hearing fixed to begin in the week commencing from 3-4-2006. Against this order of Single Bench of dated 7-3-2006, an Appeal has been filed in the Divisional Bench of Hon'ble Gujarat High Court which is under consideration.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not delivering my speech on this subject. I want to request that the legitimacy of the Committee constituted has been challenged in the Court and the verdict is awaited in this regard. If the Minister of Railways wants to inform the House about the rail

accident, then he should present the report prepared by the DRM and RPF Commandant which has been received in the Ministry of Railways and the Minister of Railways should not, under any political hypocrisy, give a misleading statement in this House ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Prabhunath Jee, Hon. Minister has given the statement as per the court order.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: He has given the statement as per the court order.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we shall take up item No. 8 Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde to make a statement.

14.05 hrs.

(III) **Status of Implementation of recommendations contained in the 3rd, 7th and 9th reports of the Standing Committee on Energy**

[*English*]

*THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): I am making this statement on the present status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Third, Seventh and Ninth Reports of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Energy in pursuance of direction 73A of hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin Part-II, dated 1st September, 2004.

The Third, Seventh and Ninth Reports of the Standing Committee on Energy (14th Lok Sabha) were presented to the Lok Sabha on 02-03-2005, 19-08-2005 and 25-08-2005 respectively. The Third report relates to the examination of Demands for Grants of Ministry of Power for the year 2004-05; Seventh Report relates to 'Hydro Power—A critique' and Ninth Report relates to 'Implementation of Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP)' ...(*Interruptions*)

*Placed in Library. See No. LT 3836/2006

[Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde]

Action taken Statements on the recommendations/ observations contained in the 3rd, 7th, 9th Reports of the Committee had been sent to the Standing Committee on Energy on 27-07-2005, 05-12-2005/23-02-2006 and 21.11.2005 respectively.

The Third report had 12 recommendations, all of which have been accepted by the Government. Statement in respect of ten recommendations has already been laid on the Table of the House on 24-08-2005.

The Seventh Report has 10 recommendations, of which six have been fully accepted and three have been partly accepted by the Government.

The Ninth Report has 13 recommendations, of which ten have been accepted by the Government.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee in the said reports 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 by reading out all the contents of this Annexure. I would request that this may be considered as read.

14.06 hrs.

- (iv) **Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 163rd report of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development on Demands for Grants (2005-2006) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**

[English]

*THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ AND MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): I beg to lay the statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 163rd Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (14th Lok Sabha) (2005-06) in pursuance of the direction 73A of the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part-II dated 1st September, 2004.

The 163rd Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (2005-06) was laid in the Lok Sabha on 06-05-2005. The Report relates to the action to be taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations of the Committee.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee is indicated in the Annexure to my statement, which is laid on the Table of the House. I would request that this may be considered as read.

14.07 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Matters under Rule 377 listed in today's List of Business may be treated as laid on the Table of the House.

- (i) **Need to take up the issue of release of Indian fishermen held captive by Pakistani Coast Guards with the Government of Pakistan**

SHRI BHARATSINH MADHAVSINH SOLANKI (Anand): This is to bring the notice of the Government that the fishermen of Gujarat are attacked by rocket launchers by Pakistani Coast Guards even though they fish in International waters, It is learnt that the Pakistani Coast Guards are doing all these acts with a view to impound their expensive fishing boats. At present 450 fishermen and 275 fishing boats are under the custody of Pakistani Coast Guards and many lives have been lost in the process.

I request the Government to take the matter strongly with the Pakistani Government for long term measures and provide protection to our fishermen and consider compensation to the deceased fishermen in such incidents.

- (ii) **Need to take steps for reconstitution of Wrestling Federation of India**

SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL (Kurukshetra): Sir, I want to

*Placed in Library. See No. LT 3837/2006.

*Treated as laid on the Table.

draw the attention of the Government of the fate of the Wrestling Federation of India. It is mired in an unsavoury controversy. The Federation was dissolved by the Indian Olympic Association. Thereafter the IOA constituted an adhoc body on December 9, 2005 under the chairmanship of the secretary, Athletic Federation of India. Three months have passed but the Wrestling Federation of India has not been reconstituted. As a result of this, neither any camp nor any championship has been officially causing great hardships to our wrestlers and their coaches. The Asian Games are going to be held in Doha this year but unfortunately it has not been possible to select our contingent of grapplers. Any further delay in reconstituting the Wrestling Federation will have an adverse effect on the Selection and training of our contingent and international schedules.

I request the Hon. Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports to intervene in the matter immediately to protect the interest and prospects of our wrestlers.

- (iii) Need to restore the number of seats reserved for SCs/STs in Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha from the state proposed to be reduced by the Delimitation Commission as per 2001 census**

[Translation]

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Sir, the Delimitation Commission under the Election Commission is undertaking the work of delimitation of constituencies in Chhattisgarh state which includes 90 seats of the Legislative Assembly and 11 Lok Sabha seats. Two seats for Lok Sabha are reserved for scheduled castes and four seats are reserved for scheduled tribes in the Lok Sabha from the state. 10 seats are reserved for scheduled castes in the Legislative Assembly and 34 seats are reserved for scheduled tribes in the State Assembly. The Delimitation Commission is reducing 5 assembly seats reserved for scheduled castes and one Lok Sabha seat each for SCs and STs. And this is being done on the basis of 2001 census.

It is pertinent to mention here that the new Chhattisgarh state was created for uplifting and developing SCs/STs and to protect their rights as well. Whereas in the above context, reduction in the seats reserved for

SCs/STs has led to violation of their fundamental rights and this has resulted in widespread resentment among the SCs/STs and they are expressing apprehensions over their rights.

I, therefore, request the Union Government to issue an order not to reduce the number of reserved seats for SCs/STs in the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha while protecting their rights.

- (iv) Need to enhance the proportion of grants being given to Rajasthan as central assistance**

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL (Tonk): Sir, several states have demanded for a review of the ratio of grants provided to them as central assistance. The center gives assistance for the state plans as loan and grant. The central government is not providing loans to the state governments from the year 2005-06 and only 30 per cent grant is being provided and the remaining 70 per cent is to be arranged by the State Government as loan. This formula has been followed for the central plan assistance for long. The ratio between loan and grants provided to the states as central assistance is not rational.

Therefore, there is a need for immediate review of this ratio. There is heavy burden on the state resources due to central loan and liability of payment of interest thereof and the loan ratio being more in the central plan assistance. Besides, due to more part of loan in the central assistance for state plan, it has lost the spirit of assistance. Therefore, the loan part in the central assistance should be enhanced to 50 per cent, at least. And this has been demanded by all the states including Rajasthan. Therefore, a decision should be taken in this regard immediately so as to accelerate the pace of development in the states.

- (v) Need for early construction of bypass at Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh**

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Sir, the construction of a bypass at Bareilly on the Lucknow-Delhi National Highway 24 has been pending for the last several years. All the formalities in this regard including the DPR have been completed. The construction on this bypass commenced two years back but the same has not been

[Shri Santosh Sangwan]

completed so far. This is an important work of the area and delay in its construction has resulted in the disruption of traffic and accidents take place there. I, therefore, urge upon the Minister of Road Transport to re-start the construction work on this bypass on the priority basis.

(vi) Need to open a Purchasing Centre of the Cotton Corporation of India In Savanur Taluka, Haveri district, Karnataka

[English]

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR (Dharwad South): Cotton farmers of Haveri district in my Dharwad South Parliamentary Constituency are producing about 30,000 bales of Jaider cotton in Savanur taluka, Haveri district, Karnataka. At present, there is no cotton purchasing centre in the vicinity with the result these cotton farmers are facing great difficulty in selling their produce and in fact, they are forced to sell their produce at a 'throw away' price, thus incurring heavy losses.

There has been a long-pending demand for setting up of a Marketing Centre of Cotton Corporation of India in Savanur Taluka, Haveri district, Karnataka. Hence, I would like to request the hon. Minister, through you, sir, to set up a Marketing Centre of CCI at Savanur Taluka, Haveri district of Karnataka so that farmers can sell their produce at a minimum support price.

I hop the hon. Minister would do the needful and help cotton farmers of my constituency to get the minimum support price for their produce.

(vii) Need to review the criteria of population fixed for construction of roads under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana In tribal and hilly regions of the country

[Translation]

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora): Sir, India is a country of villages and the vision of the developed India could be realized only when the villages are provided with basic facilities like metalled roads, electricity, water, etc.

Keeping this in view, the previous government

among other schemes had started the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in 2000-01 to link all the villages of the country with all weather roads. Earlier villages with a population of more than 1000 were to be linked with roads under the scheme. Thereafter, the villages with a population of 500 were supposed to be covered under this scheme. Later this norm was relaxed for the tribal and hilly regions where villages with a population of 250 or more were to be linked with roads.

But, the present Government has now dispensed with the norm of population 250 fixed earlier for the tribal and hilly regions. Now, only those villages are being linked with roads in the tribal and hilly areas where the population is 500 or more than that.

The villages in hilly and tribal areas are very small and scattered ones. The population of these villages vary from 250 to 300 or 400. Most of the villages are of less than 500 population. Following the new norm, most of the villages located in hilly and tribal areas would be deprived of road link for good.

I therefore, request the Central Government to relax the norm of 500 population to 250 for the tribal and hilly areas as was fixed by the previous Government

(viii) Need to look into the problems being faced by Indians working in foreign countries especially Gulf and Pakistan

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the government towards an important issue. Indians face a lot of harassment in foreign countries, particularly in the Gulf countries where they are subjected to beatings and confinement and non-payment of dues. Many Indian face imprisonment. In Pakistan particularly, when an Indian dies in an accident or is murdered, bringing his body home becomes an ordeal. Similarly, disposal of their compensation cases also run into lots of difficulties. The government should create a special cell to deal with such cases in order to help out the people facing problems in this regard.

(ix) Need to include Ajmer district in Rajasthan in National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, merely

five districts from Rajasthan have been included under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which is being implemented since 1 February 2006 onwards. Ajmer district has been facing a severe drought and famine situation for the last many years due to continuous dearth of uninterrupted rainfall.

The countryside of Ajmer has eight Panchayat Committees out of which six Panchayat Committees namely Anrai, Bhinai, Jawaja, Peesangan, Silora, and Srinagar come in the most exploited category and the remaining two namely Kekri and Masooda belong to the most vulnerable category according to the level of ground water criteria. Pre-monsoon ground water survey has revealed that the average level of ground water has fallen from 7.79 metres in 1984 to 15.90 metres in 2004. This indicates that on an average the level of ground water is falling by 41 centimetres annually. The district has a dismal record in the matter of production. There are fourteen lakh farmers in Ajmer district who are tilling an average of 2.33 hectares of land per farmer which is economically unviable. There is a shortage of cultivable land. Inflow of water into dams and reservoirs is negligible.

Hence, the Union Government is requested to include Ajmer district under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to provide employment to the rural denizens of the district and the farmers dependent on farming. Ajmer district fulfils all the eligibility criteria (laid down) under the scheme.

- (x) Need to clear the proposal for setting up a new International Terminal at Trivandrum, Kerala by the Public Investment Board**

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): The proposal to set up a new International terminal at Trivandrum International airport had been bogged down due to the delay in getting the mandatory clearance from the Public Investment Board. 27 acres of land as required by the Ministry of Civil Aviation has since been acquired and handed over to the Airport Authority of India. The delay in commencing the works of the International Terminal is hampering the other developmental activities at the Airport including introduction of new international

flights. I request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to intervene in the matter and kindly arrange to get the clearances without further delay, so that the much delay project could be taken up for execution.

Another urgent and feasible development project at the Airport is refuelling facility. Trivandrum Airport is on the International Air Traffic Route and all the International flights fly over here. If the refuelling facility were offered to such flights at Trivandrum, it would be very convenient to such flights and also be an income-generating project. I request the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Aviation to take necessary steps for sanctioning the project.

- (xi) Need to provide Central assistance to the Football Academies helping them to produce quality-players of International standard**

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Football has been one of the popular games in India since long. But we have to still carve a niche in the arena of world football. Now in terms of FIFA ranking, India stands at 127th position. It is not a matter of pride for our country having vast population and resources. There is no dearth of talent in our country. What we have to do at this moment is to search those talents with genuine efforts and groom them properly with modern concept in world football. This can be made possible by setting up a number of football academies in our country.

In our country, Mohan Bagan Athletic Club has become a pioneer in establishing such a kind of Football Academy sensing the long felt need to search talent from different parts of our country and turn them into players of international standards by providing them proper training and facilities. Mohan Bagan Athletic Club, alongwith infrastructural assistance from Durgapur Steel Plant, has established Mohan Bagan SAIL Football Academy of Durgapur.

At present, there are ten clubs who participate in Group 'A' level National League and if all these national clubs show their readiness to establish such kind of football Academy, there will be no dearth of standard players in our country in near future and India can certainly dream of participating in World Cup Football 2014

[Shri Sunil Khan]

This task will involve huge expenditure which comes to around Rs. 30-40 lakh per year for each such Academy and it can only be possible if Central Government and All India Football Federation come forward with monetary assistance.

I urge upon the Union Government to consider monetary assistance to those Academies who are going to produce world standard players.

- (xii) **Need to enquire into the functioning of placement agencies providing services of house-maids in Delhi with a view to check trafficking of Adivasi girls**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Sir, most of the Adivasi girls who are lured to Delhi with promises of employment are coerced into prostitution. Once they enter into this profession, all ways to get back into the mainstream are closed. The placement agencies have a big hand in this business. Such agencies place attractive advertisements in the newspapers in the capital promising to provide guaranteed employment and claim that they are recognized by the Delhi Government. Their agents buy girls from poor families from tribal areas of Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. Such girls are subjected to sexual exploitation and thereafter sent to work as maids or ayahs in return for advance money of Rs. 3500 to Rs. 5000. These girls do get work but remain in penury. Their wages go directly to the agency. If any girl expresses a wish to return home she is threatened and again pushed into prostitution. More than 80 thousand girls have been forced into this profession in the National capital, Delhi. The government should take cognizance of this fact and take effective action to rescue such girls so that they are able to lead a normal life.

- (xiii) **Need to expedite construction work of the bypass at Etawah, Uttar Pradesh**

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA (Etawah): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister, through the House, towards the problems being faced in my parliamentary constituency Etawah which is situated on the Kanpur-Agra N.H.-2. The work of widening and

beautification of N.H.-2 from Agra to Kanpur is almost complete but the work on Etawah bypass is lying uncomplete although the hon. Minister had given the assurance that the work would be completed by October, 2005. But work on the bypass has not progressed an inch. Vehicles passing through the city remain stuck in traffic jams for hours at a stretch, accidents have become a daily occurrence and there has been a substantial increase in pollution.

Hence, the hon. Minister is requested to get the work of Etawah bypass completed expeditiously so as to provide relief to the people.

- (xiv) **Need to review the implementation of Below Poverty Line and Antyodaya Programmes in Misrikh Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh**

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT (Misrikh): Sir, the people living below poverty line are not getting the benefit of BPL and Antyodaya Programmes being implemented in Misrikh Parliamentary Constituency in Sitapur district in Uttar Pradesh as BPL Antyodaya cards are not being issued to the eligible persons and foodgrain quota is also being curtailed regularly. BPL families are large in number in Misrikh and this number is rising every year. So the quota for these poor people should also be increased.

I, therefore, demand an inquiry into eligibility in issuing BPL cards in Sitapur district and also to increase in foodgrains quota for the poor.

- (xv) **Need to impose ban on use of foodgrains in preparation of alcohol**

DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL (Chatra): Sir, earlier I had drawn the attention of the Government towards the use of foodgrains by breweries and distilleries in preparing alcoholic drinks expressing my apprehension that this could lead to rise in price of foodgrains and the Government might have to import the same but the Government has not taken any meaningful steps in this direction. Even today, the foodgrains allocated for the poor people are being procured illegally and fermented. Surprise raids on these companies may recover huge volumes of fermenting foodgrains. When the Government has permitted use of molasis for making wines then the companies should restrict to its use. An action should be

taken against the companies which use foodgrains for preparation of alcohol and an inquiry should be conducted to know the source of procuring foodgrains.

Through this House, it is requested to the Government that the practice of preparation of alcohol from foodgrains should be banned so that there is no shortage of foodgrains in the country and the Government is not forced to import foodgrains.

(xvi) Need to Include Khandmal district in Orissa under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojna

[English]

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH (Phulbani): Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the backwardness of the tribal dominated District Khandmal which is my Parliamentary Constituency Phulbani. Even after the 59 years of independence Khandmal District has not been able to a part of main stream of the country because the maximum population of the district belongs to tribal community. Earlier the Union Government has not covered Khandmal under the K.B.K. Yojana due to which development of tribal people suffers a lot. To bridge this gap the Central Government has allocated central assistance to the district but I think by such assistance the problem of the district will not be solved.

Sir, when we are going for all round advancement and modernization we should not forget the Tribal population of our country. We have to bring them in the main stream of the nation and for that Khandmal District should be a part of Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana.

Sir, I, therefore, urge upon the Government to kindly include Khandmal District under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana so that the opportunities of modernization and the backwardness of the area can be removed.

(xvii) Need to review the selection process for the post of Chairman, Damodar Valley Corporation

[Translation]

SHRI BHUWANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA (Hazaribagh): Sir, there is no permanent Chairman in Damodar Valley Corporation for the last two years. Besides the post of Chairman, charge of several other

important posts has also been given to other officers. Interview for the post of Chairman was held in 2005 in which selection was made for the post. A panel was forwarded by the Ministry of Power to the Prime Minister which was reverted with certain baseless objections. A reminder signed by eleven Members of Parliament from Jharkhand and some twenty five Members from Bihar and West Bengal was sent to the hon. Prime Minister but it was not taken into consideration. The panel was returned from the Prime Minister's Office in April, 2005 and interview was held again in January for the post of Chairman in which some candidates were called on 21 January and some on 25 January. Interview was held on 29 January for finalisation which is not in conformity with the rules.

The Government is, therefore, requested to call all the candidates for interview again to fill up the post of the Chairman as well as other posts.

(xviii) Need to prevent illegal entry of Jute Twine from Nepal with a view to protect the Small Scale Jute Twine Manufacturing Industries in Andhra Pradesh

[English]

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): The Andhra Pradesh Small Scale Jute Twine/Yarn Mills Association submitted to the Government of India to check the illegal entry of Jute Twine for Nepal to protect the indigenous agro based, labour oriented, Small Scale Jute Twine Manufacturing Industries of Andhra Pradesh—otherwise the survival of the entire A.P. Small Scale Jute Twine Manufacturing Units spell disaster, affecting the livelihood of several lakhs of poor workers, marginal peasants/cultivators and also of coolies who are indirect dependents—the indiscriminate unwanted illegal entry of huge quantities of jute twine from Nepal, resulted in cut throat uneven competition to A.P. Jute twine manufacturing units thwarting impeding, their financial viability. As such all the 18 (Eighteen) A.P. Small Scale Jute Twine Units are experiencing acute financial crisis.

I request the Government of India to prevent the illegal entry of Jute Twine from Nepal and to protect the Small Scale Jute Twine Manufacturing Industries of Andhra Pradesh.

14.07 hrs.

GENERAL BUDGET, 2006-2007—GENERAL
DISCUSSION

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS
(GENERAL) 2005-2006

AND

DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS (GENERAL)
2003-2004—*contd.*

[English]

DR. P.P. KOYA (Lakshadweep): Hon. Speaker, Sir, the presentation of a Budget for a particular financial year, threadbare discussions with the participation of all sections of Parliament, reply by the hon. Finance Minister and passing of the Budget alongwith Demands for Grants etc. are annual exercises binding upon the Parliament and its Members. However, it gives an insight into the current state of the economy and financial health of the country; and budgetary allotment for the next financial year reflecting the policy and programmes of the Government in power. Hence it is customary for everybody to wait for the presentation of the annual Budget in the Parliament, reaction of the public on the Budget, opinion of the experts in the field and reflection of the Members of both the Houses of Parliament are all routine affairs. Everyone in this country was waiting for the presentation of the Budget 2006-07 by the hon. Finance Minister with the hope that the UPA Government will come out with an outstanding budget incorporating Common Minimum Programme and befitting to the slogan that the '*Sarkar ke haath, aam admiyon ke saath*'. But unfortunately the Union Budget 2006-07 is turned out to be a big non-event. The Budget could be described as a timid one, anti-poor, anti-farmer, anti-labour and anti-people as a whole. The Finance Minister has lost an important opportunity in providing big push to economy. He is satisfied with the inbuilt momentum and is relaxed with the 8 per cent growth. There is hardly any evidence of measures that would take the economic growth to a higher plane of ten per cent growth rate. Remember this is when the food prices are going up, petrol; diesel and LPG prices sky-rocketing, large chunk of labourers are thrown out of sick public sector undertakings. A large scale migration taking place from rural to urban areas in search of food

and employment. How can the Finance Minister be happy about the physical health of the economy. So, it goes without saying that the electoral compulsions seem to have made the Finance Minister's instincts to present such a Budget and take up the big-ticket reforms.

There is no mention in the Budget Speech about the long pending labour reforms, concrete proposals to revive the sick industries, schemes to prevent ever increasing suicide by farmers and put an end to privatisation of profit-making PSUs.

I think the Finance Minister will agree that the unemployment rate is growing faster than the GDP and there is no reference in the Budget to address this aspect. The ever-increasing number of educated youths who are not accepted by industry or service sector is an issue that has also not been addressed. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which is offered as a remedy to all the illness of poverty is falling short of expectation and practicability.

Under this scheme one-third of the districts in the country is only covered. Again 100 days out of 365 days is only visualized and that too only member of a family is covered under the scheme. From this analytical statement it is clear that only a peanut has been offered against the demands of a huge mountain.

Sir, it is surprising to note that there is no mention in the Budget Speech about the oil prices and recommendations of the Rangarajan Committee which have been skipped in the Budget conveniently. The Finance Minister knows pretty well that he has to accede to the Rangarajan Committee Report sooner or later and it will lead to a sharp increase in the prices of diesel, petrol and LPG which in turn will lead to rise in prices of all the essential commodities and thereby making the life of the poor people more miserable.

The Finance Minister appears to have a strong aversion to any thing small. I think I have to invite the attention of the hon. Finance Minister to a good old saying in English that 'Small is beautiful' especially it holds good in the current Indian scenario, India is basically an agricultural country and as the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi said the souls of India remain in villages and hence we cannot ignore the agricultural sector, agro

industries and small scale industries which support 80 per cent of the country's population. Hence, de-reservation of 180 items from SSI and similar activities are not going to help ease the problems of the rural poor.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, the Finance Minister has dealt a crippling blow to the co-operative banking sector by withdrawing tax benefits available to them. Nearly 2000 small co-operative banks that are not scheduled have been left out of the purview of section 80 (C) and will thus stand to lose badly in competition to larger commercial banks. These proposals reflect the contemptuous disposition of the Finance Minister towards the co-operative sector. It appears to be a part of over all scheme of handing over the agricultural and rural economy to large commercial and foreign banks that will have no sympathy to small farmers and self-employed people in the informal sector. These are dangerous indications.

Sir, I would like to invite the kind attention of the hon. Finance Minister to a fact known to everybody and that is about the large scale suicide of farmers that is taking place all over the country. We all know as to why they are resorting to such an extreme step. Farmers in general and the village farmers in particular value their honour, respect and above all sentiments. When they are unable to repay their compounding loan amount due to failure of the farm sector they prefer to die rather than facing humiliations of a prosecution or attachment of their property. We are all proud of our farmers who brought out the Green Revolution and subsequent self-sufficiency in food sector. But we have to accept the fact that the successive Governments miserably failed to come out with suitable projects to save the lives of thousands of our farmers. As we all know many of the hon. Members of Parliament are getting letters from farmers from all over the country seeking permission to commit suicide due to their inability to pay the compounding loan amount. I do not know how I could react to this legally. But it is a fact that I have been getting such letters and I am sure many other hon. Members also must be getting similar letters seeking permission to commit suicide because they are unable to bear such heavy burden of loan.

Sir, the hon. Finance Minister seems to enjoy in dipping his finger in every conservable service in the

service sector. Without being mindful of the cumulative effects on the economy, I am sure these moves will accelerate the process of India fast becoming a high cost economy without protecting the interests of vast majority of the people whose income cannot keep up with the race in the economic cost. In the scenario, the unorganised and informal sector are being progressively pushed out. As you know, the FIs and FDIs are not being dealt with separately as far as capping is concerned. Sir, the allocation for two major segments, namely, defence and development has not been done adequately or appropriately. It appears that the budget presented by the UPA Government for the year 2006-07 is more or less a ritual, routine and very casual one. It is not poised for overall development and the latent mystery of the Budget could be revealed once the Budget proposals start rolling under the pressure of hiked fuel prices. I think it is a deliberate attempt to buy time and withhold the senses of the poor people of India till the next round of State elections.

Sir, it is true that we have advanced in the information technology and bio-technology sector to some extent. We are proud of our experts in these fields and achievements made in these sectors. But we have to remember that the growth and development in IT and biotechnology is limited to bigger cities of the Southern States like Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai. The sector could provide employment to a few educated youngsters. But when we compare it to the population of a billion people, it is nothing. In other words, we cannot ignore agriculture sector, industrial sector including heavy industry, service sector, manufacturing sector, etc. I think the Finance Minister has failed to strike a balance between these sectors.

MR. SPEAKER: I have been very accommodative to you. You have read your entire speech.

DR. P.P. KOYA: Sir, I may be permitted to lay the remaining part of my speech on the Table of the House.

*We must remember we cannot copy of Chinese model as such. China is a grate country. They have their own culture and civilization. Remember it is a communist country which has influenced the life style of the people

......This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. P.P. Koya]

to a grate extend. But India is a different civilization consists of multi religious, multi linguistic, multi ethnic population accepted democratic form of Government and value the freedom more than any thing else. So we cannot copy the Chinese model in Toto. But I am sure as most populated countries of Asia, India and China we have many areas to cooperate rather than contradict each other.

So at the end I have to submit that this budget is full of contradiction it stands at the feet of clay and the critical analyzed of the budget can be summarized as follows.

1. It is mixed budget with different hues and colors. The FM has tried his best to port tray the scattered economy in a grant style, which is enough to fool the common people of the country who are less analytical and more hopeful, less rational and least realistic. In view of the facts that the doses of bitter pill are yet to come.
2. This budget lack pragmatism it is neither philosophical more substantive it is rather ironical as its best.
3. Allocation and appropriations have been made in al lack Lester mood of fancy and it lacks cause of consideration.
4. The projected growth in the budget is more imaginary and lack vision. The FM proved to be a visionary but not an economist. As it is clear in his budget.
5. Finally the budget is an old chorus in other words old wine which has been put into a new bottle.*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, we are having a combined discussion on the Budget (General), Supplementary Demands for Grants and Demands for Excess Grants (General).

As I have a long list of participants on the subject,

I would request all of them to be brief in their submissions. Members who wish to lay their written speeches on the Table may do so.

*SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ (Udupi): Sir, Last week it was the Hon'ble Railway Minister who while presenting his Budget for 2006, regaled the members of this August House with some couplets from Ram Charitmanas or some other scripture.

It might have given a cue the Hon'ble Finance Minister to invoko Poet-Saint Thiruvalluvar in presenting the General Budget-2006. Despite the hype and hoope that preceded the presentation of the Budget-2006 through the Economic Survery it has turned out to be a damp squib.

The Finance Minister did not attempt to raise revenue either by raising tax or netting more tax payers to see through the gigantic task of implementing Employment Guarantee, Bharat Nirman etc. Pherhaps he thought the abstinence is better than action. The coalition compulsions must have prompted him to skirt major policy announcements which become contentious among the coalition partners. The policy change made on insurance two years ago is still doing round so is the case with the Pension Regulatory Bill. Although Rangarajan Committee has suggested revision of oil prices, the Budget has skirted the issue, the Finance thought to defer a decision on this, because of the impending state assembly elections in some states. It is likely that immediately after the elections are over the Rangarajan ghost will emerge from nowhere to hike the oil prices from midnight.

The Economic survery, the curtain-raise to the Budget has predicted a growth rate of 8.1% during the current fiscal. But world economic experts say that India should aim for steady growth rate of seven per cent over the next 10-15 years with an inflation level of less than 3% so as to minimize social inequity.

A faster growth rate beyond 8% with a higher level of inflation as in India would tend to increase the already visible social disparity by creating large but isolated pockets of affluence which is now helping the Sensex boom, while the number of persons in the country below

......This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

The speech was laid on the Table.

the poverty line, continues to be stagnant, if not increasing. It has happened in fast growing economies like South Korea and correcting this to bring about balanced social equity turns out to be gigantic task.

Every day there is gloomy news of some tobacco planter or cotton farmer committing suicide due to unbearable debt burden. The Finance Minister has no doubt raised the allocations for agricultural pursuits. Even with this we are unlikely to meet the 4% growth target for agriculture as per the 10th Five Year Plan since 90% of the Government outlay for agriculture ends up for revenue expenditure which includes running costs such as salaries. The investment in agricultural sector has not recorded any increase while gross capital formation in other sectors are on the rise. Capital formation in agriculture as a proportion to total gross capital formation has been declining rapidly and has fallen from 9.4% in 2003-04 to 8.0% in 2004-05. So how this generous allocation for agriculture is likely to save farming community from ultimate ruin, is to be seen.

Now I comment on the reduction in duty for small cars. The Finance Minister's rationale in reducing the duty on small cars is that it will create more demand thereby providing employment for more. But this will also have a cascading effect in the increase in demand for petrol and diesel apart from adding congestion to the already choked roads.

Although at the peril of sounding parochial to my fraternal interests. I must express my unhappiness over the Finance Minister sidelining the fishery industry while earmarking a sum of Rs.150.00 crore for marketing facilities in horticultural sector. As a consolation for fishery industry he has announced the formation of a national Fisheries Development Board, but no fiscal package for the community ravaged by Tsunami, has been announced.

While the service sector has turned out to be a major revenue provider for the Government by expansion of service tax net, I find it strange that both legal and medical professions have been kept out of this service tax obligation. I would not impute motives in the Finance Minister keeping his fraternity (legal profession) out of

the service tax net, but burdened with the Herculean task of mobilizing additional resources, he should have roped in both the professions that are known to generate sizeable income compared to other service providers like Ten Houses etc.

It is no consolation that no new taxes/levies have been imposed in the current budget. Such new taxes/levies can emerge from nowhere, after midnight any day immediately after the state assembly elections. It is no credit to a government that has sworn by people friendly policies and a transparent way of governance. The current budget belies such hopes.

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI (Amethi): Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak in support of the Budget, 2006-07.

It is my understanding that this House may not find time to discuss the Demands for Grants for Human Resource Development. Therefore, I have taken liberty to focus attention on education in this debate.

Sir, India is emerging as a global power. We are poised to grow at 8 per cent. This achievement is built on the dreams of millions of our people. It is built on the dreams of our leaders and teachers. But most importantly, it is built on the aspirations of our students. Equally, we owe our success to our toiling masses, to our farmers and our workers. I salute them. But it is not enough to salute them. We must work for an India where a son does not remain tied with his father's past and where a daughter has an opportunity to do something which her mother could only dream of. And education is the key to achieving this.

Sir, as I travel round the country, I come to realise that education is not about schools, colleges and universities. It is about the dreams and aspirations of people. A successful educational system must do two things. It must allow all young Indians to dream and it must teach them those skills to turn those dreams into reality. About a year ago, I visited a village school. I walked upto a village student and asked him.

[Translation]

"Beta, bade hokar kya banoge?"

[Shri Rahul Gandhi]

[English]

The silent stare which I got in reply disturbed me. In school after school, I have asked this question. And in school after school, I have got no answer. Many students, teachers and parents believe that our system is a dead end. In village after village, there are children who do not have an opportunity to go to school.

Many parents are convinced that only rich can go to universities. As I speak, Sir, our education system is crushing the aspirations of these children. But I have also visited the schools where every child aspires to greatness. They struggle against adversities and keep the dreams alive. The village schools where the same system, which destroys the aspirations elsewhere, makes the child of the landless labourer dream of becoming a software engineer. I have been moved by children in a School for Blind, who spoke to me about their dreams. There are IIT graduates who run billion dollar companies.

As I speak, Sir, our education system is fuelling all these people. Why do we have this paradox? This must be addressed. As a Government, we must inspire our children to dream. To do this we need to focus on two big ideas. First, we must ensure that our education system reaches as many students as possible; second, we must improve the quality of our education system by increasing accountability.

The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme attack the first problem. The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* has young children, including girls who otherwise might not get a chance to get education. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme, the largest such programme in the world, allows the poor parents to send their children to the school.

Since it came to power, the UPA Government under the leadership of our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has more than tripled the money for these programmes. Over the last two years these programmes have reduced drop out of children by over 39 lakhs. This is nothing short of revolution. I am confident that the basic foundation of our rural and urban poor shall be enriched beyond our expectations.

The importance that this Government gives to education in UP and Bihar is reflected by the fact that fifty per cent of the total money goes to these two States alone. The real impact of these programmes needs to be made in the villages of UP and Bihar.

We have made progress in primary education. But according to estimates, only 39 per cent of our children go to secondary schools and only six per cent of our children go to colleges. The Government, the NGOs and the private sector must work together to change this. Secondary and higher education must become widely available to all our children and must provide options for vocational and technical training.

The Government's statistics show that in some northern States, on an average, a child takes over ten years to complete primary school. I am not questioning the ability of our students. What I am talking about is quality and accountability of our schools. This lack of quality is particularly harmful because it discriminates against our poor children. The rich students have alternatives. For a poor student, a bad school is the end of the road.

I am new to politics and still have a lot to learn. But if there is one thing that I have learnt is that people who are closer to a problem understands it best. Empower them, make them accountable and you will get results. Community institutions can play powerful role in improving the quality of our local schools. Teacher absenteeism and poor performance are the major problems. Handing the decision-making powers to parents and communities directly affected by the problems is our best bet to solving it. There is enough evidence from our own country to support this.

As we emerge as a global power our higher education and vocational training can no longer function in a vacuum. Two years ago I visited a university in a North-Eastern State. I met a university topper who was unemployed. Now, here is an exceptional person, a person who has followed the path laid out for him perfectly. But after fifteen years of hard work he discovers that our system has led him nowhere. It has crushed his dreams. We cannot afford to judge universities and vocational training institutes simply by the number of degrees they give out. We must also start judging them by the number

of quality of jobs that their students get. To give people productive employment our education system needs to be connected to the job market. Our education system has to deepen its links with industry, with research and development, with technology and with finance. It is only by building these links that we will move from creating job seekers to entrepreneurs.

Sir, the fact is that in order to increase the scale and quality of our education system, we need financial resources. For this, we have to think in innovative ways. The UPA Government has more than doubled spending on education. The *Prarambikh shiksha Kosh*, to which Rs.8,746 crore is being added in 2006-07, is a significant step forward. The statement on revenue forgone points out that a figure of Rs.1,58,000 crore has been forgone by the Government as a result of departure from the normal tax regime. Mentioning this figure for the first time is a positive step. But it would be very helpful if the Government could elaborate on how it intends to act on this information. This is important because even if we are able to reduce revenue forgone by 15 per cent, it will raise enough money to double our country's allocation for education.

Finally, Sir, the development of India as a global education hub could be a new way of expanding our higher education system. Today, we are recognized as leaders in higher education. The United States and the United Kingdom earn over Rs. 50,000 crore from Asian students studying there. This is more than twice our entire educational budget. Can we not try to capture some of these revenues to supplement and grow our higher education system? Nalanda and Vikramshila were the Harvard and Cambridge of their day. Why can we not revive this tradition? But I do want to stress that whatever we do, no Indian boy or girl should be deprived of higher education because they cannot afford it. This is the primary responsibility of the Government.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, every human endeavour starts with an aspiration, a dream or belief. Sir, we stand in this House as representatives of the people of India. We do so because we believe in our people; we believe in our future. It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that every child dreams and that every child has the skills to turn those dreams into reality. Let us ensure that every

child is able to answer the question: *Bade hokar kya banoge?*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for letting me put forward my views on the Budget. I support the Budget 2006-07.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope there will be more participation by our younger Members. Thank you.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): *Rahulji*, I appreciate you for your good speech.

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI: Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, this is the true spirit of this great Parliament, the democracy that we have. I am sure, this is the atmosphere you should prevail. We should be able to appreciate each other's. I am thankful this is what all of us dream of, a House which is concerned about the people and trying to respond to their wishes and dreams.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI (Badagara): Sir, I rise to support this Budget presented by the hon. Finance Minister, but not with much satisfaction. While introducing the Budget, the Finance Minister has stated that the country is on the path of economic growth. But it has to be seen that the economic growth and the economic development are not one and the same. Economic development of the country is possible only by the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. The Budget proposal of the country should aim at the uplifting of the downtrodden masses. But, the anti-poor policy adopted by this Government is clearly reflected in the Budget presented by our Minister. It rushed to the aid of the rich people by remaining steadfast to the neo-liberal framework, by protecting the interests of the corporate India.

Sir, without the basic right to food, how can there be development? How is it possible for the empowerment of the weaker section? How will there be empowerment of women? This Budget is absolutely silent about the public distribution system of the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Silence please.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: We were demanding the universalisation of the public distribution system. The

[Shrimati P. Satheedevi]

UPA Government is following the policy adopted by the late NDA Government in this aspect. Sir, in the Common Minimum Programme (CMP), the promise made by the Government has not yet materialised. There is a clear deviation from the CMP. The exclusion of a large number of families from the BPL category, denial of ration cards to a majority of the families in the rural area, is indeed a major problem.

The BPL estimate introduced by the Government is highly irrational and unjustifiable. It has really caused to exclude the most-needy and deserving people from the list. Now, you have reduced the subsidy element saying that the FCI stocks have come down. It has, in fact, added fuel to the fire. This is going to have a very negative impact.

The entire Government schemes are linked with the BPL. What is the result? The benefit provided under these schemes does not reach the deserving section.

The dismantling of the PDS is virtually leading to abolition of the Minimum Support Price and the procurement of foodgrains directly from the peasantry. This is really an attack on the agriculture sector. The Government's claim that the PDS has been decentralised is exposed as a fraud. Hence, the CMP commitment be honoured by increasing the Budgetary provisions and strengthening of the PDS.

I admit that there are some increases in the Budget proposals towards various schemes. But, Sir, towards the internal resource mobilisation, what is the scheme the Finance Minister is making? Is there any proposal for encouraging additional revenue? ...*(Interruptions)* Instead of revenue collection, the Government has depended on increasing the indirect taxes. There is no move to collect the huge dues of the corporates. The Finance Minister has to explain before this House why he is not taking any action against the delinquent corporates and recover the money from them.

The reduction in the direct taxes imposed on the richer sections will certainly lead to the reduction in the fund allotment to the State Government. It will really have a very bad impact on the functioning of the local bodies also.

The limit prescribed as per the provisions of the Fiscal Responsibility Act has led to the restriction to the local bodies to have fund from various sources. Unless there is allocation of funds to the States, they will have to borrow money from other sources and that will lead to indebtedness.

While presenting the Budget, the Finance Minister has tried to create an impression that it is farmer friendly. But what is the real fact, Sir? Due to the acute agrarian crisis, about 5000 farmers committed suicide during the last eight years. In my State of Kerala, during the last two years, in my neighbouring district of Wynad, about 495 farmers committed suicide. That is only in a particular district of Wynad. What measures the Government is placing towards this burning issue? Is there any measure to debt relief and provide suitable prices for their crop? The National Farmer's Commission set up by this very same Government, headed by Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, recommended immediate debt relief and bringing down the interest rate on banks loans to 4 per cent. But it is highly regretted that none of the major recommendations is implemented by this Government. It is true that facility for providing loan at a rate of 7 per cent interest will be beneficial to those farmers who can avail of such loans.

MR. SPEAKER: Two more hon. Members from your party are there to speak. Please conclude.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: One of the main criteria of availing a loan is that one should have some assets. No bank will provide loans to a person who is assetless. Many of the rural poor who have availed loan will not come under the institutional credit system. In the case of rural women who are not having any assets of their own, they are not capable of availing loan. So, the scheme will not actually cover those people who actually need it.

The farmers' suicide is still continuing in the State of Kerala as they were not in a position to pay back the loans. Most of them have taken loans from private financial institution also. After the death of the farmers, the banks and other financial institutions are initiating recovery proceedings against the legal heirs. Now, Sir, about hundreds of widows of those farmers are conducting a mass dharna near the Parliament for the last few days praying that their loans should be written off and to provide some special package to them. So, I urge upon the

Minister to consider this serious issue and take immediate steps to help those poor widows.

The coconut and arecanut farmer of Kerala are the worst sufferers now. The root wilt disease of the coconut trees and the yellow leaf disease of the arecanut trees has in fact caused a huge crop failure. So, I urge upon the Finance Minister to provide a special package to the coconut and arecanut cultivators of Kerala.

In the Budget, the plantation sector other than the tea plantations is neglected. There is no provision for the coffee growers, the coconut and arecanut growers. It is because of the liberalised import policy of the coffee, tea and pepper cultivators are facing huge problem as this has created reduction in the price of these crops. On this aspect, I urge upon the Government to implement urgent action for the promotion of export in Agro-industries and transport assistance should be provided to Agro-exporters.

No measure has been taken in the Budget to save the unorganized sector also. Schemes for social security for workers in the unorganised sector should form part of the Budget and adequate funds must be allocated for the setting up of Welfare Boards.

Now, the Finance Minister has proposed the expansion of the Micro Finance facilities to SHG's. The repayment capacity of the people covered under the schemes is very poor. Usually, the banks are charging very high interest rate ranging from 8.5 per cent to 11.5 per cent. Hence, in order to expand these schemes the reduction in the interest rate to 4 per cent based on the differential rate of interest for weaker sections should be introduced.

Sir, the Finance Minister has made proposals for the promotion of gems and jewellery industry. The scheme should be expedited and excise duty should be removed.

MR. SPEAKER: I will not be able to accommodate any other speaker from you party.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: Sir, the unemployment issue in our country has not been properly attended in this Budget. Sir, the employment opportunities are coming down. There is a total stagnation in rural life. The ban on recruitment still continues in various sectors. Thousands of jobs are to be cut every year. The proposed policies

will lead to large-scale retrenchment and lay off. In this situation the NREG scheme is a major intervention in the agrarian sector. But, only heavy manual works are taken up under this scheme. Work plans should be in a stage to accommodate women too. Proper auditing should also be done upon the scheme.

Sir, our Finance Minister has announced about the gender sensitivity of the budget. But, the ICDS scheme, where lakhs of women and children are covered, needs much more allocation. In many of the States, the scheme is not at all systematic. So, the 50 per cent allocation according to the expenditure incurred by the State will not solve the issues.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, no other Members from your party will be called. You are exhausting the time.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: The poor Anganwadi workers and helpers working under the schemes are really doing a great social service. I urge upon the Ministry to increase their honorarium to the tune of Rs. 3000 and Rs. 2000 respectively.

The total allocation of funds for the health sector is Rs. 12,546 crore. This is still insufficient. So, there is only a minor Rs. 50 crore increase for TB, Malaria, Filariasis, Leprosy and blindness disease surveillance and iodine deficiency put together. This is very insufficient as in States like Kerala these diseases are on an increase.

MR. SPEAKER: You can lay your speech.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: There is no mention about the social insurance. When we know that many suicides are due to the economic ruin subsequent to hospitalisation and that the cost of health care is a major contribution to poverty, there should be a major expansion in investment in regulation of the private sector.

Sir, the people of India have still not forgotten the effects of the policies adopted by the NDA Government. It is because of that they have decided to wipe out BJP and its allies from the mainstream of Indian political sphere. Sir, the common men are still having much more expectations upon the UPA Government. So, this Government should rise up to their expectations and act accordingly.

[Shrimati P. Satheedevi]

Hence, I urge upon the Minister to consider these aspects and to take effective measures for the implementation to achieve the aims of CMP.

14.39 hrs.

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Twenty-third Report

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the report of the Business Advisory Committee.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, I beg to present the 23rd report of the Business Advisory Committee.

14.40 hrs.

GENERAL BUDGET, 2006-2007—GENERAL DISCUSSION

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (GENERAL) 2005-2006

AND

DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS (GENERAL) 2003-2004—contd.

[English]

*SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar): Sir, I am constrained to say that the union Budget 2006-07 has failed to address many of the vital problems of the common people, particularly the peasantry and the unemployed. The proposed outlays for agriculture, health, education and employment generation are low inadequate for meeting the NCMP goals aiming for the actual Central plan outlays in all sectors except rural development and communications were short of the budget provisions.

The two central problems of the economy, agrarian

crisis and unemployment, have not been adequately addressed in this budget. The proposed reduction in the short-run interest rate for farmers and increase in farm credit are welcome measures, but are of limited in relation to the scale of the problem. The recommendations of the National Commission for Farmers such as the creation of a price stabilisation fund for agricultural commodities and extension of crop insurance to all farmers and crops, have been ignored. Furthermore, no additional protection from imports has been provided for cultivators of raw cotton.

Instead of extending the coverage of the Public distribution System for food in the context of ever increasing food insecurity and hunger deaths across the country, the budgetary allocation for the food subsidy has been actually reduced in this Budget.

In connection with the health and education spending, the projected increases are highly disappointing as this is very small increase in spending for the crucial ICDS programme which will not be enough even to meet the universalising the system. It has been promised by the Government to increase expenditure on education to 6 per cent of GDP; instead, the projected expenditure will still leave the total below 4 per cent of GDP. Health expenditure levels are far below those required to fulfil the promises of the National Rural Health Mission.

However, on the fiscal front, the increases in tax revenue in the current year (including through the collection of arrears) are a matter of satisfaction. Presently there is an immense potential for the additional resource mobilisation through new fiscal initiatives, the same is meagre. The increase in the securities transaction tax by 25 per cent is from a very small base of 0.02 per cent. The failure to impose a long-term capital gains tax on share transactions in the equity market is glaring and extremely unfortunate. The reduction in customs duties on a wide range of goods will hurt small producers and cause job losses for workers.

Also the various financial liberalisation measures announced in this Budget is a cause for serious concern. Allowing banks to divest government securities and increasing FIIs access to such securities provides a bonanza to foreign speculators. This would make the government finances vulnerable to the state of the

*The speech was laid on the Table.

speculative market. Allowing Indian mutual funds to invest abroad creates the potential for financial volatility and allows domestic savings to flow out of the country at a time when the government claims that huge amounts of foreign savings are required for domestic investment.

Even though the increase in the cess on petroleum products will not impinge on consumers immediately, it could be understood that it will take resources away from the public sector oil companies, particularly at a time when they are already under financial strain. Surely, this would add to the pressure to raise consumer prices of oil products, which is likely to lead to an inflationary spiral. The Government should make necessary corrections in this regard.

Despite the increase in revenue collection, the budget fails to utilise the opportunity to fulfil the major NCMP commitments. This reflects the government's refusal to make a break from the neo-liberal policy framework.

Despite a number of drawbacks in this Budget for the year 2006-2007, there are a number of measures/steps taken which should be appreciated.

I support this Budget and I urge upon the Hon'ble Finance Minister to take a review of the proposals to accommodate the suggestions made by me and reconsider to make these proposals to serve the NCMP commitments as well as to save the common man from additional burdens.

[Translation]

*SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL (Mehsana): Sir, under the able guidance of harbinger of social and economic growth, hon. Sonia Gandhi and under the monitoring by the expert of financial management our Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh, our Finance Minister has presented the excellent budget which is welcomed everywhere and the Opposition has no point to criticize. This budget provides social security without putting any burden on the middle class which is likely to bring about 8-10% economic growth. Under the provisions of this budget, small farmers will be able to raise loans upto Rs. 3 lakh which will be helpful in improving agricultural

investment as well as solve the loan problem of the farmers. All the electoral promises of the UPA Government made in its Common Minimum Programme are covered in this budget.

Interests of everyone from the industry to the farmers are taken care of in this budget. This budget will help in bringing about financial discipline in industry. Customs duty has been reduced in this budget and long term investors will be encouraged as this is a positive budget. Ours is a vast country. One of the priorities of the Government is to improve the life of the people living below poverty line but not at the cost of industry or service sector because individual interests are linked with organisations and industry so any democratic government would take decisions by taking care of all the classes. Our Finance Minister has also done so. Therefore, this is a development oriented budget and common people are surely to get some relief, this is my belief.

The one by six criterion for filing income tax returns has been done away with in this budget in order to simplify the taxation which is likely to increase the revenue receipt. Further, income tax and excise duty officials should behave with the industrialists and the traders in a friendly manner. Such practice will strengthen our infrastructure and the country will move forward on the path of development. Growth rate for the coming year has been fixed at 10 per cent. The UPA Government achieved 8.1 per cent growth rate in the current year too which, if not hampered by some natural calamities in the country, could be higher. This is the third budget by the hon. Finance Minister after the UPA Government coming to power which is the best one and can be termed as a balanced one. The Finance Minister deserves all accolades for this.

This budget would provide impetus to economic development and the problems of the country will be solved. We would also be able to eradicate poverty through this economic development. This budget would not only give impetus to the economic development but also strengthen the basic infrastructure of the country. The country would move on to a new path by setting up new ports and equipping old ports with advanced technology in the country, by constructing seven express highway and increasing the amount for construction of these highway from Rs. 9320 crore. By increasing the

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Jivabhai A. Patel]

amount from 4500 crore rupees to 7120 crore rupees during the current year for Accelerated Irrigation Programme for immediate completion of pending irrigation scheme and by commencement of many attractive schemes in foreign trade; which will strengthen the basic infrastructure of our country.

This budget is important in many ways. The interest of the farmers has been kept in mind for the first time in it. Now, the banks will provide loan to them at 7% rate of interest instead of 9%. A provision for providing the loan of Rs. 175000 crore has been made for the farmers, which is a record till date. Water will be made available for the fields of farmers for irrigating 6 lakh hectares of land. I want to draw the attention of the Government towards crop insurance scheme. Generally, it takes three years to farmer in getting the payment under crop insurance scheme. The Government should fix a time limit for it under crop insurance scheme so that the farmers may get immediate benefit from the crop insurance scheme.

The Finance Minister has expressed his firm resolve of building new India in the budget by emphasizing on fulfilling the basic requirements of the villages. There is a provision of expenditure of Rs. 18696 crore under the Bharat Nirman Scheme, which is 54% more than that of previous year, and which would bring happiness to rural life. This budget will help in the development of villages. Seventy per cent people of the country still live in villages. The rural populace of the country would always be grateful to the UPA Government for the determination it has expressed to improve their standard of living. The Employment Guarantee Scheme launched by the Government this year would provide special relief to the unemployed youth of rural area. The allocation for Rural Sanitation Campaign has been increased by 90 crore rupees, which would help in keeping the rural areas clean.

As Mr. Finance Minister is determined for economic reforms, I would like to request the Government in this direction that the headquarters of corporation functioning under the Government should be located near its production units e.g. the most of the works under ONGC are carried out in western areas particularly in Gujarat, but its headquarter is in Dehradun, which results in incurring heavy administrative expenditure. The second

thing is that the benefit of income tax being given by the corporation on production is given to the state where headquarter is located, whereas it should be given to the state where production is taking place. Similarly, the benefit of royalty should be given to the state where oil is explored, where gas is explored. Farmers have to face great hardship on account of exploration of oil and gas, the ground water level in their field has lowered down. The roads are not available to them. They get drinking water mixed with fluoride for consumption due to exploration of oil. That is why the farmers and common men fall ill. There is no hospital, no good school in their village. I mean to say that the benefit of the royalty being given should be given to the people of the area so that the loss to the farmers may be compensated. I request the Government that money for development of the area be provided to the districts directly so that works may be done with responsibility. Late Rajiv Gandhi ji used to say that only 15 per cent of 100 rupees given for various schemes reaches the people. Former Prime Minister Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee echoes the same views.

I belong to Mehsana districts of north Gujarat, where ground water level has lowered down by 1200 to 1500 feet and hence the farmers have to use more electricity for irrigation of their fields. Electricity is also costly these days. Many schemes have been launched in Gujarat for drinking water, but the rural people of northern Gujarat have not yet benefitted by it directly.

Many scams took place in cooperative banks in Gujarat some years ago because of which farmers and poor people lost their money. Therefore, I request the Government that security to the money deposited by the farmers and the poor in these co-operative banks be provided as is done in the case of nationalized banks. It is also my suggestion that any such security be provided by signing MoU with the Government of Gujarat so that the money deposited by the people, farmers and the poor may not be lost again. The co-operative banks which have been closed, be revived by giving them economic assistance. And its management system should be like that of nationalized banks. Some relaxation in income tax should be provided to the co-operative banks extended to villages for farmers.

I heartily welcome the proposal of reducing duty on

man-made fiber yarn and filament yarn from 16 per cent to 8 per cent for promoting textile industry. But 16 per cent duty is being imposed on the chips from which manmade fiber yarn and filament yarn is made. If the same is also reduced to 8 per cent, the manufacture may get the benefit of MODVAT.

I warmly welcome this budget proposal and demand from the opposition to help in getting it passed unanimously.

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Sir, I have risen to speak on the budget on behalf of my party.

14.40 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

The present government has made a habit of invoking the common man every time the budget is mentioned and this had forced us to think and try to know this common man actually is! I would like to start by recounting a small story which would illustrate how happiness is snatched away from people if the actions of governments are not well intentioned. Once, a child used to sell orange juice near an orange orchard. Whenever someone asked for juice he would dash into the orchard, pluck an orange and make juice out of it. One day, the king of that place was passing by. He saw the child and thought that he would also like to have a glass of orange juice. He told the child to make some juice for him. The child went into the orchard to get an orange and made some juice for the king. The king thought that the child must have sold a lot of juice since morning and earned lots of money. I should tax him for that. Thereafter, the king asked the child for another glass of juice. The child went to the orchard and got an orange from there and made juice. But the juice was not sufficient to fill the glass. So he went into the orchard again to get another orange. The glass did not fill even then. The child got a third orange and this time the glass became full. The king asked him why was it that the glass used to fill up with juice of a single orange earlier but it took three oranges to fill the glass this time. The child replied that it seems that the king's intentions have become suspect. It seems to me that the same holds true for the present rulers who are finding it difficult to identify the common man. Farmers, traders, students, salaried classes—all are unhappy.

Sir, I would like to point to a very important change in the conditions in Punjab. The farmers of the State who used to fill the granaries are on the verge of becoming beggars. The farmers in the State have started committing suicide. Secondly, the decision of the government to import wheat has created disquiet amongst the farmers. Consignments of imported wheat would take almost two months to arrive into the country and the wheat crop of the local farmers would already have been harvested and be ready to be brought into the markets. The local variety of wheat would not be able to compete with the imported wheat and our farmers would be forced to sell their produce at lower rates. Hence, it is my request that import of wheat should be avoided and the farmers should be provided incentives to encourage them to try for optimum production.

Sir, the commission agents provide funds to our farmers. The commission agents have to withdraw money from the bank for crops and they have to pay service tax on this withdrawal. The burden of the service tax is passed on to the farmers. It is my request that service tax should not be imposed on money withdrawn from banks by commission agents for purpose of making payments to farmers. This would provide some relief to the farmers.

Secondly, under the budget provisions customs tax exemptions have been withdrawn from some industries which do not make use of power such as the resin industry which is also called the Biroja Industry. There was a time when highest production of resin used to take place in Hoshiarpur in Punjab but ever since a prohibition was imposed on cutting of forests the people engaged in this work have had to source their raw material from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal and for this they have to pay taxes to the states concerned. If the tax exemptions are withdrawn, this industry would have to bear an additional burden of a least 16 per cent. In my view, if this exemption is withdrawn the resin industry would be completely finished off. At a minimum, 1000 families would be effected by this step. Therefore, in order to save such industries from folding up, I request you to reconsider the decision of withdrawing tax exemption from the industries which do not make use of power.

I wish to put two points. I had tried to raise this

[Shri Avinash Rai Khanna]

issue in the morning during question time as well and I would again like to point out that this budget has not given any consideration to the welfare of mentally retarded children. Mentally retarded children require permanent care because there is neither any provision of pension for them nor is there any other such provision in this regard. I would like the Government to take some welfare measures for the benefit of mentally retarded children as well.

Similarly, the practice of female foeticide is widely prevalent in the country. The measures being taken by the government to check this trend are utterly inadequate. The data I am going to quote would show that Punjab is deeply affected by this malaise. The male-female ratio in the State stands at 1000:776 whereas the ratio for the country as a whole stands at 1000:883. I would like that a special provision should be made to highlight this skewed ratio so that the balance is not disturbed.

Something which is not blatantly in view but which is a source of concern to all of us is the fact that today's youth is falling prey to drug addiction. I was going through a reply given during the question hour in which it was mentioned that narcotic substances in large quantities have been seized during 2004-05 but an even larger quantity of such substances are available for sale in our country. Whereas on the one hand today's young generation is wasting away its youth, on the other hand it is also becoming a great liability for the nation. Hence, the two things that I have pointed out may also be incorporated in the budget provisions so that we may safeguard the country from these evils.

I belong to Punjab. It used to be a wealthy state at one time. My constituency Hoshiarpur is facing great problem of drinking water. Therefore potable water is needed to be provided in this area. The Finance Minister has made no provision in the budget for water supply to this area. He has made provision only for renovation and repair. I would like him to make the same amount of provision for potable water supply in the area. Ground water in eight districts of Punjab has become highly polluted. The fluoride level in the water in these districts has gone upto 8 per cent from 3 per cent whereas the permissible limit is 1.5 per cent. I would like special budget

allocation to be made to make clean drinking water available to the people.

Punjab is a border state. The neighbouring countries pose a continuous threat to its security, even so, the present government has not announced any special package for the state after coming to power. 2,80,000 people need to be given employment in the state on annual basis. Our agricultural sector cannot bear this heavy burden, hence the government should announce a special package for the industrial sector in Punjab.

Lastly, I would like to say you have imposed 30 to 80 per cent customs duty on Vanaspati whereas there is no customs duty on the said item in our neighbouring countries. viz. Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. This has created a severe imbalance. The Government should give consideration to this point as well.

I would like to reiterate that you should give consideration to the social issue towards which I have drawn your attention. I also believe that you would make some provision in the budget to fulfill the demands I have raised for Punjab, thus providing some relief for the State.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not oppose the budget but it is the mark of a wise Finance Minister that he knows the art of dissembling and he can make his budget appear to be what it is not. I see the same sleight of hand in this budget. The hon. Finance Minister has adopted a positive approach right from the beginning. The rate of growth of GDP has passed 8 per cent and rate of inflation has also been reined in at 4 per cent. Similarly, revenue loss is stable at 3 per cent in proportion to GDP. On the surface, such facts show the budget in a good light. Presentation of economic survey in the House before the presentation of the budget has been a tradition in our country. The purpose this tradition serves is that the economic roadblocks being faced by the country are highlighted in the survey and it becomes clear whether the said issue have been addressed in the budget. A careful reading of the economic survey would tell us that there is a steady increase in poverty, unemployment and inflation in our country and we have been occupying the 127th place amongst 177 countries in the matter of harnessing of human resources consistently for the last three years. The economic survey has not laid out the details of the total

percentage of poor in the country as on date. A task force of the Planning Commission had been constituted for the first time in 1957 to lay down the criteria for defining poverty. This task force had decided that on the basis of per capita calorie intake and personal expenditure capacity, a person earning Rs. 20 per month would be deemed to be poor. On the basis of this criteria 80 per cent of the population of the country was deemed to be poor at the time.

New data with regard to poverty was gathered in the year 1973 and it was found that figures relating to the number of poor in the country had declined to 57 per cent. But the actual number of poor had not declined. Nearly 33 crore people belonged to be BPL population.

A new definition for poverty was formulated in 1992-93. At the time nearly 36 crore people were living below poverty line. The present economic survey says that the figures for the present year do not include the figures relating to the BPL population but that the BPL population has to be contained to 19 per cent by the end of the present plan period. The population of the poor in 2004 is likely to increase to 19 per cent by 2009. When we juxtapose this figure with the estimated population of the country in that year then, according to official figures, the number of the poor would come to about 23-24 crores. All these people would be having an income of less than Rs. 500 per month. If the number of these 22-23 crore people burden the economy of the country by eight per cent every year then in my view the rich populace would be swamped by the poor. Hence, the budget should have the capability of maintaining a fine balance while overseeing the distribution of the increasing wealth of the country between the rich and the poor populace.

Unemployment is on the rise in our country. During the period from 1992 to 1994, when the country was being steered towards a free economy, unemployment was increasing at the rate of 5 per cent. Now, after the passage of so many years, the rate of unemployment has increased to eleven per cent. The rate of increase in unemployment in the case of women is 11 per cent, whereas in the case of men it lies between 8 to 11 per cent, which means that with the advent of the new economic policy the rate of increase of unemployment has doubled. It is not possible for the number of poor to

decrease while unemployment increases. It would be contradictory. Poverty rises from unemployment. Poverty is the symptom and unemployment is the root cause. If unemployment is increasing at the rate of eight to nine per cent then it cannot be that the number of poor is going down. Hence, budget allocation for the programmes relating to removal of unemployment should have been increased.

This government has purportedly taken another wondrous and historical step which it has called the Employment Guarantee Scheme and for which it has made a provision of Rs. 11 to 12 thousand crores. Only two hundred out of the six hundred districts in the country have been included under this scheme. At Rs. 60 per day, employment guarantee for a hundred days adds up to Rs. 6000 in one year. Six thousand rupees in a year comes to Rs. 500 per month. How is a poor person supposed to provide his family the basic necessities such as food, education and medical treatment is a matter of thought? Hence, I would like to request that the wage rate of Rs. 60 per day under the Employment Guarantee Scheme should be enhanced and that all the districts in this country should be brought under coverage of the said scheme in a phased manner in the next two years.

Thirdly, there is a basic problem of Human Resource in our country. There is a class above poor, which is deprived of basic amenities. They face serious problems in education and medical sector. Figures show that in our country twenty seven per cent children are suffering from malnutrition and twenty per cent children out of them die within two years of their birth. Our country has not progressed at the required rate in the field of education. We say that we will spend six per cent of our budget on education. We had resolved on the day when our constitution came into force that we would arrange for free and compulsory education to the children up to age of fourteen years within next ten years. But even today we stress here in the House that we will spend six per cent of our budget on education and on development of other values relating to human resources. It is a matter of satisfaction that the hon'ble Finance Minister has enhanced the budget allocation for education but even after this enhancement our budget allocation for education is stuck at three per cent only. Several rich country of the world like Korea, which is a small nation, spends 21 per

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cent of its budget on education, Thailand which is a small and poor country is spending 17 per cent of its budget on education and we have not been able to move our country from 127 notch in human resource index of 177 nations of the world. Its reason is the prevalent illiteracy and malnutrition in our country. In order to deal with these two main problems, we should strongly address them in this budget. It is true that you have increased allocation under the heads of mid-day-meal and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. I think that adult education programme is a farce for which a provision of more than three thousand crores has been made. In our country some voluntary organizations and government officers misappropriate the budget earmarked for adult education by producing fake bills and vouchers. I am saying all this on the basis of my personal experience.

15.00 hrs

The funds allocated for adult education should be diverted to the 'Sarva Siksha Abhiyan' of the government. It should be the responsibility of the government to provide compulsory and free primary education to all the children. You have tried to make it more attractive. The diet provided to the children under the mid-day-meal scheme is just to fill the stomach and it does not contain sufficient nutritious value. Therefore, there is a need to provide nutritious food items under the said scheme. The budget for this has been enhanced by rupees three thousand crores which is a welcome step but we would like to demand from the government that additional budgetary allocation for the 'Sarva Siksha Abhiyan' should be made to make the said scheme more broad based.

Similarly, a major problem is carping up before the country and such data are being published district wise. Uttar Pradesh has given its data. There are several districts in Uttar Pradesh where the ratio of girls has come down by 400 per thousand boys. In the city like Chandigarh, where mostly educated people live, ratio of girls has come down by three hundred fifty per thousand boys. I was surprised to see it. This data is given by non-governmental organizations. I cannot say that how far the data pertaining to Delhi the capital of the country are correct but these data are published in the newspapers. The boys girls ratio in Delhi is five hundred fifty girls per

thousand boys which is a very unfortunate situation. Why is it so? Our society considers a woman and a girl as a burden due to which female foeticide is taking place. There cannot be any thing more shameful for the country and the society then killing a girl child in the womb of the mother due to evil practice of dowry prevailing in our society. Keeping all these things in mind hon'ble Minister has made a good provision in this budget that the rupees three thousand will be deposited in the Bank in the name of the girl who will pass eighth standard and the girl will be able to withdraw the cumulative amount on attaining the age of eighteen years. But how much money she will get? It means a fixed deposit in the name of a girl for five-six years may become six thousand by the time she attains the age of 18 years. What good it will make to her? What will be the value of that money after 10 to 13 years? We have persuaded the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh to start a scheme under which a girl who passes intermediate will be awarded Rs. 20,000 for Government exchequer. The scheme has been launched in Uttar Pradesh. This scheme has been launched only to safeguard the honour of girls. The hon'ble Minister should think over it seriously so that a change in the Psyche of future society could be thought of.

Similarly there is a problem of price rise about which the government is not attentive at all. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has said that the government have contained the inflation around 4.2 per cent but if you go to market you will find prices of sugar are sky rocketing. It is being sold at the rate of Rs. 25 per kg. and the prices of wheat which is an essential item has touched Rs.12-13 per kg. The Congress party and its chairperson Shrimati Sonia Gandhi organized 'Namak Satyagrah'. The Congress party reorganized Satyagrah March to revive the values of the movement that was launched under the leadership of Mahatama Gandhi for which I congratulate them. It has created awareness in the country and society about old values but what is the rate of salt today in the market. It is being sold at Rs. 9 per kilogram whereas its manufacturing cost is just 60 to 65 paise per kg. There cannot be anything more shameful than this. We should think over it. There is wide difference between the sky rocketing prices of essential commodities in the market and official figures of inflation. In economic survey the Finance Minister has accepted that there will be an

increase at the rate of 2.3 per cent in agricultural production as compared to previous year. There has been an increase of one million tones in Kharif crops only. No figures have been given in the economic survey about the extent of increase in the Rabi crops. On the basis of assessment it has been said that there will be an increase in this too. Yesterday I have raised a question about this here in the House. In its reply the government has accepted the fact that production of wheat the year is likely to be less as compared to last year.

If the production of wheat will be less, then how the government will be in a position to provide wheat through fair price shops? We are importing six lakh tones of wheat and there is possibility that there will less production of wheat this year also. Under such circumstances the government will not be in a position to allocate wheat and other foodgrains for rural development schemes. Therefore, it is necessary that the condition of the farmers should be improved. The Finance Minister has only one strategy to improve the condition of the farmers and that is to advance loans to the farmers. The rate of interest on such loan has been reduced to four per cent which is a welcome step.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It has not been made four per cent.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH: It has been reduced to seven per cent, which is a welcome move and we welcome it. But it does not commensurate to our demand. It has been said that one lakh seventeen thousand crore rupees have already been disbursed amongst the farmers as loan up to December. I would like to say with all humility to the Finance Minister that we cannot bring improvement in agriculture by indebteding the farmers heavily. Therefore, it is necessary that investment of the farmers be made cheaper.

The Finance Minister has slashed excise duty on small cars. It is all right that he has reduced it but there should have been an attempt to put agricultural implements out of the ambit of excise duty and subsidy should be given directly to the farmers. This year the farmers did not get any fertilizers for Rabi Crops. The farmers did not get chemical and other fertilizers in time and when the reasons for this were sought it was told that major fertilizer Plant owners did not get subsidy in

time from the government. The farmers did not get fertilizers due to non-payment of subsidy to plant owners in time. Therefore, I want to request that in order to increase the yield of the farmers the government should consider any such mechanism under which subsidy on fertilizers should be given directly to the farmers instead of the owners of the fertilizers plants. You are importing wheat at the rate of nine or ten rupees per kilogram whereas it is procured at that rate of Rs. 6.25 or 6.50 per kg. from our farmers. I would like to say that unless we give remunerative prices to the farmers for their produces we cannot improve their financial condition. I think it will be fatal for our future to think about agricultural advancement by indebteding the farmers heavily. There is only one way to improve the financial condition of the farmers and that is to ensure remunerative prices for their produces in time and to give subsidy directly to the farmers.

I would like to say something about the taxes that you have levied. You have slashed tax on small cars for the middle class people who need cheaper cars. You should look into this matter carefully. It seems that some hints were given by Finance Ministry to car manufacturers in January or February and they increased the prices of small cars. When prices of cars increased, the government gave concession to them in excised duty and now the prices of cars have automatically come down to the level at which they were before the presentation of budget. The concession given in excise duty on cars or any other kind of concessions given by the government are not passed on to the consumers. It is really a matter of great concern. Therefore, I would like to urge upon the government that the benefits of subsidy or concessions given by government should be passed on to the consumers.

In our country retail trade is a big employment-providing sector. The government is inviting Foreign Direct Investment in this sector. A big question of employment is going to crop up before the four crore people of the country. If Foreign Direct Investment is allowed in retail sector in the country, I think employment opportunities in this sector will diminish and middle class traders will lose their entity. Therefore, foreign direct investment should not be allowed in any case in retail sector. The Finance Minister has said that a wide area in the insurance sector

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in the country is uncovered and entry of foreign companies in this sector is a must.

I want to request the hon. Minister that our banks have huge capital reserves with them and there is even not a single bank of our country which cannot grow at a rate of 135 to 140 per cent with increase in its banking credibility. Therefore, banking sector should be encouraged to enter in the insurance sector. Besides, inviting foreign direct investment in this sector will also be fatal for the country in future. I do not consider it appropriate. Service tax is increasing continuously under the new tax regime. Earlier it was ten per cent and now it has been increased to 12 per cent. If it is not deposited for two months, ten per cent surcharge is levied on it and if it is not deposited for more than two months 24 per cent penal interest is levied on it. I think this will create the problems for small traders who are paying service tax. Therefore, a tribunal should also be set up to look into the disputes relating to service tax. I want to request the hon'ble Finance Minister to do needful in this regard. In addition to it, I would like to request the hon'ble Finance Minister to withdraw this hike of two per cent in the service tax.

Besides, there are some other issues such as share of states in tax resources is being reduced continuously, which is not good for financial health of the states. As you have curtailed the deficit financing in the central budget for the development of the country, similarly the deficit financing of the states should also be curtailed. And for this the percentage of central assistance needs to be increased. With these suggestions, I conclude and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri E.G. Sugavanam, you speak please.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Sir, ours is a big party and only one member from our party has spoken so far.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Still there are several parties from which no member has spoken so far.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: We have good strength in the House. Therefore, kindly give us a chance.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is the first member from the DMK speaking.

[English]

*SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Sir, at the outset, on behalf of my Congress Party and on behalf of my respectful leader, Madam Smt. Sonlaji, I am thanking the hon. Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram for the successful presentation of the third populist Budget on 28-02-2006.

Our hon. Finance Minister has presented his first Budget in 2004, second Budget in 2005 and this is his third Budget. In the last two Budgets, he has enunciated so many innovative schemes for the welfare of the agriculturist, poor, downtrodden, weavers and rural students.

In the present Budget also, our hon. Finance Minister has announced various welfare schemes for the welfare of the public.

Coming to agriculture, this Budget is having a number of good proposals. Out of these, one such programme is repair, renovation and restoration of water bodies. For this project, 23 districts were identified in 13 States as a pilot project. Twenty thousand water bodies with a command area of 1.47 million hectares have been identified in the first phase. The cost is estimated at Rs. 4,481 crore. Another appreciable move is to extend credit facilities to tenant farmers. Furthermore, Government decided to ensure that the farmer receives short-term credit at 7 per cent with an upper limit of Rs. 3,00,000 on the principle amount. Within a short period of two years, the UPA Government has extended credit-linked facilities to 8,01,000 Self Help Groups. For these groups, our UPA Government has disbursed Rs. 4,863 crore. Moreover, the UPA Government has decided to extend these facilities to another 3,85,000 SHGs in 2006-2007. NABARD also directed to open separate credit for financing farm production and investment activities through SHGs.

Another important feature in this Budget is allocation of Rs. 535 crore for next year for Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme. Our Government has launched a scheme for Integrated Textile Parks in October, 2005. Now, 7 parks

*The speech was laid on the Table.

have been sanctioned and 10 parks have been identified for development.

In Tamil Nadu, Tanjore is famous for paddy. It is in the Cauvery basin. In this Budget, our hon. Finance Minister has announced to develop the Paddy Processing Research Centre in Tanjore as a National Level Institute.

In the last 22 months, after assumption of office, our hon. Finance Minister has announced so many schemes for the development of textile industry. In this Budget, excise duty on all man-made fibre yarn and filament yarn are reduced from 16 per cent to 8 per cent. Import duty on all man-made fibres and yarns are reduced from 15 per cent to 10 per cent. Import duty on raw materials such as DMT, PTA and MEG will also be reduced from 15 per cent to 10 per cent. The import duty on Paraxylene is also proposed to reduce to 2 per cent.

Giving life to food processing industry, UPA Government has decided to fully exempt from excise duty for condensed milk, ice cream, preparations of meat, fish and poultry, pectins, paste and yeast. It is decided to reduce the excise duty on packaged foods and instant food mixes like idly and dosa mixes from 16 per cent to 8 per cent. Further, it is decided to extend the concessional rate to all LPG stoves without any value limit. Now, the value of Rs. 2000 attract excise duty of 8 per cent. Excise duty on compact fluorescent lamps are also reduced from 16 per cent to 8 per cent which will further boost energy savings.

We have to thank the UPA Government under the leadership of Madam Soniaji for the allocation of more funds to education, particularly, for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It is proposed to increase an outlay from Rs. 7,156 crore to Rs. 10,041 crore and decided to construct 5,00,000 additional class rooms and to appoint 1,50,000 teachers more.

It is decided to allocate Rs. 4,813 crore this year as compared to Rs. 3,010 crore allocated last year for Mid-day Meal Scheme. At this juncture, I want to mention certain facts before the House. Mid-day Meal Scheme was first introduced by Great Late Leader Kamaraj in Tamil Nadu. At the national level, it was introduced on 15th August, 1995 by the then Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Naraimha Rao. This Programme was initially covered to

children of primary stage (class I to V) in Government, local body and Government aided schools and it was further expanded in October, 2002. In this programme, Government of India has allocated 100 grams foodgrains per child on school day and 3 kilograms per month. Now, our Government has sanctioned Rs. 3,010 crore during last year and during this year, the allocation is Rs. 4,813 crore.

Sir, as the House is aware, our Government has launched Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalay Scheme in 2004. As the scheme is progressing well, Government has decided to open 1000 new residential schools for girls from SC, ST, OBC and minority communities in 2006-2007. Government has proposed to provide further incentive to the girl child who passes the VIII standard examination and enrolls in a secondary school. A sum of Rs. 3,000 will be deposited in her name. I demand from the Government that this scheme may be extended to girls from economically weaker sections also.

Our great leader, Madam Soniaji vowed to solve the prevailing unemployment problem in this country particularly in rural areas. It is a great achievement of our Government launching the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. UPA Government has taken steps to alleviate poverty in rural areas and allocated Rs. 14,300 crore for this scheme.

Another achievement of UPA Government is the launching of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission on 3-12-2005. For the development of this region, this ambitious programme was launched and Rs. 4,595 crore is proposed to be allocated for next year.

Another landmark achievement of this Government is allocation Rs. 50 crore for 150 years old Madras University for research programme. Lakhs and lakhs of old students are thanking our Government for this allocation.

Hon. Finance Minister has taken steps to reduce the prices of cement by reducing the customs duty from 15 per cent to 12 per cent.

In this Budget, Rs. 171,000 is earmarked for infrastructure projects. It is planned to expand the expressway for 1000 kilometres and power plants to generate additional 4000 MW. UPA Government has

[Shri S.K. Kharventhan]

decided to complete the Golden Quadrilateral connecting 4 metros by the end of this year.

Our Government has proposed to allocate a huge amount for the implementation of Rural Development Schemes. Last year, for Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) Programme, Rs. 4235.00 crore was allocated and it is decided to allocate Rs. 5225.62 crore for this financial year. It is unfortunate that in Tamil Nadu, particularly, in my Palani constituency, most of the road works in PMGSY Scheme—Phase IV have not yet been completed and properly formed. Without the prior permission from the Government of India, PMGSY road works were transferred from Panchayat Union to State Government Highways Department and the Highways Department is not executing the work till date. In Kangayam and Vellakoil Assembly segment in Erode District all the PMGSY works are pending in most of the areas. I request our Government has to take suitable action in this regard.

I want to submit that the farm sector needs further more attention. Through out the country, 70 per cent population are farmers. Entire country is relying upon the farm sector. The only class committing suicide in this country are farmers. Particularly, farmers in Kerala, Andhra and Maharashtra are committing suicide in large numbers. The reasons for committing suicide are:

- (i) Debt;
- (ii) Unremunerative price for the agricultural produce

The Pesticide Act is in force but all the shops are selling outdated pesticides only. By getting loan from moneylenders, cooperative societies, nationalised banks and other sources, the agriculturists borrow money on high interest and purchase seeds and pesticides but in the end, they are not able to get good yield and good prices. They are not able to settle the loans, even interest and there is no other way except committing suicide. We need thorough investigation of farmers problem.

Moreover, we have to take steps to include 'Agricultural Law' as one of the subjects in Curriculum for law students through out the country.

Sir, through out the country most of the courts in District and Taluk places are not having proper infrastructural facilities. Already our Government, Ministry of Law and Justice prepared a 10-Year Perspective Plan for the construction of court buildings, bar rooms, library and residential quarters for judicial officers and this proposal is lying pending. In Tamil Nadu, most of the Taluk places are not having any court building, particularly in my Palani parliamentary constituency Natham, Vedasenthur, and Kangayam. Courts are functioning in rented buildings. Hence, I would request the hon. Minister to allocate necessary funds for the construction of infrastructural facilities for court buildings through out Tamil Nadu.

Another important area is poultry sector. In the poultry industry, the hatcheries were claiming deduction under Section 32A. The deduction under section 32A is available only to industrial undertakings engaged in the manufacture or production of an article of things. Various assessing officers adopted a stand that the hatcheries were not entitled to deductions under Sections 32A, 80J, 801A, 801B ect. on the following grounds:

- (a) the assessed was not an industrial undertaking;
- (b) the hatchery was not engaged in production or manufacture;
- (c) the industry was not producing an article or thing as per the provision of the Act.

Initially, the Government fully exempted income from poultry farming by inserting section 10(27) in the Income Tax Act, 1961 which continued right up to 1975 vide Companies Act, 1975. The total exemption was restricted to 33-1/3 percentage of gross total income from poultry farming by availing Section 80JJ. This exemption continued up to 1997 except for a brief period from 1986 to 1990. Withdrawal of Section 80JJ benefit has already resulted in tremendous hardship to poultry industry and has resulted in lower investment in poultry sector. Hence, it is humbly requested that the hon. Finance Minister may kindly incorporate necessary changes in the Income Tax Act to make available concessions for all the industrial undertakings to poultry and hatcheries.

Sir, I would like to make one more suggestion in

regard to clause 13 of the Finance Bill regarding the proposed amendment to section 54EC re: Capital gains tax exemption instruments.

Exemption from capital gains tax was so far available to investors who had invested their capital gains in the capital gains bonds issued by NABARD, National Housing Bank, NHA, REC etc. But the Finance Minister has proposed in his budget speech that hereafter investments made in the capital gains bonds of NHA and REC alone (where the minimum investment is for a sum of Rs. 1 lakh as compared to others where the minimum investment has been Rs. 10000) would qualify for such exemption.

The implication of this is that small investors who had already invested prior to 28th February, 2006, in the capital gains bonds issued by NABARD etc. would be losing the exemption from capital gains tax while at the same time those who had invested or who are likely to invest Rs. 1 lakh as capital gains would be eligible for an exemption of Rs. 20000 or more, as the case may be.

This would put hardship to small investors who had validly taken shelter under section 54EC by investing in capital gains bonds of NABARD etc. prior to 28th February, 2006. The proposed amendment also means that retrospective effect is being given to a taxation provision, which to say the least is highly inequitable for the small investors and senior citizens who depend on interest.

It is, therefore, suggested that the following proviso may be added by way of amendment to clause 13 in the Finance Bill, re: amendment to section 54EC:

"Provided that this section will not apply to investments made prior to 28th February, 2006 in the capital gains bonds issued by organizations (other than the NHA and REC), which had been notified prior to 28th February, 2006 by the Central Government for the purpose of capital gains tax exemption under this section".

In the subsequent clause, namely clause 14 re: amendment to section 54ED, it has been specifically provided that it will come into effect from 1st April, 2007, that is from assessment year 2007-2008. One does not

know why this benefit has not been extended in the case of the proposed amendment to section 54EC.

I hope the Finance Minister will accept the suggestions to continue the exemption from capital gains in the case of investments made in NABARD etc. prior to 28th February, 2006, for the assessment year 2007-2008, by incorporating the proviso suggested by me earlier.

I once again thank the hon. Finance Minister for the presentation of a good Budget to the nation.

*SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM (Krishnagiri): Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Union Budget (2006-2007) presented by the UPA Government is widely welcomed by all the sections of the society. Restructuring of taxes and tax rates, reform measures and efforts to overcome deficits are the noticeable features in this year's Budget that encompasses them all. This Budget augurs well for a prosperous future ensuring progress. It paves the way for prosperity and development. The Common Minimum Programme is being sought to be implemented through this Budget having been accorded priority. When the Opposition was taking us lightly and mocked at us asking whether it would be possible to implement the CMP, the Finance Minister has done his bit commendably well. A full stop has been put to the Opposition's criticism.

Growth of agriculture, upliftment of poor farmers and Rural Development have been addressed to. Rs. 1,41,500 crores has been set apart to ease that debt burden of the farmers. Interest rate on agricultural loan has been reduced by two per cent. It is now reduced to 7 per cent. From that angle, this Budget assumes importance as it aims at giving a boost to our agricultural economy. It is unheard of in the history to find the 2 per cent reduction in interest rate and paying back the same to the tune of about Rs. 1700 crore. At an expense of Rs. 94,400 crores, about 6 lakh hectares of land is to be brought under cultivation. It is a welcome measure. Similarly, Rs. 100 crores has been earmarked to give a boost to tea cultivation. It is essential and need of the hour to support tea growers.

Old age pension for the aged people has been enhanced from Rs. 75 to Rs. 200. In order to encourage

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri E.G. Sugavanam]

education among women, this Budget proposes an incentive of Rs. 3000 to every girl child who completes successfully eighth class. I would like to record my appreciation for this measure. Rs. 4863 crores has been earmarked as an increased allocation to extend loan to women self-help groups. This only shows the UPA Government's concern for the women in the rural society.

It is heartening to note that Tamil Nadu has got its due share in many of the schemes and measures announced for the entire country. For instance, the Rice Research Centre in Thanjavur has been upgraded to be a National Institution. On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu, I would like to thank the Union Government for upgrading the Institute for Port Studies as a National Maritime Centre with the status of a Central University. It is my bounden duty to thank the Union Government and the Hon'ble Finance Minister for granting Rs. 50 crores to University of Madras for specific research study purposes.

It is a welcome announcement to provide Chennai-Bangalore highways a face lift meeting international standards and world class. Chennai-Bangalore may kindly be linked via Vellore, Vaniambadi, Krishngiri, Hosur and I appeal to the Union Government on behalf of the people of those areas to complete it accordingly. Midday Meal Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission, Integrated Health Scheme, National Rural Welfare Scheme, Urban development measures are pepped up by the UPA Government. It is a welcome gesture in the form of enhancing financial allocation for these schemes.

Fund allocations have been made to improve the bit of the depressed classes like the Scheduled Castes and the Minorities. There are welcome announcements to improve the living conditions of both the poorer sections and middle class people of the country. This years' tax free Union Budget aims at all round growth of the country. This will increase the pace of our economic growth. I would like to congratulate the Finance Minister on this count.

As one hailing from the State of Tamil Nadu, our Hon'ble Finance Minister is well aware of the drinking water problem found in a prevalent fashion in many

districts of Tamil Nadu. Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri in my constituency are faced with drinking water problem. This needs to be attended to. During the tenure of our leader, Dr. Kalaingar Karunanidhi, a joint venture scheme was conceived at a cost of Rs. 1000 crores to take up Hogenekkal Drinking Water Supply Scheme. But, after his tenure as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, the Government that came to power has put in cold storage that Drinking Water Scheme. Hon'ble Finance Minister, who knows well the needs of those districts, may kindly resurrect those shelved schemes. I request him to take up that Drinking Water Scheme to provide water to the parched throats of the people of those drought prone districts.

Under the able guidance of the Chairperson of UPA and with the dynamic cooperation of our leader, Dr. Kalaingar Karunanidhi, the Union Government under the premiership of Dr. Manmohan Singh has brought about several welfare measures for the betterment of the people through this commendable Budget.

The Rural Employment Guarantee Act provides for job opportunities or financial compensation to people living below poverty line in two hundred selected districts of the country I urge upon the Union Government to introduce it in all the districts of the country. To begin with you may kindly include both Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri districts in my constituency.

Herein I would like to sound a word of caution about the problems that may be faced by the poorer class and the middle class people due to the increase of service tax rate from 10% to 12%. I request the Union Finance Minister to look into and if need be to reconsider it.

Rs. 1500 crores has been earmarked to promote Horticulture. I welcome this step. Hosur and Bagalur in my Krishnagiri constituency carry out Rose Culture in a big way and export Rose Flowers. I urge upon the Union Minister to provide incentives to the export oriented horticulture activity in that part of the country. On Valentines Day celebrated last month, the net export of rose flowers on that single day was Rs. 10 crores. Hence, I seek the kind intervention of the Union Finance Minister to Rose plantation that come under Floriculture. Storage facilities with Centralised Air Conditioning System may be provided there to help store rose flower and also

mangoes that grow abundantly in Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri and neighbouring districts. There are many private entrepreneurs in this sector. But, there is a need to give a boost to this agricultural activity in a big way. Hence, the Union Government may set up viable processing units there. Through Food Processing Industries Ministry, a mango pulp processing unit may be set up there. I urge upon the Union Government to take up this seriously that may help both the mango growers and the unemployed youths in that area.

In order to prove the fact that the country is one from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the telephone STD rates within the country has been made one rupee per minute unit. I welcome this measure by the Communication Ministry.

I would like to put on record my deep appreciation for the continuance of the Golden Quadrilateral Project linking the length and the breadth of the country with quality four lane roads.

I would like to congratulate the valiant measures of the UPA Government and appreciate the salient features of this Budget presented by our able Finance Minister and his deputies who are part of this alliance. Let me thank them on behalf of our Party DMK and on behalf of our leader Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi. Expressing my support for this Budget, let me conclude my speech.

*SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (Periyakulam): Sir, this UPA Government has been making great strides in every conceivable fields under the able leadership of UPA Chairperson, Smt. Indira Gandhi, and under the able leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh.

I would like to stress in the field of agriculture. Agriculture is the backbone of our country. Over 60% of the population lives on agriculture. I am of the firm conviction that as long as we depend on monsoon, we are bound to face such problems. Government has to waive off thousands of crores of rupees to save the farmers from committing suicide. Here, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister that instead of reducing the tax on 4-wheelers, you could have reduced the tax on 2-wheeler, which is the vehicle for lower middle

class persons. In the same manner, I would like to request you to reduce the tax on LPG cylinders. Some State Governments are even levying 32% tax. Central and State Government should reduce the tax to 15% on LPG cylinders so that women folk and the common derive the benefit out of it.

Another demand which has been pending for a long time is extending insurance cover in case of crop failure or floods or droughts or any other eventuality. Is there any thinking in the Ministry to introduce crop insurance scheme, especially for those farmers who are affected by natural calamities, floods and cyclone?

Lack of proper marketing facility at the village level has been creating a lot of problems for the farmers. A proper marketing network by Central Government should be set up at the village level to ensure that farmers sell their produce at the minimum support price and are not forced to sell at the throw away price or sell in distress and loss everything and not able to get back not even what they had invested. This should not be case. Would the Central Government make extra efforts and innovative steps to set up good marketing facility system at the village level for the benefit of the poor farmers who are at present losing very heavily and are forced to sell their jewellery or spend their life savings at the time of floods, or poor marketing network at the villages.

The stark reality is that in India water problem would continue to haunt us as long as we depend on monsoon. We should develop fool-proof rain harvesting system in each and every household to solve the problem of blue gold' called water. Another solution lies in the linking of rivers which is a stupendous and arduous task which can be implemented only by pooling enormous money. I do not actually know whether it is feasible. But I am all the more certain that it would take long years to complete the linking of rivers. But if we complete this unthinkable task, our future generations would heave a sigh of relief. Central Government has to study afresh the problems being faced in the implementation of linking of rivers. I would like to know in this regard the work done so far by the Task Force which has gone into this issue. Hon. Finance Minister has imposed service tax on those who use credit cards. This has attracted a lot of criticism from

[Shri J.M. Aaron Rashid]

the general public. The imposition of service tax on credit card users should be dropped or reduced.

Recently the Supreme Court has given a judgement concerning Periyar Dam. The water level of the dam is 142 feet. Previously, it was 152 feet. Unnecessarily Kerala Government intervened and reduced the height to 136 feet. In fact, the Tamil Nadu Government has strengthened. The main structure of the Dam to the level of 152 feet. Baby Dam is also somewhat strengthened. After the Supreme Court judgement, water level. Has to be raised to 142 feet immediately in the interests of the farmers of my constituency and the 18th Channel and other channels to be opened for further water inflow to the lower level ponds, for the welfare of the agriculturists.

Recently, small tea growers and small cardamom Planters in my constituency have suffered a lot due to heavy sonw fall in the recent past in my constituency and the tea leaves have been scorched with the result production has been decreased to the lowest level. Hence, I would like to request the Government to send a team to study the damage done to the small tea and small send a team to study the damage done to the small tea and small cardamom planters and give compensation to them. Compensation can be given in the form of fertilizers and pesticides at subsidised rate.

In Theni Highway, there has been a long-pending demand for railway bridge as there are two railway crossing due to which people including school going children, are suffering.

Necessary funds should be allocated for the construction of Tunnel between Gudalur to Ayyappan Temple in Kerala. This would help pilgrims going to Ayyappan temple. Many a time, I have brought this matter to the attention of the Railway Minister. He has replied to me that the Finance Minister being a South Indian he should take up this important task and complete the tunnel which would reduce the distance from 150 km, to less than 10 kms. If this tunnel is constructed, considerable time would be saved.

Pure drinking water in Andipatti and other areas of my constituency is a far cry. We drink contaminated water

having more flouride content. Even 15 year old persons can be seen with yellowish colour teeth and with toothache. Funds should be allocated to provide safe and pure drinking water to my parliamentary constituency, particularly Theni in Andipatti.

Huge quantity of water is going waste and going into the sea in Andhra Pradesh. This water can be diverted to Tamil Nadu, which is facing scarcity of water. Godavari and Krishna rivers should be linked. Likewise, in the borders of Tamil Nadu, millions of gallons of water is going into the sea. This water should be diverted to the southern parts of Tamil Nadu which is facing water problem.

Sea Water Salination Water Project has been announced last year but the same has not yet been started so far. I pray and request the hon. Finance Minister to take serious not of drinking water and speed up this project.

Education is another area, where we have to lay more emphasis in the years to come. Dropouts from schools have not reduced over the years. Innovative and effective steps should be make to ensure that each and every child, particularly from the underprivileged sections of the society and people living in despicable conditions attend the schools, If we provide education to one and all, there is no doubt that our country would become a developed country sooner rather than later. Here, I would like to appreciate the UPA Government for allocating more funds in the Budget for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the educational activites to provide education to the rural poor.

Tourism is another are where we can bring in more foreign exchange. Maintenance of historical sites along with improvement of infrastructure with low-budget hotels, airports facilities and rail services would undoubtedly improve the inflow of foreigners. Government should look into this aspect with insight and should come out with immediate steps to set right the way for more inflow of foreign tourists into our country.

In Kodaikkanal, Kozandai Velappan Temple is located. It is a historical temple. It should be brought in the map of tourism. Already Kodaikkanal is a big attraction for his scenic beauty and waterfalls. This request of mine should also be considered favourable by Kozandai

Velappan temple should be developed where a lot of educational institutions and MNCs are already located.

In the last year's Budget, I requested the Minister to set up Kendriya Vidyalaya schools for Kodaikkal and Theni districts. I have brought this matter a number of times to the notice of hon. Minister in Parliament. He has also promised to consider my request but nothing has come out of it. I would pray and request once again that Kendriya Vidyalayas have to be set up in my parliamentary constituency in Kodaikkal and Theni districts.

I would like to suggest that a model school be set up in each district of the country; centres providing health care particularly to the needy poorest of the poor should be started in the nook and corner of the country; proper roads should be laid in the remotest areas of the country so that people living in those areas would become part of the national mainstream.

Unemployment is one of the gravest problems India is facing not only today but for years. New thrust should be given by the UPA Government to take the problem of unemployment with all the seriousness it deserves. Employment generation is to be given top priority. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana should be taken up with more vigour. It should be reviewed to see that whether it is moving on the right lines. Under the Employment Guarantee Act, I request the Hon'ble Finance Minister to include Periakulam Constituency in Then Distt. should be included in Rural Employment Guarantee Act. With these words I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the budget presented in this august House by the great economist Finance Minister of the country. It is right that he has taken care of every section of society and areas in this budget and has enhanced allocation for all the areas. It is a praiseworthy step. I therefore, support this budget.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir the Hon'ble Finance Minister Presented budget not only on behalf of his Government but he also presented budget in the previous Government. The farmers constitute 80 per cent of population of this country. But, I regret that they have not been taken care

of. It seems that they have been deliberately ignored. No such step has been taken to benefit the farmers who are the backbone of this country. The farmers used to pay interest at the rate of 14 to 29 per cent on agriculture loans. We have been demanding that this rate should be brought down. Now the hon'ble Minister should bring it down to 7 per cent. The farmers should be given compensation for the loss they suffer due to natural calamities, like floods, hailstorm etc. He should be given loan at the rate of 7 per cent to build houses. Loans are being provided at the rate of 7 per cent for the purchase of a car. You should think about it. I, therefore, request the Finance Minister that he should announce in his reply that the loans to the farmers would be provided at the rate of 7 per cent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I come from Bihar. Bihar is the most backward state. Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi visited Bihar when he was the Prime Minister. And on his return from the visit, he had announced that Bihar would be given a special package for the development of infrastructure there. And I am to say that it is two years since the UPA Government took over and they have reiterated this thing in their common minimum programme that they would fulfill the announcement made by Late Shri Rajiv ji. Two years have passed but this Government has not taken any step in this direction. It is a wrong thing. I say it with heavy heart that the Government should think over it. Bihar is a backward and poor state and no Government even thinks about it. Every year it is affected by floods as devastating as the Tsunami and these floods cause large scale damage and loss every year. And we have been putting up with it. Rivers originating from Nepal cause problems for Bihar. Floods cause damage to standing crops, houses, roads, electricity and also results in loss of life and property. But the Government does not compensate for the loss suffered by the people there. We have discussed it several times in this House, the loss caused by the rivers originating from Nepal in the State but no compensation is paid. But if such a damage occurs in other States, they are given compensation and they should get it too. If the cyclone hits the coastal areas of the country, they are given financial assistance but if any natural calamity occurs in Bihar, no such compensation is given to the State and it is ignored. What is the fault of Bihar in it? Why Bihar should suffer?

[Shri Raghunath Jha]

I, therefore, request the Finance Minister to pay special attention to Bihar. Talks should be held with Nepal and steps should be taken to prevent damage caused by the rivers originating from Nepal. This is the duty of the Government of India and not that of the Bihar Government as it is not within the rights of the State to hold talks with Nepal. Therefore, the talks should be held with Nepal on this issue and the State Government should also be invited to such talks. Some days back some action was taken in this regard and Rs. 32 crore were also provided to get a DPR prepared by Nepal and for this purpose offices were opened at two places but later they did not function. I request you to act immediately in this regard.

Sir, after the nationalization of banks, there has been manifold expansion in the commercial banking sector in the State but its proportional benefit to the State has come down to 32.2 per cent in 2003 which is below the national average which is 58% per cent. There is a large network of the National Highways in our State.

15.26 hrs.

(DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY *in the Chair*)

Four laning of 890 km was sanctioned by the Government of India with a condition that 40 per cent of the cost should be borne by the State Government and 60 per cent by the investor. How a backward and poor state like Bihar would arrange for this money? We had collectively told the hon'ble Minister in this House that we could not do it. Therefore, the four-laning of 890 km should be done out of the package to be given by the Government and work on the remaining 1200 km should be done as per the National Highway funding norms.

Sir, the division of Bihar took place during the NDA regime. And those who are supporting it now were against it at that time. The then Home Minister and the Prime Minister had assured the House that Bihar would be given special package for the loss it suffered on account of division of the State. Because we have lost our Industries, factories and many other things due to division. Under the leadership of the present Chief Minister of Bihar who was the Railway Minister that time, Members of all the parties together gave a memorandum to the Prime

Minister which he had accepted. But till now not a single paisa has been given to Bihar. Bihar is passing through a difficult phase. We are lagging behind in the power sector, be it the rural electrification or setting up of power plants. A 500 MW power plant has been sanctioned one each at Barauni and Kanti. But it has not been set up neither at Barauni nor Kanti. The power plant which was to be set up at Barh, the work on that is also going very slow. Similarly, the electrification of Navinagar in Aurangabad area is pending. Therefore, the expansion work of power plants should be expedited be it at Barauni, Kanti, Barh or Navinagar in Aurangabad.

The entire North Bihar is affected by the floods. About 10 lakh hectares of land is under water logging. Thousands of acres of land along the banks of the Ganga from Farakha to Buxar is washed away due to soil erosion and dozens of villages get submerged in the Ganga flood water. The river Ganges passes through many States. Whether the Government of India will not provide funds to the Bihar Government to save the State from the fury or floods and will not act to prevent damage caused due to floods? It seems that the Government of India is neglecting Bihar in every respect. I, therefore, demand that this work should be carried out immediately.

During the NDA regime it was announced to set up seven new hospitals on the pattern of AIMS in the states including our State. Hon'ble Vice President Shri Bhairu Singh Shekhawat had laid its foundation there. The Members of Parliament, Legislators and Minister were also present on the occasion. But the present Government and its Health Minister have not stated categorically as to whether an AIMS like hospital would be set up there or not.

The second thing which I want to say is that the major hospitals were to be upgraded on the lines of the AIMS. But Bihar has been left out of it. Kindly give sanction to upgrade the Patna medical, the Indira Gandhi Institute. Where 8 per cent of total electorate is, there is no central university. The Patna University which is the old university of Bihar should be given the status of the Central University.

Sir, I want to tell that there were five six districts which were affected by the naxalite in the undivided Bihar. But as on date be it the North Bihar or the entire South

Bihar, the entire area from Bettiah to Kishanganj adjoining Nepal are naxalite affected areas. We are suffering a lot there every year and people are facing all sorts of problems due to this problem. The 500 km long Indo-Nepal border is an open border. But there is no road nor police nor the administration could reach there. In case any enemy attacks there, there is no road to reach there. We have been demanding for this repeatedly. There are roads in such strategic places in every country. I therefore, request that the roads should be constructed there by the Home Ministry or the Defence Ministry.

The Finance Minister is present here. In the last year's budget, he declared 170 districts as backward districts and these included 36 districts from Bihar also. He also announced that Rs. 500 crore would be provided to each district. I want to know whether this promise was fulfilled? And what were the reasons for not fulfilling the said promise. So, I demand that how the said amount should be provided to the State for both the years, the last year and this year so that developmental works are carried out there.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the farmers take loans from the cooperatives in Bihar. We have discussed this issue several times in this House. Any person who commits theft, kidnapping or murder, he is given all sorts of facilities in jail but if a farmer fails to repay the loan amount due to any reason, the police comes to his house to arrest him and he is made to pay the petrol expenses of the police jeep and the police as well besides the food he is given during his jail term and unless he pays for all these expenses, he is not released. What law is this? We have discussed this several times in the House. This black law is indeed a blot on this independent country, so kindly think over it. So kindly amend this law and the Hon'ble Finance Minister may talk to the Bihar Government in this regard or may discuss it in the House.

Sangh Vikas Yojana is being launched in our State and crores of rupees are being spent on it. I want to know from the Hon'ble Minister whether any of officials there ask the people's representatives as to what is to be done? Do they take the opinion of the people's representatives? In fact, they do not take any such opinion. They do all work on their own. If we win, you form the Government and if others win, then they form the Government. But it

hardly affects the officials. They do work at their own sweet will. That means that you do not have faith in MPs and Legislators. Crores of rupees are being spent. So, we demand that kindly take the opinion of the people's representatives also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you please conclude.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: There is rampant corruption in the Food for Work Programme. There is no mechanism in place for its monitoring.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has made a mention of the 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana' in the budget but its pace is also very slow in Bihar. The Government has not increased the kerosene prices but they have increased the diesel prices. I, therefore, demand that the diesel prices should be reduced. Finally, I support the budget and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I lay the remaining part of my speech on the table of the House. I urge upon you to include it in the proceedings of the House.

*Mr. Chairman, Sir, the recommendations of the 12th Finance Commission are significant for Bihar. Bihar was already a backward and poor state and division of the State has led to increase in its woes due to reduction in its basic resources and in the process its basic interests have been neglected. Basic and valuable capital assets, sources of revenue, technical institutes, training infrastructure and other assets have slipped out of its hands without any compensation package. If a divided state has to speed up its development, heavy investment is needed for the purpose. To discharge its obligatory commitments and to create surplus funds for investment., The recommendations of the 12 Finance Commission are significant with a view to mobilizing additional resources. In this backdrop, a memorandum has been drafted for the consideration of the 12th Finance Commission.

The President of India has predicted that India would achieve a target of 10 per cent growth in the coming years. If we take it as a base then the per capita income would increase at the rate of 10 per cent annually. Thus, the national average of per capita income based on the

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Raghunath Jha]

1993-94 prices would increase from Rs. 12985 to 28405 in 2009-10 and Rs. 60570 in 2019-20. If India is to remove disparity between the States and make them prosperous and egalitarian state, then the GDP growth rate of Bihar would have to be increased there then 10 per cent and the rate of per capita income of the State would have to be increased at the rate of more than 8 per cent only than it would achieve the national average of per capita income in 2019-20.

This is a huge task because during the period from 1993-94 to 1998-99 the gross domestic product of undivided Bihar registered an increase of merely 4.2 per cent. After partition, the growth rate of rest of Bihar has further gone down in the year 2000-01, the per capita income in Bihar was Rs. 3707/- at the same rate of prevalent in the year 1993-94.

Small area, big population: The area of existing Bihar is 94163 square kilometer which is merely 2.8 per cent of total area of the country. Contrary to it, as per the census of the year 2001, population of Bihar has arose 8 crore which is 8.1 per cent of the total population of India. This is much higher than the national average which was pegged at 324 persons per square km in the year 2001. Besides, in the 1980 decade, the population growth rate in Bihar was 23.38 per cent which increased to 28.43 in the 1990 decade. After partition, the situation has worsened. Only 54 per cent of area has come under Bihar but population share is 75 per cent. It is obvious that people land ratio in Bihar has been disturbed.

Inadequate infrastructure: Basic infrastructure relating to road network, irrigation and electricity needs to be strengthened at large scale. In the year 1999 infrastructure index of Bihar was 81.33 whereas that of Punjab was 187.57. After partition of Bihar, infrastructure index has further come down. Only 28.45 lakh hectare of land is under irrigation through tube wells and canals which is only 50 per cent of total transplantation area. The consumption of power in the state is more than 140.8 k.w. per capita whereas the national average is 354.75 k.w. per capita. Likewise roads are also inadequate in the state i.e. 90 k.m. per lakh population which is much lower than the natural average of 257 k.k. per lakh population in the year 1997. Length of railway line in the

State is 30.22 km per 1000 square km whereas in Punjab it is 42.45 km per 1000 square kilometer. Slide in infrastructure could also be ascertained from the expenditure during the time periods of the fifth year plan. Total expenditure on infrastructure in the Fifth Five Year Plan was 46 per cent of the entire plan which came to 33 per cent during the Five Year Plan.

Fall in per capita plan cost and central assistance: Lower level of per capita plan expenditure, inadequate central assistance and inflow of inadequate institutional finance are responsible for slower growth of per capita income and GDP. All these indexes have been on lower side in view of large population of the State. For instance, during First Five Year Plan, per capita plan expenditure and per capita central assistance was Rs. 25 and Rs. 14 respectively whereas the national average was Rs. 33/- and Rs. 23/- respectively. This trend continued during the Seventh Five Year Plan. During that period too, all India Plan Expenditure was Rs. 733/- and Rs. 1076/- per capita respectively. Likewise, Central assistance for the state was Rs. 340/- and the national average was Rs. 375/- per capita. The situation arising out of the prescribed per capita plan expenditure during appendix IV, seventh and eighth Five Year Plan, plan expenditure was Rs. 653/- per capita in Bihar whereas in Punjab and Haryana per capita plan all ocation was Rs. 3252/- and Rs. 3497/- respectively, as against Rs. 1506. This is despite that large scale capital investment was made for construction of Chandigarh. In fact, both Punjab and Haryana got immensely benefited owing to their vicinity to national capital of Delhi which was financially linked to both these States. Due to international airport and dry port in Delhi, both the States got saved from becoming land locked.

Poverty and unemployment: In Bihar both urban and rural poverty index is higher than the national average. In the year 1990-91, 43.60 per cent population was below the poverty line. Though population growth per cent which was 54.96 per cent in the year 1993-94 declined but the population living below the poverty line increased-annexure-VIII. During the year 1993-94, unemployment rate was higher than the national average in Bihar. Unemployment rate in rural areas and urban areas of Bihar was 8.3 per cent and 29.9 per cent higher than the national average. Though unemployment rate in rural areas of Bihar is lower than the national average during

the year 1990-00 but urban unemployment rate got worsened and became 53.2 per cent higher than national average. After partition, unemployment has increased in Bihar. In Bihar fast growth in gross domestic product is needed to create employment and increase income so as to alleviate poverty. Therefore, development strategy should ensure adequate growth of GDP in Bihar.

The Planning Commission discharges its duty of arranging finances for the plan expenditure of the State. The size of the plan outlay therefore, is the important indicator. If we closely analyse the plan expenditure of center and the states, it is apparent that in the total plan expenditure, state's proportionate share is decreasing in comparison to the Centre. During the first Five Year Plan, 63.52 per cent of share of total plan expenditure was given to the states which remained between 40.00 to 50.67 from seventh to Fifth Five Year Plans and declined to 43.67 per cent during the Ninth Five Year Plan. On the other hand, Centre's share which was 36.02 per cent in the First Five Year Plan increased to 59.52 per cent during the Eight Five Year Plan. This affected the States quite adversely.

Bridging the gap in Credit-Deposit Ratio: Credit Deposit Ratio is the important indicator of inadequacy of infrastructure in backward states. In the year 2002-03 Bihar's Credit Deposit Ratio was 23.2 per cent which is much lower than the national average of 58 per cent. Lower level of Credit Deposit Ratio of State indicates that capital inflow of the State is towards comparatively developed States. Main reason for lower level of Credit Deposit Ratio is inadequate infrastructure and reserve. The point to note here is that capital formation takes place in backward states but is used in the developed states. Debt management of banks is mainly conducted on the parameters of the Central Government which is inimical to the interests of poor states. Finance Commission should, therefore, consider giving compensation to the states with lower level of Credit Deposit Ratio so that these states improve infrastructure and improve their debt disbursal capacity. Finance Commission is expected to take bold initiative to free the poor states of their infrastructural inadequacy.*

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Mr. Chairman,

Sir, on behalf of my party Pattali Makkat Katchi, I deem it a pleasure to support the proposals of the Union Budget for the year 2006-07. I also personally compliment and congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for providing a Budget, which has been acclaimed and praised by every section of the society all over the country.

In my view, there are seven important merits of the Budget, which deserve appreciation. The first thing is that the Budget translates the commitments of the National Common Minimum Programme. The second thing is that it not only believes that growth is important, but more than the growth, social justice is important. Therefore, it combines both growth and justice. Therefore, I welcome it. The third important appreciable point is that this Budget says that both the infrastructure and investment are required for growth, and that way, it has to be appreciated. Fourthly, there is continuity in policy both on the tax front as well as on the expenditure front. Therefore, there is stability in policy, which would create a healthy environment for the investors to come to India. Fifthly, Sir, the tax system today is moving towards more of progressivity rather than regressivity because nearly 47 per cent of the total tax revenue today is coming from direct taxes.

Now, more important than all these aspects are a number of innovations that characterise Budget. Here is the Finance Minister, who has for the first time given us a commitment that he will provide an Outcome Budget for the country. Secondly, he has made an account of whatever promises he has made in the last Budget, to give more transparency. He had made 67 announcements, and on all the 67 announcements, actions have been taken, of which 46 actions have been completed, which means that within one year, 68.6 per cent of the commitments made in the Budget have been completed. And, this is a great achievement on the part any other Finance Minister in the post-Independence era. Another important achievement of this Budget is that he has provided for Gender Budgeting, which is again an innovation. He has also said that he is moving towards a regime of goods and service tax.

Now, these are all the important and salient and remarkable features of the Budget. But at the same time, I would like to draw the attention of the Finance Minister

[Prof. M. Ramadass]

to one of the very important inaccuracies that has crept into the Budget papers. I want to pay attention to this one important point because this has to be corrected by the Minister. In the budgeted grants as well as in the Budget papers, he says that the revenue deficit is 2.1 per cent of the GDP, the fiscal deficit is 3.8 per cent of the GDP, and primary deficit is 0.2 per cent. Now, what is the GDP figure that he has taken? What is the denominator for the calculations of these deficit ratios? Now, on the face of it, I thought that he has used the GDP figure given in the *Economic Survey* of 2005-2006. Page S1 of the *Economic Survey*, gives the gross domestic product at factor cost, namely, at constant prices as well as the current prices.

That figure is restricted only up to 2004-2005. The Economic Survey of 2005-06 should also give the figure of 2005-06. It has not been given. If he has taken this as a denominator and worked out the revenue deficit as well as the fiscal deficit, then it is patently wrong and erroneous. From the figures that he has given, for example, if you take the revenue deficit, 2.1 per cent, Rs. 84727 is 2.1 per cent of the GDP. If that is so, the GDP figure should be around Rs. 40,34,619 crore. If we use the same analogy for fiscal deficit then the GDP comes to Rs. 39,12,789 crore. If we take the primary deficit and calculate the GDP it is Rs. 34,31,500. How can there be three national incomes or GDP figures for one year? This requires an explanation from the Minister...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): With your permission, Sir, if the hon. Member will just take a copy of the document called the *Statements* laid before Parliament as required under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, this is a wide booklet, and if you turn to page 23, Paragraph 4, the entire answer to his question is there. May I read that paragraph for the record so that we do not raise the controversy? I am reading paragraph 25.

"The growth in GDP at factor cost, at constant 1999-2000 prices, is estimated at 8.1 per cent, as compared to the growth rate of 7.5 per cent during 2004-05. The rate of growth of GDP at current market prices, during 2004-05 quick estimate and 2005-06 advance estimate has been put at 13.1 per

cent pegging the GDP at current market price in 2005-06 at Rs. 35,29,240 crore. For Financial Year 2006-07, for the purposes of calculation of GDP, growth rate of 12 per cent has been assumed."

If you take Rs. 35,29,240, assume a growth rate of 12 per cent, you will get the GDP at current prices in the denominator then every ratio will tally.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: I would also like to draw the attention of the Finance Minister to page 11 where the absolute value of GDP at factor cost is given as Rs. 32,06,00 crore at current price and that is growing at 12.5 per cent. This is the latest figure that is available and even if you use this as a denominator then...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not go into the details. You had asked something and the hon. Minister has made a reference to that.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: I would like to be enlightened by the Finance Minister. Revenue deficit is 2.6 per cent, fiscal deficit is 4.65 per cent and primary deficit is 0.35 per cent. All these targets are exceeding the estimated target. I can even sit with him then either I am corrected or he will be corrected on this issue. This is my first concern on the estimates.

The second important issue which I would like to tell him is, he is very happy that the economy is growing at the rate of 8.1 per cent. In our view this growth rate in terms of income is not the real indicator of the growth of the economy. If 8.1 per cent is the yardstick then why this poverty ratio is increasing. Why clothelessness is increasing? Why all kinds of socio-economic problems persist. So, the important point that we should know is that it is not merely the income that matters but we must also take the per capita income and if you take the per capita income, the country's per capita income has been growing at the rate of 4.2 per cent, 2.2 per cent, 7.15 per cent and 6.1 per cent in the last four to five years. Therefore, this is also not an adequate measure of development.

Today, all over the world, the United Nation's Development Programme is embarking upon a new measure of development in terms of Human Development Index and UNDP says that income clearly is only one

option that people would like to have. Though an important one but it is not the sum total of their lives. Income is also a means with human development the end.

Therefore, it is the human development that must be taken into account in assessing performance. When we consider the Human development index, we must take human development index, gender related development index and human parity index into account. To start with, India had started the construction of human development index. The Planning Commission had also constructed it. The human development index was 0.302 in 1981, 0.381 in 1991 and 0.472 in 2001. This has been growing at the rate of 2.61 and 2.38 in the last two decades. This growth rate is not above the traditional Hindu rate of growth. So, it has to be increased.

The Finance Minister has been very happy to mention in the Budget Speech that the growth will be our mount, equity will be our companion and social justice will be our destiny. I would only pray that all these statements come true as far as India is concerned. The growth is important but growth is a function of investment and investment is a function of capital expenditure. Now, if you look into the expenditure pattern in this Budget, we have to lament upon the fact that the capital expenditure has been given lesser importance than the non-Plan expenditure in the Budget. Out of an expenditure of Rs. 5,63,991 crore, he has devoted only Rs. 75,799 crore which would constitute just a paltry sum of 13.1 per cent growth whereas the non-capital expenditure is to the extent of 87 per cent. Even within the Plan expenditure, out of Rs. 1,72,728 crore, he has devoted only Rs. 28,966 crore as the capital expenditure which is just only 5.1 per cent. Now how do we aim at higher growth rate with lower capital expenditure? He may think that FDI is flowing and public sector investment is flowing. But the capital investment in terms of capital expenditure is declining.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof. Ramadass, conclude now. Your Party has been given ten minutes. You have already taken 12 minutes.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Sir, I would just take three more minutes.

Another suggestion that I would like to give is that if

there is going to be real growth in the economy, agriculture and social sector must be given importance. When we look into the Budget figures, we find that agriculture and allied activities numbering ten, get only Rs. 7385 crore which is just only 2.9 per cent of the total expenditure. As a sector which employs about 60 per cent of the people, it is getting only 2.9 per cent. The total plan and non-plan expenditure on agriculture is only Rs. 8199 crore which is just 1.4 per cent of the total expenditure.

The Finance Minister has been gladdened to say that he has been increasing agricultural credit to the farmers. I would like to get a clarification from him as to who benefits out of this agricultural credit in the given environment in the rural areas where the land ownership is the criterion for availing credit and the land distribution in the country is highly screwed. To give you one instance, the marginal farmers with less than one hectare of land constitute 58 per cent of the total farmers. They have a total area of 15 per cent. The small farmers who constitute 33 per cent are having 41 per cent which means 91 per cent of total farmers in the country are small and marginal. I would like to know whether these farmers have derived more benefits from the distribution of credit given by the Government of India. According to me, a number of complaints have come from the marginal farmers. They say that they do not get good treatment by the banks when they go there and there are a lot of problems in getting the loans. Therefore, I would feel that instead of saying that I have allotted Rs. 1,75,000 crore as credit, he must be able to tell the amount given to this sector.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): For Tamil Nadu, Rs. 11,000 crore has been given for the marginal and small farmers.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: I want to have the figure for all India. I have tried in the Reserve Bank of India and NABARD. But nobody is able to give me this figure. I would be gladdened and enlightened, if the hon. Minister of State for Finance is able to give me those figures in terms of marginal and small farmers. Therefore, there should be targeting of credit which the Government gives. M.S. Swaminathan Commission has recommended that the rate of interest should only be four per cent. It has also recommended for a Fund for stabilisation of prices.

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All these things have not been given due attention. More than that, the Minister has mentioned about financial inclusion. What is the nature of financial inclusion that we have today?

Not many people, not many farmers have been brought under the fold of banking. Today, out of every 100 people only 31 have bank accounts. It varies from 134 in Chandigarh to 9 in Manipur. Therefore, we have to go a long way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude your speech. You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Sir, I have no written speech. I would conclude in a minute.

Sir, the Government of India guidelines of financial inclusion have been followed in the Union Territory of Pondicherry for the first time by opening Zero Balance Accounts...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am calling the next Member now.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Therefore, the hon. Finance Minister would have to take an overall view of development that is coming up. He should be able to accelerate the tempo of development by taking into account the agriculture and the social sectors of the country.

*SHRI D. NARBULA (Darjeeling): Sir, the Honourable Finance Minister through his budget for the year 2006-2007 has introduced several provisions, which would help to generate employment and thereby uplift the economic status of lakhs of people of our country. Many people living at the BPL category will develop and improve their economic status. A total amount of Rs. 12041 crores has been allocated for the development of the North Eastern Region in the year 2006-2007. This amount will certainly bring about a development in the North Eastern Region.

I hail from the Darjeeling Parliamentary Constituency. The problems as well as geographical situation of Darjeeling is very similar to that of the North Eastern Region but unfortunately we are not included in NER and

therefore the people living in Darjeeling hill areas do not have any facilities. Therefore, I urge upon the honourable Finance Minister and UPA Government to provide similar facilities to the people of Darjeeling hill also.

In the present budget a sum of rupees 10041 crores has been provided for Sarva Siksha Axiyan for the year 2006-2007, towards the construction of 5 lakh additional class rooms and appointment of 1 lakh 50 thousands more teachers. This will definitely help to provide better education for students between the age group of 6 to 14 years and the said appointment will also generate employments. At present 12 crore children are being provided mid day meal and for the year 2006-2007 the fund allocation under mid-day meal scheme has been raised from 3010 crores to Rs. 4813 crores. Here I would like to say that in many areas the amount provided for mid-day meal is not utilized sincerely. I therefore request the Government to take strict measure to see that all sanction is used effectively in right manner.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has proposed to increase the allocation of funds from Rs. 3,645 crores to Rs. 4680 crores under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission; this will help to cover 1 lakh 40 thousand Schools for providing Drinking Water Scheme. Sanitation is a grave problem to the people living the rural areas. The UPA Government has been trying to solve this problem and the present budget has raised the allocation from 630 crores to 720 crores in the year 2006-2007. This will help to solve the problems of drinking water and sanitation as well.

Health Centres have been lying in deplorable condition in many places. A sum of Rs. 8207 crores have been allocated for community health centres to provide round the clock services under National Rural Health Mission Scheme. In my Constituency also Health Centres are completely neglected and are lying in very bad condition, I urge upon the Government to provide fund from the above allocation so that these Health Centres are also renovated and regular Medical Services are provided to the people living in such different rural areas of my Constituency.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme: Under this scheme 1000 new residential schools for girls from ST/SC/OBC communities will be opened in 2006-07. This

*The speech was laid on the Table.

year's budget has proposed to provide 300 crores for this scheme.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has proposed to provide an incentive to the girl child who passes Class VIII and enrolls in a Secondary School. For such a girl student a sum of Rs. 3000/- will be deposited in her name, which she will be entitled to withdraw at the age of 18. The introduction of this Scheme will encourage Girls students for continuation of their studies.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has proposed to enhance the old age pension from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 200/- per month, I welcome this proposal. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has also expected similar amount from the State Government so that the total amount of pension would become Rs. 400. I do not believe that State Government would concede this proposal, even if considered Rs. 400 is too meager an amount to maintain the family with Rs. 400 per month. As the number of the old age pensioners are limited in every State, I request to the Hon'ble Finance Minister to raise the old age family pension to the tune of Rs. 1000 per month.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has brought out a proposal to establish a Central Institute of Horticulture in Nagaland. I propose that a similar Institute of Horticulture be established in the hilly region of Darjeeling, which would help to develop the economy of the farmers of Darjeeling hill regions.

In the plantation sector the Hon'ble Finance Minister has proposed the introduction of a 15-year programme for massive re-plantation and rejuvenation of tea, and the Ministry of Commerce has also proposed to set up a special purpose tea fund. The Hon'ble Finance Minister proposes to make a contribution every year and for the year 2006-07 the contribution is expected to be 100 crores. At present the tea industry is facing a great crisis all over the country and especially in Bengal. This proposal of the Hon'ble Finance Minister will help to revamp the tea industry. Several tea industries have been closed down in West Bengal; and people have been starved to death. This closure of tea gardens recently led a worker of Chong Tong Tea Garden in Darjeeling to commit suicide.

Cinchona Medicinal Plantation is another vital industry of Darjeeling. More than 50 thousand people

depend on Cinchona plantation industry, which is however lying in a very bad shape. I urge upon the Hon'ble Finance Minister to allocate some fund for the revival of this medicinal plantation also.

I finally congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for introducing such an excellent PRO-PEOPLE-BUDGET and extend my full support towards it.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Finance Minister is present here. Through you, I want to express my views on the budget for the year 2006-07. I would rather like to call it an election budget.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon, Speaker has said that the hon. Members should be brief. I also request the hon. Members to be brief as there are still 67 Members to speak.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is not fair if we are not allowed to make our point....*(Interruptions)*. I will try to be brief....*(Interruptions)*

The budget has been presented keeping in view the ensuing elections in five States and to please the allies. An attempt has been made to allure the middle class which plays an important role in the elections....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you are reading, then you can lay your speech.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: I want to tell the hon. Minister that these are not the only requirement of the middle class, they need several other things. Sugar is used by everyone—the rich and the poor. Sugar prices are going very high. Bricks are a basic requirement for construction, be it a small house or only a wall. Bricks are also likely to become costlier. Only the wearer knows where the shoe.

There is no initiative in the budget towards labour reforms. Earlier a tax was introduced on withdrawals from

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banks, it was opposed right then. We were expecting from the hon. Minister that he would roll back the said withdrawal tax. The same has not been rolled back but the coverage of service tax has been increased. The rate of service tax has been increased from 10 per cent to 12 per cent to worsen the situation.....(Interruptions)

I appreciate the increase in defence budget but there was a need for greater increase therein. We are aware that we have threats from two sides not from one side only. On one side there is Pakistan and there is Bangladesh on the other. The threat is increasing from both sides. This is not a direct fight. We need latest armaments. Had the defence budget been increased to some more extent our defence would have been more powerful.

Providing package for reconstruction of Jammu and Kashmir is a good thing, the Government should certainly provide support. But it would have been better if a package was also provided to Gujarat, a state moving on path of development.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched by the NDA Government Hon. Vajpayeeji and given a call to the children of the country in his own words—*Chalo school chalen, chalo school chalen*. The children living in remote areas were also eager to go to schools but the abhiyan has lost its steam. More schools are needed. Now Rahul Gandhiji has laid emphasis on education. This is very good but what is reality in the field of education? There are no schools in villages. If at all there is any school, there is no teacher. If there is teacher then no black board and room for students to sit. This is the situation in the entire country. More funds should be provided under Rural Employment Scheme for mid-day meal. The schemes already launched by the NDA Government have been recast under new names by this Government. This is an old scheme but the Finance Minister has said that metro train service would be started in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Ahmedabad. He has not given any time limit in this regard. A fixed time frame should be given. In addition to this, what is important is that our internal infrastructure is also in the global competition but our growth rate is not upto the mark as in the power sector, it has increased from 4.7 per cent in 2005 to 6.5 per cent

in 2006 and in several other major industries like coal, crude oil, petroleum, refinery and cement etc. growth rate has been estimated at 4.5 per cent during the period from April, 2005 to December, 2005 whereas from the year 2004 till date growth rate has been assessed at 6.4 per cent only. The hon. Minister should pay attention to this also. In our State Gujarat, there is an adage about the farmers which goes like this—"Kisan Jagat ka tat"—which means farmer is the father of the world—Mistryji must be aware of this. But what is the condition of the farmers in our country? Today, the farmers are committing suicide. They are not getting necessary facilities and that is why they are hard pressed. At some places their compulsions lead them to commit suicide. The NDA Government had declared 7 per cent rate of interest for the farmers but the UPA Government is still playing the same old tunes. The Government has not done justice to the farmers and has shown them only day dreams by giving some assurances.

Rates of interest are increasing and rupee is devaluating as a result of which the goods manufactured in our country have become very cheap, small scale industries are closing down every day. The laws applied to our country under WTO should also apply to other countries. In our country an industry with 50 workers and a capital of rupees one crore is declared small scale industry whereas in America, to my knowledge, industry with even 500 workers is also called small scale industry and the capital may be even more than one crore. If these rules are being applied to our country, then we should also take a stand that only the goods manufactured by the units having less than 50 workers and a capital of rupees one crore will be imported, then only our small scale industry will grow.

Ours is an agriculture dominated country and our economy is based on it. Hon. Minister has talked about constructing ponds. Thousands of such ponds and small ponds have been constructed in Gujarat and rivers have also been inter linked. People from across the country and the world visit Gujarat but how many ponds can be constructed with allocation made by the hon. Minister? Therefore, more funds are required for this purpose. It is said that the next war will be fought for water, there will be great crisis of water. I have read in a news paper about

a farmer in Kanpur, his name is Shri Purushottam Topiwala. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already taken more than ten minutes and there are twenty more Members to speak from the BJP.

16.00 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Its estimated cost is about Rs. 40,000. Grant should be provided to such farmers in order to promote them. Medical and engineering colleges are coming up in private sector but children of poor people cannot study in them because of their high fees. I request the hon. Finance Minister that fees of poor students studying in such private medical and engineering colleges should be borne by the Government of India. Similarly, deposits upto Rs. 5 lakh in scheduled banks are exempted under Section 80 (c) but this exemption is not available in cooperative banks. This will discourage people from keeping their deposits in cooperative banks and these banks will, close down ultimately. Likewise, income from dairies was earlier exempted from income tax under Section 80 (C) and the same was deposited in cooperative banks but now such income has also been brought under tax as a result of which the same will not be deposited in cooperative banks and, gradually the cooperative banks will be closed down.

Sir, gross injustice and partiality has been meted out with Gujarat by not recommending Mahatma Gandhi's birth place Porbander and State capital Gandhi Nagar for renewal works. The Minister has created a hype by announcing a number of schemes in this budget. Construction of 20 thousand water bodies in rural areas has been announced in it. This means that 20000 water bodies will be constructed among 6 lakh villages which works out to one small pond among 30 villages. How is it going to serve? Likewise, rupees 50 have been provided for constructing toilets. Gujarat has a long coast-line, there is a big port which handles transportation of goods from the entire country. The Finance Minister has meted out unjust with Gujarat by not paying attention towards coast line in Gujarat. This way, he has indirectly tried to stop

the development of Gujarat. Porbanders and Sabarmati should be included in the scheme of development of 15 tourist places as announced by the government because Mahatma Gandhi had started his work from here.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I am calling another hon. Member. Please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: You people use the name of Mahatma Gandhi and take Mr. Bush to his Samadhi. I hope, after listening to me, you will do something for the poor farmers and youth of the country. Today, youth of the country is unemployed and demands for livelihood.

*As India is in global competition now and our internal structure is also very wide but the policy of the Government is quite disappointing in this regard. Growth of power sector was 4.7 per cent during the period from April to December 2005 which increased to 6.5 per cent during 2006. Likewise, in the industries directly related to internal facilities viz. coal, crude oil, petroleum refinery and cement etc. growth rate was 4.5 per cent during the period from April to December, 2005 whereas the growth rate is 6.4 per cent from 2004 till now. A reduction of 2 per cent in one year indicates failure on the part of the Government. After 1990, the NDA Government had for the first time strengthened and improved the economy and the present UPA government got a ready strong economic structure but this Government failed in making good use thereof.

Gujarat Government has done a commendable job by sending Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes students abroad for studies. The Government should direct other states also to follow suit. Today, there is scarcity of hostels and residential schools for SC and ST students. Therefore, residential schools for girls as well as for boys should be opened in every district in the country. The NGOs receive donations from outside for social and national interests, still the funds allocated to them under the rural employment guarantee scheme is very little. Rupees 15500 crore are to be distributed among two

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

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hundred districts. This is not going to do anything and the scheme will become a cruel joke for the poor.

The hon. Minister has tried to mislead the people of the country by the jugglery of figures. Export has increased but import has increased by double as a result of which our small scale industries have closed down. Small units are ruined. Today, markets are flooded with foreign Goods. China, Taiwan and Korea have captured the market*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

**SHRI SITA RAM SINGH (Sheohar): Steps taken in all sectors-in farming, business, trade, for labourers, textile traders, economic sector, social sector, health sector, in development sector; in this budget are praiseworthy.

Sir, ours is a country of farmers, where 70% people live in villages; where the main source of income is farming. But, it is regretful that adequate welfare measures have not been taken in the interest of farmers. Farmer invests everything he has in farming, and when he does not get adequate cost of his produce he gets disappointed. Not only this, the farmers are getting burdened with the debt due to destruction of their crop due to floods, drought and natural disasters and that is why they go on committing suicide. Sir, hence there is a need to pay adequate supporting price for the produce of the farmers and to take welfare measures in the interest of farmers. Laws have been framed to check the practice of child labour but they are not being implemented properly.

There is a need to make Child Labour Acts more stringent.

*Not recorded.

**The speech was laid on the Table.

Sir, there is a scheme to get bored tube-well for all the needy persons in the country under Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission but the scheme formulated by the Government is not being implemented properly. This scheme needs to be implemented in a proper way.

Sir, the government constructs houses for the poor under Indira Awas Yojna; but all the poor in the country are not getting benefit from this scheme. The booty under Indira Awas Yojna is being shared with the help of BDO and Mukhia, whereas the fund are provided by the Central Government. Sir, welfare schemes are being launched in the interest of the poor, but I think, the poor do not get their benefit. Middlemen pocket the money with the help of officers. Sir, all the industries and factories have gone to Jharkhand after the partition of the State of Bihar. The matter of providing special status to Bihar was raised after the partition of Bihar. But no adequate economic assistance is being provided to Bihar. Labourers and workers are migrating from the State. Unemployment is at its peak in the State. Hence, Bihar should be given the status of special state so that it may develop. There are many things to say but there is not enough time. I express my gratitude you and appreciate the steps taken by the Hon'ble Minister.

The budget for the year 2006-2007 would give direction to the ongoing economic reforms in the country. It will help in investment and all round development of the country.

Education and development of social structure has been emphasized in this budget.

Development expansion of Power, ports, roads etc. has been emphasized in this budget. The target of increasing growth rate from 8% to 10% is a big thing.

Fall in the prices of medicines for diseases like cancer, AIDS, etc. and life saving drugs will make it easy to get these disease treated. It is a praise-worthy step.

This budget is praise-worthy also for decision taken in social sector and to control fiscal deficit.

The industries have been encouraged by decreasing excise-duty.

There is a need to set up foodgrain storage centers at block level in the country.

The Government has shown leniency on need like loans in the interest of farmers. I welcome this step. Along with it there is a need to give more relaxation and make it easily available.

Important sectors like labour reform have not been adequately paid heed to in the country, which needs to be paid attention to.

There is a need to introduce welfare measures in the interest of bidi labourers working the country.

There is need to solve the problem of flood permanently in the country, particularly in Bihar.

Emphasis should be laid on providing electricity to all the villages in the country under Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyuikaran Yojna.

Electricity be provided free of cost to the people living below poverty line in the country.

There is a need to take more steps in the field of research and development in the country.

No relaxation has been given to middle class businessman in the budget, which needs to be given.

Welfare schemes should be launched in the country in the interest of weavers.

*SHRI VIRCHANDRA PASWAN (Nawada): Sir, I support the general budget 2006-2007. Hon'ble Finance Minister has shown his erudition. He has been praised also by the middle class for it. But no meaningful effort has been made in the direction of solving the problem of villages, farmers and labourers.

Sir, this is the country of villages, and farmers. If we want the country to progress, then meaningful efforts would have to be made for the development of villages and farmers. The problem of farmers will not be solved only by some reduction in the rate of interest for loan being provided to the farmers. A sum of only Rs. 2902 crores has been allocated in this budget for the development and welfare of about 25 crore people belonging Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. This Government wants to develop a person belonging to

scheduled caste/scheduled tribes by spending a sum of Rs. one hundred and twenty five. This is a ridiculous step taken by the Government. I request that these classes should not be cheated in this manner as the poor may be living in hut but they understand every political stunt and strategy adopted by ruling class.

The neglect shown towards the people belonging to scheduled castes; scheduled tribes, farmers, villages and labourers today will result in adverse outcome tomorrow. If you think that neglecting these classes is your erudition, I suggest you not to commit such mistake. Nobody will object if you develop the cities. But neglecting farmers, labourers and villages is a big mistake. I hope that the Government will take concrete step for integrated development of farmers, labourers and villages.

With these words I conclude my speech and support the 2006-2007 budget

*SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Sir, I feel happy that the budget presented by the hon'ble Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram for the year 2006-07 is people friendly and all efforts have been made to fulfill the hopes of the people in it.

It is a matter of happiness that the General Budget will accelerate the speed of development of the country, provide maximum benefit to the farmers, make the life of the common man easy and will strengthen the foundation of the development of the country.

It is also a good thing that the rates of interest on the loans for the farmers have been lowered and relief has also been provided for the various implements used in agriculture in this budget.

It is a good thing cheaper loans could be made available for the farmers. Till now, injustice was being done to the farmers in comparison to the urban consumers in this regard. Then, they have very little access to the Government loans. It is hoped that some of the problems of the farmers can be removed through the concessional loans and they can be protected from the trap of the moneylenders.

It is also a welcome step that other condition of the

[Shri Brajesh Pathak]

income tax have been relaxed without increasing it. This will particularly benefit the middle and lower middle classes.

It is a matter of happiness that provision for both Government support and economic concessions for large industries from the point of view of employment, such as textiles, automobiles and food processing industries has been made in the budget.

It is also good that even after liberalization the targets for budgetary and revenue losses are likely to remain within the justifiable limits and no cess has been imposed.

It is also good that the steps for the benefit the weaker sections have also been taken in the budget and items used by the common man have been made cheaper. The infrastructural development will really get a boost by the budget.

It is also a good thing that many steps strengthening the education, science, aviation, petroleum, tourism and industry sector have been taken in the budget and the subsidy given on the petroleum products has also not been touched.

It has been stated in the budget that irrigation facilities, cheaper loans, would be provided to the farmers and diversification would be done for agriculture and it would be made more productive through the market and particular interest has been taken in the operation of women cells in various ministries, which is a good thing.

It is also a good thing that a provision for grant of 3000 rupees for the admission of a girl child to ninth class has been made and provision for scholarship for the dalit-advansi children has been made and 100 crore rupees each have been given to three universities and small cars, soft drinks, shoes, lamps, DVD drive, flash drive, printing and writing paper, cancer and AIDS drugs, plastics, LPG gas stove, clothes mineral metals and food items have become cheaper.

Though, the planned expenditure has been increased by 20.4% in the budget but the required amount for agriculture, health, education and employment has not

been provided and the most of the recommendations of the National Farmers Commission have been rejected.

No provision for imposition of additional tax on the millionaires and billionaires has been made in the budget and not only the scope of the service tax but its rate also has been increased which will ultimately burden the consumer.

Besides, no serious efforts have been made to curtail wasteful expenditure not to unearth or control the black money and check its origin or to control corruption.

Though, the performance of the Indian economy in the budget is commendable but there is no mention of such a mechanism which can ensure proper spending of the budgetary amount for various schemes to achieve desired results.

Common man will definitely be affected by the manner in which the rate and the scope of the service tax has been widened in the budget and it will increase the inflation too. The cost of houses can increase further which will force people to take higher amount of home loan.

It should have been kept in the mind that there has been an increase of 50 to 100 per cent in the real estate prices recently. If both the rate and the scope of the service tax is widened in such a situation, then it will add to the problems of the common man too. People are feeling uncomfortable due to imposition of service tax even on small services. Some relief should have been provided in this regard but rather its rate has been increased.

The manner in which it is proposed to impose higher rate of tax on the anonymous donations received by the charitable institutions, may create problems for the hospitals and educational institutions run on donations. This may result in people staying away from such donations on one hand and some financial crisis may also arise as well for the institution run on donations. It could have been better if some other solution could be found rather than levying tax on the money received through donations.

In spite of all this, we can say that it is a balanced pro-people budget which will not cause inflation. Its focus

on agriculture, infrastructure, rural development, education and health is also balanced.

There is no exaggeration in saying that this budget has been presented in the backdrop of the spectacular performance of the economy. A target of 10% growth has been fixed in the budget and efforts have been made to strengthen the financial situation.

But, the funds required for the empowerment of the people from the poor sections have not been provided as per the requirement. It is injustice towards the Dalits and poor people. Funds have not been provided in consonance with the concern shown for the weaker sections and social security.

The Government will have to make arrangement for proper implementation of the Central schemes, if it really wants to improve the rural economy and to bring the people belonging to the dalit and poor sections of the country to the mainstream of the nation so that they get their rightful dues. No doubt, this work can be achieved only when the State Governments cooperate with the Central Government. But, unfortunately, such condition does not exist presently and this is the reason that the dalit and poor sections are not getting the full benefits of the centrally sponsored schemes.

It is good that noble intentions for the development of the rural economy have been expressed in the general budget but there is also a need to inspire states from them. It is definitely a difficult task but not impossible. This difficult task can be made easy through administrative reforms.

It is unfortunate that administrative reforms are not visible in the agenda of either the Central Government or the State Governments. Therefore, it will be better that administrative reforms are accorded the highest priority. In fact, this is only way through which the budget provisions can live upto the hopes of the common man along with the expectations of the Government. In this regard, this fact can not to be ignored that most of the budgetary provisions remain merely registered in the documents. There is no doubt that the economy can also be strengthened through the slow paced reforms but that is possible only when reformative efforts are made in all the sectors.

With these words, I welcome the budget presented by the hon'ble Finance Minister and also hope that necessary steps will be taken by considering the suggestions given by me.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Nikhil Kumar will speak.

[Translation]

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (Aurangabad, Bihar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for allowing me to speak on the budget.

[English]

Sir, I rise to speak on the Budget to support it. I have heard some hair splitting on the Budget by some hon. Members. I could explain those points and can answer the questions raised by them. But that would take a long time. So, I wish to confine myself to only what I had proposed to speak on.

I support it because, I think, it is a good Budget. It is a good Budget because there are some landmark achievements mentioned in it. The revenue receipt has been Rs. 3,71,000 crore last year which is more than Rs. 100 crore than the previous year. This is quite an achievement. I compliment the Finance Ministry for that. Secondly, this year the revenue receipts are expected to go up to Rs. 4,40,000 crore. I am confident that the Ministry will be able to achieve this target. When it does, we will be in a position next year to compliment the Ministry and the hon. Finance Minister. What is very important is something that has not been mentioned by any of the hon. speakers. But it is a significant and a crucial point in the Budget. I quote from the Budget:

"The Revenue Deficit is estimated at 2.1 per cent of the GDP and the Fiscal Deficit is estimated at 3.8 per cent that is less than 4 per cent."

I do not wish to compare these figures with the figures in the past. But obviously, these are extremely good figures and they go to show that the economy is in good hand. We should compliment the Finance Minister for this.

[Shri Nikhil Kumar]

Sir, I will digress a little and recall to you the nuclear deal that was signed last week between us and the United States. It is a landmark deal, a very big deal because India has finally managed after 35 years to get into select group of nuclear nations. When we get into this select group, we shall guard our sovereignty, our integrity, with our own discretion to use it to our intent. I quote here from the hon. Prime Minister's statement.

"The House can rest assured that India retains its sovereign right to take all appropriate measures to fully safeguard its interest."

It goes on to say that:

"The autonomy of our research and development activities in the nuclear field will remain unaffected."

I repeat, this is a landmark achievement of the UPA Government and for this, I wish to compliment the Chairperson of the UPA, Shrimati Soniaji, and our prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singhji. We wish them all success in the implementation of this accord hereafter. I also recall here the statement made by the United States' President during his recent visit to Delhi. He referred to India a global power. Now, we want to be a global power and we are well on the way to becoming a global power. If we intend to be such a power, we cannot do with a second-grade economy. Everything connected with the economy has to be first-rate. Each sphere of our activity must measure up to world standard, whether it is the agriculture sector, the manufacturing sector, the services sector or matters relating to infrastructure like road, power, railways, ports, airports or telecommunications. Sir, this is possible only if there is a friendly environment for investment. This environment will have to be conducive to it and especially to FDI. If we are to be a global power, then we should see what others are doing. Again, I quote from the United States' Annual Report, and the State of the Union addressed by the United States' President, in which he referred to only two Asian countries as countries which are coming up very fast and that Americans should be aware of them. The two Asian States mentioned by the United States' President were China and India. Now, let us see what China is doing about the FDI. It is really

mind boggling that China has an annual FDI US \$ 50 billion. What is ours? It is a mere pittance when compared to this or rather contrasted with this. It is only \$ 5 billion. This will not do. This will have to be increased and I am fully supportive of the efforts by the Finance Minister and the UPA Government to invite as much FDI as is possible in our own economy.

The other thing connected with this relates to infrastructure. I just want to cite one instance, and that is an instance of quality of roads that are constructed. I am aware of some roads which have been constructed with foreign collaboration. Their quality has been extremely good. I am not saying that we cannot do it. But then, we will have to compete. If we have to compete, it will have to be an open environment which is another reason why I say that there should be FDI in India. FDI will create the right atmosphere for competition, rivalry that will lead to much greater quality. Seen against this background, I am also saying that the Budget is very satisfying. I will quote a little from the Budget papers that the hon. Finance Minister has given us.

The allocation of our flagship programmes of the UPA Government has increased by 43.2 per cent. It is not a minor, not a very small amount. It is bound to have its effect in taking India on to a developing graph. Here, I refer now to one little point about Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. I was planning to speak on education. But since our young leader Shri Rahul Gandhi has already spoken at length on it, I will not repeat what he has said. But I will just mention two points.

One is that while there has been an increase in the allocation for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan—we welcome it—we must put in place a monitoring mechanism which will see that the amount that has been allocated for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan reaches the target. I am aware personally that there is a great deal of unhappy and unsavoury activities going on at the grass-roots level. There is just no control. I would like to request the Bihar Government, through this House, Sir, that it must pay attention to the actual, the correct and just expenditure of the amount allocated for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. In my constituency alone, there is something like Rs. 12 crore given to us for refashioning and re-building the

school buildings. But I find that when I toured the constituency that this money has not been spent at all. This money will have to be spent in a most useful manner. For this there has to be a monitoring mechanism. So, I would request the Government of India to set in motion some kind of mechanism. I know it is basically a State subject but since this money is coming from the Centre, the Centre should reserve its right to see that it is spent properly. This money, if it is spent properly, will go a long way in improving the educational standards in our rural countryside.

The second thing is about the National Rural Health Mission. The hon. Health Minister, when he was replying to the debate on Health, made a very special mention of ASHA. Indeed, there is a great deal of recruitment going on in Bihar. But unfortunately, this recruitment is not drawing the best people because of a great deal of favouritism that is going on. Once again, this is exposed to a lot of unsavoury activities. Here also, I suggest there should be a monitoring mechanism. Without that, it will not be possible for the ambitious scheme of the National Rural Health Mission to be a success.

In this connection, the another suggestion that I want to make is about rural sanitation. There is a great deal of importance given to rural sanitation....*(Interruptions)* A great deal of attention is paid to rural sanitation and there is a mention of providing individual household toilets. This is indeed most praiseworthy. But that is going to take time. Till such time that is in position, my request to the hon. Health Minister is that he could kindly consider, under the head of sanitation, providing public toilets. It is a real curse to go into our villages and see our womenfolk being put to tremendous inconvenience. There is lack of amenity. It is a shameful thing. So, I would very earnestly urge upon the hon. Health Minister to kindly pay attention to providing public toilets.

Sir, I will not take much time. I would like to particularly compliment the hon. Finance Minister for the increased allocation he has made for farm credit. This is something very necessary. Contrary to all the apprehensions that have been expressed by some hon. Members here, I am all for it. This 28 per cent increase to Rs.1,71,000 crore from Rs. 1,41,500 crore is extremely

welcome. It will do a lot of good to our farmers but I would like to sound a warning bell here. There are complaints of harassment of farmers by the bank staff. All kinds of demands are made. I am not saying that the bank staff is guilty of graft or any other thing but the fact is that it is a common complaint in the rural countryside that they do not behave properly. They make unnecessary demands. At the same time, they are unable to discharge their duties properly. So, my request is that the rural banks should shed their urban bias and attempt to deal with the applications made by the farmers in a sympathetic and a positive manner. This is possible....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR : Sir, there are demands by the bank staff....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Already there are so many speakers.

SHRI NIKHAL KUMAR: Why can these not be publicised? If this is done, the farmers will be totally happy....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please cooperate with me.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Secondly, there is a very serious problem about the tenant farmers. Hon. Finance Minister has himself highlighted it. He said that the tenant farmers are not considered creditworthy. It is agreed. But, then we must find a way of helping them out. That is also possible if we consider their right to get some credit as a right. For example, we give loans to students without any assurance that they will pass and do well. So, why can there be not a legal provision to consider tenant farmer's rights as a right? That should be taken as a collateral or taken as an asset....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: With reference to Bihar, the question of procurement of food grains is very important. Unfortunately, the food production and food procurement in Bihar has not been up to the mark. I will not mention here the quantum of food production but the quantum of food grains procured. It is really very sad that in 2003-04, Bihar had only 3.65 lakh tonnes of food grains procured by the FCI as against Haryana, which had procured 66

[Shri Nikhil Kumar]

lakh tonnes, and Punjab, which had procured 1,76,00,000 tonnes of food grains. If this is the worst situation in Bihar, it is because in many districts the FCI does not have godowns. It does not have a godown in my own district....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. I am calling another Member.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: I am very grateful to the hon. Member, Shri Raghunath Jha that he has mentioned the power position in Bihar. It is dismal. It has to improve....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly cooperate. Now, Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Hon. Finance Minister has provided for five mega power projects in the country. I am greatly saddened and disappointed that the Nabinagar Super Thermal Power Project is not there. This is an old power project which was first conceived of in 1989. Now, 16 year have gone by and this project is yet to take off. I believe it is now in the final stage. It is awaiting the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs. When that comes through, it must be given Central assistance and for that I would request the Finance Minister to kindly include this as another mega super power project because this will do a great deal of good to the whole State of Bihar. Without this, Bihar will never be able to improve....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. Thank you very much. This is too much.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: The Finance Minister has been compassionate....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have called another Member.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: But, he must give some consideration to people over 70 years of age. They are not in a position to meet the expenditure on their medicines and hospital expenses. In many cases, it has come to notice that their children are also reluctant to help them. So, Sir, would the hon. Finance Minister show some compassion to those who are above 70 years of

age and exempt them from the payment of Income tax? Without this(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy. Nothing will go on record. Please, I have called another Member.

(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Sir, the Ministry of Highways has a very ambitious plan to completely transform the National Highways in Bihar. But unfortunately National Highway 98, which is one of the important National Highways of our country that runs from Bengal to Maharashtra passing through Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, is in a very bad shape. The traffic on this National Highway, both goods as well as other, is very heavy. I would request that adequate fund allocation should be made to widen this National Highway.

[Translation]

**SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA (Samastipur): Sir, the third progressive budget 2006-07 by the UPA Government is commendable in which all the sections of the society, in particular, the development of the rural India have been taken care of.

Lowering of interest on the agricultural loan and partial waiver of interest is a good step in the direction of providing relief to the farmers in the country.

In addition to comprehensive investment of about 50,015 crore rupees in the eight major programmes Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid-day Meal Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, Rural Sanitation Campaign, National Rural Health Mission, Integrated Child Development Scheme, national Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, the additional allocation to accelerate the "Bharat Nirman" Scheme, Rajive Gandhi Old Age Pension Scheme, Welfare Schemes for the SC, ST and Women, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Yojana, North Eastern Railway Scheme and Jammu and Kashmir Reconstruction Scheme will be a milestone in the development of the country till date.

*Not recorded.

**The speech was laid on the Table.

Through this budget, the Government has sent the message that the common man of the country is important for it and that welfare measures and secularism are still its priority.

I, therefore, support the budget 2006-07 with the expectation that the farmers and the workers of the country will prosper in the coming days and the common man will be able to make his life more comfortable.

[English]

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY
(Nalgonda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I believe that the Budget Discussion is a very good occasion for discussing various problems the country is facing, but unfortunately, year after year, the discussion is getting reduced and now also, unfortunately, due to the forthcoming Assembly Elections in five States, the Budget Session itself is being cut down and Demands for Grants relating to several Ministries will be guillotined. This is a very unfortunate thing.

Sir, the hon. Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram has presented his Budget like a seasoned magician. We have all heard his eloquent Budget speech, but after the magic is over, when the things are getting unfolded, we feel very disillusioned. I think, this is not a Budget which we expected and not a Budget which we suggested. This is definitely not a Budget that flows from the National Common Minimum Programme. Despite the rhetoric, there is no action programme to tackle several crises the country is facing, particularly in the agricultural field. The Budget allocation to agriculture is very nominal and there is no remedy to arrest the decline in the bank credit to small-scale sector.

Sir, the budgeted capital expenditure as a proportion to total expenditure shows a decline. The Budget, in general, is disappointing and highly distressing. The suggestions of the Left Parties and trade unions are cynically rejected by the Finance Minister. In the Budget, more things have been stated in an implicit way than explicitly. The Left Parties have suggested a 12-point resource mobilisation plan for bringing an additional Rs. 1.6 lakh crore. We have given a suggestion to tax the rich, super-rich, affluent sections as also the high-profile corporates for raising resources for investment to turn the wheel of economy for more jobs, to generate more

resources for investment in housing, healthcare, education etc., but unfortunately that has not been taken care of.

The income tax is the same as also the corporate tax. In fact, the corporate tax is reduced. The tax burden will remain the same for all the rich and middle classes. Income tax collection is projected to increase from 13.47 per cent to 16.86 per cent and corporate tax collection is likely to grow by only 3 per cent. The customs duty has generally been reduced from 10.5 per cent to further lower levels. The tax GDP growth is extremely weak. It is too weak to assist the development plans meant to meet the aspirations of the people. There are several industries in the public sector which have been closed down and there is no special mention about them or special fund allocation to re-open the closed industries. There is a dip in the industrial production up to 0.8 per cent. Mobilisation of resources in the primary market is only Rs. 30,391 crore and it is nearly down by Rs. 5,000 crore comparatively. There is a decline in the production of power generation, which is far from satisfactory and nowhere near the demand of the country.

Sir, in the agriculture sector, there are lot of problems. The rainfall is erratic. Sixty per cent of the crop land area is dependent on the rain, but the amount that is made available for irrigation from the Centre is very limited and it is not going to solve the problem in any way. The problem of the slow growth of agriculture is going to have an effect in the overall GDP growth. Fifty-seven per cent of the workforce in India is still dependent on the agriculture.

I would like to mention here that the hon. Finance Minister has not taken this very important factor into consideration. Between 1991 and 2001, according to the population Census, about 70 lakh agriculturists disappeared from this profession. This is a very serious crisis and though more amounts are given for agriculture, that is nowhere near to the necessity and it is not going to solve the problem of agriculture crisis in any way. Though some relief is given in regard to interest, it is not going to give real relief to the entire agriculture as such.

The hon. Finance Minister is silent on the subsidies and on the cost of fertilizers. There is no word about Price Stabilisation Fund to give some sort of remunerative price

Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy]

to the peasants. There is no proper price for either food grains or for the commercial crops.

The unemployment problem is very serious. I believe, the Government has not taken note of the serious situation in regard to the unemployment in the rural and urban areas and men and women. Take, for example, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. It was expected that a sum of Rs. 40,000 crore are to be spent, but only a sum of Rs. 11,700 crore is allotted for this. There are a very large number of people who register their names in this work. For example, in Andhra Pradesh, about 20 lakh people are expected to register their names, but about 34 lakhs have registered their names. A sum of about Rs. 1,000 crore is allotted and a sum of another Rs. 2700 crore are necessary. Whatever is allotted here by the hon. Finance Minister is not going to meet the needs of this demand.

Earlier also, there were schemes for the rural employment. All these schemes are integrated and whatever amount is additionally given is very small. We do not know whether the Government is really serious in implementing the Common Minimum Programme and the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, which is given a very wide publicity throughout the country.

As far as poverty alleviation programme is concerned, unfortunately, I would like to say that about 40 crore of the population is poor and 24 crore of the population is very badly poor. They are unable to have two square meals a day and the budget allocations for the poverty alleviation is very small.

Under the glare of the stock market zoom, the short-term foreign exchange reserve, boom in real estate and upswing in the service sector, urban affluence, shining glittering cities, the Finance Minister has forgotten the crores of people the backyard of the economy, spared, 440 billionaires, 70,000 crorepaties and the people having more than ten lakh rupees of income, refuse to broaden the tax base and forgotten to put his fingers on the black money, that has grabbed nearly 40 per cent of the economy. The hon. Finance Minister has been modest to the corporate sector and immodest to the working people.

There is no serious effort to unearth the black money which could have yielded an additional amount of Rs. 5 lakh crore. On the one hand it is being argued that we need a trail from the banking transaction tax (BTT) and PAN, and on the other hand we are giving up where a trail may be easily visible. How would computerisation and PAN work succeed if a lot of people with high incomes simply drop out of the tax net? It is said that only 85,000 individuals file tax returns showing an income of more than Rs. 10 lakh per annum in this country. I would like to know whether it is a fact. Is it a correct figure? Will it satisfy the prevailing situation in this country?

Regarding health and education also, the allotment, of course has definitely increased as compared to last year but it is definitely not anywhere near the demand. So, Sir, in these circumstances, we feel that this is definitely not a Budget of *aam aadmi*. The Finance Minister should set right the things. This way, this Budget is not going to solve the problems of the country. By an increase in the Sensex in Mumbai, with the high prices of gold and silver, we cannot feel that the country is advancing. The basic needs of the rural poor and the urban poor people are to be satisfied. I believe the way in which India is moving, this Budget is not going to satisfy our needs.

Sir, I believe that at least after this discussion, the Finance Minister will set right the Budget to some extent. Please put more tax on those who can pay and reduce the tax on those who cannot pay. Please spare the poorest sections of the society. UPA Government is a Government with several promises. Poor people of this country, working people in this country, and agriculturists have a lot of expectations and hopes. Unfortunately, all these hopes are gone with this Budget. I am very sorry to say this and I hope that there will be some corrections made at the end of his Budget reply. Please allow me to lay the rest of my speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Okay. Rest of the speech will form part of the proceedings.

*SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY :
Expenditure to social sector has gone up nearly by

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

13 per cent in the last two year. As such, Human Development Index has slipped from 124 to 127 in the international survey.

There is a sharp increase in expenditures on education and health. This is welcome, but is it adequate? The state of education is suffering from lack of funds. Reports suggest that many programmes are on paper since money is siphoned off and data are cooked up. For the Mid-Day Meal scheme for 12 crore children the expected expenditure is Rs. 5348 crore or Rs. 445 *per capita*. For each working day, it would amount to about Rs. 2 per day. Of course, this is something, but at today's prices it would not even fetch a cup of tea in an urban setting. More funds are necessary for these types of schemes. There have been several pro-poor announcements but no budgetary allocations have been made. There is reduction of tax on cars, ice creams and increase of tax on umbrellas. There is 16 per cent tax on country-made detergent soap. If the country is to advance with high growth rate, we need to fully utilise our human resources. Half a billion plus population in our country is not having adequate work. The Budget has got no solution to this problem. On the one hand sensex goes up, gold and silver prices go up, on the other hand poor people's miseries are on the increase.

Hence we are very unhappily with the Budget, angry with this Budget and demand that the general policy of the Budget should be changed. We strongly protest the way in which the Budget is prepared.*

[Translation]

*DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH (Bhind): Sir, I am opposing the budget for the year 2006-2007 because this budget will deceptively extract money from the pocket of common man as service tax has been imposed on all essential services. As a result the prices of essential commodities will go up. All the Governments since independence have been claiming that their Government is the government of farmers; and the Government of the poor. The real India lives in villages but nothing has been given to farmers and villages. For the first time attention was paid towards it when the government was formed

under the leadership of hon'ble Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1998. For the first time NDA Government paid attention towards villages under the leadership of hon'ble Atal Bihari Vajpayee and for the first time on 25 December, 2000 Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojan was implemented in lakhs of such villages where there were no roads. According to this scheme, by the year 2007, all the villages with a population of 500 was to be connected with roads but in this budget UPA government has announced to connect by link roads only those villages having a population of 1000 by year 2009. It is regretful that instead of connecting all the villages having a population of 500 with a link road by the year 2007, now it is being proposed to connect only those villages having population of 1000 by the year 2009. Despite this it is said that UPA Government is well-wisher of farmers and villages.

It has been said to provide potable water under Swajaldhara yojna, whereas the ten per cent amount deposited by the people has been returned to them. I, through you, want to suggest the hon'ble Minister to discontinue various water schemes being run and continue with only one scheme with an objective to provide drinking water to all and replenish ground water, otherwise disputes would start over drinking water by the year 2020 and ration cards will have to be issued for drinking water.

Sir, our young colleague, hon'ble Rahul Gandhiji has expressed his views on education a little while ago. I am happy that he may not have enough experience but he expressed his views honestly on the condition of education at present. Education is heading towards extinction in rural areas. You may increase budget allocation for education or may provide mid-day meal but the fact is that education is no more there. If education is to be promoted honestly in rural areas, then only one educational programme should be followed with one objective and uniform education system would have to be introduced throughout the country after discontinuing all other educational programmes. I, through you would like to tell hon'ble Member, Shri Rahul Gandhi to introduce a Private Member Bill for implementing uniform education. We shall support that.

**The speech was laid on the Table.

[English]

*SHRI SHARANJIT SINGH DHILLON (Ludhiana): Thank you, Deputy Speaker Sir, for giving me the opportunity to speak on the General Budget 2006-2007. The development of any country depends mainly on Agriculture and Small-scale industry. But, in this budget, both these sectors have been totally ignored. By ignoring both these sectors, you are playing with the development of the country. It does not augur well for the progress of the country.

Sir, In Punjab, the farmers are in a miserable condition. The farmers of Punjab were harbingers of the Green Revolution. They made India self-sufficient in the production of foodgrains. Punjab is the largest contributor of foodgrains in the Central pool. But the minimum support price of wheat and paddy has increased only marginally. On the other hand, prices of all items related to agriculture have gone up. The price of diesel has sky-rocketed. The price of fertilizers has increased. Water-table is going down in Punjab. Every year, farmers have to bore their tube-wells deeper and deeper to tap the ground water. Agriculture is being neglected by the Government. Per hectare production of foodgrains is going down. Farming has become a loss-making venture. But, farmers have no alternative. They are heavily in debt. As a result, they are committing suicide. More than 30,000 farmers have committed suicide in the last few years. As per an estimate made by Punjab Agriculture University, there is a total debt of 22,000 crores on the farmers of Punjab. 80% loan has been taken from the Private Financiers and 20% loan has been taken from Government agencies. Farmers who fail to return the loan are put in jail and money lenders grab their land. There is a lot of talk regarding diversification of crops.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dhillon, you are reading your speech. If you are reading the whole speech then you can lay it.

SHRI SHARANJIT SINGH DHILLON: Sir, I will not take much time. Markets have not been provided for the produce of the farmers. Remunerative Minimum Support Price has not been given to the farmers. Private Companies are cheating the farmers.

I have a few suggestions to make. Loans of small and marginal farmers of Punjab should be waived off. Interest rates on loans being given to farmers should be reduced further. The Central Government should enact a law on contract farming to safeguard the interest of farmers. If a company goes back on the agreement it has entered into with a farmer, action should be taken against that company, and the farmer should be fully compensated.

In Punjab, farming is mechanized. The cost of mechanized farming, pesticides and fertilizers in Punjab is higher as compared to the cost of these things in other states. The Government should grant package to the farmers of Punjab. There is an urgent need to establish an agro-based tinned-food plant in Punjab. Special facilities should be provided to the agriculture and small industries sectors. Indo-Pak trade should be further encouraged at the Wagah Border and Husainiwala Border. Vegetables and fruits can be exported to Pakistan and other countries.

I would like to know from the Government the details regarding the status of small-scale industry in India in the last two years. Industrialists have been moving out of Punjab. Many industries have closed down. Please provide the details. The Budget is silent about this. Ludhiana, which was earlier called the Manchester of India, is in ruins. Industrialists are moving out of the state and setting up their factories in the neighbouring states. If financial assistance can be provided to Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, why is this being denied to Punjab? If the centre continues to ignore Punjab, this gem of a state will be ruined. The Government must provide an economic package to Punjab for the revival of its industries. The loans of the farmers should be waived off.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Azmi ji, the members of your party have spoken. Only three minutes are left.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI (Shahabad): I shall speak for five minutes only.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only one or two minutes.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: Mr. Chairman Sir, although I have

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

risen to support the budget because in my opinion the budget is neither good nor bad. Service tax is an unfair tax. It is promoting inspector regime. When there was a downward trend.....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The members of your party have spoken for 17 minutes, therefore no time is left for you, however it will be better if you be brief as much as possible.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: Will all the members of BSP be treated in the same way?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is not so, yet you may speak in brief.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: Whenever a member of BSP rises to speak, things are said about them and time is monitored.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, kindly be brief.

[Translation]

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the rate of service tax has also been increased and many services have been included in it. Have we been left with only one job to support imposition of irrational taxes and exploit the people. The money so collected will be distributed among looters, corrupt officials and touts. We have been crying hoarse because it seems we come here to help wrong person so that he may be able to exploit the poor. Whether it be the government of NDA, or the present UPA Government or that of United front, nothing has changed for them. They did the job of exploiting the poor and the money so collected is to be spent on handful of persons. I want to speak on the money being spent in the name of development of villages. The money is sanctioned for schemes launched by the Government of India. It is a good thing but there is no control over the officers and officials of State Government. The minister of rural development cries hoarse in Lok Sabha that they have increased the amount by crores, thousands of crore rupees had been given for development but development is not seen in reality.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, everyone knows that National

Literacy Mission is out and out a source of loot for the officers. I have been continuously opposing it in the Lok Sabha since last seven years that it should be wound up but like all religious books, every Government accepts it so that these schemes may continue to remain a source of amassing money for those looters. Financial irregularities under the said scheme continued unabated and money has been continuously extracted from the poor masses in the name of taxes. It has a social aspect that the persons who join government services start taking bribes in their respective departments and thereafter spread their influence in their own villages. When sons of poor people try to emulate their wards and find themselves unable to live their lives on those lines, they adopt wrong methods and ruin their lives by falling into the clutches of thieves, dacoits and mafia. To bring themselves on par with them, they even fall into the clutches of traitors or terrorists. When they see that a simple government servant is enjoying his life lavishly and they are unable to do that, then it becomes a social issue.

B.P.L. Scheme and Antyodaya Yojna were introduced in the Lok Sabha to provide foodgrains to the poor people at cheaper rates. We had supported that scheme so that poor people may get foodgrains at cheaper rates. Today, more than 25,000 crores of rupees are being looted by corrupt people despite my repeated submission that there are 50 per cent schemes in which loot is going on. Therefore such schemes should be wound up. Why new taxes are imposed? There is no need of imposing service tax. Out of 25,000 crores of rupees, only 2-3 thousand crores reach the poor people. Rest of the money is looted. Food for Work Scheme was launched last year and thousands of crores of rupees were provided for that scheme. The scheme was implemented in 150 districts and if homes of CDO, DM of those districts and the development agencies of the concerned states are raided by the income tax officers, it will come to light that they have become rich through the Food for Work Scheme.

Hardoi and Lakhimpur Khiri are two districts located in my parliamentary constituency. Some work has been done in Hardoi district. The Honourable Minister has constituted a monitoring and vigilance committee there of which I am the chairman. To some extent, work has been done there. Second district is Lakhimpur Khiri. An

[Shri Ilyas Azmi]

M.L.C., two M.L.A.'s of the ruling party of the state, some J.E's, A.E.'s of the construction agencies and D.M. and C.D.O. of the district have connived and I am ready to face any consequence in this House itself, if they show us any work done even for a paltry amount of Rs. 3 crore out of the allocation of Rs. 30 crore made for this purpose. The entire amount has been looted. I have written in details to the Minister of Rural Development, but no action has been taken in this regard till date. I received a letter from him that effective action is being taken but so far not even a single person has been arrested in this regard.

A large amount is allocated under the Swarn Jayanti Rozgar Yojna (SJRY). The amount is allocated at District Panchayat, Block Panchayat and at Gram Panchayat level. Rs. 35 crore is allocated for both the districts of my constituency and it is being given for a long time. If our cabinet shows work even for Rs. 35 executed then I will accept that some thing has been done. Entire fund is being looted and this process will continue. It seems that God has thrust it upon or it has been written in all religious books that howsomuch fund is wasted, the masses being exploited and these looters are free to loot the money.

Mid Day Meal Scheme is being run by the government as a very sacred scheme. Perhaps, the government is unaware that only 10 or 15 per cent amount out of the total amount released, is being spent on meals for poor children, rest of the money is going into scams. The government does not have money to spend, where it is necessary. Be it Bhartiya Janta Party, or Left Front, Congress, Bahujan Samajwadi Party or Samajwadi Party, the leaders of all the parties accept that the minorities, particularly the Muslims, have lagged behind in education. There is no difference of opinion over it. Everyone, be it friends or so-called foes of Muslims, accepts this truth that Muslims have lagged for behind in education. After putting in so much endeavour, strenuous efforts and meeting with the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, a demand was put up that a lumpsum amount of Rs. 1000 crores should be deposited in the corpus of the Maulana Azad Foundation. People are benefitting from this foundation. There are very good people in this foundation and not even an iota of corruption is there. People are benefitting from it but there is no fund available

with the foundation for it. Thousands of crore rupees are there to be squandered but there is not a single pie for work. Finance Minister has hardly allocated Rs. 200 crores this year against the demand for Rs. 1000 crore. I am thankful to him for this.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ilyas Azmi, please conclude. Now, I am calling another Member, Shri Bikram Keshari Deo. You have already taken ten minutes.

....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: I am about to finish. This is the truth. I want to make a submission to all the Members of this House, be it the Members sitting on my left or those on my right, to introspect their conscience as to whether 10-15 lakh people vote for us in the hope that we should snatch their hard earned money by imposing tax and squander it away among the corrupt? Such things are never monitored. We should deeply think over it as to what is our responsibility as a person being in power. I do not hold any single person responsible for it. It has become a trend that whichever scheme is formulated, that is treated as sacred as 'Kuran' or 'Gita' and no modification can be made into that scheme.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your speech is not going on record. Shri Bikram Keshari Deo to speak now.

(Interruptions)*...

**SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA (Mangalore): Sir, The budgetary estimates for the fiscal year 2006-07 is presented with the back drop of the report of the economic. Survey report published by the government a day earlier. The Survey report indicates that the growth parameters are very good. The GDP is slated to grow at around 8.1%, there is buoyancy all around in the market with a growth rate of 7.8% on industrial front also. But expectedly, the growth in the farming sector is pegged at 2.3%. The Finance Minister had a great opportunity to

*Not recorded.

**The speech was laid on the Table.

utilize these positive indicators to be very radical and innovative in the budget for the coming year. But unfortunately his hands seem to be tied down by the left parties who are going to face crucial elections in about a few weeks time from now. Otherwise the Finance Minister should have taken drastic steps to give a facelift to the agriculture of the country. It is to be noted that our Prime Minister is stating in many public forums that for a healthy and balanced growth, the primary sector (Agriculture) should achieve and exceed a growth rate of at least 4%. I would say that finance minister has disappointed many and that would include the PM also, by not giving any serious thrust in this front.

Sir, in the five year plan proposals presented long back I am given to understand that the government support to agriculture and rural India has to exceed 3,00,000 crores over the plan period. If we take this into consideration, the allocation to this segment has to be around 60,000 crores every year. I am of the firm opinion that the present finance Minister has not been able to achieve this target in the last two years. If the statistics are to be believed I am of the opinion that in the first year the UPA allocated around 17,500 crores only which is abysmally low. The figures for the current year are not very clear but I suspect these do not add up to the required level this year also.

Sir, I would like to remind that the UPA govt came to power by stating during election that it would give top priority to agriculture and rural India. But if the budget proposals are any indication, I feel that the government has disappointed or should I say that it has left in the lurch the 'AAM ADMI'.

We are a country which dreams of being among the top five economic powers in about 15 years time. If the economic growth that we have been able to achieve over the last ten years are any indication, none would deny that this is realistic. We along with China, Brazil and Russia are considered to be the growing economies in the world. It would be very pertinent to compare ourselves with our neighbouring China on the agriculture front. In the recent budget proposals of China, the premier of the country states that he is taking up reforming the agriculture of the country on top priority. His budgetary allocation for the farming sector is 42,5 billion US dollars

which is an increase of over 14.2%. Over the previous year. Rural health care will see a 7 fold increase in budgetary support this year. Even on the education front which is vital for the growth of the rural area, his allocations are nearly double this year. I would like our FM to take a leaf out of this and make changes in the budget which will correspond to almost similar levels in our budget also.

The NREGP scheme is allotted 14,300 crores in the budget. I do not want to question the efficacy of the project about which our party has our own reservation. I doubt whether this meager amount would suffice to make any changes in the rural India. There is a view that any Employment guaranty scheme to be effective would need a fund of 25,000 plus crores of rupees. But we should realize that what is expected of the government is not mer employment generation to uplift the poor. This course may have effect at a point of time but over a period of time, the government is required to do something totally different to change the facet of the primary sector. The inputs by way of technology and modernisation are the requirement of the day.

Sir, the country stands very poor 127th in the human index report of the UN report published about 6 months back. More growth rate of 7% is never sufficient to change the real life conditions of the masses. Government should set a target of lifting this rating to around 95-100 in the near future and improving the economy on this basis should be core policy of the government. Hence under this context I would like to say that a mere NREGP scheme and more funds for rural credit are sufficient to achieve this target. I am happy that the FM has stated that around 1,72,000 crores of rupees will be available for rural credit. But what is required is a paradigm shift in the nature of rural credit. As an MP from rural Karnataka, I should impress upon the finance minister that major portion of rural credit is currently being used for direct consumption and for short term investment. The government should see that there is a shift towards investment based loans in this area. To modernize the agriculture the credit for investment on land and development has to be practically considerable.

Now the most important sector where the budget could have shown more vision is the power sector. The

[Shri D.V. Sadanand Gowda]

infrastructure development has been the bane of our economy since so many years. It is said in the economic survey report that annual loss due to the shortage on power front is a whopping 3,00,000 crores. The government needed to have taken radical steps to improve the power supply both qualitatively and quantitatively. The notion that the power and agriculture are a drag on the central budget could be easily changed positively if the government has the determination to make changes in these two vital sectors. Again I also feel that allocation of 9940 crores is insufficient for the development of roads. This should have been much higher to make transport sector one of income generators for the government. Our state Karnataka which has been totally neglected in the Railway budget over last two years needed more funds to improve the roads.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Mr Chairman, Sir, I stand to speak on the General Budget for 2006-2007 placed in this House by the hon. Finance Minister. Sir, the hon. Minister of Finance has tried to place a healthy Budget. But, at the same time, there are a lot of anomalies in the Budget in every sector. He inherited an economy whose foundation was laid during the NDA Government where the FDI investments improved and FII investments came in. Besides, it was a rural economy-favourable Budget during the last Government whereby industries like the steel sector, cement sector showed an upward trend. This climate had prevailed during the NDA Government. This UPA Government has just inherited it and has tried to maintain the growth rate at 8.1 per cent.

16.52 hrs

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD Yadav *in the Chair*)

Here, on this 8.1 per cent growth rate, my question is that with the incoming of FDIs and foreign investments, it is okay that in future we would be able to achieve even a higher growth rate. But, I would like to know that how much of this growth which is going to take place will accrue to the *per capita* income of each and every citizen of this country. That is a very moot point to be understood because money will come. With the FDI investment, state-of-art manufacturing processes will come into line, bigger industries will be set up and more investment will come.

But how much of that money will accrue to the poor man, to the *aam aadmi*?

Still we have 26 per cent people living below the poverty line. At the same time, we have 17,000 billionaires in the country. So, the gap between the rich and the poor is so much that to close this gap the Government has to think of some innovative and creative programme.

The hon. Minister of Finance has given a speech. It is okay. He has tried to stabilise the economy. But, from where will he get the money? Today, take the public debt. In PSUs it is over 50 per cent. How would you get further investment for development of the infrastructure like ports and other infrastructure required like electricity? In electricity you are supposed to achieve 6.5 per cent growth; but you have achieved only 4.5 per cent. This is abysmal. Today electricity is the engine of growth. Without electricity you cannot go forward. The hon. Prime Minister has taken a very good initiative by signing this deal with America for developing nuclear energy which comprises of about three per cent of the total energy generated. But here, I have got another question. This programme will be over in 2014. In 2014 the population must have doubled, the industries would have doubled, the consumption of electricity must have tripled. So, even the contribution to the energy sector would only increase by 1.5 per cent and also if it unclear energy. So, you cannot call it a historic agreement. Yes, it can be called a historic agreement as far as international relations go, our ties with America will strengthen who helped us during the Green Revolution in the beginning and we could achieve it with scientists like Dr. Swaminathan who came to the forefront and we could achieve the Green Revolution with their technology. This technology import is welcome. But, at the same time, we would like to see here that our mainstay is agriculture. Today the hon. Minister of Finance has said that agriculture's contribution to GDP has grown from 1.4 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

I was reading the book Expenditure Statement. There it is written that agriculture has grown with other allied agriculture industries and other allied plantations. Sir, plantations come under the Ministry of Commerce and are regarded as industry. They are not regarded as agriculture. The plantation industry pays tax and has to abide by labour reforms and Companies Act. It is not there

in agriculture. How could you tag agriculture and plantations together? Though it is an agricultural crop and plantations are grown on the soil, it does not contribute much to the GDP. By clubbing these two, you have shown that agriculture's contribution to GDP has gone to 2.3 per cent. This is not fair. I feel that this is juggling with figures.

The Finance Minister in his speech has not made a mention of Orissa. He has said that they will develop ports. They are developing ports only in West Bengal because Left Front is ruling there. They will develop ports in that State, but every year they spend thousands of crores of rupees on dredging the Haldia Port, which is virtually being choked. Why do they not develop Gopalpur Port on the East Coast? Why does the Port Authority of India not take up this port and develop it into a deep port because the hinterland of Gopalpur and Paradip are filled with iron ore and bauxite, which are two major contributors to the metal industry in the State and for the country.

Sir, you will be surprised to know that today there has been a fall in the mining sector as per the report of *The Economic Survey*. These mining sectors are located in the backward regions. If these sectors could come up, it would improve these backward regions also. In the same vein *The Economic Survey* says that there was a deceleration in the mining sector and quarrying due to the damage caused to the Mumbai High Platform due fire and accidents. Why do they not develop ports of Eastern India and especially the ports of Orissa which offers a very big coastline of 720 kilometers. That could be developed and made into a prosperous area because as per the report of *The Economic Survey*, Orissa is the poorest State in the country, with 47.7 per cent people living below the poverty line. So, why is the Central Government not taking interest to boost the economy of that State?

I am sorry to say here that the repeated requests of the State Government to release funds in the infrastructure sector, under Pradhan Mantri gram Sadak Yojana, have not been acceded to. The State Government has already spent the money in Orissa. The third phase and fourth phase moneys have already been spent, but it is very sad thing that the Central Government has not reimbursed the money till yet, despite repeated requests

of the State Government of Orissa. How do you expect the Orissa Government to go forward and develop its infrastructure?

Orissa has 75 per cent of mineral ores of this country, from chrome ore to iron ore, manganese and gem stone. It is heartening to hear that to boost the gem and jewellery sector, the Finance Minister has said that he will call experts and talk with them to see the future of gem industry. Here, I would like to suggest that in Budget of 2005-06, excise duty of two per cent was levied on jewellery having brand names or trade names affixed on it. I would like to submit that still jewellery industry or business is in its infancy stage, but it has got a very bright future. The foreign exchange earnings from export of jewellery is the maximum for our country, India. It is at number one in foreign exchange earnings. My only request is that it is in infancy stage and should be encouraged. It is not a big industry. It is more of a crafting process. It involves *karigars* and crafting where small people are involved in the art of lapidary where they process gem stones. In places like Jaipur and Surat, it is a big industry. It is a clean industry and does not emit any pollutants into the atmosphere and earns the maximum foreign exchange for the country.

17.00 hrs.

So, this industry should be encouraged at the places where gemstones are found. ...(*Interruptions*) specially in Western region of Orissa.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Deo, please conclude your speech.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: I have alot more to say. I will take five minutes more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All members have to speak. 20 Hon'ble Members are to speak from your party, I have a list.

[*English*]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: I am saying this because it is more of a crafting process rather than a manufacturing one. So, the excise duty of 2 per cent

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

imposed on the branded names in the gem industry should be made to pay only a simple tax of 1 per cent. I think that this would be better step in allowing the industry to grow. A lot of poor people and mining sector people will get benefited, and the State Government will also get a lot of revenue from it.

Lastly, I would like to mention about the water resources. The Finance Minister has promised us that one crore acres will be brought under irrigation. I do not know how he is going to achieve it. I am saying this because every year we receive 4,000 billion cubic meters of water that precipitates during monsoon and snowfall, but we have only been able to harness 29 per cent of it till date.

You have also not worked out a water policy. You should have a national rivers programme where inter-State rivalry is not there. The dream project of the last Government, namely, the NDA Government of inter-linking the rivers was there. I am very happy that the UPA Government has also supported this move, so that India, as one country, can shine with the help of inter-linking of rivers. If it is implemented, then there will be no backward region left in the country where people die of floods, drought, etc. Floods constantly affect states like Bihar, etc. This long-term programme will generate a lot of employment, and that money will also go to the poor man.

The Government has tried to give money and infrastructure, but I am very sorry to state the AIBP programme—which has been launched—is not going on in full swing. I can say this because I am also a Member of the Standing Committee. I am not supposed to quote this here—as per Parliamentary precedence—as I am a Member of the Standing Committee. But I will fail in my duty if I do not say it because the farmers of this country will die or they will migrate or they will starve to death. The AIBP has to be implemented in its right perspective, and implemented on time. There should be some accountability fixed for it. There is no accountability fixed for any delayed projects.

Today, so much of money is lying in Orissa as the grants—which were given for backward regions like KVK, etc.—have been converted into loans. Why is this being

done in this manner? It is being done because we do not have the resources to implement it. So, you should help the poor States with implementation of the programmes quickly. Therefore, I request the Finance Minister, through you, that the grants should only be treated as grants for development, and not as loan. I am saying this because you have made a policy that if the grants under the AIBP programme are not spent within two years, then it will be converted into loans. Sir, this is a highly criminal step towards the farmer, and towards the promise given to the poor man or the agriculturist. This is the reason that the allied sectors in agriculture are not growing as per your optimum requirement.

Your programme of drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation for the farmers at subsidised rates has also not been implemented properly. The programmes only come to the States, but they are not being implemented because of lack of agriculture extension at the grass-root level, at the ground level, and at the *panchayat* level. Therefore, this has to be strengthened through the Panchayati Raj, and I am saying this as the hon. Minister for Panchayati Raj is sitting here.

Sir, please give me another five minutes. Therefore, I would like to say that for the ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your five minutes time is about to be over.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Please give me two minutes more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Many Members of your party are yet to speak.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Lastly, I would like to talk about the retired employees of the Government in the health sector. I hope that the Rural Health Mission succeeds, and the doctors stay in the hospitals.

I would request the hon. Minister to raise the exemption limit on Income Tax in respect of medical expenses, which is Rs. 1,500 per year in regard to retired employees, and it is very less. I am saying this because

of the exorbitant price of medicines, which have gone up.

The monthly limit for medical treatment for employees under section 17(2) of the IT Act should be raised or increased to Rs. 50,000. Then only, our senior citizens and retired employees will get some benefit. It is highly criminal if only Rs. 15,000 is given. With just Rs. 15,000, they cannot do anything. In order to encourage the use of infrastructure and medical facilities, deduction should be allowed to all sections of the population, especially for senior citizens.

Today, we have signed an agreement with America for a nuclear energy deal, but at the same time, the same America is not putting its signature on the Kyoto proposal. It is letting out Greenhouse gasses and polluting the atmosphere. So, the Government of India should take a strong stand on this and stick to this point.

Tiger is the national animal of this country which resides in about 200 sanctuaries throughout the country. They should be preserved because the Tiger habitat is being destroyed, and the tiger products and parts are being smuggled out of this country. I would request the Government to increase the budgetary allocation for preservation of tigers and declare further reserve forests as National Parks and Game Sanctuaries.

I would also suggest that the Forest Department or the Forest Ministry should come under the Concurrent list. It should not be in the State List; it should come under the Concurrent list. Then only, our forests could be saved because the State Governments are financially drained out and they cannot manage their forests properly. Today, these Sanctuaries and the National Parks have become a haven for naxalites. The situation in the forests is such that there is only one security guard who looks after 205 kilometres of forest-land. Is it humanely possible to do so? It is not humanely possible to do so. That is why, our forests are disappearing. Therefore, awareness has to be created among the people so that the environment, which is vital for our subsistence, and for the tribals who depend on minor forest produce is protected.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a very good move. That is the brainchild of the NDA Government. We made it compulsory and a fundamental right for children to study

from the age of six to fourteen. So, you are bound to give monies to *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. From Rs. 7,150 crore, you have raised it to Rs. 10,000 crore and that is fine. You have also mentioned that you are going to give an additional amount of Rs. 1.5 lakh for the appointment of teachers and you are going to provide for five lakh classrooms.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): The hon. Member was saying that plantation growth should not be included in agriculture. The former Chairman of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, is here and Shri Yerrannaidu is here. There was a constant demand from the Standing Committee on Agriculture that plantation growth should be included in agriculture. But the reason why we have not included it in agriculture is because the price of plantation products fluctuates and it depends upon the international market. Therefore, the Government wanted to give subsidy to it, and for this reason, it is with the Commerce Ministry.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Thank you, Sir.

Regarding *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, we made it a fundamental right. Here, the big problem is and you must also be facing this problem, /sir, because the schools under the Tribal Sub Plan are totally neglected, so quarters should be provided for at least 3 teachers to reside.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I give the floor to Shri L. Rajagopal.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, please allow me to lay the rest of my speech on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

**SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, it appears that the UPA Government has learnt the lesson that different political decisions need to be taken office, worked on behind the scenes and implemented when consensus is

*Not recorded.

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

built. This explains why the Budget is silent on further reform in more difficult areas like FDI, PSU Disinvestment, cutting subsidies, labour market reforms and so on

My first point is about infrastructure. Finance Minister has taken advantage of the favourable economic tailwind to hike spending in agriculture sector while at the same time pruning the fiscal Budget to 3.8 per cent of the GDP and the revenue deficit to 2.1 per cent. However the great, what opportunity they missed, to my mind, was on account of lack of pronouncements and spending on infrastructure projects whether it be roads, ports, power, airports, housing, transportation etc. There were references to road-building projects under the NHDP and rural roads and electrification but given the scale and quantum of the infrastructure deficit in India, this was a golden opportunity to publicly shape the Government's priorities in this area.

My second point is about Taxation. It is also necessary to correct the present liquidity shortage, which will be only partly overcome with tax exemption of over five year bank deposits. It is important that the tax structure remains stable. The 'no change' approach in respect to direct taxes adopted by the Finance Minister is welcome. He has also rationalized the FBT to ensure equity. A similar approach is necessary in respect of indirect taxes as well so that investment in different industries and services can be planned without being confronted later with surprise.

My third point is about Pharma sector. The pharmaceutical industry has been completely ignored by the Finance Minister. The industry had been seeking an extension of the weighted average deduction of 150 per cent on in-house R&D by another 5 years, and wanted to expand the scope of the weighted average deduction to include clinical trials and patient filling. It had also proposed lower duties on R&D consumables, equipment and duty-free import of enabling technologies to promote collaborative R&D and was looking forward to a reduction in excise duty on formulations from the present 16 per cent to 8 per cent. These have not been touched upon. The Ministry of Chemicals itself had recommended increasing the weighted average deduction to 200 per

cent apart from the extension. The *status quo* regarding excise duties will mean high prices for drugs for the common man.

Silver lining is that the health care spending has been increased to 22 per cent, however, the Budget has accounted for the industry demand of reducing the custom duty on import of life saving drugs. Custom duty on 10 anti-AIDS and 14 anti-Cancer drugs has been reduced to 5 per cent and on certain life-saving drugs, kits and equipment from 15 per cent to 5 per cent. These drugs have also been exempted from excise duty and Countervailing Duties (CVD). The industry sees this as a boon for the patients although the benefits would go largely to MNCs who import these drugs into the country. The industry has demanded 'zero custom duty' on imported Naphtha used in the basic chemical industry, while the Budget has allowed zero custom duty on Naphtha imported for the plastic industry and not for the pharma industry. It seems as if the Government does not consider the pharmaceutical industry as a major economic contributor. If research is not encouraged then there will be a flight of R&D projects from India to overseas.

My fourth point is about steel industries. The Finance Minister has re-imposed 5 per cent custom duty on iron and steel melting scrap. This is to rise the cost of production of steel producers who use scrap in their electronic arc furnaces. This 5 per cent duty would lead to additional annual outgo of about Rs. 12 crore to Rs. 15 crore. The price of steel will rise between Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000 as the international scrap prices have shot up from \$ 235 a tonne till last month to \$ 270 per tonne now.

Apart from the duty increase on scrap metal, the firming of global steel prices may see a further rise in steel prices even by integrated steel producers who do not use scrap but produce steel through the blast furnaces route. It is bound to feel the impact of the increase in Minimum Alternative Tax (MAT) by 2.5 per cent which an expanding steel industry will not be able to recover in 7 years. The industry had hoped for some relief in the excise duty, especially, on products that go into the construction. This has not happened.

My fifth point is about non-conventional energy. My one disappointment is with regard to the lack of focus

on non-conventional energy. He did allocate Rs. 597 crore and that is welcome. But, there was no proposal for incentives to companies to engage in R&D and for consumers to shift away from fossil fuels to renewables.

I say it is surprising because Finance Minister's speech clearly shows that he is in consonance with the existing duty and fiscal anomalies and the importance of restoring the marketing companies to financial health. He refers pointedly to New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and the Rangarajan Committee but provides no details. The constraints on the Finance Minister were exemplified by his approach to the subsidies. Infrastructure inadequacy constitute constraint of full potential for India's resurgence, peak up investment and buoyant export. The growth of power generation during April- December, 2005 at 4.7 per cent was not lower than annual target and also the 6.5 per cent achieved in the same period of the previous year. The industries like coal also, the overall index of Rs. 6 crore industries coal, electricity, crude petroleum refinery throughput, steel and cement, which have direct bearing on infrastructure registered a growth of 4.5 per cent, which was lower than the 6.4 per cent registered during April-December, 2004. There is also reduction in the crude oil production and there was deceleration in growth of coal, electricity and steel sector.

My sixth point is about National Highways. On the broader infrastructure front, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), which is implementing the highway development programme seen by many people to have hit a road-block under this Government, is to be revamped and allowed a wider spectrum of resources to help it implement the programme better. But, the most significant initiative in this area is not backed by money.

The Finance Minister has done well to allow Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) to invest more in Government securities and corporate bonds. This will ease the liquidity crunch and thereby fend off any sharp increase in interest rates—which could choke growth. But, looking at the message in some of the Budget numbers, does the Finance Minister know more than he is letting on about the economy slowing down next year after three years of 8 per cent growth?

My next point is about power. In infrastructure, while there was considerable genuflection towards public-private

partnership (PPP), when the chips are down (as in electric power) the bulk of the action will apparently continue to be in the public sector. There is nothing wrong with this, but as they say, we have seen this movie before. The dreaded phrase 'open access' is no longer mentioned. Instead, the Minister modestly referred to the need for 'deep and durable' reform in transmission and distribution. Similarly, to the extent that many economists believe it is labour legislation that holds back the growth of labour-intensive manufacturing both for export and for home market. This too was among the unmentioned. In the area of small-scale reservations, only incremental progress continues to be made.

The Finance Minister is one who is ruled by politics and not by vision. To appease the Left he makes no major proposals. He talks a lot about social expenditure but has neither significant increase nor stated outcomes. It has little for infrastructure except for the old Vajpayee programme. Agriculture, which has suffered from declining investment for two decades, receives more words than funds. Much of the Finance Minister's speech was about programmes for the poor. But, the expenditure increases on agriculture, health care and education are modest. So, he dreams in words not in deeds.*

[Translation]

*SHRI MUNSHI RAM (Bijnore): Sir, I have risen to speak on the budget-2006-07 on behalf of the Rashtriya Lok Dal whose President is Ch. Ajit Singh ji. The Government believes that this budget is pro-common man, pro-farmers, and pro-labourers. I hereby put forth my views on the budget.

The Government believes that this year the agriculture sector has recorded a growth rate of 2.3 per cent. This is being attributed to the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) but in actual terms it is not so. Two-third agriculture depends on monsoon. Owing to good rains in certain areas, The growth rate in the agriculture sector has increased resulting in cultivation on 5 lakh million hectare extra land. The Government had set out a target of 215 million tones of foodgrain production. In actual terms, 205-210 million tones of foodgrains production has been achieved due to good rains and

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Munshi Ram]

hard labour of farmers. The Government intends to increase the growth rate of 7-8 per cent to 10 per cent but this is possible only when a growth rate of minimum 4 per cent is achieved in the agriculture sector. But how would government increase the growth rate of agriculture sector to 4 per cent? Only one third of our land is covered under irrigation with our limited available resources, therefore, two-third area remains unirrigated. The UPA Government had mentioned in its first budget that most of the land will be covered under irrigation by harvesting the rain water. According to the previous budget, a sum of Rs. 2350 crores has been provided for covering 20,000 water source under 23 districts of 13 states which is less than what is actually required for this purpose. The amount earmarked for providing loan at lower rate of interest is also not adequate. In fact, as per the Government survey, more than 43 per cent farmers are dependent on the private sector banks and in event of being unable to pay back the loan amount, the farmers are committing suicides in the country.

The Government launched the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on 2nd February which ensures employment for one member of a family for 100 days out of 365 days at the rate of Rs. 60/- per day in 200 district of the country on which the government is spending 11 thousand 300 crores of rupees in the year 2006-07. Simultaneously, the Government has made a provision to spend 3000 crores of rupees under the Sampoorn Gramin Swarojgar Yojna in the remaining 400 districts of the country. Does it not manifest the true intentions of providing employment to all the rural people? That means inadequate funds have been allocated under the SGSY.

The Government levied a new tax called service tax last year. This tax means whosoever earns more will pay more tax. Therefore, the Government intends that an individual should not work hard. Perhaps that is why the government has increased the percentage of tax and has also widened the scope. In fact, the service tax rate should be lowered.

The Government has also provided for extending grants on certain items like food, fertilizers and petroleum to the tune of Rs. 24,000 crore. Rs. 17,000 crore and

Rs. 3000 crore respectively and that aggregates between Rs. 44,000 - Rs. 46,000 crores, though the Government's annual budget is 5 lakh and 64 thousand crores of rupees. That means this grant amount is not a big amount. In European countries, the farmers are given grants at a much higher percentage. The above grants are meant for farmers, weaker sections, SCs, minorities OBCs etc.

But this amount instead of reaching the targetted groups is being eaten up by corrupts in the FCI. Fertilizer grants are also being diverted to manufacturers. Likewise, petroleum grants are going into the pockets of a few officers instead of reaching to the poor. I strongly believe that grants system needs to be revamped. Grants should be extended directly to the farmers, SCs, OBCs, and minorities in the form of poverty allowance. As has been recommended by the Committees constituted by you, the only thing Government needs to do is to implement them.

From 27th February to 28th February, i.e in one day, certain capitalists assets have registered unprecedented increase, for instances Mukesh Ambani:- 228 crores, Anil ambani-184 crores Sunil Mittal 172 crores of rupees, Kumar Mangalam Birla-145 crores of rupees, Rahul Bajaj-112 crores of rupees. That explicitly states that the Government has benefited a selected few and has simultaneously levied new taxes worth 72 thousand rupees. Therefore, my suggestion should be taken by the government seriously. With these words, I on the behalf of the Rashtriya Lok Dal, support the budget for the year 2006-07.

[English]

*SHRI M. SHIVANNA (Chamrajanagar): Sir, at the out set I would like to thank you on behalf of the people of Karnataka for taking a final decision to install in our Parliament Complex the statue of Kittur Rani Chennamma, a great warrior, freedom fighter and a revolutionary of Karnataka State.

Sir, I welcome the General Budget 2006-07 presented to the House by the Hon. Finance Minister Mr. P. Chidambaram. Among so may educational systems agriculture is the best education according to the great

*English Translation of the speech originally laid on the Table in Kannada.

poet and philosopher of Karnataka, Sarvajna. Farmer is the back-bone of our country's economy. He is not only the back-bone but also the front bone because we can count the ribs of farmer. That is the condition of farmer in our country today. The Hon. Minister has allocated Rs. 14,300 crores for the poverty alleviation programme and to provide employment in the rural areas. But this is not at all sufficient looking at the pathetic condition of the farmers today.

I urge upon the Hon. Minister to double this amount and provide at least Rs. 28,600 crores for this purpose. The prices of Industrial products have increased enormously during the last ten years. The Government employees who were drawing ten thousand rupees per months as salary ten years ago are getting thirty thousand rupees today. Unfortunately agricultural products like tender coconut water, milk and others have got a very nominal increase in their prices. Therefore, The Centre should come to the rescue of farmers and provide them remunerative prices for their produce. They should not be arrested if they have not repaid the bank loans. The Centre should direct the banks and cooperative societies to increase the farmers credit limit. I hope the Finance Minister will consider this matter seriously and announce many concessions to the farmers while replying to this debate.

This budget has not extended any concrete help to the Government employees. Karnataka Government employees are already on strike demanding increase in their salaries. The central Government employees are demanding for setting up Sixth Pay Commission. In fact sir, you will be surprised to know that some recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission have not been implemented till today. For example one of the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission is to give second assured career progression (IIACP) after 24 years of continuous service. Only Home Ministry has implemented this recommendations. Other Ministries, Autonomous bodies have not implemented this and they are not prepared to interpret this recommendation in favour of the Central Government Employees.

Now I will deal with the problems of my constituency Chamarajanagar which became a new district seven years ago. Till now the district head quarters and the entire

district has not received any financial help from the Centre for its development. I am repeatedly reminding the Centre for constructing a sports stadium in Chamarajanagar. So far, there is no response from the Centre. The hospital building has to be constructed and it has to be expanded. The number of doctors, nurses and other employees has been increased. I have appealed to the Centre to provide financial help for this purpose. Drinking water problem is always there and other civic amenities have not been provided to Chamarajanagar. I am demanding the Centre to help the state of Karnataka to change the Socio Economic face of the Rural Hinterland. We can achieve this goal only when centre comes to our help. An Ice cream plant and a powder plant have to be set-up in Chamarajanagar immediately because it is one the most backward districts in the country. The labourers in the entire district are facing peculiar problems. At present they are not getting the minimum wages. The jobs of these daily wage labourers must be regularised and they should get proper salary.

My constituency has many other serious problems including tourism, transport, etc. All these problems have to be tackled before it is too late. The functioning of BSNL is also not satisfactory. Substantial funds have to be provided for clearing the pending Railway Projects like Chamarajanagar to Mettupalayam and others. Centre should assist Karnataka to successfully implement the adult education programmes. implementing all the above mentioned programmes require a substantial financial assistance.

I therefore sir, request the Hon. Finance Minister to provide at least one thousand crores of rupees as special grants for the development of my constituency during the financial year 2006-07. I also hope that the Hon. Minister would respond favourably to all my genuine demands mentioned above. I thank you sir, and with these words I conclude my speech.

SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL (Vijayawada): Sir, while I rise to support the Budget, I recollect the great words of the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. He said that *Gram Swaraj* will come not only by acquisition of authority by a few, but also by acquisition of capacity by all to resist the authority when it is abused. This UPA Government, under the guidance of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, with the

[Shri L. Rajagopal]

active support of the Left Front, and under the stewardship of Dr. Manmohan Singh, through the Budget presented by Shri Chidambaram, tried to address the major issues of how to build capacity, how to build infrastructure and sources of living for one and all in this country. That is the reason why in this Budget and its earlier Budget, the UPA Government only spoke about Bharat Nirman.

The major requirements of the people of this country are electrification, rural road connectivity, telephone density, irrigation and so on. We allocated Rs. 12,000 crore for Bharat Nirman in the last year's Budget. That has been increased to Rs. 18,000 crore in this year's Budget. That is a 50 per cent increase over the last year. The UPA Government has identified eight flagship programmes for implementation, like elementary education, rural development, urban development, increase of irrigation facilities, ICDS, mid-day meal and National Rural Health Mission. These flagship programmes of the Government have been allotted Rs. 50,000 crore which is 42 per cent more than the allocation last year of Rs. 35,000 crore.

Coming to the issue of revenue, my friend Shri Sudhakara Reddy of CPI said that substantial measures were not being taken to increase the revenue. I asked him what exactly he meant. He said that we should increase the revenue to Rs. 1,30,000 crore. In this Budget the revenue collection has increased to Rs. 4,40,000 crore from the last year's collection of Rs. 3,70,000 crore. It is an increase of Rs. 70,000 crore in one year. The Centre's share alone is Rs. 4,00,000 crore. That happened in spite of reduction in customs duties, maintaining both corporate and individual tax rates, and excise duties being cut down. In spite of all these, we have increased tax collection from Rs. 3,70,000 crore to Rs. 4,40,000 crore. So, this Government has taken many measures on the one hand to increase the tax net to bring in more people, to increase the revenue, and on the other hand to allocate more to social sectors.

We have seen a substantial increase in allocations for Bharat Nirman and eight other flagship programmes. In spite of all these things, we need to try and understand if that is enough for the villages in the country. The allocation in this year's Budget for Rural Development is

Rs. 31,400 crore. We have more than 12 lakh villages in this country. When you divide the allocation by the number of villages, it comes to about Rs. 2.5 lakh for village. Is it enough to build infrastructure in villages?

Take the example of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Allocation for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was increased year after year from Rs. 2,000 crore prior to 2004 to Rs. 4,400 crore. In the current year's Budget it has been increased to Rs. 10,040 crore. However, when you divide that allocation among 12 lakh habitations, it comes to less than a lakh per habitation. Would it be enough for a village? That means, it is going to take several years for building infrastructure in the villages under this Scheme. There are many schools in rural areas, tribal areas and backward areas. We need to build proper infrastructure there so that children can get proper education.

Budget for ICDS has been increased from Rs. 3,300 crore last year to Rs. 4,000 crore this year. Still, is that enough? Are the conditions favourable for children in villages to go to school and get proper education? I myself have visited many *Anganwadi Kendras* and saw the facilities available there. When you divide the allocation of Rs. 4,000 crore among all the villages, it comes to Rs. 30,000 per village out of which at least Rs. 20,000 goes for the salary of the Caretakers there. That means, what is left is only Rs. 10,000 for the entire population of children there.

So, we need to try and see how we can increase all this. It is easy to say, like our friends from the Left are saying, "Why cannot we get more people into the tax net? Why cannot we increase the taxes?" There is a substantial amount of black money in the economy of the country. We have two economies today in the country—black and white. All of you understand what these black and white are.

The official value of the real estate transacted in this country is Rs. 3,00,000 crores. But the unofficial value of real estate is more than Rs. 6,00,000 lakh crores. That is, more than Rs. 6,00,000 crores is changing hands every year on account of only real estate. We have to bring this money into the net. It is not easy. But it will take a lot of time. It is very easy to say but when it comes to practice, there are many difficulties to face.

The most important thing is the administrative reforms. We need to bring in administrative reforms. Our Finance Minister used to say that it is not outlay, it is outcome, which is important. In the last two years, we increased the Budget by more than Rs. 1 lakh crores for the social programmes. What is more important is that these outlays have to be transformed into outcomes. To achieve that, we need to see as to how we would bring about better administrative reforms.

Here, I would like to remember my childhood days. When I was a 10-year old kid, I used to live in a small hut. I used to see my grandmother as to how she functioned. She was a good economist. I always used to say that my grandmother was a very good economist. She used to sell milk, butter milk. Not only that, I used to wonder as to how she used to sell even cow dung in order to earn money. I used to ask her as to why she sells all these things. She used to reply that we cannot waste anything. In this country, the most valuable thing is the human resource. Secondly, we should not waste a single minute of our time. If we take care of these two things and put them together in a proper time frame, definitely we can rise to any situation. I am sure, this Government would try to create such a situation. We have seen that in the last two years.

Prior to 2004, economy was derailed. There *Bharat Nirman* was temple *nirman*, places of worship *nirman*, and destruction of places of worship. They had a totally different focus. This Government brought everything back on track and on focus. Under this Government, we have only talking of gender budgeting. Their Government also talked of gender burning. But this Government not only talks of gender budgeting but has also allotted Rs. 29,000 crores. We have eight lakh Self-Help Groups in the country, who are lending Rs. 4,800 crores. Andhra Pradesh alone contributes Rs. 1,500 crores in terms of Self-Help Groups for women. So, we need to see as to how we can bring about more women groups and try to bring in credit link to ensure that their produce is not only sold in India but also abroad. We need to have a market arm so that the produce of Self-Help Groups are marketed by an umbrella, not only in India but also all over the world. We need to take steps in this direction

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL : I would take just one minute. I value time. I do not want to take much of the time of the House because as I stated time is the most important thing.

Apart from this, when it comes to agriculture, I would like to say that this Government has increased the credit to the agriculture sector from Rs. 1,41,000 crores to Rs. 1,71,000 crores. But I would like to inform the hon. Finance Minister that we need to correct one thing. We treat district cooperative society or the cooperative bank on par with any other commercial bank. We need to understand here that people have more faith in nationalised banks. When it comes to putting money in the cooperative society, they have lesser faith. We need to give more interest for the depositors. For that reason, I feel that we cannot treat these cooperative banks on par with any other commercial bank. I want the Finance Minister to take note of this situation and try to see as to how he can correct the same.

Finally, I would like to say that Shri Chidambaram by giving priority to outcome for outlays has created a more transparent system so that everybody could see as to what the performance is. Dr. Manmohan Singh talked about performance over promises. Shrimati Sonia Gandhi's perception is that not only human face is required, but human heart also is required. ... *(Interruptions)* Soniaji has voluntarily said that she does not want power. She chose people over power. She is the only person in this country who has chosen people over power. Let us not forget that. ... *(Interruptions)* I am not for promotion. I was the first person who said that first time MPs do not require Ministership. I do not require power; I do not require Ministership. I came here voluntarily. I had been to Gujarat in December 2002. I saw the condition in Gujarat. I saw the situation in Gujarat, the way the Government was functioning. ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you speaking on the budget?

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: People like me came to public life so that we could strengthen the hands of Shrimati

[Shri L. Rajagopal]

Sonia Gandhi. I am very happy that this government would talk about performance and development. They do not talk about building places of worship or destroying places of worship or burning women in the name of *Sati*, trying to build temples of *Sati*, trying to glorify the burning of women. Shrimati Sonia Gandhi has given a human heart to this Government.

Finally, I would like to say that if this Government functions like this, I am sure, this India, will definitely become a place of opportunities.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not happy with this Budget presented by the Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram for the year 2006-07.

This Budget cannot be termed as common man's Budget. The Indian economy is moving ahead to achieve 8.1 per cent growth. But the growth is not likely to generate enough employment. This is the truth. We are happy that the Indian economy is growing at 8.1 per cent. We are creating wealth. Whatever wealth we are creating, the benefit of that should trickle down to the poorest of the poor, the common man of this country. We have to improve the per-capita income of the people, otherwise, there is no meaning of the growth in the GDP. That is why, the Government of India should think of major policies so that the wealth should be passed on to the common man.

Take the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. This Act has come into force from 2nd February, 2006. What is the promise given by the UPA Government in the Common Minimum Programme? They have said that it will be implemented as soon as possible. As per the Act, this scheme should be implemented from 2nd February, 2006 in almost 200 districts. In another two years, how is it possible to cover other 400 districts under this National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme? For this Scheme, they have merged two major schemes, the Sampoorna Rozgar Yojana and the National Food for Work Programme. Previously, these two programmes were extended to the whole country. Everywhere people want employment. We could provide employment under these two schemes. But after merging of these two schemes

under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, it covers only 200 districts and there is no scheme for the poor people. If poor people in a district approach the Collector, he says that there is no scheme to provide employment as there is no Food for Work Programme, there is not Sampoorna Rozgar Yojana. My demand, through you, is to extend this scheme throughout the country. This is the commitment of the UPA Government under the Common Minimum Programme. There is no help provided to the poorest of the poor people.

Regarding the National Rural Health Mission, Southern States are not included. Under the Prime Minister's Swasthya Suraksha Yojana, the two major hospitals in Andhra Pradesh, the NIMS in Hyderabad and the SVIMS in Tirupati, have not been included under the Scheme.

The previous NDA Government had earmarked Rs. 100 crore for the improvement of NIMS under the National Rural Health Mission. They went in for the names like NIMS and SVIMS on the lines of AIIMS. But even the NIMS and SVIMS are not covered under this year's Budget. So, I would request the hon. Finance Minister that along with the NIMS which we are creating in so many States, for Andhra Pradesh he should upgrade the NIMS and SVIMS as per AIIMS standard..

Sir, the *Antyodaya Anna Yojna*, is a beautiful schemes. Under this scheme, we have been creating food security to the poorest of the poor in the villages of the country. But after the UPA Government came, this scheme is not being implemented properly. They have even decided to reduce the quantity of rice, which is being given under the *Antyodaya Anna Yojna*. Therefore, I would appeal to the hon. Finance Minister that as this scheme is exclusively for the poorest of the poor, the quantity of rice under this scheme should not be reduced at any cost. The food security is very, very important. It should be the primary objective of the Government. Under the Directive Principles of our Constitution, we have to provide health, education and food to everyone. These are the basic obligations of our Indian Constitution. That is why I would again request the hon. Finance Minister that the quantity of rice under the *Antyodaya Anna Yojna* should not be reduced at any cost.

Similarly, about the Mid-Day Meal, it is a good

scheme. It was started by the previous Government, and it is running well. Then, about the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, they are increasing the funds; that is a good thing. They are getting income. They are increasing the plan and non-plan expenditure also. Simultaneously, they are increasing the funds on each sector. But about the Mid-Day Meal scheme, which is a very good scheme and which is the world's largest scheme, the students up to only VII standard are covered, I would humbly request the hon. Finance Minister to include students of VIII to X standards also. Then, it would benefit lakhs of students. It is because, we all know that the poorer sections of our society cannot afford on students of VIII to X standard. So, these students should also be included under the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme.

Regarding the drinking water and sanitation, if we go through the figures given in the Budget which the hon. Finance has presented, everything is arithmetic jugglery. You go through the villages, you would find the real position. What has been said in the Budget is that: "Only 10,000 villages are remaining in the country to provide drinking water." But this is not at all correct. Even in Andhra Pradesh, you would find that a large number of people in the districts like Nalgonda, Mahboob Nagar, Guntur, or even the coastal areas of Srikakulam to Nellore, are suffering from Fluorides and Arsenic diseases. Some areas are suffering from the blackish water. There is no potable water, safer water available to the fishing community. That is why, I would appeal to this Government that the allocation of Rs. 5,600 crore, which they have earmarked is not at all sufficient, and it should be increased.

Sir, they are providing, as per the parameter, on bore-well for a population of 250. But this is not at all sufficient. There is a need decrease the population criterion. It should be one bore-well for a population of 150. Even 20 years back, for a population of 500, there was one bore-well. Then, after 10 years, it was reduced to one bore-well for a population of 400. Later, it was made one bore-well for a population of 250. Some bores are having enough water but some bores do not have any water. That is why, this norm of one bore-well for a population of 250 should be made as one bore for a population of 150. Then only, we would be able to provide potable, drinking water to the common man.

Sir, regarding SCs, STs, minorities and OBCs, I would submit that it is all right that there are Special Component Programmes for SCs and STs. For minorities also, the UPA Government has announced a 15-Point Programme. This is a good thing. I am also very happy and I am congratulating the UPA Government for having such programmes. But what about the 'Other Backward Classes' in this country? More than 60 per cent population of the country constitutes 'Other Backward Classes'. But what is the Budget allocation for the OBCs in this year's Budget? It is only Rs. 65 crore for the OBCs of the entire country! There are no special programmes for the OBCs, in general. There are no special programmes for the OBC students. That is why, I am demanding from this Government that they must increase the Budget on the development of OBCs on par with the population. That is why, the OBC students in the majority areas are not coming to the student. They are not offered the higher education and other things.

Like the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other minorities, the Government has to announce special programmes for the welfare of other backward classes. I would request the Government to form a Parliamentary Standing Committee for the welfare of Other Backward Classes. There is a Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. There is such a Committee on women but there is no Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Welfare of Other Backward Classes. Reservations suggested in the Mandal Commission were implemented by Shri V.P. Singh and 27 per cent reservation was given to the backward class people. There is no Parliamentary Standing Committee to monitor as to how it is being implemented in various States. This Standing Committee does not need any additional Budget. Hon. Speaker can recommend to the Government and the Government can arrange for it.

Another important aspect is agriculture. Agricultural growth in the country has dropped since the beginning of year 2000. Through this House, I demand the Government that there should be a separate Budget for Agriculture Ministry, just like the Railway Budget. In India 80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas and they depend on agriculture. So, there should be a

[Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu]

separate Budget. My friend, Shri Rajagopal has mentioned about the cooperative sector. What is the necessity for the Finance Minister to amend section 80 (C) of the Income Tax Act to exclude cooperative banks from its purview? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Yerrannaidu, please conclude.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Cooperative banks are functioning at par with the other commercial banks, which do not endow tax. This is a completely incorrect statement. The Government has to change the mindset of the rural people. The cooperative banks, even the primary cooperative credit societies are lending money to the poorest of poor and marginal and small farmers even if they have only one acre of land. The Government is now exempting them from this. I request the Government to drop the proposal to amend section 80 (c). The commercial banks are lending money to big corporate, big industrial sectors. The cooperative banks are now in doldrums. Vaidyanathan Committee is there to take care of the cooperative banks. There is a problem everywhere and they go on strikes. I humbly request the Finance Minister to again go through this amendment of section 80 (c), otherwise the cooperative sector will not be able to serve the farming community.

So far as irrigation is concerned, inter-linking of rivers is the need of hour. By inter-linking rivers we can even achieve more than 10 per cent of the GDP. We can not only provide for irrigation, but also drinking water, generate more power and create employment. This year, under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme the Government has provided Rs. 11,000 crore exclusively for 200 districts. If we extend this programme for 600 districts it requires another Rs. 20,000 crore. We can provide employment throughout the country for excavating canals. We can produce power and also provide for irrigation. There is no mention of inter-linking of rivers. This should be given priority by the UPA Government. Shri Chandrababu Naidu submitted a report. He was earlier the Chairman of the task force. ...*(Interruptions)* He has submitted a report on micro irrigation in too. It is a fact. Can the Minister deny it? ...*(Interruptions)*

I am talking about the previous Government. The NDA Government constituted a Task Force under the chairmanship of Shri Chandrababu Naidu. He has submitted the report. I demand that this report should be implemented in toto for the benefit of the farming community, particularly in dry land areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: As regards textiles, the weavers are facing a lot of problems. More than 50 persons have come to Delhi from Andhra Pradesh by walking 2400 kilometres. Around 442 weavers have committed suicide so far. There are some starvation deaths also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please sit down. Now, Shri Vijoy Krishna to speak.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: The Government of India has reduced the subsidy from 30 per cent to 10 per cent. That is why, the whole industry has collapsed. Therefore, I would request that the Government of India should restore the subsidy for the weavers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing would go on record now.

(Interruptions) ...*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yerrannaiduji, your speech is not going on record, Sh. Vijoy Krishnaji. Only Vijay Krishnaji's speech will go on record.

[English]

**SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO (Purulia): Sir, due to paucity of time and direction of the Chair, I would like to lay my speech on the Table of the House.

We support the Budget but are not quite happy with the Budget proposal. The Budget has failed to address to redress many of the vital problems of the common people, particularly, the peasantry and the unemployed. The proposed outlay of agriculture, health and

*Not recorded.

**The speech was laid on the Table.

employment generations is low and inadequate for meeting the CPM goal.

Despite more allocation, the education share fell from 3.74 per cent to 3.49 per cent of the GDP, though UPA promise was 6 per cent of GDP.

PDS has not been extended in spite of growing evidence of food scarcity and human deaths across the country. Finance Minister has actually reduced the budgetary allocation for food subsidy. It is stated that inflation is under control. In the market, prices of *dal* and *roti* have been increased; onion by 46.7 per cent, pulses by 19 per cent, wheat by 10.7 per cent, potato by 58 per cent, vegetables by 39 per cent and gram by 25 per cent.

Now, let us look at *bijli, sadak and pani*. Growth of power fell 4.7 per cent and average power shortage is 8 per cent. Golden Quadrilateral has been held up for want of land acquisition in many States. Drinking water continues to be a serious problem. Tele-density remains low just 2 per cent. The problems of farmers have been ignored.

Cutting down the interest rate of farm loans to 4 per cent is also ignored. The Government had set up a National Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr. Swaminathan. I am unhappy about the fact that hardly any major recommendations have found place in the present Budget.

Loan to farmers to be made available at 7 per cent, of course, is a relief. Sir, 22 per cent of agricultural population is dependent on loan from private moneylenders and only 27 per cent have access to institutional finance and half of the population engaged in agriculture does not have access to agricultural credit.

NREGA has been launched in 200 districts. There is no mention where the rural unemployed will get work in other districts.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA (Barh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the time allotted to the Hon'ble member has already run out and now my time starts with your permission. Common man has welcome the budget presented by the

UPA Government under the leadership of Hon. Mammohan Singh ji. The salient feature of this budget is that it proposes estimated huge profit in the earning of the Government without putting extra burden on the people. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing except the speech of Vijay Krishna ji will go on record.

(*Interruptions*)*...

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: There is a balance between revenue and fiscal deficit. Therefore, this budget can be termed as a balanced budget. But the influential leader from the opposition Hon. Vajpayee ji has expressed apprehension that this might lead to price rise. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yerranaidu ji, your two minute speech has not been recorded. You may lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: The members of Marxist Communist Party and left parties have said that problems being faced in agriculture sector and prevailing unemployment are two such key areas of economy which have not been given adequate priority in this budget. I request the Hon. Finance Minister to ponder over the apprehensions expressed by the members of Marxist party and left parties. When the ruling party presents something in view of common minimum programme, it should be duly considered. By and large it is a balanced budget and it has many important features. The target for growth rate has been fixed at 10 per cent and the rate of income tax has not been revised, which is a good step. The allocation for education has been increased. I request that the ongoing programmes on education be streamlined.

The manner in which the funds under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan should have been managed in Bihar and many states of northern India, are not being properly managed and the schools for children of the poor are not being constructed in the manner they should have been. There is a need to look into as to what steps can be taken in this regard.

*Not recorded.

[Shri Vijoy Krishna]

You have increased the defence budget allocation by 6000 million rupees, the people of the country has praised it. Increasing the defence budget on every count is a good step.

The common man has relied upon you that life saving drugs will be cheaper and will be available to poor sections of society through this budget. You know that the medicines required for the treatment of AIDS, Kalazar, Cancer and some other diseases are very costly. A large number of people die of Kalazar in Bihar. We hope that the people living below poverty line will be able to save their life from these fatal diseases. I think, there needs to be done something more in this direction in which you have already made effort. You have made some provision for cities also. You have tried to make car cheaper for middle class people. You will consider it yourself as to what extent it should be praised and to what extent it should be criticized. You have talked of providing short term credit to farmers at the interest rate of 7%. This move has been appreciated from all quarters. You have tried to attach importance to rural India. You have reduced the rate of interest on agricultural loan to farmers by two per cent. You have also increased the amount allocated for irrigation and reduced the duty levied on the food processing produce. These steps taken by you have also been applauded.

Our colleague from Ludhiana, Punjab was saying that there has been a starvation like situation at many places. I want to ask why such a situation has arisen? When the wheat produced by the farmer is about to reach in the market, than what compelled us to import wheat from outside? Mr. Finance Minister this is the apprehension you have to allay. Common man is thinking as to what led to the situation to import wheat when the wheat produced by the farmers is about to reach the market. As a member of UPA, I would like to request you to allay all these apprehensions. I would also like to say that you have talked of providing loans to the tenant farmers, living in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and working in group for holding. But even now there is a flood particularly in the rivers of northern Bihar, an agreement should be entered into with Nepal for the safety of farmers. I want to know as to what initiatives you are taking for

this. The rivers flowing through Bihar bring havoc every year and the farmers have to face many a problems. Special arrangements which should have been made for the area of Central Bihar which is taal and diyara area and which is agriculture land area, has not been made so far. The farmers in Bihar are very apprehensive about the solution to the problem in this regard. Neither any advance amount has been released no any effort has been made for development of the region from Buxar to Diyora, Buxar to Patna, Patna to Munger, Munger to Farakka. The submerging area particularly that of taal area Mokama, Barhaiya, Fatawa which is spread over 12 hundred square kilometer can provide pulses to the entire Bihar and to the northern India. No integrated scheme has been made for this region in the budget. It has been stated that you are making available some earmarked amount for those areas. It has created some kind of apprehension in the minds of farmers of Bihar particularly the farmers of central Bihar, who once voted for you and with whose support you have been elected. I hope that you will allay all these apprehensions. A scheme should be formulated with the help of Nepal for the people of northern Bihar, particularly for taal area and diyara area of northern India. Permanent solution to the devastation caused by flood every year to the farmers should be found out with mutual cooperation from Uttar Pradesh and Nepal. There is a need to make some integrated arrangement to control flood and drought in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Problems increase every year in these areas and hence I think that you will do something in this regard. This is what I want to place before you.

You have done good work in many fields, and those works have also been discussed. But you have increased service tax from 10 per cent to 12 per cent i.e. you have increased it by two per cent. Common men who earn 15 to 20 thousand will have to face extra burden of Rs. 500. This is a burden to be borne by common men. This burden should not be increased. I hope that you would withdraw it, as it affects common men, the poor, the middle class men, who has voted for you and with whose support you have been elected to his House. Therefore, I hope and request you to consider it.

You have increased Rs. 24 thousand crore under central scheme in comparison to the previous your but in terms of rupees it has ben increased five thousand crore

rupees only. It gives a clear signal that the centre will implement these schemes on its own and would not depend on states. You too have wished so, which is a good step. No special attention has been paid to the welfare of labourers and their social security. There should have been special attention towards it but it is seen nowhere in the budget. We hope that you will pay attention to the exploited class. We will have to formulate many welfare schemes for the labourers and have to make a provision for them in the budget. You have not considered it this time. We must learn from our mistakes. We should come forward and do such works.

Some people say this is not an encouraging budget but a discouraging one. It is what your critic says. Many people also opine that it will lead to price rise. I have already mentioned one name. You should allay such apprehensions and streamline budget afresh so that it may pave way for favourable circumstances in days to come. You have talked of improving the condition of farmers. I have put forth my suggestions in regard to flood and drought. It was expected that incentive would be given to farmers for increasing the production of fruit, flower, vegetables, sugarcane and other crops but no such provision has been made in the budget. No mention has been made with regard to providing remunerative prices for crops. Old-age pension has been increased to Rs. 200. It is being given to 2 per cent population hence special attention needs to be given to it. This amount should be doubled. You had talked of providing money to backward district fund and had assured that five thousand crore rupees would be given but no provision of money has been made for it. An NTPC plant has been set up in Barh, but the work thereon is very slow. The amount that should have been allocated for it, has not been allocated. The super thermal power plant of Navinnagar is yet to be started. Barauni is on the verge of closure. No attention has been paid to it. On the one hand you are making provision for electricity and on the other you are neglecting power projects. Both things can not go hand in hand. I want to request the Finance Minister that no wrong signal or message should be conveyed to the public. We had vehemently opposed to all the persons who divided Bihar, be they belonged ruling party or opposition and under whose leadership effort was made to divide Bihar. The members of NDA had told that they would provide special

package to Bihar but no special package to Bihar has yet been provided which is very unfortunate. The people of Bihar have applied their full strength to bring the UPA Government in power. We hope that more amount would be provided to power sector, other sectors and specially to tourism sector and to those which have been neglected so far. No such message should be conveyed that the people of central Bihar are being neglected. Ram Kripalji is sitting here. He worked hard and launched a national-wide agitation. Discussion on AIIMS has been held. It was inaugurated by Hon'ble Vice-President but no amount for AIIMS has been provided. Thousand of people for Bihar are coming to Delhi for their treatment. The AIIMS at Delhi is being run with the help of Bihar and northern Uttar Pradesh. It is not right that money is not provided to AIIMS and it is not made functional. It is not right that all such things happen when the UPA Government is in power.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Please conclude. Hence forward I will not allow your speech to go on record.

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: The money for national highway was allocated but no work was done. National Highway No. 30, 31, 38, 77, 83, 88, which connect north-eastern India. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to do justice to all.

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: These highways are totally neglected. Chairman Sir, a lot of papers are there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please lay rest of your speech on the Table of the House. Your speech is concluded.

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: I had more issues to raise but I do not want to disrespect you. I lay the remaining papers on the Table of the House.

*Sir, the allocation for education has been increased by 31.5 per cent. Prices of Agricultural products have been slashed. It is proposed to carry out electrification of 40,000 villages, to construct nine lakh houses and provide five crore phone connections in villages. Cars have been made cheaper for the urban population. Special consideration has been given to farmers and rural development and it has been announced that farmers would be granted small loans at an interest rate of seven per cent. It is proposed

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Vijoy Krishna]

to allocate funds for the eight flagship programmes started under the Common Minimum Programme. Rs. 8207 crore, Rs. 4813 crore and Rs. 4007 crore have been sanctioned for the National Rural Health Mission, Mid-day meal and Bal Vikas Yojana respectively.

Special consideration has been given to minorities in the Budget. It is proposed to grant 20,000 scholarships and to double the Consolidated Fund Maulana Azad Educational Foundation to bring it upto Rs. 200 crore. Provision has been made to incur expenditure on infrastructure development to speed up the rate of development. Budgetary assistance for power, roads and telecom sectors has been increased. A special feature of this Budget is that it purports to substantially enhance the revenue earnings of the government without transferring any additional burden on the people. Another remarkable feature is that the revenue deficit and fiscal deficit is under control.

Besides, no major change has been made in income tax except for inclusion of recurring deposits in the ambit of savings schemes and waiving the need to file returns in six cases. Modifications in indirect taxes would lead to reduction in the prices of cars, DVD etc. but enhancement of payable tax on service tax and widening of net on taxable services would take away a big part of any saving made as a result of the steps taken in this regard. The enhancement of service tax would put an additional burden of Rs. 6000 crores on the people.

A provision of Rs. 7121 crore for Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, Rs. 4481 crore for restoration of 20,000 water bodies and Rs. 4000 crores for Gramin Sadak Yojana has been made.

Small cars, soft drinks, shoes, lamps, printing and writing paper, ice creams, meat and fish, poultry products tinned food, soyabean nuggets, pongal, idly, dosa, gulab-jamuns, gas stoves, drugs for the treatment of AIDS and cancer have been made cheaper in the Budget.

Cigarettes, Umbrellas, spectacles, walking sticks, henna, ordinary soap, soaps manufactured under a scheme, pencils, computers, biscuits, sugar, imported

refined oil, honey, household items, glassware and crockery etc. have become dearer.

Fifteen new services including ATM services have been brought under the net of service tax. Income tax exemption has been given on deposits which have been lying with the banks for more than five years. The left parties have expressed disappointment regarding the amount of budget provisions for planned expenditure. I would request the government to consider this aspect.

This is a balanced budget. Provision of higher amount of funds of education and the Urdu language would display your good intentions.

Agriculture and unemployment are two issues which are facing a whole lot of problems. Both have not been given adequate consideration in this budget. Merely two per cent of the needy population is able to avail of old age pension. Its scope should be widened. I would like to say that an attempt should be made to resolve apprehensions expressed by the Marxists in this regard.*

[English]

SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR (Hanamkonda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on behalf of the Telengana Rashtriya Samiti on the Budget presented by the hon. Finance Minister for the year 2006-07.

At the outset, I thank the hon. Finance Minister for presenting an all-encompassing Budget which has covered many micro and macro level issues. The hon. Minister has succeeded in proper fiscal management and fiscal consolidation. Therefore, he was able to contain the revenue deficit to 2.1 per cent and fiscal deficit to 3.8 per cent. This should be appreciated by one and all.

Through his third Budget and of the UPA Government, the hon. Finance Minister has rationalised the direct taxes and the indirect taxes to ensure the growth of economy as well as the growth of revenue collection.

Coming to the flagship programme of the UPA Government, that is the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, I would like to say that it is immensely helping the backward region in Andhra Pradesh, that is Telengana. I would like to mention here

that all the nine districts of Telengana region are being covered under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme. This vindicates our stand and our struggle for a separate State. We have been telling that this region is the most backward region in this country. You are well aware that the Planning Commission fixes the criteria for backwardness. All the districts of this region have come under this Programme. So, I would like to take this opportunity to bring to the notice of my colleagues here that this region is the most backward region in the country and it deserves the kind attention from the Government. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramdas Athawale, I am not allowing you to speak. Please take your seat.

SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR: Sir, the Government and the district administration thought that they would get around one or one-and-a-half lakh applications. But as on today, they have received four lakh applications. My friend Shri Sudhakar Reddy has just now mentioned that in Andhra Pradesh the number of applicants has gone up to 34 lakhs. But this Programme has a continuous enrolment. I feel that this may go up to fifty lakhs in Andhra Pradesh. So, in this context I would like to say that the allocation of Rs. 11,000 crore for this Programme is not substantial. I would request the hon. Minister to increase the allocation.

In fact, day before yesterday I read a news item, according to which the hon. Finance Minister had said that this is a new Programme and one cannot expect more than Rs. 11,000 crore. I feel that some further funds should be earmarked for this Programme.

Due to paucity of time I am unable to express many of my ideas. But I would like to speak something on rural credit. By rural credit, the bankers think that they should give loan to agriculture alone. It should not be the case. They need education loans also. I read a few days ago that in the next two decades, 60 to 75 per cent of the population would be below the age of 20 years. So, new generation is coming up and they have to be educated. Many students are coming to Members of Legislative Assemblies and Members of Parliament in order to get education loans. In the rural areas, bankers are not giving education loans to the rural people. As on today, education loan is being given to middle class and upper class

students and students belonging to urban towns. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to direct the bankers to earmark some education loans to the rural poor. There should be a direction to the effect that each rural bank should at least give the education loans to the students of the rural areas.

Each rural bank has to give, at least, 10 education loans to the students who pursue their higher education. The Finance Minister has announced five Ultra Mega Power Projects of 4000 megawatt each. Unfortunately, my State has not been included in this category. Sir, Andhra Pradesh was not given such an opportunity to have an Ultra Mega Power Project. Telengana region is gifted with large reserves of coal, which are located just adjacent to the Godavari River. This part deserves to have an Ultra Mega Power Project. I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister to have one more such project and that should be established in this region. We feel that, at least, something will happen in the backward region.

My next point is that the Access Controlled Expressways with certain traffic intensive sections were also mentioned. I would like to say that not any such road is being identified in Andhra Pradesh. You are well aware that Hyderabad-Vijayawada section is one of the heavy-traffic roads in the country. I would request that this road should also be included in this Access Controlled expressways.

Lastly, I would like to say about the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission which was announced. Sir, Andhra Pradesh has around more than 8 crore people. In Andhra Pradesh, as a whole, only three cities were identified, that is, Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam. Unfortunately, Warangal City missed the criterion. They kept one million population as the criterion. As Warangal has around 8.5 lakh population, it missed the bus. I would request the hon. Minister to include it....*(Interruptions)* The criterion should be changed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR: It is a request that the criterion of 7.5 lakh population may be evolved. Today, I met the concerned Urban Development Ministry people. They said that if the population of 7.5 lakh is taken, another 15 cities are going to be included. I would request

[Shri B. Vinod Kumar]

the Finance Minister just to change the criterion so that some more cities may come under this. Warangal city which falls under backward region may also be taken up.

With these words, I would like to lay this paper....*(Interruptions)*

*Sir, it is also noted that other social sector programmes like rural employment, health, education, mid-day meal and urban renewal, have got 43 per cent increase in allocation which, I suppose, has become possible through better fiscal management. Therefore, our party is of the view that only prudent fiscal management paves the way for meaningful and required allocation for social sectors.

But some ground level constraints remain still unaddressed. Sir, I am of the view that some technological innovations are required to provide some last minute connectivity to the beneficiary. For example, the payments to the beneficiary are required to be made only through his bank account, which should be opened by the nearest bank branch to the village. Why I am bringing this issue is that similar employment guarantee scheme being implemented in Maharashtra for the last twenty years was not able to achieve the desired result due to payment of cash to beneficiary through muster rolls, which were manipulated. Such manipulation is only avoidable by payment of wages through beneficiary's bank account. For this purpose, the banking system in the country should be geared up to network all their rural branches at the earliest to link with the District/State Headquarters so that electronic transfer of funds takes place directly to beneficiary's account. Such procedure would also serve bringing many villagers into banking fold thereby serving the broad purpose of financial inclusion.

In this context, I would also like to further add that the Special Project for Restoration of Water Bodies should also be dovetailed with this National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme so that backward districts of Telengana would get their water bodies restored for increasing the irrigation potential at local level with the help of annual average rainfall.

Sir, our party humbly requests hon. Prime Minister and hon. Finance Minister to take note of our suggestions on technology as well as linking Water Bodies Restoration Project in implementation of NREG Scheme on pilot basis in the nine Districts of Telengana.

Our party is again grateful to hon. Finance Minister for acknowledging severe difficulties being faced by farmers during the last two years and showing compassion to farmers by going extra mile to the aid of farmers in spite of fiscal constraints. Hon. Finance Minister should be again lauded for granting 2 per cent relief/rebate to the farmers who have availed crop loans from banks for Khariff and Rabi 2005-06 and for announcing 7 per cent interest cap on all short-term loans being availed by farmers from banking system up to Rs. 3 lakhs. These measures would again bring immense relief to millions of farmers in the backward districts of Telengana and other backward districts of the country. However, these measures are helpful to the farmers to some extent, but do not address the complexity of Rural Credit in an integrated manner.

In this context, while responding to previous year Budget, our party had clearly advocated comprehensive measures for tackling the issue of Rural Credit in a holistic manner. Therefore, our party again reiterates that the issue of Rural Credit requires critical look by the UPA Government for its sustainability. Though hon. Finance Minister set the target of Rs. 1,75,000 crore for credit and addition of 50 lakh farmers to their portfolio, our party is not sure whether these targets are really being achieved as there is no measurable mechanism in place. On the other hand, Credit/Deposit (CD) ratio in many backward districts of the country is still below 50 per cent and the Rural and Semi-Urban CD ratio is still below 45 per cent as per the statistics provided by the Reserve Bank of India through its Quarterly Publication. These statistics do not match with the achievements of doubling the rural credit. So, I humbly request hon. Finance Minister to obtain District specific Credit/Deposit Ratio in general and District specific Rural and Semi-Urban CD ratio in particular to assess and monitor the credit flow to farm sector at grass-root level.

Sir, with regard to Rural Credit, hon. Finance Minister

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

has quoted the findings of NSS 59th Round Survey which revealed that Institutional Rural Credit only reaches only 27 per cent of cultivator households in the country. This startling revelation by hon. Finance Minister is a challenge to think tanks and policy makers of the country. We reiterate that issue of Agriculture and Rural Credit needs to be tackled on a mission-mode approach and time for us is very short. For a long time, these issues have been evading solutions for their complexity. Time has come to look for out-of-box solutions. Agriculture is mainly dependent on rural credit and water resources. Rural Credit is the Central Subject, whereas agriculture and water are the State Subjects. On the other hand, 70 per cent of population is dependent on agriculture with all its diversity and complexity. Therefore, our party urges UPA Government that time has come to bring the most important agriculture and water sector under Concurrent List of State and Central Government so that collective wisdom and resources of Nation are focussed and utilized in harmony for bringing rapid improvements in the agriculture and water management so that the fate of 700 millions of rural population becomes overriding national priority.

In this context, I would like to conclude my today's speech by quoting the architect of the first Green Revolution, respected Shri M.S. Swaminathan, the Chariman of National Commission of Farmers in "The Hindu" dated 1st March 2006.

"Agriculture being a State subject, I hope the State Budgets will fill the serious gaps. The Union Budget has, however, failed to convey the message that if agriculture goes wrong, nothing else will have a chance to go right."

Therefore, I once again humbly request hon. Chairperson of UPA, Shrimati Sonia Gandhiji, hon. Prime Minister, Shri Manmohan Singhji; and hon. Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram Garu, to focus all their energies on agriculture during the remaining period of UPA Government in order to win the people's mandate once again during the 2009 elections.

Thank you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to share our feedback on Budget 2006-07.*

*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): Hon. Sir, I would like to place before this House the following:

While welcoming the hon. Finance Minister in respect of the concessions given to the farming community for short-term loans up to a ceiling of Rs. 2 lakh but the same is to be extended for the benefit of long term loans also. It will boost the agricultural production to a great extent. It is the need of the hour to take into consideration of the problems being faced by the middle class people as also the agricultural sector, who have not provided with an incentive for savings and it is the middle class people who are depending upon savings. The hon. Finance Minister should have considered the benefit of the middle class people while increasing the contribution towards pension fund from Rs. 10,000 to Rs.1,00,000 and it should have to be at least Rs. 2,00,000 under section 80 C of IT Act. The Banks Fixed Deposit of 5 years and above will not at all benefit the deposit with the limit of Rs.1 lakh, unless the exemption under section 80 C of IT Act is kept out of the purview and the limit has to be enhanced at least to Rs.2 lakh. The imposition of tax on ATM transactions will give further burden on the public and it should be withdrawn forthwith. The introduction of ATMs was an overwhelming step but the present step of introduction of tax is a retrogradatory step and it is much against the principles and policy adopted by the hon. Finance Minister.

Similarly, the imposition of tax on profit of Cooperative Banks needs reconsideration, as it will harm and erode the basic ethics of cooperative movement which is strong and vibrant. We have to encourage the growth of cooperative movement. As per the Common Minimum Programme of the Government, the Government has to encourage the agriculturists in developing the production and also earn foreign exchange through their products.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister that it is high time to offer incentives for the technocrats, artisans, and village industries. No steps have been taken for export of agricultural products including dairy products through our agricultural sector which is quite capable of competing at international market. It is a pity that the inflation is not reflected in the graph of

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri S. Mallikarjuniah]

Consumer Price Index which indicates a committed and prudent step to reach the benefit of the economic reforms to the common man in spite of the claim of the hon. Finance Minister.

I once again urge upon the Finance Minister to consider the above points for the benefit of the common and middle-income group people and make necessary amendments for the benefit of the public at large. So, I would like to submit the following point:

- (i) Electricity should be supplied 8 hours every day.
- (ii) Water should be supplied to every field.
- (iii) Proper price should be fetched for food grains and their commodities.
- (iv) Northern districts are in want of basic facilities such as education, water for drinking, water to agricultural fields.
- (v) No roads are well maintained in north Karnataka and also old Mysore.
- (vi) For Drip irrigation, money should be liberally granted to all agriculturists.
- (vii) House to be given to poor people.
- (viii) Primary education should be given top priority in education field.

I press more for this aspect, and I conclude my speech.

SHRI KIREN RIJJU (Arunachal West): Sir, this Budget for 2006-07 presented by the hon. Finance Minister with great fanfare has brought smiles on the face of some people, but brought tears in the face of many, many people. There is not much reason to celebrate. Crores of people across the country today are in a gloom. The Budget is very purposeful and meaningful for a section of people, probably which constitutes 10-12 per cent of the population of the country. It is still disheartening to see that 38 per cent of the poor people living below the poverty line in the world are our own countryman, the Indians. I will not go into the dynamics of economy

but I will just pinpoint some of the core areas where it is in the area of my interest, for example, the budgetary provision for the Ministry of ARI.

Khadi is one of my favourite subjects. I am very, very sad to see that not a single paisa has been increased for the interest subsidies for the khadi products. As regards the flagship programme of the ARI Ministry, the Rural Employment Generation Programme, in fact, the provision has been reduced from Rs.369.95 crore to Rs.334.48 crore this Year. This will weaken the khadi sector. We must strengthen the KVIC, which is carrying forward the work of national pride and symbol.

18.00 hrs.

I would now talk about sports. In the international arena of the sporting world, India is in the bottom of the list. Many people say that one billion people cannot bring any gold medal from the Olympics event. Some other people say that the Indians are genetically a weaker race. But if this kind of a Budgetary support of only Rs.669 crore is provided, how can we bring any gold medal from the Olympics event? Hysteria has been created in the country for the Cricket game alone which is damaging most of the competitive sports in our country, the Olympics which brings laurels to the country.

In the impending discussion on sports infrastructure in the country, all the hon. Members, including my friend Shri Naveen Jindal, have been repeatedly urging the Government to provided proper fund, to allocate adequate fund for sports in the country. But it is very sad to see that only Rs. 669 crore has been allocated and it has to take care of the 2010 Commonwealth Games which is going to be hosted by New Delhi. This is a very sad state of affairs.

The total foreign tourist arrival in India during the last year is less than 4 million people. This is less than half of what a small City State like Singapore received. The Incredible India Campaign launched by the Ministry of Tourism will not be successful with this kind of a Budgetary support. A State like Arunachal Pradesh, which has been declared as the hottest bio-diversity spots in the world, has not been included in the tourism map. The allocation to the tourism sector this year is very much minimum. We expected to raise income of at least Rs.

35,000 crore for the country from the tourism sector. But I do not think we are going to achieve the target with this kind of a Budgetary support. We need a separate package for the North-East to develop the tourism potential in the region.

In respect of agriculture, there are many subjects but I would just like to request the hon. Finance Minister, through you, Sir, to pay attention to one important thing. Shifting cultivation is a major problem in the North-East because of the topography of the terrain. A financial package must be provided to bring these people for terrace cultivation. The shifting cultivation is damaging environmentally. It is going to have a negative impact throughout the region although 78 per cent of Arunachal Pradesh is still covered by the forest. But it is dwindling very fast.

Regarding culture, I think the hon. Finance Minister does not have much attachment to culture. This year, we are going to celebrate the 2550th Anniversary of Buddha Jayanti. Lord Buddha was born in this country. India is central to Buddhism in this world. People look at India, especially the Buddhist community. I have mentioned earlier also that during His Excellency the President of India's Address to both the Houses of Parliament, he has not mentioned about this. I expected that the hon. Finance Minister would come out with a package for the celebration of the *Mahapari nirvana*. There has been a Committee constituted. It is headed by the hon. Prime Minister as its Chairman, the hon. Minister of Culture is the Vice-Chairman. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and the hon. Finance Minister himself are all the Members of that Committee. We already have held a meeting. The hon. Finance Minister could not attend that meeting. But I expected a lot from the hon. Finance Minister to come out with the necessary support in this Financial year to celebrate this *Mahapari nirvana*.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House agrees, then the proceedings of the House may be extended for two hours.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): The proceedings of the House may be extended till

8 pm. My only request is that the Members who are yet to speak, may speak briefly. In case of the new Members, who are not aware, they should lay their speeches. It proves beneficial when it is printed in the debates. This will provide opportunity to all and I believe that everyone will cooperate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members should keep in mind the time constraint and put their points in least possible time.

[English]

SHRI KIREN RIJJU: Sir, I am coming to my favourite subject of road transport. In Himalayan belt, in a State like Arunachal Pradesh, there is no air connectivity, no railways and no inland waterways also. How to substitute that? We have only one means of transportation and that is road transportation. We expect that Government should at least come up with a great help to the relief of the people who live in mountains. I am actually happy that the Government has framed a policy for Special Accelerated Road Development Programme, which is estimated at Rs. 12,120 crore and out of which Rs. 9,952 crore is to be budgetary support and rest to be mobilised through private sector participation. But the problem is that under SARDP NE Phase-"A", out of estimated Rs. 4,618 crore, only Rs. 550 crore is provided this year. Even if we complete the project in normal way, smoothly on time also, it is going to stretch beyond ten years. How can a project be accelerated when you are going to stretch such a vital connectivity programme in ten years time? There should be more considerate opinion from the Government, particularly, from the Finance Ministry to see that Arunachal Pradesh is not left behind vis-a-vis rest of the country with regards to road connectivity. The Borders Road Organisation is to be strengthened, which is the lifeline of the people of, particularly, border areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI KIREN RIJJU: I will leave some of the points. I will just come to the last point because not much time is left.

I would like to point out here that every time the Government comes out with a population criterion, it is not applicable to the mountain region. How can we come

[Shri Kiren Rijju]

up with the rest of the people? There has always been an attempt to segregate us from the development process. How can you go against the nature? Guidelines should follow the nature. But, you are trying to make nature follow the guidelines, the population criterion for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, and all others schemes like Indira Awas Yojana. The transportation cost alone is five-six times more than that of the plain areas and you expect us to construct a house out of Rs. 28,000. How is it possible? You expect roads will be connected only where population is more than 500. How is it possible? You cannot have one thousand people living in one place in such high mountainous areas. I need your protection because I am probably the first speaker from the North-Eastern Region. So, I would just request you to give me five minutes extra.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes only.

SHRI KIREN RIJJU: Today, the literacy rate in Arunachal Pradesh is the lowest in the country. I expect a special package for the development of educational infrastructure, particularly, in my State of Arunachal Pradesh. As regards allocation of 10 per cent share of each Ministry for North-East is concerned, I feel that it should include all the Ministries and Departments and not only a few. Why are you exempting some Departments and Ministries? Because they are not pertinent to North-East, You are penalizing the North-East for not having any work out of those Ministries. I feel that the excluded Ministries must be included. At the same time, the unspent balance amount, which is kept in national pool, that is a mystery. It is because the unspent balance should be handed over to the Ministry of DONER so that it can be included in the next year's budget as an additional amount. That is a mystery.

That is a mystery. I do not know where that money goes. The allocation for the Department of North Eastern Region is Rs. 700 crore. Out of that, Rs. 100 crore is for BTC and Rs. 90 crore is given for Sarva Siksha Abhiyan under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. What are we left with then? The Finance Minister says that he is increasing the Budget allocation for us, but actually he is decreasing it. He is increasing the budgetary allocation by 3 per cent, but if we calculate the inflation, it is actually a reduction.

18.11 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI KIREN RIJJU: Sir, I will not take much time. I will take only two minutes more.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude within one minute.

SHRI KIREN RIJJU : All right, Sir, Let me complete my speech now.

Sir, this Budget will increase the gap between the rich and poor, between backward areas and forward areas. I would like to submit to the hon. Finance Minister that the sails of the vessels of the people of North East are unfurled, but his wind is not blowing. We are waiting for that, the people of North East are waiting for the wind to blow and we also want to march forward with the rest of the people.

[*Translation*]

*SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE (Khargone): Sir, the hon. Finance Minister has talked about Bharat Nirman in many of the announcements made by him. I am not an economist but I remain in touch with the public and am well aware of the roadblocks that lie in the way of implementation of the schemes announced by the Government. These roadblocks impede the betterment of the common man's lot. I would like to discuss these roadblocks today.

The announcement made in the Budget that the GDP would achieve the growth rate of 8.1 per cent this year and that the government has decided to increase this to a target of 10 per cent is a welcome announcement. But I fail to understand how this target is to be achieved. Let us take agriculture. The government has said that farmers would be provided loans at 7 per cent interest rate but how would the farmers be able to avail of such loans? Even now there are no branches of nationalized banks in villages which is where the farmers reside. The hon. Finance Minister has suggested resolution in this regard. It is my belief that this initiative will go the way of

*The speech was laid on the Table.

the Kisan Credit Cards. 80 per cent of the farmers take loan form co-operatives or societies NABARD gives loan to the apex banks the apex banks pass it on to the co-operative banks and the co-operative banks provide loans to societies. Each of the said units take two percent interest on the loans granted to the next unit and the farmer has to ultimately pay an interest for credit card usage amounting to 15 or 16 percent on this loan amount. The seven percent interest rate loan announced by the hon. Finance Minister is going to fall prey to the same problem.

Soft loan schemes for farmers would succeed only when the government makes loan available to the societies directly. Otherwise under the present system for the grant of loans the interest rate would remain as high as at present and the farmers in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra would be forced to resort to suicide as is happening at present. The Government announces support prices to ensure that farmers get loans at a cheaper rate of interest and the right price for their produce. Even so the purchase of the produce of the farmers is not commensurate with their needs. While replying to a question in the House the hon. Agriculture Minister has said that he would make efforts in this direction. Take the case of mustard. The mustard harvest is lying in godowns and with farmers. The government has not purchased the stock as yet. As a result, the middlemen buy the stock at lower rates and sell them off at the procurement centers. The middlemen earn commission but the farmers has to run from pillar to post to get the right price for their produce. The same situation in regard to mustard prevails at present also.

Our hon. Members from mustard producing areas are moving around daily. I am observing it. Similarly unless arrangement is made to procure wheat, gram, soyabean, paddy, masur at support price and farmers are provided remunerative prices, the poor farmers will continue to get poorer.

Hon. Minister of Finance has mentioned in his budget speech to provide drinking water to 56270 houses and 1.40,000 schools. It is a matter of surprise that even after 58 years of Independence the people of this country do not get pure drinking water. Multinational companies are doing business of supplying drinking water worth Rs.

1000 crore in this country. In this budget hon. Minister of Finance has provided Rs. 4680 crore for drinking water. He talked about providing drinking water to schools. In my parliamentary constituency amount was allocated last year for boring upto 300 feet. But water is available there only at 400 to 500 feet under the ground. I say that these are not bores but mere potholes. These bores have dried up. Today the maximum life of bore is just three years due to rapidly falling water table.

In USA annual rainfall is just 30 to 35 inches but due to good water management there is no scarcity of water. Therefore, water management has to be improved. Water should be harvested in ponds and wells in each village. I would like to ask as to why the plan of NDA for interlinking the rivers was abandoned? The problem of water can not be solved unless a permanent solution is thought out. Even today pure drinking water is not available in tribal majras-tolas as a result of which diseases break out. So only increasing the budget allocations will not solve the problem. Till now I talked about water and indirect taxes. Now I would like to draw the attention of hon'ble Minister of Finance towards direct taxes.

Now-a-days traders grapple more with papers than with their business. There are numerous types of taxes such as custom, excise, service tax, income tax, market tax and wealth tax etc. Apart from this there are many more type of taxes and it is very difficult to remember them. Therefore, number of taxes should be minimized. Inspectoraj should be brought to an end. The system of taxation should be simplified. The return filed by traders should be accepted except under some special circumstances. Hon. Minister of Finance should also think over it as to why the number of income tax payers is only 3 per cent? I do not agree that people do not want to pay taxes. People prefer to pay Rs. 10,000/- as lawyers fee just to avoid paying Rs. 5000 as income tax. Therefore there should be such dispensation which encourages taxpayers. For this purpose income tax payment should be linked with respect and prestige. This will certainly increase the number of taxpayers. This will increase national income reduce black money and nation will develop. I hope that hon. Minister will definitely pay attention towards these suggestions.

[English]

SHRI DEEPENDER SINGH HOODA (Rohtak): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise today in support of the Budget presented by our hon. Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaran.

Sir, the Budget Statement is a clear reflection of the rational change that the UPA Government has been able to usher in, in favour of the *aam aadmi*. In the recent two years, we have moved away from a highly unequal, pro-elite growth to a more equal, all-inclusive development for all Indians, we have moved away from 'India Shining' for a few rich men to 'Bharat Nirman' for all *Bharatvasis* and we have moved away from a period with an average growth rate of 5 to 5.5 per cent to a period, under the UPA Government with an average growth rate of about 8 per cent. Now, from a naked eye, that may not be seeing much, but the fact of the matter is that even with the current growth rate, we will be able to double the incomes of our people, two times as that of what the NDA Government could have managed with their growth rate. So, does it mean that we are doing and the economy is doing twice as better as the NDA Government did? No, Sir, I think, we are doing better than that.

Sir, under the able stewardship of our hon. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, I believe that our economy is stronger than it has ever been. Our hon. Finance Minister has been able to usher in a fiscal discipline and prudence due to which our fiscal deficit stands at 4.1 per cent today. This has partly helped us to keep the inflation at a moderate level of about 4 per cent, which, in turn, has helped the banks keep the interest rates at low levels which have reduced the cost of capital. All this has led to a spurge in investment and we see a record-high investments in our economy. When we combine this with a high saving rate, we see a new model of growth that has been ushered in by the UPA Government, a model of growth in which we have been able to expand and increase our expenditure in the social sectors, without having to pass on the burden on the *aam aadmi*, in the form of taxes etc. Talking about taxes, it is highly commendable that our tax to GDP ratio has grown above 10 per cent.

Sir, the last macro-economic indicator that I would like to talk about before I talk about some of the sectoral

allocations is about the employment numbers. Our hon. Prime Minister had famously said once that we have inherited a hi-tech jobless growth. He could not be more right. The employment elasticity, the rate of employment generation per incremental GDP growth point has crashed from 0.5 to about 0.1 under the NDA regime. With the galloping manufacturing and services sectors today, I strongly believe that, perhaps, this has rebounded and I would like to urge our hon. Finance Minister to furnish the numbers on the employment elasticity, if it is feasible, in his reply.

With regard to sectoral allocations, the first sector that I would like to focus my attention is on power infrastructure. I would like to bring an anomaly in the pricing of power and agricultural products to the kind notice of this august House. In a nutshell, this is a burden that a power-deficient, foodgrain-surplus State has to bear when it pays a high, unregulated price, a price that is fixed by State Regulatory Authorities to purchase power from power-surplus States to produce foodgrains. The very food grains that the State has to sell at a low centrally regulated price to the Central foodgrains pool.

[Translation]

Sir, when the scarcity of foodgrains was looming large in India in the decade of 70-80, the green revolution was launched in India. Some states were standing in the frontline in this wave of green revolution. Haryana and Punjab were frontrunners among those states. The farmers of Haryana and Punjab started feeding the entire country. But when we started supplying foodgrains in each nook and corner of India, especially the areas with acute shortage of foodgrains. We never tried to take undue advantage for this by charging more for foodgrains from them. Today the situation is different. At present there is shortage of power in India. When Haryana or other cereal producing states need electricity for their agricultural production and seek its supply from other states, other states charge high discriminatory price for this. They take advantage of the shortage of power and take high price for it.

[English]

Sir, I believe that even Adam Smith would agree with me on this point that this is an economically unviable

situation. Our customer is also a supplier in this case. When he supplies us electricity, he is allowed to charge a discriminatory price, but when we supply foodgrains, we are not allowed to charge any kind of discriminatory price. In fact, we give a subsidised price.

In view of this, I have three recommendations to make to the hon. Finance Minister to rectify this anomaly. Firstly, there should be a mechanism at the national level to rationalise the power charges for all States, especially the inter-State transactions should be brought under a central authority.

Secondly, in the Government of India's power projects, the incremental share should be given to those States which do not have natural resources to produce power.

[Translation]

In Haryana, there are no water-falls to produce Hydal Power, nor are there any coal mines to set up ultra megawatt power plants at pit head. So such states should be provided some protection in setting up Central Projects.

[English]

Thirdly, an *ad-hoc* financial package of Rs. 1100 crore be dispensed to the State of Haryana considering the fact that the State is supplying foodgrains at a low regulated price to central foodgrains pool, while paying high price to other States for power to produce these very foodgrains.

[Translation]

Today, through this House, I would like to assure the hon. Minister of Finance if the power related problems of the farmers of Haryana is sorted out then the farmers of our state will keep the self-reliance of our country in foodgrain intact.

[English]

Sir, I would like to make a few comments now on the agricultural sector. My generation of urban Indians used to think of Mr. Chidambaram as Finance Minister who patented the Dream Budget, but I have to say that from 28th February, 2006, he has ensured that people of

my generation start viewing him as a farmers' Finance Minister. I wonder if ever before the Union Budget lent such a helping hand to the agricultural sector and I commend all the increased allocation for various segments.

I would like to, now, point out a couple of suggestions and recommendations that I have for various segments under agriculture. First, let me touch upon the issue of import duty on agro products, starting with oil seeds, specifically palm oil and soya oil. The case of palm oil is specifically peculiar. WTO allows us to raise the import duty on palm oil to about 300 per cent. But today, we have an import duty of about 80 per cent to 90 per cent in our country. The farmers of Rajasthan and Haryana together contribute two-third in production of mustard seeds and the economies of these farmers are very badly hit because of the fact that we are importing a lot of palm oil from other nations. I think, the last year's number was over five million tonnes.

Sir, we need to very urgently raise up the import duties. The second point relates to the duties on soya oil for which already we are at the WTO bound limit of 45 per cent. I believe, what we need to do is to impose qualitative restrictions of not allowing genetically modified oil seeds to enter our markets.

Regarding irrigation, I had a couple of observations as well. Time and again, various studies have shown, the one recently by Jeffery Sachs, the noted Economist, how deep is the correlation between human well-being and apt allocation of water resources. This has been an aspect of our economy which was overlooked by NDA regime. In fact, during their entire tenure, the total irrigated land out of our all arable agricultural land stood steadfast at 40 per cent stable like a plateau. I commend our Finance Minister for increasing allocations for this sector, be it through AIBP or restoration of water bodies or encouragement of micro irrigation facilities. For example, he has reduced duty on plastics which constitutes the raw material for micro irrigation, drip irrigation products from 15 per cent to 5 per cent which will be having a bearing in lowering of that cost. I would further recommend that we will take another step forward in this direction and can reduce the levies and taxes on micro irrigation products even further. I am informed by the

[Shri Deepender Singh Hooda]

experts that if we do that we can lower the cost of micro irrigation products by up to 46 per cent. Today, we give out subsidies on purchase of these products to the tune of 50 per cent. We can on the same side, keep reducing both in a phased manner.

I would like to touch on agriculture credit too. A very special dispensation has been made for the farmers in the current year and I commend the hon. Finance Minister and the hon. Prime Minister for this. The Government has decided to ensure that the farmer gets the credit at about 7 per cent. We need to watch this closely to ensure that the goodness in the intent of the scheme reaches the poorest of the poor farmers. We have to take a hard look at our agro-credit chain. I am sure, Sir, that the Finance Minister is very well aware of the excruciating long agro-credit chain that we have from NABARD to the Regional Rural Banks to the cooperative societies and eventually to the farmers. We have to see that 7 per cent rate does not increase. As is the case today, it increases by about 60 per cent to hundred per cent from what the rate the NABARD charges.

I have a couple of recommendations for this. The first recommendation I have is that a High Level Committee should be set up to examine the feasibility of deconstructing and shortening our agro-credit chain. The second recommendation that I have is that the Committee should also look at feasibility of reconstructing the cooperative societies similar to commercial banks. I have another suggestion for National Agriculture Insurance Scheme. Mr. Finance Minister noted that the Scheme will continue in its same form for the next year. But, there are some holes existing in this Scheme that need to be plugged. One of the holes that I am going to point out is from a first hand experience. First of all, the settlement process is too small and all the affected farmers are not being compensated. For example in a particular area, mustard growers are compensated but not gram growers because the Scheme is implemented on a block level and not on a crop level. So, the mixed farming is not protected in this Scheme. Something needs to be done about it.

Now, Sir, let me first of all congratulate our Members

from Punjab for the acknowledgement and grant they receive for Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana for the contribution it made in the Green Revolution. I would also like to point out that I am afraid to say that this also disheartened the scientists of another premier agriculture university in our country, Hissar Agriculture University, Haryana. The fact is that Hissar Agriculture University had produced and patented more than 150 seed varieties more than any other University. The fact is that Hissar Agriculture University was a part and parcel of Punjab Agriculture University at the time of the Green Revolution when Haryana was a part and parcel of Punjab. The fact is that Hissar Agriculture University pipped Punjab Agriculture University to be named as the best agriculture university in India just last year by the Indian Council of Agriculture. While we hope that the Finance Minister would acknowledge the contributions that have been made by Hissar Agriculture University in his reply, we also hope that he will be generous enough to kindly give us some grant for this. Due to paucity of time, I would like to make the final comment on agriculture, on horticulture and animal husbandry.

After studying the Budget statements, it looks to me that the progress that we have made specially in the horticulture area has not been very well reflected in the agriculture growth numbers. So, without going into the details, I would just ask the Finance Minister if he can take a look at the horticulture numbers to make sure that those are reflected in the agriculture growth numbers in his reply.

I would like to make a few points on the social sector spending on education. First of all, I would welcome the 43 per cent hike in spending for eight flagship programmes. Having said that, one of the flagship programmes is the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission. In this, my recommendation and suggestion is this. One of the cities that is included is the city of New Delhi. With New Delhi, we should also consider including the entire NCR because it is a stated policy of the Government to de-congest New Delhi, and the Municipal Committees of Gurgaon, Faridabad and Ghaziabad should be included as a part of the National Urban Renewal Mission. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI DEEPENDER SINGH HOODA: Sir, it is my maiden speech. I would like your guidance and cooperation.

Sir, I would like to make a couple of points regarding the education sector before I conclude my speech.

I would like to commend the expenditure in the education sector by 37 per cent but there are a few suggestions. We have to take a hard look at the rural urban divide and the divide between the public and the private sectors as was very aptly noted by my colleague, Shri Rahul Gandhi.

The Budget emphasizes on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme. Perhaps we need to seriously think beyond the Navodaya schools to have a chain of public schools in the rural areas on a sustainable basis affiliated to renowned schools in our country.

Studies after study has revealed that the effectiveness of our expenditure is more in the private sector when we talk about education sector. So, I would like to request our hon. Finance Minister that a part of the incremental allocation for education should go towards scholarships and vouchers that should be handed over directly to the poor students, and let the poor student decide whether they want to go to private school or public school.

In the end, I would just say this. John F. Kennedy, one great American President had once said: "It is for the statesmen to decide whether they want to take their nations towards the future or towards the past. It is for the statesmen to decide whether they take their people towards economic prosperity or towards economic peril." Twenty-two years back, one great Indian Prime Minister took the decision and chose to take our nation to the 21st Century, to take our nation towards economic prosperity and to take our nation towards the future. Today, Sir, I think, we are ready to reap the seeds that were sown by our great Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and this Budget takes us a step closer to that.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Though your speech is a maiden speech, it is an excellent speech and I appreciate you. You spoke like a matured Member.

Now, Ms. Mehbooba Mufti.

***SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL (Kurukshehra):** Sir, I rise to extend my whole-hearted support to the Budget presented for the year 2006-07. I compliment the hon. Finance Minister for presenting this growth-oriented and far-sighted budget which has been hailed by all sections of the people.

After going through the Budget speech and other Budget papers, I feel that this Budget bears the stamp of Shri Chidambaram's expertise of skillfully balancing the needs of various sectors, the rich experience of our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the commitment of UPA and the vision of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi.

It is for the first time that the national Budget holds the promise of economic growth up to 10 per cent by focusing on a number of sectors, primarily agriculture, rural health, education and infrastructure. These sectors will be reinforced by ambitious schemes like Bharat Nirman and National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme launched by our Government. It is, therefore, the duty of all of us to make them successful.

I congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for reducing both revenue deficit and the fiscal deficit more than the target and showing tremendous fiscal discipline.

Sir, development of infrastructure is the main theme of this year's Budget. It is an admitted fact that power generation is one of the cornerstones of infrastructure. In spite of the best efforts made by the Government, it has not been possible to meet the power generation targets. Hon. Finance Minister is aware of it more than anybody else.

It is reported that as against a target of 41,000 megawatt power generation during the current Five Year Plan, it would be possible to achieve about 34,000 megawatt by next year. Even the previous NDA Government which was in power for the first two years of the Plan could not do much about it.

Power generation in 2005-06 is likely to show a modest growth of 4.7 per cent. It is mainly due to shortage of fuel like LNG and Coal. I am happy that the

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Naveen Jindal]

Government will add about 39,500 megawatt capacity in the next three years, including 33,000 megawatt in public sector. About 15,000 megawatt will be available by March 2007. It is understood that the Ministry of Power has invited bids for five Ultra Mega Projects of 4,000 megawatt each which may be awarded by the end of this year.

The fact that the shortfall in power generation has a crippling effect on agricultural and industrial production need not be overemphasised. The GDP losses are estimated to be approximately Rs. 300,000 crore due to shortfall in power. It is staggering figure which a growing economy cannot afford.

I would like to suggest that we should go all out overcome this shortfall. The coal production has to be augmented to meet the needs of the thermal power sector. I am glad that the coal policy is being reviewed from all angles. Hon. Finance Minister has stated that this year "45 coal blocks have been allotted for captive consumption to the power, cement and steel sectors and to the State Governments. After reserving blocks for Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries for the period up to 2012, it has been decided to de-block coal reserves of 20 billion tonnes for power projects." I welcome this decision wholeheartedly.

Pilferage of power has to be put down with a heavy hand. The distribution has to be streamlined. Another suggestion, I would like to give is to improve the inter-connectivity of the five regional grids. The States which are power deficit and have no natural resources to generate power on their own like Haryana should be given more power from NTPC, NHPC projects as Haryana is the Granary of the Nation and agriculture suffers because of power shortage.

Roads are a vital part of infrastructure both for agriculture and industry. I welcome that, keeping this in view, the hon. Finance Minister has provided for making seven expressways linking some major commercial cities. They are Delhi-Agra, Delhi-Jaipur, Delhi-Meerut, Delhi-Chandigarh, Mumbai-Vadodra, Bangalore-Chennai and Kolkata-Dhanbad. This will give a fillip to tourism also.

In addition, assistance to States and Union Territories has been fixed at Rs.1500 crore to improve roads. This will help faster movement of goods by road.

The Budget has provided an allocation of Rs. 669 crore for the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports which is a little more than 30 per cent of last year's allocation. An amount of Rs. 150 crore is to be spent on the development of infrastructure for the 2010 Commonwealth Games to be held in Delhi.

Nearly 82 per cent of the Budget allocated to the Ministry has been assigned for Sports & Youth Affairs which comes to Rs. 551.02 crore, Rs.124.99 crore more than the last year's allocation.

There is also a provision of Rs. 42.79 crore for the development of sports facilities in the North Eastern States as compared to Rs. 38.90 crore last year, an increase of Rs. 3.89 crore.

I welcome the allocation of Rs. 150 crore for the 2010 Games. I hope that much more will be allocated in the following years so that we can have the best of infrastructure for the Games. It will also help us in showcasing India as the prospective venue for the olympic Games.

However, the overall allocation of Rs. 669 crore for the Ministry falls much below the expectations of sportsmen like me who are keenly interested in promoting all the games, particularly the Olympic disciplines to the highest level. To compete at international levels, we have to have the latest equipment and training facilities. For this purpose, a much higher allocation is required.

I take this opportunity to point out that we must have welfare schemes to look after our eminent and budding players and those who have retired. Many of them are finding it hard to pull on. I will give just one example to illustrate my point. Take the case of Shri Mukesh Kharti, an Olympian Wrestler. He has represented India in 35 international events since 1996. He was ranked 5th in world wrestling championship in 2001 in Greece. What is his condition today? Due to financial problems, he cannot afford to have proper diet or practice with latest equipment. There are many more like him. Sir, the Government must take immediate measures to help such sports-persons, otherwise our youth will not feel encouraged to take to sports.

Sports may be made a part of Bharat Nirman also

so that we can build sports infrastructure in villages and as a result, we will widen our base of sportsmen. We need to give incentives to companies promoting Olympic sports. Sir, 150 per cent tax exemption should be given to companies who promote, sponsor or build infrastructure for Olympic sports.

I compliment the hon. Finance Minister for allocating a sum of Rs. 4813 crore for the mid-day meal scheme. In my view, this is an investment in our upcoming generations. At present, 12 crore school children all over the country are getting the benefit of this scheme. Another encouraging feature is that more and more children are being sent to schools in the villages.

I would like to suggest that the food being given to the children should be more nutritional. In most of the schools, only *khichri*, *dalia* or *sattoo* is served day after day. As a result, the children lose interest in these items after some period. We may consult qualified dieticians to suggest how to bring variety in the mid-day meals so that they become appealing and appetising. Secondly, the food should be cooked and served in hygienic conditions so as to keep the children free from diseases. Particular care should be taken of the water given to them.

If my suggestions are considered in the right perspective, I am sure, they will go a long way to make our coming generations strong, healthy and energetic. By and by, this scheme may be extended to middle-classes also because mid-day meal is not a matter of a meal for small children only. It should be viewed on a larger scale as an effort to tackle hunger and poverty. Our ultimate goal should be that no boy or girl will sleep on an empty stomach.

Let us remember the old saying—a healthy mind in a healthy body. Let us feed our children well under the mid-day meal scheme so that they will have healthy bodies and healthy minds and become valuable assets for India.

In the last five decades, India's population has increased from 36 crore in 1951 to over 102 crore in 2001. For a long time, the economists have been expressing their concern over the increasing population which is viewed as the biggest impediment to the development of the country.

As our economic growth gets diluted by rapid growth of population, many of us believe that in order to bring down population growth quickly, we have to perhaps emulate China's one child norm. While it is true that China has brought down its population growth rate remarkably, even more remarkable drop in population has occurred in Kerala over the same period, that too within the democratic set-up and without any coercion. Total fertility rate in China dropped from 2.8 in 1979 to 2.0 in 1991, while in Kerala it dropped from 3.0 in 1979 to 1.8 in 1991. In fact, the decline in China's population growth rate had its roots in increasing educational access, improvement in the economy and improvement in the status of the women.

Curbing population growth cannot be a goal in itself, it can only be a means to development. If development can help stabilising population that is much better. Obviously, India's large population in itself is not the real reason for high level of poverty, low per capita income and slow economic growth. The stark reality is that income levels and growth depend on how well the State invests in its people, in their education, in their health and in their well being to improve their quality of life. Therefore, socio-economic development and improvement in quality of life can be an end itself. The success of population stabilisation programme is dependent on various factors like improved literacy rate, socio-economic status, women's empowerment, better healthcare and other human resources indicators.

In order to achieve this objective, our Government has started various socio-economic programmes like National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Rural Health Mission, etc. and allocation for other programmes, such as Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Integrated Child Development Services, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme, Mid-Day Meals Scheme, Drinking Water and Sanitation, etc., has been substantially increased. Still, there is much to be done in the coming years.

I, therefore, urge upon the Finance Minister to allocate more funds for education and child health services so as to bring down maternal mortality ratio to below 100 per 1,00,000 live births, reduce infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births, achieve 80 per cent

[Shri Naveen Jindal]

institutional deliveries and 100 per cent deliveries by trained personnel; make school education up to the age of 14 years free and compulsory for both boys and girls, and reduce dropouts at primary and secondary level; promote delayed marriages for girls, as envisaged in our National Socio-Demographic Goals for 2010.

It is evident that the main thrust of the Budget is on farming sector because it is also the central theme of the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA. As a result of the concerted efforts of the Government and the hard work of our farmers, the foodgrain production this year is likely to be 209.3 million tonnes. It is 5 million tonnes higher than the previous year. To give it further boost, hon. Finance Minister has stated that Rs. 944.18 crore has been released so far as grant under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme. This will help to achieve the target of 600,000 hectares of irrigation potential this year.

Our Government and our party are fully aware of the problems and difficulties faced by the farmers. That is the reason why the Government has decided that the farmers will get short-term credit at 7 per cent only, with an upper limit of Rs. 3 lakh on the principal amount. This indeed is a great step and I am sure that the whole House and the farming community will welcome it. This will help our farmers to take to new technologies and equipment for increasing agricultural production.

I think, this is the right opportunity to point out a few problems being faced by the farming community. These problems have a deleterious effect on the cropping pattern and quality of soil.

The first is soil erosion which, according to media reports and experts, is becoming alarming. The country is losing its soil at a very fast rate and it takes a million years to replace topsoil. According to a report in Times of India dated 7 November 2005, the country's average soil erosion rate is 16 tonnes per hectare per annum which is more than three times the acceptable norm. The figure goes as high as 80 tonnes in the Himalaya. As a result, productivity goes down and the siltation rate goes up in crucial water reservoirs. According to hon. Minister of

Agriculture, soil erosion causes a loss of about 8 to 9 million tonnes of valuable nutrients.

The other two problems are the contamination of underground water due to pesticides and the growing ingress of salinity, particularly in the coastal areas. I will suggest that the Government may set up a high level committee of experts to address these problems and find out effective solutions.

The Government has decided to establish four new institutes of Hotel Management. This is in view of the increasing arrivals of foreign tourists. Their number touched 3.92 million in 2005.

I am happy that one of these institutes will be opened in Haryana. Other three are going to be opened in Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal—all new and small States. Sir, I suggest that the Haryana institute may be set up in the famous and historic town of Kurukshetra due to many locational advantages. It is next door to Delhi and the students can travel easily for in-house practical training in the five star hotels of Delhi as and when required.

As per the Budget allocation for the year 2006-07, education sector will receive Rs. 24,115 crore, 14 per cent of Gross Budgetary Support of Rs. 1,72,000 crore. It is 31.5 per cent higher than the Budget allocation for the year 2005-06. However, it is only about 0.68 per cent of our GDP estimated to Rs. 3 5,29,240 crore in 2005-06.

Allocation for elementary education alone is Rs.16,892.50 crore. Elementary education has been given priority since 1966, when it was decided to spend 6 per cent of its GDP on universalisation of elementary education. Forty years since, the figure still hovers around 3 per cent of GDP. The State of the World's Children 2002 Report (UNICEF) reveals that Korea (21 per cent), Thailand (17 per cent), Malaysia (23 per cent), Nepal (14 per cent) and the US (8 per cent) spend more on education than India in terms of GDP. Pakistan is the only country which spends less than India. The World average is 6 per cent.

The Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution accord the highest priority to provide free education to all children up to the age of 14 years. This has not been

achieved so far, as according to an estimate, about 1 crore children aged 8-14 are still out of school.

Despite a major thrust on enrolment in the elementary education sector, the dropout rate according to Planning Commission records is 60 per cent (both elementary and secondary level combined). It is as high as 79 per cent in certain States. The scenario worsens in case of girl child.

Keeping in view the above fact, my humble suggestion to the Finance Minister is to increase the allocation of funds for elementary education in the coming years so that it may be around 6 per cent of our GDP at the start of 11th Five Year Plan.

Sir, I will conclude by saying that the Budget presented by Shri Chidambaramji is a very positive and growth-oriented Budget. He has imposed no additional taxes which is very unique and exemplary. The unprecedented emphasis on rural India, the real India, the India of Gandhiji's dreams, is especially welcome. I once again join millions of my countrymen in supporting the Budget which will reinforce the foundation of a resurgent, vibrant and a truly shining India.

Sir, the hon. Finance Minister mentioned introducing GST by 2010 which is a welcome step. Only I would request his to try to achieve it by 2008 and I am confident everyone will fully support him. Another great concept is the revenue expenditure budget or the revenue-forgone budget which will show us the total cost of all the exemptions.

Sir, finally I would like to compliment the hon. Finance Minister for taking bold steps of introducing Outcome Budget which will look at qualitative aspects rather than only quantitative aspects.

I wholeheartedly support the Budget.

[Translation]

MS. MEHBOOBA MUFTI (Anantanag): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today budget is being discussed in the House. In my view 50% success of any budget depends on its implementation. It is regretful that a lot of problems are cropping up due to the atmosphere which has been created in the country. Especially the incident which took

place at Varanasi shocked us. I belong to a state where we see children drenched in blood and youths dying daily. Therefore I can empathise with their sorrow. I would like to congratulate the people of Varanasi that they did not let this incident snowball into a minority-majority issue despite the efforts of some politicians. I am happy that the chairperson of UPA, Soniaji herself visited the place and tried that the atmosphere is not vitiated there. I want to say that such an incident has not taken place for the first time, such incident have taken place several times and after such incident the most peculiar thing which is done is that within 24 to 48 hours some people are killed and it is said that these people were involved in the incident. If our police force is so efficient then why such an incident took place at all. Some people have doubts about this. Who are killed within 12 hours, 24 hours or 48 hours? The worst thing is that actual culprits are not caught and they watch on T.V. that innocent people have been punished for the crime perpetrated by them. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Madam, this is a discussion on General Budget.

....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please listen to me. This is a discussion on the General Budget and not on Presidential Address.

[Translation]

MS. MEHBOOBA MUFTI: I want to tell the people of country that we are Muslims and in our religion it is said "Huble Watan Minal Iman" i.e. iman (faith) and love for the country are both equal. The problem arises when we have to choose either of them. Don't create such a situation. ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, budget is prepared for the people, when there shall be no people, for whom the budget will be prepared.

This is a big country and its strategical importance is increasing day-by-day, America would come to you, other countries would also approach you. I have no objections to our country making agreements with other countries in the world. If such agreements benefit the

[Ms. Mehbooba Mufti]

country then they have my unstinted support. Many American Presidents have visited this country earlier also but such a reaction has been evoked for the first time. What is the reason for this? Look at the prevailing scenario—the situation in Iraq, the cartoon incident, the Iraq problem. In such an atmosphere this treaty has been signed. I fail to understand why this treaty was signed in such a hurry? ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Come to the Budget.

[Translation] We will discuss this issue on the 11th.

[English]

MS. MEHBOOBA MUFTI: I am coming to the Budget. I have to speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are going to have a discussion on this issue.

[Translation]

MS. MEHBOOBA MUFTI: I have a suspicion whether America is not using this treaty as a carrot and stick approach.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please come to the Budget.

MS. MEHBOOBA MUFTI: I will come to the Budget now. [Translation] This Budget has simply tried to consolidate last year's position. There are people in our country who stand below the middle class in status. Privatisation is being encouraged. Undoubtedly, privatization gives rise to efficiency but it finishes off the labour component.

Besides I am thankful to the Minister for the funds allocated for Jammu and Kashmir. I would like to tell the hon. Finance Minister that I had insisted on self-rule for the state in the recently held Round Table Meeting/Conference. An important constituent of self-rule is self-reliance. The most important resource Jammu and Kashmir has is water, followed by tourism, agriculture,

horticulture and handicrafts. Water as a resource, is of utmost importance to us but this is the area in which we have been hit hardest by the Indus Water treaty. This treaty has been signed because Article 370 was diluted in 1952 whereby the state government had handed over the control of river waters to the centre under the Delhi Agreement. I want Article 370 to be restored. The Self Rule model of 1947 should be restored. The state has its own resources for self-reliance and water is one of such resources. The state should be provided compensation for the loss suffered as a result of the signing of Indus Water Treaty so that it is able to realize its dream of self-reliance. The State returns Rs. 1700 crore to the Union Government under the power head out of the funds allocated to it. Whereas it can earn more than three thousand crore rupees from hydro power generated through its rivers. We are not able to do so because of this discriminatory treaty.

The security forces have done a good job in Jammu and Kashmir. The time has now come that 50-60 thousand young men should be recruited for the Police and assign the internal security of the state to its people.

Sh. Rahul Gandhiji is right in saying that we should improve our institutions so that we are able to provide a good education to our people in the country itself instead of sending our students out of the country.

SAARC fraternity has said that they want to set up a university and handicrafts center. Jammu and Kashmir is a complete, little India in itself. I would like Jammu-Kashmir to be chosen for the purpose of setting up this center. This proposal should be discussed with them. This would provide opportunities to the youth of the nation as well as the youth from Pakistan and other countries of the sub-continent to visit and explore Jammu-Kashmir.

Minorities are generally called anti-national. I would like to say something in this regard. Jammu-Kashmir has a population of one crore twenty lakh out of which 60 to 70 per cent belong to the Muslim community. Only 2 or 3 per cent of these Muslims have taken up arms and we have had to keep a force of 7 lakh army men posted in the state for the last 18 years. We shift the blame onto the minorities but if, God forbid, 15-20 crore Muslims of the country take to arms we may not be able to sit in the House for long.

[English]

*SHRI FRANCIS FANTHOME (Nominated): Sir, at the very onset let me compliment the Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram ji for his understanding of the current issue before the nation and the need to focus areas that will provide the right platform for progress and growth.

The Finance Minister has coupled with great financial skill understanding of the evolving socio-economic scenario with development thrusts addressing the future requirements of the nation in keeping with vision 2020 for the nation, in terms of progress and prosperity.

The greater our understanding about the economic needs of the nation, the greater are the inadequacies exposed. Bridging the divides between an essentially agrarian economy mixed with marginal industrial economy inputs, with the requirements of a knowledge economy, in the context of a social order that has a very special cultural identity, requires great depth of appreciation coupled with mastery of the economic instruments that can address the prevailing challenges. Fortunately he has the sound advice of a scholar Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and an understanding party President Smt. Sonia Gandhi, who provide the political will to address the concerns, with the much required focus on the "aam aadmi" in terms of the vision that Mahatma Gandhi had for the nation. It occurs to me that had this focus prevailed during the past five decades, we would have by now wiped the tear from the eyes of the poorest of the poor in the nation. It is apparent that a section of the people in the country are today participating with greater involvement and integration in creating the future, they also realise that the foundations of an equitable economy is good for their own economic prosperity in the long run.

To grasp how the progress in economic terms over the past hundred years has impacted us we can visualise the same in a span of a decade. About ten years back man emerged with a bullock car, a wheelbarrow with a plough and a sickle, living in thatched huts without healthcare, schooling and sanitation, facing floods, disease, drought and famine, bare foot, and wrinkled by the time he was thirty. About three years back he learnt

to read and write and discover his political identity. Two years ago he participated in the freedom struggle and shed the foreign yoke, built bridges and began to address the challenges of a emerging industrial economy. A year back began the green revolution, hospitals were set up and the motorcar was put on roads. Six months back we discovered the goodness of electricity, medicine, air travel and the telephone.

A month back we set up the systems of a planned economy and the institutions for research, expanded the educational infrastructure and provided resources for Bharat nirman, urban renewal, education and health care, and employment for all. And today we are shedding the mantle of a developing nation to find our true identity as a leading economy in the world with 8.2% growth rate and trained professionals that also support the growth of the most prosperous nations on the planet. Remarkable progress, but with a population over a billion and about half the population living below subsistence levels, devoid of adequate healthcare and access to modern amenities the burden on the Finance Ministry does not seem to lighten despite his efforts to bridge the prevailing divides.

No matter what some may say there has been remarkable progress during the past two years and the Congress party can take full credit for the greater economic good prevailing today.

As the nation progresses new vistas unfold consequently new challenges emerge to reach the un-reached. The country will not be built by those who wait and rest, look for discredits and flaws but by those who overcome obstacles and move onward.

I do not wish to repeat the commendations that have accrued consequent to the presentation of the Budget. Let me mention a few matters that need to be addressed to make for greater efficiency and introduce effectiveness in transactions. The bane of the processes in place is lack of accountability in delivering the rupee at the grass-root level.

A good start has been made by providing an Implementation Report of the budget for the financial year 2005-06. The focus of the report is expediency from the Ministry of Finance and its efficiency in providing resources. However, an evaluative report on outcomes is

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Francis Fanthome]

necessary for the people to know how effective the resources have been. This can be done by monitoring the role of the government in delivering the schemes to the people. It is courageous of the government to have the political will to address this paradigm shift and take up the challenge to provide urban amenities in rural areas.

It is my view that despite the resource base increasing exponentially over the past plans the attitude of the officers remains constrained. Very much like what prevailed in the Raj—they continue to be revenue officers and not creators of national goodness. While not responsible for entire spectrum of: mobilisation, utilisation, creation and evaluation of the revenue platform, there needs to prevail a sense of stake holding in the entire process. This can be achieved by impact analysis studies of the last budget in terms of the outcomes and value additions. This should include an analysis of the human capital generated consequent to the return on investments. The greater our understanding about the economic needs of the nation, the greater are the inadequacies exposed. Bridging the divides between an essentially agrarian economy and the knowledge economy is crucial for economic benefits in the future.

I commend the Budget and support the provisions provided therein.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (Dhenkanal): Sir, this is a middle of the road, non-descriptive, meaningless Budget produced by a brilliant mind. It is a Budget aimed only at the rich, the high and the mighty. But, unfortunately, it has completely neglected certain areas of this nation which deserve total attention. For example, my State of Orissa has been completely neglected in this Budget and I would like to mention a few points in detail. Let us also remember that Orissa, alongwith Bihar and a few other States, was a State which gave this country freight rationalisation for a very long time and it helped in creating the infrastructure on which both sides of this House claim that they have their contribution. But the reality is known to the people of Orissa.

It is being rumoured that the hon. Prime Minister may go to Orissa soon. It is hoped that an institute like

the National Institute of Science and the Paradip Refinery, which has been promised to the State for a very long time but, unfortunately, not been mentioned in the Budget, will be announced by the hon. Prime Minister when he visits Orissa in the near future. We do not have any quarrel with the Congress or with the ruling clique. They can take all the credit they like, but they must give the due that Orissa deserves. We have no objection to their *pasta* mind-set and we have absolutely no problems when VJ Cyrus in his MTV programme gives kudos to the national Budget. We appreciate it because that is also a part of India and that population is also watching what is happening in this country. But there are certain points that I would like to mention in brief, very quickly.

Sir, in para 96 huge Grant has been given to Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai Universities, Similarly, an amount of Rs. 100 crore have been given to the Punjab Agricultural University. We are very happy about it. Kolkata is Left, Mumbai is Congress and Chennai is the hon. Finance Minister's home State. It is excellent. Sir, Punjab is your home State. We are all very happy. But along with that we have to consider that Orissa also needs a boost in its educational facilities. We also have an agricultural university. We also have a culture university which needs the Central assistance, but nothing has been done about it. Our NIS and our AIIMS type institution projects have been shelved. When the BJD and BJP MPs complained about this and were agitating about this in the House, the hon. Minister of Finance himself took it upon himself to come and assuage our feelings and to tell us that 'chill, relax I will take care'. But it is sad that he forgot our demand and he did not think it fit that we should be taken care of in his own domain and no budgetary provision obviously means no sincerity.

Sir, in para 83 there is a talk of one thousand kilometres of access controlled expressways. Everybody in this House knows that LWE, the Left Wing Extremists, are creating problems all over this country, but in a specific belt—right down from Nepal and down South. We were hoping that the proposed Ranchi-Vizag National Highway which was conceived and which was supposed to run through this LWE affected areas, would be considered in this access controlled expressway programme. But there has been no mention of that in the Budget.

In para 80, where there is a mention of petroleum, it is stated that Rs. 22,000 crore would be invested for capacity increase of existing refineries, But, Paradip, which is a Greenfield refinery project, has been completely neglected in this Budget and there is no mention of it anywhere.

Similarly in para 75, there are talks of mega power projects in many States, some of our neighbouring States. Sir, Orissa has coal and Orissa has required infrastructure. But we have been kept out of this para and we have not benefited from this. Here, I would suggest that if you are already taking coal from us, if you are polluting our water and if you are not willing to invest more money in our State, you must give us 10 per cent free power from what NTPC produces in Orissa so that the State benefits from it.

Sir, let us admit that just because the people of Orissa decided not to vote a group of corrupt and inept Congress people to Parliament, this Government is settling scores and is taking revenge. Today we heard a very beautifully written speech read out to us about the educational system in this country. It is much about nothing. Everybody has been talking about *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. In your Budget, you have kept two per cent as education cess. You are collecting crores in that. Through that cess, you have re-invested a part of it, Rs. 7,100 crore or some figure which has been made into Rs. 10,000 crore or something. But there is nothing new about the education sector.

You have subsidised medical education, engineering education and other specialised studies. Who are the children who go and study in those institutes? It is the children of the rich people, the bureaucrats etc. Very few politicians' children get to study in these institutes. It is the businessmen, it is the bureaucrats whose children go and study. But once they finish their course in the IITs or in the medical colleges what do they do? They go off to the US, they go off to Canada and they go off elsewhere. But there is no system here in our country by which they can be made to pay back the subsidies that this society has invested in their studies.
...(Interruptions)

Sir, I will conclude in a very short time. It is also

sad that there is nothing specific mentioned about the health sector and especially about population control in this Budget. One of the major problems of this country is population increase. There is no mention of that. The hon. Minister of Finance, in his own words, has admitted that the number of taxpayers is increasing; tax collections are going up; compliance is on the rise. It is a very good information for all of us. But on the promised mention of administrative reforms to this increasing line, to tap that, no mention has been made about it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude now.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: Sir, I will take a minute. Without service to taxpayers will compliance increase? We have to see that. By removing Section 10(23)(g), tax exemption for income from investment in infrastructure, we have not only damaged infrastructure growth but we have also damaged the cause of the poor. I wonder if this will help in the so-called *Bharat Nirman*.

Similarly, the definition of long-term specified asset has been amended in Section 54(e)[c]. The notified bonds redeemable after three years, starting from 1st April, 2006 for National Highways Authority and Rural Electrification Corporation alone will be tax exempt.

At the same time, the people who have invested money in NABARD, which helps the farmer directly, National Housing Bank or SIDBI, which helps small and medium industries, they will not be benefited. The sad part is that there is retrospective effect on that. This should be considered whether these projects and this mindset will help in your *Bharat Nirman*.

When all the Western countries are giving higher subsidies to their agriculturists, here you have come down to Rs. 46,213 crore in this Budget from Rs. 46,874 crore given as subsidies in 2005-06 Budget. That means you have slashed Rs. 600 crore from farm subsidy alone. It is very sad that you are killing and throttling the agriculturists. There must be a re-think on this. It cannot be a country fit only for the survival of the rich and the high and the mighty. This country has to be made a country where the poor have to be made rich and the weak have to be made stronger.

*SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR (Dharwad South): Indian Industry and the corporate world might have given a thumbs-up to the Hon'ble Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram's Budget for 2006-07, but the common people by the large upset and disappointed.

There is 2% increase in the Service Tax. There is no relief on the Income Tax front. The Budget has no concrete steps for building infrastructure. Hence Budget lacks vision as expressed by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Ms. Jayalalitha.

Some relief is there for farmers while they take crop loan. But this is not enough to claim that is pro-farmer budget. There is nothing for farmers and little for aam aadmi (Common Man). The NDA regime lowered interest rates for short-term credit to farmers to 9% in 2004. Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram should have brought it to the down to 6%. The entire farming community is disappointed. All these years farmers were committing suicides but now weavers and cotton growers are also committing Suicides particularly in the States like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and others. The Finance Minister referred to a farm income guarantee scheme last year, but this time he ignored it. I take this opportunity to quote our guide and leader of the opposition Hon'ble Shri L.K. Advani. He said **"the budget punishes farmers, ignores the middle classes and gladdens the affluent"**. This budget is nothing but an eye wash. Irrigation should have been given impetus. Unfortunately the entire farming community has been ignored. There are a dozen long pending irrigational projects in Karnataka. The farmers in Khanpura, Guledagudda and other places are already and they have planned BANGALORE CHALO in the month of March. They are demanding the union Government to take up KALASA BANDURI, MALAPRABHA project and "UPPER TUNGA PROJECT' immediately.

Strangely the budget does not throw any light about such serious problems of the farmers. Karnataka had surplus electricity but now the state is limping and dumping the farmers in darkness. The budget is silent about generation of more power. The problem of labourers particularly mines workers and those working in small industries are enormous in the country particularly in my

state Karnataka. Kudremukh Iron Ore Company in Karnataka locked its doors and the doors were sealed on 31st December 2005. Similarly, a couple of years ago all the Gold Mines in Kolar Gold Mines including Oorigam, Andersonpet and other areas have been closed. The labourers and other workers who were working in the above mentioned industries area at the across roads. Is it not the moral duty of the Union Government to come to the rescue of these helpless labourers and other employees. The Union Government instead of providing employment to the unemployed, it is silently witnessing the workers losing their employment and therefore, I have no other choice but to call this as a lacklustre budget.

This Government has completely forgotten the goals outlined in the National Common Minimum Programme. While the Finance Minister has increased outlays for the plan by 20.4% the proposed outlay for agriculture and employment generation are inadequate to meet the goals outlined in the National Common Minimum Programme. As far as the vast majority of poor and working women are concerned, their expectations have been completely belied. Infact, it is shocking to note that at a time when there is migration of millions of women to the cities in search of jobs the outlay on working women's hostel has actually been cut, Strange! but true. Though there is no imposition of new taxes or hike in the tax rates, there is no relief to common man either. There is no mention of the social security bill for the unorganised sector for workers who are the worst exploited.

Hon'ble Minister of Urban Development Shri Ajay Maken who won the Lok Sabha Election from New Delhi constituency gave one dozen important assurances to the people including the setting up of Sixth Pay Commission. Last time it was in the year 1993 the Fifth Pay Commission was set up to look into the pay, allowances and other working conditions of the Central Government Employees. Sixteen years have elapsed but announcement has come from the center about the time of the setting up of Sixth Pay Commission. Another shocking fact is that the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission have not been implemented till now. Many departments of most of the Ministries, autonomous bodies have not cared to implement the SECOND ASSURED CAREER PROGRESSION (II ACP). According to second ACP all the Central Government employees

*The speech was laid on the Table.

immediately after their 24 years of service will become eligible for their Second financial up-gradation irrespective of the time of their first financial up-gradation or promotion. Unfortunately, most of the officials in Ministries and Autonomous Bodies do not know as to how to interpret and implement this recommendation II ACP. Home Ministry is the only Ministry which is strictly implementing this provision and giving financial i.e., II ACP after 24 years service, even though the employees has got his first promotion after 20 years. That means after four years of his first promotion after completing 20 years of service the employee will get his II ACP in just 4 years. Will the Hon'ble Minister give an assurance to the Central Government employees through this house that II ACP will be implemented forthwith in all the offices of Ministries and Autonomous bodies.

Now I shall take up the problems of my state Karnataka. We are urging the Ministry of Finance to clear the Metro Rail Project as it is the only solution to the traffic problems of the Silicon City. Many I.T. Industries have already stopped further investments in Bangalore. Some of them have threatened to leave the city. Under these circumstances I request the Hon'ble Finance Minister to clear Bangalore Metro Railway Project without any further delay. Some of the Roads in Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli Dharwad and other Cities have to be expended. There is an urgent need to construct subways and over bridges in these cities. Infrastructure facility in all these cities especially in Bangalore city should be improved without any further delay. My plead to the Hon'ble Finance Minister is to release at least 1000 crores of rupees for improving the infrastructure facilities in Bangalore and other cities in Karnataka State.

My constituency has some peculiar problems which have to be addressed immediately as we have waited for a long time.

"Upper Tunga Irrigation Project" should be completed immediately sufficient funds may be provided to this project under A.I.B.P. project.

Harshar To Hubli "Four Lane Road N.H. 4 between 282 to 440 K.M. may please be provided. Expedited. Sufficient funds may please be provided.

Major Industries should be set up to eradicate

unemployment in between 282 400 K.M. on N.H. 4 between Varoda and Tungbhadra river.

Central School in Haveri Town may please be set up immediately.

ROB in Haveri Railway Station i.e. in Haveri Town, Distt Headquarter my please be taken us immediately to the longer conveyance of the people of farmers in particular.

Sir, for the last two decades we are (urging) demanding that a bench of Karnataka High Court should be set up a Hubli-Dharwad as it is there are lakhs of cases pending before the High Courts. Also people from Northern parts of Karnataka find it very difficult to travel more than 400 kms to reach Bangalore. A quick decision has to be taken infavour of the people of northern Karnataka.

Karnataka State is providing mid-day meals to students studying in schools upto 10th Standard. Now, Karnataka Government has an ambitious plan to extend this facility up to 12th Standard. Matching grants have to be come from the Centre. But strangely till now there is no response from the Union Government.

I would like to illustrate another interesting story to the August House. The construction of the Bangalore International Airport was planned to start by October 2002 and the airport was to become operational by 2005. This would have become India's first Greenfield, Corporate, Joint Sector Airport build and managed to International Standards. Karnataka Government has repeatedly requested the Centre to support the project from the proposed National Funds for Airport. Will the Hon'ble Finance Minister will give an assurance to this effect while replying to the debate such that at least our children will be able to see this dream Devenahally Airport. Sir, I would like to add one word at this stage. The construction of the Airport has since commenced on 2nd July 2005 and my request to the centre is to provide sufficient funds such that this ambitious project can see the light of the day as early as possible.

Similarly the work of the Belgaum Airport is also pending for a long time. The centre has to take up the improvements of terminal building and security measures

[Shri Manjunath Kunnur]

of the airport. This request was made to the centre one year ago. Hence this has to be taken up by the centre very soon.

Before concluding, I would like to thank the Hon'ble Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram for announcing Rs. 14,300 crores with a view to combating rural unemployment and poverty. Of this Rs. 11,300 crore will be utilised under the National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREG) Scheme and Rs. 3000 crores is to be spent on Sampoorna Grameen Yojana (SGRY). A massive allocation of the funds to the tune of Rs. 3,825.73 crores is proposed for the Panchayati Raj Ministry.

Finance Minister has also said since there was a legal guarantee of employment under the NREG Act, more funds would be provided as required. I therefore, request him through you sir, to release substantial funds to combat rural unemployment and poverty. Similarly agriculture should get a massive allocation. The economy of our country mainly depends upon agriculture. This House is well aware that we can provide foodgrains not only to the whole of India, but also to the whole world, if modern and scientific methods are adopted and sufficient funds are provided export of variety of Basmati Rice, wheat, Bangalore Rose Onion, Sandal Products, tender coconut water and other products can increase tremendously. Floriculture is flourishing and infact export of flowers is making miracles in the country. The centre has to give a big boost to the export of the above mentioned goods, and that is the reason why I am stressing again and again about agriculture, horticulture, cottage industry and rural economy. Agriculture is the backbone of our economy and it has to be strengthened both the Centre and the States.

The growth rate has crossed 8% and I take this opportunity to thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and his colleagues for this achievement. Several incentives have also been announced for education of girls from SCs, STs, OBCs, and Minorities. Likewise I urge upon the Union Government to continue the scheme of boarding and lodging of girls students access and equity grants under the Ministry of HRD secondary Higher Education department. So as to be helpful to the women education in rural and backward area.

The Government of India has provided sufficient funds for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and ICDS scheme and mid-day meal scheme, I being a member of HRD Standing Committee visited so many States like West Bengal, & North Eastern States. These schemes have not been properly implemented.

Hence I kindly request the Government of India to form a vigilance and monitoring Committee at State and Distt. Level. The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India monitoring Division has issued a notification and guarantee order likewise it is more important to set up a vigilance and monitoring Committee under Chairmanship of Member of Parliament of their respective constituencies in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

Finally I want to draw the attention of the centre towards the pathetic condition of cotton growers and weavers in the country particularly in Northern Karnataka. Earlier only farmers were committing suicide but now weavers throughout the country especially in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra are committing suicides. The Union Government should come forward to rescue the weavers from destruction. The labourers who are working in looms are demanding minimum wages.

Centre should immediately enact a law such that all the workers in looms can get minimum wages.

I would like to reiterate and request the Union Government to help the state of Karnataka regarding following urgent matters.

Infrastructure facilities of cities especially in Bangalore deserves a substantial amount allocation very soon.

Irrigational projects which are pending for a long time should be completed and enough funds must be provided by the centre.

Bangalore Metro Railway Project should become a reality at the earliest all decks be cleared immediately.

Interest on agriculture soft loans should be waived to help the small and medium farmers.

The demands of the weavers should be looked into sympathetically.

I hope and trust that Hon'ble Finance Minister will come out with suitable solution while replying to this debate.

I thank you sir and with these words I conclude my speech. I may please be permitted to lay the speech on the table of the House.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, I will not say that I am opposing the Budget because the financial indicators are very strong. With a bullish stock market, buoyant tax collection and above eight per cent GDP growth, the indicators are very good. I shall congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for three more achievements—achieving the target set for doubling the rural credit, bridging down the fiscal deficit and promising to disburse credit to the farmers at an interest rate of seven per cent. I thank him for that, but as a Member of the Opposition, it is also my duty to find out loopholes in the Budget and point them out. That is exactly what I shall do.

The Budget sets a target of ten per cent GDP growth. How will we achieve it? We can achieve it only by growth through an expeditious process of reforms. With eight per cent GDP growth, the speed is just right to mount big tag reforms on the economy. But instead, the Finance Minister has made a tightrope walk across the minefield. If he had tilted either way, he would have attained sainthood and if he had moved right, towards freeing the economy from artificial investment, restraints and inefficient spending, which is deemed sinful not only by this Government but also by their supporters, by their allies...*(Interruptions)* Sir, leave him. He always does like that. He thinks that only by insulting, he will earn some name like that.

More than doing the right thing, not doing anything wrong has become the virtuous way of this Budget. Instead of using the strong economy to take bold steps, the hon Finance Minister has expressed mere intentions and pious platitudes to achieve this. The job of the Finance Minister is to make sure that he is not just witnessing the spectacular high growth, but also to contribute to it, but I do not find any contribution of the Finance Minister to this Budget. So, I rate this Budget as 50:50 for doing good. I rate this Budget as the lost opportunity also for doing good. It is neither a feel good Budget nor a feel

bad Budget; it is a feel relieved Budget. It is a tough job to decipher this Budget.

Sir, growth cannot be auto-piloted; it can only be geared by the individual policy intervention. Where is the policy intervention? There is hardly any policy intervention because now I will comment with regard to *The Economic Survey* that has been presented by this Government on the floor of this House.

Is no policy intervention a genuine cause for reforms or it is a withdrawal symptom?

I would like to give you some concern from *the Economic Survey*...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): It seems that the puse button has not been withdrawn.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please do not give running commentary in the House.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: I would like to give you some concerns that have been expressed in *the Economic Survey*, but the same have not addressed in the Budget. The concerns that have been expressed in *the Economic Survey* include higher inflation and persisting danger of expected oil price hike, hardening of the interest, fiscal deficit, etc. These are the concerns expressed in *the Economic Survey*. A warning has also been given in *the Economic Survey* with regard to the burgeoning subsidies, labour market rigidities and distorted tax exemptions. All of it calls for the Government to address the perverse incentives, and the anomalous differential tax rates for crude and petroleum products. But it has not been addressed in it.

It has also been mentioned in *the Economic Survey* that the Survey calls for a bold response to the situation of incomplete pass through of crude oil price hike to the consumers. It has given a warning that the absence of a firm resolve could have serious consequences to the finances of the Government as well as the oil companies. I would like to know this from the hon. Minister. What has he done, through his Budget, even though this has been mentioned in *The Economic Survey*?

Let us take the example of the power sector. If you want to attain 8 per cent growth or 10 per cent growth,

[Shri Kharabela Swain]

then you require power. Power is the engine of growth. But let us kindly observe the growth of power generation. It has fallen by 4.57 per cent during April-December, 2005, and many States are reeling under power cuts. The average power shortfall is eight per cent, that is 5000 crore units. The Government says that it will electrify all the villages under *Bharat Nirman*, but that will take time. Even if all of them are electrified, yet the wired villages will get power only for a few hours.

Another point with regard to the power sector is that there is uncovered subsidy of State Electricity Boards to the tune of Rs. 15,987 crore this year, and it is going to be enhanced to Rs. 18,470 crore next year. It is a pity that it has been heightened by the shortage of coal. I am saying this because coal generation has been reduced by 1.5 million units this year.

I would now like to mention about the issue of infrastructure. As regards the infrastructure sector, they have mentioned in their own *Economic Survey* that the Golden Quadrilateral project has been held up for want of purposive land acquisition by many States. Everybody in this House knows that it has considerably slowed down. They have also admitted it in their *Economic Survey* that it is because of the failure of the contractors. This is another reason for which, it has considerably slowed down.

As regards drinking water, there is acute scarcity of drinking water everywhere, but *the Economic Survey* says that 96 per cent of the inhabited villages in India have been covered by safe drinking water. Does anybody in this House believe that 96 per cent of the habitats in this country have been covered by safe drinking water?

Let us take the example of unemployment. It says that the unemployment situation has risen on a daily basis from 5.6 per cent to 9 per cent for the rural males, and from 5.6 per cent to 9.3 per cent for rural women within a decade, that is, from 1993 to 2004.

Again, it has been mentioned that unemployment is the highest where minimum wages are high and the workers have stronger bargaining power. I accuse this Government that they are talking about implementing the

National Employment Guarantee Scheme, and that is exactly going to heighten this rate of unemployment because these are the factors this National Rural Employment Scheme is going to create, and the Government will learn them within a year or two. The labour law rigidity, protective laws in this country, has restricted labour mobility and has led to the capital-intensive methods in the organised sector. This is what they have mentioned in *the Economic Survey* and there is no redressal of these points. That is what they have mentioned in *the Economic Survey*.

On education, the hon. young Member of Parliament from Congress, Mr. Rahul Gandhi, delivered a good speech. But my point is that the hon. Finance Minister, the Government, speakers after speakers, are taking the credit that they have put more and more money in *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* and in elementary education. It is agreed. I know that the Central allocation has increased from Rs. 8,225 crores in 2004-05 to Rs. 15,244 crore in 2005-06. Even though the allocation for education has increased substantially, its share in the GDP has come down. The expenditure by the Centre and the States combined together in this educational sector has come down from 3.74 per cent of the GDP in 2003-04 Budget Estimates to 3.49 per cent of the GDP in 2004-05. Will the hon. Minister during his reply say that this is wrong? The Finance Minister himself said, and the Government has also declared its intention of increasing the allocation in education to six per cent of the GDP, but actually, it has fallen down.

In regard to rural credit, the hon. Minister knows that it is mandatory on the part of each and every nationalised bank to provide 18 per cent of its total net credit to the agricultural sector, but most of these banks have not done that. Out of the 27 public sector banks, only 13 banks have attained this target last year. During the course of his reply, the hon. Minister said that it was very difficult to attain this target. If it is difficult, then why do you set this target of 18 per cent? If 13 banks have attained it, why can't the other 14 banks not attain it, especially the State Bank of India, the leader? In the case of State Bank of India, the disbursement of rural credit is only to the extent of 12.99 per cent meaning thereby that they are even five per cent short of the mandatory

provision. I will appeal to the hon. Minister to look into this matter.

I will just come to another point. It is with regard to this fiscal deficit. What the Government has claimed is that it has brought down fiscal deficit to 2.1 per cent of the GDP in this year's Budget, and the hon. Finance Minister says that he will cut it further in future and he will bring it to zero during 2009. That is the target set by the FRBM Act. If to remain in the course of the target set by the FRBM Act, the revenue deficit for 2006-07 should have been fixed at 1.7 per cent and not at 2.1 per cent. The interest rates are hardening everywhere. It is not only hardening here, it is hardening almost everywhere in the world. There is a 0.5 per cent increase in the interest rates on loans for house building, loans for purchase of cars and in other sectors.

19.00 hrs.

When the interest rates increase, the Government would have to pay more on its borrowings. When the Government pays more, how does the hon. Minister expect to restrict the fiscal deficit in future? This was the right time that he could have utilised to reduce the fiscal deficit.

Hon. new Member Shri Hooda has just now mentioned that the Budget has tried to match the outcomes with the outlays. I would urge the hon. Minister to go in for private-public partnerships. I would advise him that for every rupee spent by the Government he should see that five rupees come from the private sector. What is important is to have the right infrastructure, correct delivery systems and accountability. The hon. Minister should see that he becomes a coordinator in the Centrally-sponsored schemes. The Government is only moving from project approach to programme approach. I would expect that he would coordinate this programme. This Budget does not lead either to a consumption boom or an investment boom. The situation in the country now is such that even if the Government commits mistakes, the economy will continue to stay buoyant.

To set up plant in India, an investor will have to spend up to 20 per cent of his total cost on building basic infrastructure such as roads, captive power plants etc. If he goes to China, he does not have to do that. It is

because of this that more funds are going out and Indians are now investing more outside the country than in India. Does the Finance Minister not think it is going to put us in trouble? Or, does he believe that this is also a good sign for Indian economy?

The Government had set up the Rangarajan Committee to go into the issue of petroleum pricing. The Committee has submitted its report but there is no mention of that in the Budget. The Government has set up an Investment Commission under the chairmanship of Mr. Ratan Tata, one of the leading Industrialists of India. That Commission has also submitted its report. The Report made recommendations on labour reforms, speeding up of infrastructure development, cutting the red tape, and removing the FDI cap. We do not know what the hon. Minister has done about it.

I was not surprised when the hon. Minister during the course of his Budget speech made an appeal to the Left on the Pension Fund Regulatory Authority Bill. I am a member of Standing Committee on Finance. The Committee was asked by the Government again and again to quickly examine the Bill because the Government was in hurry to move it in Parliament. We did our best and passed on the Bill with our consent to the Government. However, because the Left is opposing the Bill the Government is not piloting it. It is shameful on the part of the Government to back out like this. In an intervention, the hon. Minister said that this was the only political space that was left with him and that was why he was unable to move forward on it.

I am in full agreement with the concerns expressed in the Economic Survey. I would suggest that the Government must address all those concerns.

Only then it would be possible to achieve the target of 10 per cent growth. I would like to make two or three suggestions. I have already mentioned with regard to the priority sector. I would appeal to the hon. Minister of State for Finance that the *Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana* (PMRY) should be recast because the current recovery on the PMRY is hardly 18 per cent in most of the cases. Hence, the banks should be allowed to identify their own beneficiaries and have their own training programme. Only then, this programme would be successful.

[Shri Kharabela Swain]

Investment in the Food Corporation of India for procurement of agricultural produce should be treated as a priority sector lending. Most of the banks want that it should be treated as a priority sector. While giving rural credit, banks expect mortgage. Stamp duty differs from State to State. My suggestion is that it should be same because in some of the States it is very high which is putting people who take credit with a lot of difficulties.

Self-Help Groups are doing exceedingly well. Their recovery level is 97 or 98 per cent. They should be given more training because more and more training would improve the quality of their asset.

Already my colleagues from Orissa had mentioned about this. I would remind that the hon. Leader of the House, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, our Finance Minister and the Prime Minister have already assured that the National Institute of Science would be established in Bhubaneswar. I believe that the Government would deep its word. Whether they establish it in Kolkata or no, we are not bothered. But let them established it in Bhubaneswar. ...*(Interruptions)* We do not bother whether it is established in Kolkata or not, we must have one in Bhubaneswar because we do not have any Central Institute. During the tenure of the NDA Government, we were assured that another All India Institute of Medical Sciences would set up. In response to the Calling Attention notice last year, the hon. Health Minister assured us that within three months, construction would start. Where are the All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences? It is neither established in Orissa nor in Bihar or Punjab or Chhattisgarh or Uttaranchal, altogether six such institutes were assured. If the Government is so much interested in the health of the people of the country, it should start construction immediately. Revenue collection is very high. If that is the case, then why are you not starting it immediately?

There is *Subarna Rekha* River in my constituency, Balasore, in Orissa. Its mouth should be dredged. Since it is silted, it is causing floods.

I would like to appeal on fringe benefit tax. Since it has been opposed by the corporate sector, can be the Government increase one per cent tax on the corporate tax and do away with the fringe benefit tax?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs would like to say on Private Members Business.

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSHI: I seek the indulgence of the House that to facilitate the important Government business tomorrow, I propose that the House may suspend the Private Members Business tomorrow, the 10th March, 2006.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What is the sense of the House?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Gentlemen, I would like to make one request. More than 30 hon. Members are still there to speak. Therefore, I would like to make a request that they should be very brief in their in their speeches. It would be better if they give the suggestions instead of making lengthy speeches.

Shri V.K. Thummar.

*DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Sir, I am speaking on behalf of my Party Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam headed by Mr. Vaiko leader of the Tamilians in Tamil Nadu.

The planned progress of our country towards prosperity is very much documented in the Budget as evidence by the steady growth of the GDP which was during.

1999 - 2003	5%
2004 to 2005	7.5%
2005 to 2006	8%

The Budget has many good aspects and I support the Budget as announced which are to benefit and to uplift the farmers and Rural People who constitute about 70 per of our Indian population.

Farmers are to get short term credit at 7 per interest rate with an upper limit of Three Laks on the principal amount. This in fact has given a great relief for the farmers.

*The speech was laid on the Table.

Farm Credit was Rs 1,25,309 crore in 2004-2005. Current year Rs 1,75,000 crore 2006-2007 for the current year Fifty Thousand crores increased.

50 lakh New Farmers will be benefited, tenant farmers also will be benefited under the same scheme, by opening a separate window.

Further six lakh hectares of irrigation and potential, is proposed to be created this year.

L.P.G, Petrol & diesel prices not touched. Fiscal deficit from 4.1% and Revenue deficit 2.6% will be brought down to 3.8% and 2.1% respectively.

Fiscal Position will be improved by:—

tax Collection and by

reducing the non plan expenditure and

Tax proposals are Central Excise, Service tax and Indirect taxes only.

Tax on ATM should be reduced to the minimum possible to facilitate use by all common men.

Rural Infrastructure Development under Bharat Nirman Scheme: Rural electrification of one thousand and one hundred crores, which is to cover 10,366 villages,

Rural Roads,

Accelerated Rural Water supply Project,

Rural Housing 6 lakh Houses are to be built,

Rural Telephoning, and

National rural Health Mission concentrating on Sanitation Health Nutrition & Drinking Water.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme gets Rs. 11,300, crore for the benefit of the Rural and the Farmer population of the country, 200 districts are to be selected with Water Conservation Project added to it. This scheme will be useful in the long run only if the money is invested in Small Scale Industries or Khadi and Village Industries, Cottage Industry so that they work throughout the year to earn for their livelihood. Otherwise this huge recurring expenditure is going to be a colossal waste.

Self Help Group (SHG) There are credit linked Eight lakhs one thousand SHGs Credit to them is Nearly Five Thousand crore has been allotted. Further enrollment of Credit linked three Lakhs eighty five thousands SHGs is aimed for 2006-2007.

Sarva Siksha Abhiyan—Ten thousand forty-one crores. Noon meal is to be given for 12 crore School going Children which is very much appreciated for as a revolution education.

There has been no mention about inter-linking of Peninsular rivers about which my leader, Thiru Vaiko is very much interested. I wish at least, during the Supplementary Budget, plans should be approved and funds should be allotted.

Urban Development: One hundred and ten crore is allotted. I request to allot required fund for Coimbatore City for modern Drainage system in the Town.

Ultra Mega Power Project—Among the five, one Ultra Mega Power Project should be installed in Tamil Nadu—4000 mega watt. Further, Sir, I again wish that the Service Tax for ATMs should be reduced to the minimum.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Sir, the total budget expenditure for the year 2006-07 is Rs. 5 lakhs 63 thousand 991 crores, out of which plan expenditure is Rs. 1 lakh 72 thousand 728 crores and non-plan expenditure is 3 lakh 91 thousand 269 crores. This budget makes no mention of any efforts on the part of the government to effect a reduction in non-plan expenditure. The Budget is not simply an account of income and expenditure but is a document which purports to fulfill the needs of the country and strive towards a bright future for the country. If we test this budget on this touchstone it would be found wanting. The thrust of the budget is on increasing production. The important thing is that the increased production should be distributed equitably so that disparity between the haves and the have-nots is reduced and the rising unemployment could be checked. The Government has resolved to attain an annual growth

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ramnji Lal Suman]

rate of ten per cent during the course of next few years and the corresponding targets for agricultural and industrial sectors are 4 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. Both the targets are far fetched. To effect an increase in agricultural production effective water management is needed and power is needed to accelerate the growth of industries. Government policies have proved to be a failure in both fields. With regard to agriculture, it can be said that in the history of independent India this sector has never been so neglected as it has been now.

The Government has been avoiding the issue of suicides by farmers but the real picture has emerged now after all. The Maharashtra Chief Minister, Vilas Rao Deshmukh has admitted that 1500 farmers have committed suicide in Maharashtra alone since 2002 till date. The Finance Minister himself admitted after presenting the Budget that the farmers in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh are committing suicide because they find themselves unable to repay their debts. To resolve this problem the government has proposed to increase the agricultural loans and made a budget provision of Rs. one lakh seventy five thousand crores towards this end. But I would like to know whether the instructions issued by the RBI to all the other banks to the effect that 18 per cent of total loans granted should be granted to farmers, have been followed or not. The Finance Minister has announced that farmers would be granted loan at the interest rate of 7 per cent whereas the Agriculture Commission has recommended that the interest rate should be 4 per cent. Doesn't this amount to betrayal of farmers? The government may make any claim about increasing loan amounts but the ground reality is that 43 per cent of the farmers in the country take loans from private moneylenders.

I would like to tell that the farmers belonging to the area having high yield are more dependent on private sector moneylenders than on the loans provided by these banks. About 52% farmers in Punjab, 58 per cent in Bihar, 63 per cent in Rajasthan and 49 per cent in Andhra Pradesh raise loan from the moneylenders and the interest paid on loan range from 18 per cent to 36 per cent. It is a matter of concern that the Government has

not included agriculture in the eight-priority sectors. It is this Government, which had constituted an agriculture commission under the Chairmanship of famous scientist M.S. Swaminathan which submitted its report to the Government. But the Finance Minister has not bothered even to mention anything about implementing the recommendations of this Commission in his budget speech. The main problem of the farmers is how to increase productivity in farming, decrease the cost of production, get remunerative price for produce get the crop sold at profit after reaping and get cheap and advanced seeds. The Finance Minister has not looked into all these questions. The need of the hour is to set up an agriculture information center and to set up a fund to deal with waiving off loans and preventing of suicide in every village today.

Sir, the future of farming is dark without proper arrangement for irrigation. This Government had accorded due priority to water harvesting in its first budget. Two-thirds of the total agricultural land of the country still depends on the mercy of Monsoon. The Government had resolved to renovate all the traditional reservoirs of the country but the Government has taken up renovation work only on 20 thousand traditional reservoirs of 23 districts in 13 states after a lapse of approximately two years. A target for expenditure of about Rs. 4481 crore was fixed which included the share of states as well. The Government had made a provision of Rs. 1680 crore under accelerated irrigation scheme during 2005-06 and Rs. 2350 crore during 2006-07. It is very difficult to understand how the irrigation system of the country is likely to be improved with such scanty amount. U.S.O.F. Fund has been set up to improve telecommunication system in the rural area. An amount equal to the 5 per cent of the revenue collected by the cellular operators is recovered from them under it. Seven thousand crore rupee is balance in this fund now but an arrangement of only Rs. 1500 crore has been made for improvement of telecommunication system in rural area in 2006-07. Whereas the Telecom Regulatory Authority has assessed that an arrangement for Rs. 9 thousand crore will have to be made for connecting rural India with telecommunication services. The same Regulatory Authority has also made an assessment that an amount of Rs. 37 thousand 5 hundred 41 crore will be deposited in U.S.O.F. Fund by

2010. It is certainly a matter of concern that despite arrangement of fund, the scheme could not be completed in the stipulated time. When the price of crude oil decreased to 51 and 52 dollar per barrel in the international market during the past months, the issue of decreasing the process of petroleum products particularly that of petrol and diesel was raised. Although the Government had reduced the price of fuel used in aeroplanes in view of above decline in the international market but prices of petrol and diesel were not reduced. It was reasoned that decision would be taken after the report is submitted by the C. Rangarajan Committee constituted by the Prime Minister. Incidentally the report of committee was submitted before the Finance Minister presented the budget. The main task of the committee was to frame policy for fixing the prices of petroleum products and to rationalize the taxes being imposed by the state and the central governments. Overlooking the recommendations of C. Rangarajan Committee, the Finance Minister increased the taxes. The cess on crude oil, which was Rs. 1800 per metric tonne was increased to Rs. 2500 per metric tonne. Besides, though the government has classified LPG as declared goods for which the sale tax was collected at the rate of 10 to 14 per cent earlier to be collected at the rate of 4 per cent only. This tax deduction will result into reduction of price by 24 rupees per cylinder. Was this benefit passed on to the consumer? The Government has done nothing except putting money from one pocket to the other. The Ministry of Petroleum is advocating for hike in the price of LPG by Rs. 75/- of petrol by Rs.1.21, and of diesel by rupees 1.69 per litre in the name of the Rangrajan Committee. The Government should frame policy for fixation of price of petroleum products without any delay.

Sir, subsidy on food and fertilizers has been fixed at Rs. 24 thousand and 3 thousand crore rupees respectively in this budget. Overall subsidy stands between 44 thousand crore rupees to 46 crore rupees. The Government talks of decreasing subsidy. This subsidy is given as economic assistance to the needy people. On the other hand, debt and interest thereon in the country is increasing day by day. The amount of interest amounted to Rs. one lakh twenty six thousand nine hundred thirty-four crore rupees in 2004-05 which

increased to 1 lakh 39 thousand 823 crore rupees in 2006-07. If an amount of rupees 1 lakh 50 thousand crore rupees is spent on the payment of interest out of the budget amounting Rs. 5 lakh and 50 thousand crore, can the budget of this country be said to be development oriented? If one rupee would be spent from the budget of 2006-07, 21 paise out of it would be spent on the payment of interest. Similarly if an income of 1 rupee is earned, out of it 22 paise will be added to debts. It clearly means that the country has based its economic policy on debts. Only some divine power can protect a family or country whose economy is based on debt and on whom the debt is increasing continuously. The budget has disappointed a common man. It is certainly anti-village and anti-agriculture budget.

SHRI V. K. THUMMAR (Amreli): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the budget for 2006-07 presented by the Finance Minister on 28th February. It has been shown in the budget that we have achieved progress in every field and we have taken the path of development. Although the nature has not been kind to us yet we have been able to achieve GDP growth rate of 8.1 per cent despite bearing the burnt of nature. This growth rate stands at 9.4 per cent in the manufacturing sector and in agriculture sector we have achieved the growth rate of 2.3 per cent. The mercy that should have been showered over farmers by nature is not there. Yesterday, there was a heavy rainfall in Gujarat, which has caused great loss to the crop of wheat of the farmers.

As everyone knows until the pace of rural economy is not accelerated the true development of India will not be possible. The rural economy will be strengthened by promoting other parts of agriculture such as horticulture, floriculture, by promoting food processing and the people residing in villages will be directly benefitted from it. I would like to thank Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi ji and Mr. Finance Minister for the effort made by the Government of U.P. for farmers. According to Central government the state government does not make available related information. No payments for Crop Insurance Scheme has yet been made in Gujarat. When we approached the Finance Minister he replied that the state government had not staked claim for that. The interests of farmers are being jeopardized due to the tussle between state and central government. The

[Shri V. K. Thummar]

time-limit for payment of crop insurance scheme should be fixed or there should be a separate authority so that all the disputes on crop insurance scheme may be settled.

Economic development of any country depends on its economic reforms. Maximum results can be achieved from less expenditure through these reforms. Such efforts may help any country to be on the path of development. Our Finance Minister who after gaining expertise in economic reforms has used administrative power for economic reforms. This can overhaul the economy of our country. Some scheme should be launched for farmers through economic reforms. There is development in industrial sector and many other sectors but farmers are facing lot of problems. Hence there should be some clear-cut policy for farmers.

The country has developed very fast with the growth of education and commercial education as indicated in the budget presented by the Finance Minister. Even our young leaders Rahulji and Hooddaji have also stated that the youth will definitely progress from the efforts to be made by the government for new education system.

There is a huge foreign exchange reserve in India. The import is growing at the rate of 26.67 per cent in India and export by 18.9 per cent. There is a great need to improve the condition of foreign trade so that industry and other trades may get a chance to progress. This could be achieved through more export than import. It will increase employment opportunities. The House is very well aware of the fact that unemployment has taken a terrible form. Export has to be increased for removing unemployment. The banks are coming forward for promoting investment in agriculture. But I regret to say that foreign, private and co-operation banks create some or the other problems in extending loans to the farmers as they simply do not take interest in the matter. Co-operative banks and foreign banks provide loan to the farmers at the minimum interest rate of eleven per cent that is why the farmers are dying. They should be given some benefit, but they are not getting benefit. The Government announces that farmers will be provided loan at the interest rate of seven per cent. But co-operative banks and private banks are not doing so. You should take strict action against them so that these private banks

may also provide loan in accordance with the policy framed by the Government. I request the Government for the same.

19.16 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

I belong to Saurashtra, Where cultivation is the main profession but here rural agricultural industries have not been promoted. Granite and chemical industry can be promoted to a large extent. There is a need to widen national highways as there are a lot of ports located in this area. There are a lot of ports in the area to which I belong and from where goods are imported and exported. There is a large forest area in Saurashtra. The forest-based industry can also be set up here.

No tax except a few items has been increased in this budget which points out there a number of sources of income available with the Government. The process of collecting revenue is required to be simplified. Together with this the revenue that should have been collected is not being collected due to corruption prevalent in income tax and excise department. The raids conducted by CBI during the last two years, has been conducted mostly on the residences of officers of income tax, excise and custom departments. It is very much required to control their functioning. The raids have been conducted mostly on the residences of bureaucrats. Benami properties have been found with the officers of income tax department. The revenue that should have been collected is not being collected due to so much corruption among the officers of income tax department and custom department. Such a situation should be controlled and monitored.

Surat is known as a diamond city of Gujarat. The officers visit the area during the month of March so that the people engaged in diamond industry may disclose their income soon as disclosing income means increasing finance. I want to say only one thing regarding the people employed in diamond industry.

There is shortage of power in the country which is not in the interest of farmers. There is an acute shortage of power. Increasing the capacity of power plant by the Government is required very much. The foundation stone for Pipawaw power plant in my parliamentary constituency

was laid by late Rajiv Gandhiji, but it has not yet been completed due to shortage of supply of gas. I request the government to supply gas to this power plant at proper price so that the demand of power for western India region may be fulfilled.

As there is a shortage of time at present, I lay the rest of my speech on the table of the house. I conclude my speech with these words and support the budget.

*Sir, there are a lot of tourist places in my native area Saurashtra but it is not proper that the central government has not paid much attention to these places.

Much progress has been achieved from the expenditure made by the Government. I believe that the country will be on the path of development from the increase in the rate of inflation by 45 per cent and GDP by 8.1%. The Government should consider that there is poverty in the country and many sectors are still not having balanced growth. The unemployed persons from rural areas are grateful to be present government for launching Employment Guarantee Scheme.

At last, the farmers of my constituency are unhappy because they get loan from Amroli district bank at the rate of 11 per cent. The government should take action against the NABARD so that they may get loan at lower interest rate and I demand CBI inquiry into the irregularities ongoing in the bank. With this I support the budget.*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, here, we will have to evolve a formula. Now, there are about 20 more speakers to participate in the debate. We will have to finish the debate before 9 o'clock. So, I would allow five minutes for every speaker. If he is not able to conclude his speech within five minutes, the rest of his speech he may lay on the Table of the House. There can be no deviation.

On the fourth minute, the bell would be rung. Fifth minute, the second bell would be rung, and then I would call the next speaker.

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

Only if you all co-operative, we would be able to finish the debate in time.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA (Banaskantha): All the members have been allotted 5-15 minutes. How will it do, if you allot me five minutes....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The number of speakers mentioned in the List of speakers with me is more than the actual Members present here in the House. I do not know where the others have gone.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Please extend time. Please extend the time upto 11 o'clock. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, do not fight with me. We should be able to finish the debate by 9 o'clock.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: My speech will not be completed in five minutes, where am I at fault on this count. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, after consulting the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, I have fixed up the time for each member. Nobody can find fault with me.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I express my gratitude to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Budget for the year 2006-07. I rise to support the Budget. I would also like to express my gratitude to the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, hon. Finance Minister and the hon. Minister of State for Finance who have striven hard to measure upto the expectations of a hundred crore strong population through this Budget. This is the third Budget

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presented by the UPA government. Dr. Manmohan Singh is also a renowned economist himself. Under his able leadership and guidance, an effort has been made to ensure that the common man does not have to bear any additional burden. Various measures have been introduced in the Budget to solve the problems faced by the people and to provide relief to them, in all the sectors be it education, agriculture, roads or electricity sector every effort has been made to solve the problems in all the sectors. The previous NDA Government had finished off the economy of the country but the present Budget has tried to resuscitate it. As several hon. Members have just pointed out that in the three Budgets presented by the UPA Government during its last 20 months tenure an effort has been made to get a grip on the economy and to contain the rate of inflation.

Sir, I would like to point out to the hon. Finance Minister that although he has made good efforts in all the sectors, yet adequate provisions have not been made for certain sections of society in the country such as the unemployed people the people engaged in farming and those belonging to poor sections and for backward states. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister towards the fact that 70 per cent of the country's population depends on agriculture and 70 per cent of the people are farmers who are the actual wealth of the country. The economy of our country is dependent on farms and fields, farmers and labourers. I know that you have tried to satisfy these categories. You have reduced the rate of interest on loans from 12-13 per cent to 7 per cent. I would also like to draw your attention towards the fact that the government had constituted a committee under the chairmanship of the Dr. Swaminathan, an agricultural expert to study how the condition of the farmers could be improved. He had submitted a report, after a comprehensive study in which it had been recommended that unless the interest rates on loans to farmers are brought down to 4 per cent it would not be possible to improve their economic condition. Nowadays, large number of people are having disinclination towards agriculture. The people are migrating from villages to cities in large numbers due to which cities are witnessing a rapid increase in population. Why is it that people primarily engaged in the agricultural sector are turning away from

their traditional occupation and are moving towards the cities. If basic facilities such as roads, power and education are provided in the villages then I do not think that the charm for the cities would match that of the villages. The people in the cities barely manage to eke out a living. They are forced to live out their lives in jhuggi-jhoparis and slums and have to live in straitened circumstances. They are not able to have a comfortable living. Cities are facing an onslaught of various diseases and the people living in them have to face a lot of difficulties. The government should consider this issue. The government will have to consider this issue because the economy of the country cannot be strengthened unless the issues pertaining to the people dependent on the agricultural sector are resolved. The farmers are committing suicides on a large scale. This is discussed in the House every day. We should try to get to the root of the problem. The farmers work hard to increase production yet the electricity rates have been escalated, alongwith the prices of diesel, fertilizers and seeds. The farmers are not able to get the right price for their produce in the market. The government would have to pay the support price. Unless the government provides remunerative prices for products of the produce of farmers the farmers can not be encouraged. Moreover it cannot satisfy the crores of people who are engaged in farming this way.

Mr. Chairman, favourable provisions have made for the rich. Interest rate of loans for cars and houses has been fixed at 5 to 6 per cent but no such provision has been made for people working in the farming sector. I express my thanks for the efforts made by the Minister but he would have to take a few more steps to make a difference for the farmers. I would like to say that either he should present a revised budget the next time or should ensure that an emphasis would be given to the problems of the farmers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are talking about Bharat Nirman. Those who talked of India shining have been rejected by the people of the country. Crores of people have reposed faith in us. Their faith and strength are with us. The UPA Government is committed towards Bharat Nirman. It is moving forward in that direction purposefully and its commitment shows that it wants to address the

problems faced by the rural populace. This populace has no more faith in those who had propounded the idia of "India Shining". Hence, I would like to request that if Bharat Nirman is to be carried on then attention has to be paid towards the rural people.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister towards Bihar which is a backward state where poverty and despair are prevailing. There are no factories in the state. The Budget has disappointed the people of Bihar. He had made a commitment to the people of Bihar and to the leaders of the state that he would make up for the englect shown towards the state particularly during the last 7-8 years, by the previous NDA government. We had hoped he would make up for this neglect and would work lto ensure that the people of Bihar get their due rights ...*(Interruptions)* The hon. Finance Minister has disappointed us in this regard. The people of Bihar had not expected that they would have to face such disappointment. ...*(Interruptions)* Mr. Chairman, I speak occasionally only. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. For your help I will suggest one thing. You can write down the details and you mention here only the points.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Chairman, you have co-operated with me so far. I am not in the habit of making written speeches. I would like to express my thoughts verbally and I will be brief.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. I will give you some more time.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Chairman, I was talking about the condition of banks in Bihar. People like the Rickshaw-wallahs, the Thele-wallahs and the small farmers deposit their savings in banks. There are guidelines of the Reserve Bank which lay down that 35 per cent of savings deposited in banks should be utilized for carrying out development works in the state in which

the branch of the bank is situated but the fact is that all the money is diverted to Delhi and Mumbai or to other metropolitan cities. 85 per cent of the funds are invested in other states whereas my state receives only 15 per cent of the total amount invested. Why is this injustice being done to us? All the non. Members belonging to my state have drawn the attention of the Finance Minister towards this fact but even so no consideration has been given to this issue when the guideliines laid down by the government are not followed how is Bihar's situation to be improved? I would like to request, through you, that concrete action be taken in this regard. At least 35 per cent of the funds may be invested in Bihar. Bihar is a poor and backward state but unfortunately it seems that he is not able to relize this fact.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we talk about the literacy potential of Bihar. Is justice being done to the State? The Government has made a provision of merely 20 per cent for the state. Our hardworking people are migrating and working in other states. They are migrating to Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and Assam. The average literacy rate in the country is 40 per cent but it is merely 20 per cent in Bihar. How would it be possible to ensure Bihra's development with this kind of literacy rate? My request is to remove hurdles in increasing literacy in the state. Bihar is affected by both floods and drought. The Government has made a commitment to carry out irrigation of 6 lakh hectares of land out of the 12 lakh hectares of land areas available in the country. But funds should be made available for Bihar as well. This would enable Bihar to achieve 40 per cent rate of literacy. Bihar has no factories. It has only agricultural land which provides livelihood to the farmers. Only the farmers can improve the economy of the state. I request that justice should be done to Bihar it is proposed to construct 900 km of roads in the country but not a single kilometer of the said road length is to be laid down in Bihar. How would the development of Bihar take place? Is Bihar not a part of India, does the government mean to separate it from the rest of the country?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, many of the hon. Members have pointed out that Bihar does not have any large hospital. Many new All India Institute of Medical Sciences are proposed to be set up all over the country. Foundation stone of are such institute had been laid in Patna also

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

during the tenure of the erstwhile NDA government. The Minister of Health in the present UPA government had stated in the House that an AIIMS would be set up in Patna as well but I have observed that no provision has been made in the Budget in this regard....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am concluding. Please help us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given you much more time.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I am just concluding. I was saying that the investment being made in my state is inadequate. Why has Bihar been continuously ignored since Independence? For how long are the people of Bihar going to face neglect? The people sitting on the opposite side have carried out the partition of Bihar and have ruined it. Bihar should be provided a special package. We had no expectation from those people but we have expectations from the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Finance Minister in the UPA Government that they would act with justice towards Bihar be it the issue of roads, power, water or Indira Awas Yojana. A meagre amount of funds has been allocated under the Indira Awas Yojana. The amount of old-age pension has been increased but even that is an inadequate increase. The Government has provided funds to many universities. Patna University is a university of historic importance which has produced many learned scholars for the country over thousands of years. I request that the Patna University may be accorded the status of a Central University. I have full faith that the assurance of a special package for the poor and for the farmers in Bihar would be given by the hon. Finance Minister in his reply.

Sir, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme introduced by the Government is an excellent scheme. Only 22 districts have been covered under it. It

is my request that more districts should be brought under the coverage of this scheme. UPA has made a commitment of providing employment to all. The UPA Government has taken a historic step by introducing this scheme by providing for assured employment for the unemployed people of the country. This scheme would provide employment for such people. Besides, many district are being covered under the Food for Work programme. I have faith that the hon. Minister would definitely look into the major issues towards which I have drawn his attention. I believe that the country would progress under the leadership of the UPA government and the justice would be done to poor.

[English]

*DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur): Sir, the Union Budget, 2006-07 presented to the Lok Sabha on the 28th of February 2006 by the Hon'ble Finance Minister Thiru P. Chidambaram.

It has been twenty months since the UPA took charge of the country. This is the third Budget of the UPA. So far so good.

All Hon'ble member present on that day were taken by surprise.

I was also equally surprised the way and the manner in which the Finance Minister showcased the proceedings of the day. Kudos to him and to the perceptive leadership of the Prime Minister, in the words of the Finance Minister himself. Our respectful salute to the Chairperson of the UPA. But for her sacrifice and guidance, this would have not been just possible.

Sir, all of us do understand that the Union Budget is the official financial statement/plan that the Union Government makes about how much it will earn in taxes or otherwise and spend on public services in the future. The speech of the Finance Minister was so drafted as to put the record straight. There was no denying of the fact that God helps those who help themselves. Whatever little gains this government achieved is the fruits of its honest labour. The whole exercise is perhaps for the implementation of the NCMP of the UPA government as mandated and its true manifestation.

*The speech was laid on the Table.

Sir, the six-component ambitious Bharat Nirman, a mission, targeted to be achieved by the year 2009 took off very successfully. I congratulate the Finance Minister for the gesture shown to the people of the North East under this mission. The 54 per cent increase in the budgetary provision for the North East shall definitely find the required encouragement in that part of the state. Over and above this, there is given another step up of 18 per cent from BE 2005-06 to BE 2006-07, for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER).

We also acknowledge the approval of a special accelerated road development programme for the North Eastern region. For which, I, on behalf of the people of the North East and on my own behalf shall remain grateful.

Sir, the additionality of 43.2 per cent in the allocation of funds as provided in the proposed current budget of the UPA towards the implementation of the Flagship Programmes speaks about the sincerity with which this UPA Government has been functioning in the last about 20 (twenty) months. All these programmes are now in full swing. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan envisages to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the age group 6-14 years. With this implementation, the number of children not in school has come down significantly. This year's fund allocation also has substantially increased. I beg to propose that the state government who are responsible for the judicious implementation of this scheme should be told in clear terms that the money for the scheme as raised through the education cess should be utilized expeditiously.

Sir, Mid-day Meal Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, National Rural Health Mission, Integrated Child Development Services, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, National Social Assistance Programme, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Minorities are some of the flagship programmes of the present UPA government.

To successfully implement them, a huge sum of money is required for which the necessary resource mobilization is being candidly proposed by way of collecting direct and indirect taxes, inviting investments including

foreign direct investments visa-vis a transference mechanism of implementation to deliver the goods. The implementation of all these programmes and schemes definitely demands the involvement of a large number of the population and the Public Private Participation is the real key to it. The Finance Minister is able to show this in the present Budget.

Sir, under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Old age pensions are granted to destitute persons above the age of 65 years. This budget proposes to increase the monthly pension from Rs. 75 to Rs 200. I congratulate the Finance Minister for this and while doing so, I would like to remind the Minister that the economic environment in many of the state in the country is still very pathetic. These states shall never ever be able to make an equal contribution as their share to the old age pension scheme. Hence, I would like to suggest to the Minister that the Union Government may directly grant a pension of Rs. 300 per month per head.

Sir, In this Budget, the Finance Minister is able to clearly show a road map to handle the productive sector of our economy. I am glad to share my view in this area with the hon'ble members present here. Please look here, the proposals to give a proper focus on Agriculture, Assured irrigation, Agricultural Credit, Agricultural Insurance, Diversification and Creating a market for agricultural products require our full attention. These will enable us to overcome some of the inherent difficulties faced by our farmers. We welcome the proposal to establish a Central Institute of Horticulture in Nagaland. Please, let us start it. We want more actions, less promises.

Sir, This budget has identified very correctly two sectors having potentials to create a number of jobs. They are Manufacturing and Services. The Finance Minister has indicated that in Manufacturing alone, some industries like Textiles, Food processing, Petroleum, Chemical and Petro-chemicals, Leathers, and Automobiles can generate jobs and also absorb a large number of workers. In Services, Tourism potential of our country needs to be revisited. The Scenic beauty of the North East, Flora & Fauna there, and above all, the rich Forest and Mineral products of the area, are worth mentioning.

Sir, Adequate space is provided for development of cotton textiles industry and Handloom & Handicraft

[Dr. Thokchom Meinya]

industries. This is a part of the development of Khadi & Village industry for which the UPA government is striving forth. However, the sorry state of affairs prevalent in villages in the country about it, requires special attention. Why because, with the development of modern technology for synthetic fabrics, the demand for the products of Khadi & Village industries has come down to a very low level. The workers in the Khadi & Village Industries cannot just maintain their families, forget about its textiles. Such is the pathetic condition. We have started learning living on marginal profits. We buy cotton fibers from outside and make our products. You know, by this we cannot compete with milled products. Whom we should blame for this? We ourselves are fully responsible for this.

Sir, You know very well that India is not India without her villages. Hence, Rural India is the first priority on the UPA agenda and UPA government is committed to developing Rural India at any cost. It is in this scenario that we should live village life, eat village foods, wear village cloths and use village products as far as possible. Then we shall be able to appreciate the beauty of village life. As I come from the village, I understand what is village life. Village life is very simple, climate is good, food is delicious, people are very cooperative and friendly, but they are very emotional. The government should try to conquer their emotion, and if we can do so, then no problem of this country shall remain unsolved. Our people friendly programmes of UPA undertaken so far during the last about 20 months are taking us to the right direction. This budget is the correct testimony to show to the rest of the world that we are able to perform better in almost all fields.

Sir, this budget precisely addresses to the spread of information technology (IT), IT Enabled Services worldwide and also the contribution to this sector by our country. Proper investment for the manufacture of IT Related items is envisaged. We are proud of it. Further, the last budget proposed major initiatives in respect of micro finance. The matter is being rigorously followed. the Plantation Sector Small and Medium Enterprises Development occupy their deserved places. The Financial Sector is well secured by making reforms in Banking, Insurance and Pensions. At the same time, the Self Help Group (SHG) movement

is given a right direction and encouragement. This is really a necessity for the health of our economy. In respect of infrastructure development, emphasis is being given to telecommunication, Power, Coal, Petroleum and Road Transport. A proper deal of attention has been given for Capital Market. A good number of proposals are initiated. These include research & Development, Institute of Excellence, Skill Development etc.

Sir, Regarding Foreign Trade, the budget reported the growth rate of over 18 per cent this year. Imports are high. This is very good. Here, I would like to draw the attention of this august House to the fact that Manipur has a small border town, Morch, neighbouring another small town, Tamu, in Myanmar. Tamu is quite well developed as compared to Moreh. It is really unfortunate. Moreh is a mini India where people from all parts of the country come and do business. My hon'ble friends, Members of Parliament, there are Karelites, Tamilians, Punjabis, Kashmiris, Nepalis, Marwaris, Biharis, Bengalis, Andhraits and what not, in this small town. The markets in Manipur are full of foreign goods and the markets there in Moreh and Tamu are full of Indian goods. I wish, the Minister will allocate adequate fund to develop this border town to the international standard.

Sir, This will definitely be a good beginning rather a start of our Look East policy the Border Areas Development fund should be exclusively used in the border areas. Once the border areas are properly developed our neighboring countries will definitely respect us.

This budget gives a proper direction to the area of Fiscal Consolidation. This is possible, because the 12th Finance Commission recommendations are being implemented in the right earnest. As regards the Subsidy Regime the Government proposes for evolving a national consensus. This is where lies the beauty of this budget. The budget estimates for the current year, no doubt, stand on a very firm base. The tax proposals both Indirect and Direct are very sound and people friendly. The introduction of the Banking Cash Transaction Tax, Fringe Benefit Tax, VAT and CST are found to be very productive and every fellow Indians begin to develop faith in them. Brothers and Sisters, let us join together to support this budget and pass the same unanimously.

[*Translaion*]

*SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.):
Sir, the Finance Minister has not proposed any scheme for the development of Uttar Pradesh and the backward areas of the state such as Bundelkhand. The schemes like reducing the rates of cars have proved that he is the Finance Minister of the rich and budget is for the rich, by the rich and of the rich.

Bundelkhand, particularly Hamirpur and Mahoba districts, which I represent, is an extremely backward area. There are no industries and most of the young people are unemployed.

It is a matter of satisfaction that the Uttar Pradesh Government under the leadership of the hon. Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh Yadavji is paying special attention to Bundelkhand but limited resources are proving to be a roadblock in the way of development of the area. I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister, through you, that backward regions such as Bundelkhand should be identified and programmes for development of such areas should be formulated in consultation with the State Governments to ensure all round development of such areas.

Sir, additional funds need to be allocated for backward regions like Bundelkhand. The situation of farmers and labourers in such places is pathetic. The center should establish industries in such places. Adequate power supply should be ensured by working in tandem with the state governments. Adequate supply of cheap fertilizer, seeds and water for the farmers needs to be ensured.

Sir, it has been announced in the Budget that farmers would be provided short term loan at seven per cent rate of interest. How is a farmer who is not able to get two square meals a day, who is committing suicide due to low yield and on inability to repay loans, supposed to repay loan with an interest rate of seven per cent. Long term loans would attract a higher rate of interest. I would like to know why is this cruel joke being played on the farmers. It seems that the Budget has been formulated while keeping in mind the rich classes rather than the poor, the backward and the farmers.

*The speech was laid on the Table.

Sir, old age pension has been increased to Rs. 200 per month from Rs. 75 per month. This is a welcome step but Rs. 200 is not enough to feed a man for a whole month let alone provide for his boarding and medical care. The government should set up old age homes for the poor and lonely old people. Only then the old people would be able to live secure and peaceful life in the last leg of their lives. Till the time this becomes possible, I would request that the old age pension be increased to Rs. 600 from Rs. 200.

Sir, many of the rivers in the country are drying up and unchecked denudation of forests is leading to low rainfall. The government has set a target of providing electricity connections to all rural villages but as long as such areas get power supply only for 2 to 4 hours in a day, as the hon. Finance Minister might be aware of, how much advantage the farmers are likely to avail of the Rs. 7121 crore allocation made for irrigation. Agriculture is the backbone of the country. Agriculture is the means which feed more than 100 crore people of this country. In view of such a situation, it is not right to neglect agriculture and the farmers.

An irrigation project, named Virat Sagar Project, is to be constructed in my constituency Hamirpur-Mahoba (U.P.) but its work is not being speeded up due to lack of adequate funds. Hence, central assistance may be provided to get this project completed expeditiously.

Sir, it would not be a good step to bring ATM service under the ambit of service tax at a time when the government is revolutionizing banking services by developing the ATM services. Therefore, ATM services should be exempted service tax.

Sir, the Finance Minister announced in the Budget that banks would be instructed to provide loans to 50 lakh farmers. While issuing such instructions to banks, special care should be taken to ensure that farmers are able to avail of such facilities without greasing palm of Bank official and without going through any middlemen.

Sir, 40,000 additional villages are targeted for electrification during the year 2006-07 under the Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Scheme. This is a good effort but steps should also be taken to ensure that the villages covered under the electrification scheme also get an

[Shri Rajnarayan Budholia]

uninterrupted supply of electricity for a fixed number of hours everyday. Farmers in the country, particularly in the rural areas, have started disconnecting their electric connections for tubewells because of inadequate power supply. Hence, the government should also set a target for augmenting power generation capacity in the country.

The Government is implementing many scheme for providing road linkages to villages and this is a joint venture of the Union Government and the state governments. But the rural people frequently complain about the quality of such constructed roads. Hence, the government also needs to take particular care about the quality of roads which are being constructed in rural areas.

The Government has identified certain National Highways for development of 1000 km long approach linked Express ways. I welcome this step. But I regret that the Kanpur-Sagar National Highway and the Jhansi-Mirzapur National Highway have not been selected under the scheme. This has disappointed the people of my constituency. Hence, both the said National Highways may be selected for this purpose during the current financial year.

Grants-in-aid for backward areas under the Rashtriya Sam-vikas yojana may be increase from Rs. five thousand crore to Rs. Ten thousand crores to ensure proper development of backward areas.

Sir, the allocation under Rural Sanitation Campaign has been increased to Rs. 720 crore from Rs. 630 crores. As we all know nearly 70 per cent of the population of India resides in Village, hence, an increase of merely Rs. 90 crores is inadequate. This amount may be increased to Rs. 1000 crores.

Water in village Khandeh, Icholi, Mamna (sarita) etc. in Moudaha Tehsil in my parliamentary constituency has a high degree of salinity which renders it unfit for drinking due to which people are facing a lot of difficulties. They have to go several kilometers to fetch drinking water. Children and women are kept occupied in fetching water on bullock-carts. All the states in the country have such areas where access to drinking water is a big problem for the people. Keeping in view this widespread problem

allocation of Rs. 4680 crore under Rajiv Gandhi Potable Water Mission may be increased further so that all the people, including those belonging to my parliamentary constituency, for whom getting drinking water is a daily struggle, may get fresh drinking water easily.

The government has increased the cost of items used by the common man such as walking stick, umbrella, spectacles, soap, refined oil, ghee and pencils. All these items are used even by the poorest of the poor.

In the end, I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister, through the House, that the cost of all such items, which have been made costlier in this budget, may be kept stable keeping in view the condition of poor people, backward classes, the middle class people and the farmers.

[English]

*SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (Calicut): Sir, Hon'ble Finance Minister constantly reminds us that the Indian economy is booming. He quotes figure of GDP growth of 8.1% as compared to 7.5% of 2004-05. BSE Sensex has climbed to record breaking 10,000 plus level. Hon'ble Finance Minister is excited. It is not the fiscal prudence and strong fundamentals that have ensured growth in the stock market. The fiscal extravagance in the form of huge tax concessions to the domestic and foreign super-rich has delivered this bonanza.

I would like to point out that the resources that could have been mobilized for employment programmes, social expenditure, and much needed capital investment have been squandered. Sir, we can't surmise that the growth that drives the sensex is due to the prudent fiscal policy of the government. The prosperity of a few urban elites of Greater Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai and Kolkata is not an indication of National prosperity. Overwhelming majority of the rural poor. The fiscal 'prudence' the finance minister is advocating provides tax concession to the upper middle class and also erodes the government revenues.

To quote an economist "Curtailed revenue growth and reduced deficits have meant too little money for much

*The speech was laid on the Table.

needed investments in irrigation, drainage, health facilities and educational infrastructure. Chidambaram himself would recall the many dream budgets he was personally responsible for. These budgets affected revenue growth adversely and created anomalies of the kind where a lower-middle class salary earner pays taxes on income; where as speculators in India's booming stock markets are exempt from taxes on the huge capital gains they garner. The GDP in agriculture grew at 0.7% in 2004 and is expected to rise by 2.3% in 2005-06. This distorted growth has serious implications. The boom sector which Hon'ble FM pointing out will not be offering employment opportunities for the large numbers of miserable poor in rural India and they will not share the fruits of India's urban elite. Inequality is growing. The list of Indian Millioners and Billionaire is growing while income-poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy continue to persist.

Sir, this budget has a hidden agenda. To press for more liberalization of our economy. Besides privatization of airports, FDI in retail and opening up more sectors for 100% foreign investment through the automatic route, we can justifiably conclude that moves are afoot to launch in the coming months a series of initiatives to provide a thrust to economic reforms. Relaxing environmental restrictions on construction in metro areas, introducing legislation at the state level to facilitate contract farming; removing 250 items reserved for the small scale sector from the currently reserved list; modifying labour laws to increase working hours in a work week from 48 to 60 hours, amending the industrial dispute act to give flexibility to hire seasonal workers, to amend the contract labour act to increase labour flexibility are all parts of this hidden agenda.

The Indian farming sector is facing disaster. The Hon'ble Finance Minister offers too little to sustain the agricultural economy. I need not repeat the statistics of the suicide in Indian villages because it does not neither stun nor surprise the treasure benches any more.

The proposal in the sixth Hong Kong ministerial conference will only hasten the doom to our agricultural sector. Our peasants are not on the level play ground in this global economy. America and European common market is set for unbridled plunder of our economy. We

have taken it for granted—the Billions of dollar domestic subsidy America and ECM give to their corporates and the richer sections of the society. 15% to 2% export subsidy which they will phase out in 2013 is considered as a great concession and for this pittance we are opening our service manufactures and industrial or reason. Sir, these policies of the government will bring disaster in course of time.

Because of the paucity of time I don't want to dwell on various aspects of the budget. Sir, the marine fisheries sector suffered a lot last year due to Tsunami devastation. The budgetary provisions have been reduced from Rs.71.80 crores in Rs. 32.80 crores. The Hon'ble Minister has assured to set up a Fisheries Development Board but details have not been disclosed.

In his anxiety to confirm to World Bank dictate to reduce subsidy on food, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has claimed to have reduced food subsidy by 2000 crore. What does it mean? Food subsidies are meant for poor who cannot pay market price. Will it not amount to more people going to sleep with empty stomach? How are we going to eradicate poverty unless we strengthen the public distribution system?

Further Sir, withdrawal of exemption of excise duty of goods manufactured without the aid of power like soaps, biscuits, locks, bricks, essential oils, solutions of essential oils etc on the pretext that such exemptions are difficult to implement is not fair. It will hurt severely livelihood of lakhs of people engaged in manufacture of these goods on the one hand and deprive poor people who are predominant users of these goods of cheaper alternatives on the other. Then, how the budget can be ascribed to benefit the "Aam Admi"? this budget is making cars and cold drinks cheaper but making life difficult for common man.

Hon'ble Finance Minister quotes from Thirukural and Henry David Thoreau. For them man, nature and environment were precious and divine. I am sorry to say, for our Hon'ble Finance Minister all what they valued most are nothing but commodities.

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE (Barasat): Sir, in view of the time constraint, as suggested by you, I would make a few submissions for the kind consideration of the Minister

[Shri Subrata Bose]

for Finance and I shall submit the written text elaborating some other points, as suggested by the Chair.

Coming to the tax payers, I would like to make two points. The first point is about the postal services other than the MIS scheme. Apart from drawin interest every month during the period of deposit, the depositors were entitled to receive, on maturity, the full capital of the deposit together with the bonus. Now this bonus has been withdrawn and it is going to affect the depositors in the postal MIS scheme who are very ordinary people and most often from the middle class. I would request the Minister for Finance—the Minister of State for Finance is here—that this bonus should be restored.

My second point is about the senior citizens. I belong to this category. So, naturally my concern is for the senior citizens. You will recall that in the last year's Budget, certain provisions or certain concessions were given for the senior citizens which ensure that their tax structure remained the same. They did not gain anything. This year, there is no change in that tax structure. I would only suggest for the consideration of the Finance Minister, for relief purpose, there is a provision for medical insurance premium upto a limit of Rs. 15,000. Particularly, for the senior citizens, the insurance premium has increased manifold and sometimes, even the senior citizens have to pay Rs. 25,000 as medical insurance premium to get themselves covered under this.

If they do not get themselves covered, it is going to be difficult because the cost of treatment today has become, in certain cases, very exorbitant. So, I would request that it may be considered that instead of changing the overall limit—I am not suggesting for amending the overall limit—the limit for the medical insurance premium can be increased so that those who can afford it can take wider medical insurance cover.

Talking about medical treatment, I would draw your attention to the excise duty being imposed on all pharmaceutical products, that is drugs. There are certain concessions with regard to the essential drugs for certain diseases like cancer. But even for ordinary and minor diseases, persons are required to undergo treatment.

Since the cost of medicines have gone up considerably and continuously going up, I would request that the excise duty on all pharmaceutical products, that is drugs be reduced from 16 per cent to say eight per cent or so, if that is possible. It is because that is going to give relief to all ordinary people and to those who are suffering. Sometimes, diseases may not be terminal but they become chronic and require long treatment.

Going on to the other subjects, I think hon. Member, Shri Sudhakar Reddy, had mentioned in his speech about the excise duty of 16 per cent which is being levied on the hand-made laundry soap. These are washing soaps manufactured without power. This is absolutely a cottage industry and it is a very small industry. These soaps are used more or less by people belonging to the so-called mofussil areas. The market for these hand-made soaps are limited perhaps more to the rural areas than to the urban areas. I think this 16 per cent excise duty which is now being imposed on these hand-made laundry soap is more or less killing this small industry, which is still providing some livelihood to some of the rural people in the rural areas of every State.

I shall not take much time and I shall certainly confine myself to time limit. I would only refer to one more point. An hon. Member from the North-East mentioned about the allocation for sports. We have now started preparing for the ensuing Commonwealth Games. We are also thinking and we are wishing to hold Olympic Games in our country. But just holding international competitions is not going to improve the standards of our sports. We should have a national sports policy and to execute it properly, I think, more increased allocation for sports should be given. I have said this on other occasions also. It is a shame that a country with more than 100 crores of people is not able to produce quality sportsmen. We are satisfied with winning one gold or one silver medal at the most in the international competitions. I think this should be given priority.

I would like to take up some more points. But because of the time constraint and abiding by your order, I would lay rest of my speech on the Table of the House so that the hon. Finance Minister and the Minister of State for finance can go through it and consider my suggestions and submissions.

*Sir, I take this opportunity to make a few submissions to the hon. Minister of Finance in respect of the Budget (General) for 2006-07 presented by him.

Firstly, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister to the postal MIS Deposit scheme. Under this Scheme, depositors draw monthly interest and on maturity of the deposits, they were getting back, in addition to the deposit amount, a bonus. This bonus has recently been withdrawn. You are aware that mostly ordinary people—those of middle class—invest in this Scheme. The bonus proved to be very useful to the investors. I request the hon. Finance Minister to restore the bonus, which was being paid earlier on maturity of the deposit.

Secondly, I would like to draw the attention to the tax structure for the senior citizens, to which class I belong. Last year, some changes were made in the structure which ensured that the senior citizens, if they did not benefit much from the changes, at least did not suffer. A ceiling of Rs. 15,000 was set for Medical Insurance premium for the purpose of getting relief. Medical Insurance premium rates are high particularly for covers granted to senior citizens. I request that this ceiling be increased to Rs. 20,000 or Rs. 25,000 so that wide covers for medical expenses incurred may be obtained by the senior citizens.

Then I come to Excise Duty in respect of Pharmaceutical products, that is, drugs. There is Excise Duty relief in respect of essential drugs or treatment of some diseases like cancer, etc. Drugs need to be taken for all diseases irrespective of their being major or minor. To ensure that poor people also can have themselves treated, I shall urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to consider reducing the Excise Duty on all drugs from 16 per cent to 8 per cent.

I understand that representatives of small-scale, hand-made laundry soap (washing soap manufactured without power) manufacturers met the hon. Finance Minister to plead for 50 per cent reduction of 16 per cent Excise Duty imposed on this product afresh. This is a really small-scale cottage industry and persons in the villages who are engaged in this industry will face gradual

extinction if their representation is not considered sympathetically.

I am very happy that a National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management is proposed to be set up at Thanjavur. This will be a second institution of this type in South India, the other being already in Mysore. I certainly have no objection to two institutes of Food Technology in South India as acquiring knowledge and skill of modern food technology is absolutely essential for us to augment food production to meet the growing needs of an increasing population. I would like only to draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister to the fact that Calcutta and Jadavpur Universities in West Bengal have been doing good research work in this sphere in the recent past. I, therefore, request that such an institution be set up in Kolkata and the above two universities be actively associated with such an Institute's work.

Lastly, I must refer to the sad plight of the farmers today. The Budget does not unfortunately address this situation. Merely, some extension of credit facilities will neither solve their problems nor improve their condition. Unless cost of agricultural inputs is brought down, irrigational facilities are considerably increased and farmers can be assured of obtaining minimum sale price of agricultural products, tragic suicides of farmers will continue to take place. The hon. Finance Minister and, for that matter, the Government of India, must take stock of the prevailing situation and come to the Parliament with positive steps and measures to retrieve the situation.*

*SHRI SUGRIB SINGH (Phulbani): Sir, I represent Biju Janata Dal which is a regional party. For centuries together we are preaching the theme of peace, love and brotherhood, since I hail from the land of Lord Jagannath. It is stated by hon. Prime Minister that it is an outstanding Budget which is pro-common man. As per the Leader of the Opposition, the Budget has not been addressed to serve the peasants since suicides by the peasants and farmers has become an alarming problem and the Finance Minister did not give proper attention to that aspect. According to our Left brother, this Budget has

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Sugrib Singh]

failed to address many vital problems concerning peasants and unemployed. Some people say that this Budget is commendable; it is in the interest of the middle class and poor people have not been given proper attention by the Finance Minister.

Sir, I would like to urge upon this august House that I represent Phulbani parliamentary constituency which is dominated by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and also by Backward Class people. The people of my area are passing their days with utmost miseries and their suffering is immense. I would like to bring to your kind attention that my constituency solely depends upon rain water and there is absolutely no irrigation facility as a result of which the agriculturists are facing a lot of difficulties.

Secondly, I would like to urge upon you that unemployment is a very acute problem in my State, Orissa and more particularly in my constituency Phaulbani. There are no industries or mines etc. The Employment Guarantee Scheme, which has been introduced recently, may not be able to serve the problem adequately. So, for my constituency, a special package should be declared to solve the problem of unemployment.

From tourism point of view, in my constituency there are very beautiful tourist spots like Daringbadi, Belghar, Balaskuinpa, Pokadajhor, Putudi, Mondasore etc. So, the special allocation may be made from the Central Government for the development of the above tourist spots which will attract thousands of the tourists from all over the country.

I represent the Phulbani constituency which is the most backward area of the country. Unfortunately Phulbani (Kondhamala and Bouth) district was not included in the KBK area and till today the Government of India also did not provide any special package for the all-round development of the tribals. The result is that they have become financially weak and they are unable to avail minimum amenities of life. Though, some time back, a request was made to include my area under RSVY, but unfortunately it was not considered by the UPA Government. We are voicing in this august House the grievances of the SCs, STs and backward people of the

country. I would like to say with anguish that practically their demands are never addressed to by the Central Government. Though the Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government tells to solve the interests of the 'aam admi', I am waiting for the sweets when actually the UPA Government will take up the real issue of the tribals.

So, I would like to urge upon the Central Government to provide special package for all round development of the tribal people of my constituency Phulbani which will remove regional imbalance.

*SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (Jagatsinghpur):
Sir, I represent Biju Janata Dal which is a regional party and the party is named after Biju Pattanaik who was a National Hero, a true parties, an eminent nationalist and earned international fame by rescuing the then supreme of Indonesia as desired by Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sir, as you know, Orissa is rich with vast natural resources, beautiful sea coast and unique tourist spots and art, architecture and sculpture reflected in Puri, Konark, Lingaraj and Boudha Vihars, which reminds us about our glorious tradition and cultural heritage.

Sir, the budgetary process and the action taken on the recommendation, of the successive finance commission, have provided opportunities to the richer states to grow fast while backward states grow slow and the least. So within India a distinction is clearly visible between the advanced and the least developed states, like Orissa where I come from.

Budget is just not a statement of revenues and expenditure over a year. It reflects the strategy of the Government how these expenditures will be made to vitalize the economy and eliminate poverty and intra regional disparity. The State which are facing unusual financial crises due to the faulty policies followed by UPA Government, at the Centre as well as at State Levels, are in a double jeopardy position.

First: They are backward under developed due to historical reasons. Secondly, they do not have resources even to provide minimum maintenance expenditure on asset, created what to speak to investment. They are in a stationary low equilibrium level with 2-3% annual growth

*The speech was laid on the Table.

with wide year to year fluctuation and accompanied poverty and hunger.

In this context, I would like to point out that Orissa as per the latest estimate still has 47.15% of its population below the poverty line. Those who belongs to backward areas of South and North-West region have an unequal share of the poverty burden those who belongs to SC/ST are in much worst situation—still deep in poverty.

In this regard I would like to point out that the demand of Orissa to declare it a special category state has been denied. These states are less aggrieved in comparison to us been included in that list. Sir, Orissa is India's disaster Capital deserves special status and special package because we are under constant threat of national calamities like heavy flood, super cyclones, draught etc.

The Socio-Economic characteristic, of special category state vis-vis Orissa indicates the following:

Per capita indicates the following:-

Rural—Assam Rs. 537.32—Orissa Rs. 307.69

Urban—Assam Rs. 883.29—Orissa Rs. 736.11

Percentage of SC/ST Assam 20, 22, Sikkim 28.31, Orissa 38.41% of population—below poverty line (BPL), Orissa Highest 47.15% all other special category states much below. Per Capita total revenue including resources—transferred from the Centre 2199.58 all other special category states are at a much higher level.

Sir, I would like to urge upon this August House for consideration of the Government for declaring Orissa as a special category state. Otherwise the regional inequality that Orissa faces my give rise to Social disorder.

Sir, at present it is very much exciting for investors in mines and Minerals Sector that Orissa is having maximum deposit of Iron, Manganese, Chromites and coal. It has felt Economy. The 80% populaltion of Orissa depending upon agriculture and vegetation, mockery part of the budget is that there is no such vital package declared for formers or peasants. Irrigations facilities should be given top priority to serve the interest of peasutes.

Sir, I should mention that naxalities and maobadi activities are mounting upon the state which is a dangerous sign. To stop such maladies I urge this Government to take special care and grant special package for my state.

Orissa ia always neglected. Orissa's ixperts are not considered for positions in various expert bodies, committees of the Government and institutions. We have not had a single member in Planning Commission during last 5 decades. We did not have any representation in finance commission. Why Orissa been neglected intentionally in every nation and international Forum? It is because centrally tagged poor state. What we deserve it should be provided to us.

Here I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble Finance Minister with regard to reaction expressed by my Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Navæn Pattanaik that "abolition of C.S.T. will seriously effect-Orissa's revenue which does not have large consumer base. Increased provision for rural road, under rural infrastructure development fund will only add to the indebttness of the State.

I again urge the UPA Government, that Orissa should be given special category status and special package be to cope up with present growing national economy stream.

*SHRI W. WANGYUH KONYAK (Nagaland): Sir, I have seen the reactions from all nock and corner of the country wherein somebody cirtisiene or somebody appreciate it. Before I touch few points on behalf of the people of Nagaland and on own behalf, I would like to congratulate the UPA Govt. and the Finance Minister particularly Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture for their decision to setup a Central Institute of Horticulture in Nagaland and earn marked Rs. 150 Crore for this year 2006-07. It is good gesture on the part of the Govt. for remembering the State like Nagaland by establishing a Central Institute on Nagaland by establishing a Central Institute on Horticulture.

Page No. 19 Serial No.100-101

When I had seen the special assistance provided to the Jammu and Kashmir under many Schemes I feel

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri W. Wangyuh Konyak]

very happy on it. I have a point here Jammu Kashmir and Nagaland State is same in nature because both states has got Constitutional right under 370 and 371 (A) respectively. Moreover, in the Sixteen Point Agreement between Govt. of India and naga People's Convention Govt. of India had agreed upon that Lump-sum provision will be given to Nagaland State, and in case of J & K it is clearly mentioned to provide special Central assistance amounting to Rs. 1300 Crores. Yes, Nagaland is also getting meager amount and this amount is like other state are getting.

I therefore, suggest that in Finance Minister's speech special Central Assistance to be given to Nagaland State should be highlighted at a par with Jammu and Kashmir. Why I am asking this because Nagaland is only State in country who got the State with the bollodshed and entered with agreement in India.

I appeal to the Central Govt. particularly Hon'ble Finance Minister to release all the committed amounts against Nagaland State under any scheme like PM's Package and other. Otherwise giving commitment/ allot the State to prepare D.P.R. and not releasing commitment amount is a sin/crime.

Page No.15 Serial No. 81 Road Transport

Finance Minister has proposed Rs. 9945 Crores in 2006-07 for National Highways Development Programme (NHDP). I am regret to know that though Finance Minister has given so much amount to the NHDP during year 2005-06, but Nagaland State has been neglected very beady, State Govt. had submitted three new National Highway roads construction proposals to Union Govt. i.e. (i) road construction between Tuensang-Tobu Abol-Mon-Sibsagar (Assam) (ii) Kohima-Peren-Mohar (Assam), and (iii) Dimapur-Pongkitung (Wokha) Konthonyu-Zunheboto-Aguanto-Kiphire, but these schemes were not considered still by The NDHP. Therefore, I request the Central Government for inclusion of above proposals on top priority during year 2006-07. Since road connection is only means for the people of Nagaland, as there is no other means connection between districts, there are no facilities; there is no shipping waterways/Railways etc. connection with other state or within the State etc.

Page No. 15 serial no. 82 Accelerated Road Development programme

The Minister has provided for road development programme in North Eastern Region with at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,618 crores out of which Minister has propose to provide sum of Rs. 550 crores for this programme. You are fully aware that we have eight states in North Eastern Region including Sikkim. The problem face by the North Eastern people is hilly area state like Nagaland is affected by heavy land slide and plain area like Assam is effected by foold every year and if we Central Govt. will releases or propose at the rate of 550 crores per financial year it will have no meaning at all. Instead of given the money in piece meal or wasting the money without completion of the work better not expend any money under this scheme.

Otherwise if the Central Government is so desired and realise that road communication is very important in North eastern Region first and foremost is to identify the road. Central Government should direct the states to prepare the Detailed project Report (DRP) against each state and Central Government should try to complete this within two financial years.

Finance Minister has mentioned about deduction of 10% for development of NER i.e. out unspent amount and the decision was taken on 15-12-1997 by the NDA Government In fact, the decision taken by the NDA Government was to implement commitment made by the then PM Shri H.D. Deve Gowda. He had announced Rs 6,00,000 (six thousand crore) for Development of NER. In order to regularize the commitment NDA government has taken decision to deduct 10% from all Ministries. The present UPA Government is also follow in same procedure adopted by the NDA Government as a result NER we are getting maximum development in speech and paper but in ground realities noting. Why I am saying this, I would like to cite few examples.

In the Finance Minister speech Page No. 4 Serial no. 7—It has mentioned that 10% of the Plan Budget of each Ministry/Department of schemes and programme implementation in the North Eastern Region the extracts of Expenditure Budget 2006-07 Volume II presented in Parliament containing the Budget allocation for 2006-07 of the DONER Ministry is placed at Flat-A. The provisions

are the same as at page 38/ante. The total plan allocation is Rs. 1350 as against Rs.1176 crore, an increase of 14%. The non-plan provision is proposed at page 38/ante. The total plan allocation is Rs 1350 as against Rs. 1176 crore, an increase of 14%. The non-plan provision of Rs. 12.48 crore, an increase of 2.48%. Both plan and non-plan put together, the provision has gone up from Rs.1188.48 crore to Rs. 1362.79 crore, an increase of 14.69%.

About DONER Ministry there is confusion even amongst the Ministers and Minister of State, there is also confusion with regard to contribution of 10% to the DONER. Exact position is that Finance Ministry has instructed to the Ministries those Ministries who are not exempted from contribution of 10% to the DONER. Exact amount given to the DONER is Rs. 1350 crore out of which Rs. 700 crore goes to DONER, Rs. 600 crore goes to NEC and Rs. 50 Crore goes Secretariat maintenance. But in the mind of the public of the North Eastern people it is presumption that all the 10% deduction for the development of the North East goes to DONER Ministry, whereas it has not so. I am extremely happy that under Revenue Capital Head Account 3601 Finance Minister has put one lakh rupees for development of cities and roads in North Eastern States. I have strong believe that with this huge amount of Rs. One Lakh, cities and roads in North Eastern States will develop in a big way.

I therefore, suggest that DONER Ministry should allowed to prepare Project Report and selection of the schemes for amount of Rs. 12041 crore in consultation with the allied Ministries. Instead of waiting for unexpended money and accumulated in the Notional Resources Pool fund and transfer to the DONER Ministry in the next financial year. In order to avoid delay/failure in implementation of the schemes in North East announce by the Government, I suggest that unexpended balance amount should be credited to the DONER Ministry directly and let the Ministry have a plan as stated above.

I am happy that Finance Minister has increased old age pension from Rs. 75 to Rs. 200 per Month, in which Finance Minister has also mentioned that he will urge the State Government to make the equal contribution from their resources so that destitution Pensioner would get at least Rs. 400 per month. On this I have one suggestion,

the resources of poor States like Nagaland resources are very limited and it any not be possible for them to contribute Rs. 200 per month out of their resources.

Therefore, I request the Finance Minister to make difference between having full resources states and non-resources states and it should be given by the Central Government.

Serial No. 50 Rural Infrastructure Development fund (RIDF).

I am happy that Rs. 346 crores has been sanctioned under the scheme for North Eastern States and according to Finance Minister it may likely to touch Rs. 600 crores by the year-end. It also proposed in FM Speech to increase the State Governments to make the best use of these funds. I want to know how much amount has been earmarked for NER during 2006-07

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It is good sign that 3.92 million foreign tourists visited the India in 2005. Out of which Nagaland might have got hardly 10 or 15% because the problem is created by Government of India, like foreigners has to have Protected Area Permit. Why there is restriction on foreigners with visa issued by the Indian Mission to visit Nagaland? This is an anti delusion practice that does not go well with the globalisation and liberalisation.

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY (Bellary): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak here. I thank the people of my Lok Sabha constituency Bellary for electing me to this House.

The Union Budget 2006-07 has failed to address many of the vital problems of the common people. The proposed outlay for agriculture, health, education, employment and power is inadequate.

Coming to the inter-linking of river projects, I would submit that crores of farmers are looking towards this great project. We all talk about farmers as they are the backbone of the country but they are neglected. We talk even about the green revolution. The hon. Prime Minister recently announced that under the Bharat Nirman Programme, one crore hectare would be irrigated. It is possible only with the inter-linking of rivers. Without that,

[Shri G. Karunakara Reddy]

I hope that it will not be possible. In this project, irrigation, drinking water, power, navigation, tourism development will be on the higher side and we can improve them.

If we take the Karnataka State, many districts are dry areas where the underground water level has gone down to 800 or 900 feet. People are facing drinking water problem. They are even facing problem in respect of irrigation also. The real development is only possible with the inter-linking of rivers, Farmers are the backbone of the country. I would, therefore, request the hon. Finance Minister to reduce the interest rate to two per cent from the existing seven per cent.

In my constituency, there are nearly 400 villages with fluoride contamination. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to help my Bellary Lok Sabha constituency to overcome this problem, to give safe drinking water to the villages.

About rural sanitation, it is very unhappy to say that the hon. Finance Minister's allocations are very less. The Union Government is giving only Rs. 625 for each BPL family to construct a toilet. It practically comes to a minimum of Rs. 4000 to construct a toilet. So, I would request the hon. Finance Minister to give Rs. 4000 for the BPL families.

Regarding health, I would like to mention that the population of our country has crossed the hundred crore mark. But most of the population is very poor. The poor people, especially the villagers, do not have any access to quality health care. The villagers have to travel a long distance to reach the hospitals. When they are critically ill, they find it difficult to reach the hospitals in the cities. They may die even during the journey also. This is the condition of the health service in rural India. So, the Government should come forward to set up a Primary Health Centre in each village. If it is not possible, it should be there at every Gram Panchayat level. Adequate medical facilities should be there in these medical centres. Every taluk hospital should have a good operation theatre. There should be adequate facility for the pregnant women. Also, there should be laboratory and other medical facilities available there. The hospitals should have facilities to handle even major operations.

Regarding electrification, I would like to mention that the situation in the country is very poor. A large number of villages in the country are without electricity. The rural people are facing great difficulties to lead their day to day life. The Union Government should take immediate steps to provide electricity to every household in all the villages in our country.

Regarding textiles, I would like to mention that in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and some other parts of the country, the handloom weavers are facing a lot of problems. Hundreds of suicides occurred last year. So, I demand that the Government should make investigations into it. Further, the Government should support the handloom weavers by charging the interest at four per cent on the loans taken by them. Whatever products they manufacture, the Government should purchase and support these people to earn their livelihood.

Regarding tourism, I would like to say that a large number of domestic as well as foreign tourists are visiting Karnataka.

Sir, after Kerala, Karnataka is having wide scope for developing tourism. There is a World Heritage Centre in Hampi in Bellary District, There is a famous port in Chitradurga and there is another famous port in Badami in Bagalkot District and also in Mysore. There are many other important tourist destinations in Karnataka. The coastal areas of Karnataka are also having a good tourism potential. The Government of Karnataka has submitted many proposals to the Government of India for development of tourism in the State. They are pending with the Ministry of Tourism. I would request the Government of India to clear all these pending projects and give financial assistance to the Government of Karnataka to develop tourism in the State.

Sir, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan is meant to spread education in the country. Though the Finance Minister has increased the allocation from Rs. 7,156 crore last year to Rs. 10,041 this year, 90 per cent of the schools in my constituency are suffering from lack of classrooms. I have personally visited almost all the schools in my constituency. Every year, the strength is going up and more than 100 student are sitting in one classroom. So, I would request the Finance Minister to allocate more funds for

construction of more classrooms in rural schools and also for construction of more school buildings in villages.

Lastly, despite the increase in revenue collection, the Budget fails to utilise the opportunity to fulfil the major commitments. I urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to consider the points mentioned by me and I would also like to urge upon him to take necessary steps immediately for implementation.

Sir, there are many more points. Due to paucity of time, with your permission, I would like to lay the rest of my speech on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, please lay it on the Table of the House.

*SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Sir, I am opposing this Budget because it has brought very much unhappiness and no word has been put in this Budget about the inter-linking of rivers project. Crores of farmers are looking towards this Budget because it not only solves the irrigation problem but also the water problems of the crores of the people of this country. The Congress Party has ruled the country for nearly 46 years and they have not implemented this inter-linking of rivers project. It is a matter of national importance and this project should be speeded up. In some areas, there is flood and in some other areas, there is drought. This uneven situation causes great problems to the people and this project should be taken up very seriously and immediately on war-footing basis. Sir, everybody says that the farmers are the backbone of the country but we are not giving importance to this project of inter-linking of rivers. Many say that Green Revolution has been brought. I think, only with the inter-linking of rivers project will be completed, the scope for irrigation, drinking water, power, navigation and tourism development will be on a higher side.

I come to the most important point that is the crop loan to the farmers. The crop loan, which is required by the farmers, exactly is not given by the banks. Only partial amount is given to the farmers. Take for example, Chilly-Dry, the actual cost of cultivation per hectare is Rs. 23,400 but the farmers get only Rs. 17,500 as crop loan and for Chilly Irrigated, the actual cost of cultivation per hectare

is Rs. 40,000 but the farmers get only Rs. 30,000, which means that the farmers cannot meet their crop requirements fully. For the rest of the amount, the farmers have to go for private moneylenders and the private moneylenders are charging interest of nearly 36 per cent. The poor farmers are facing great difficulties to repay the loan and interest amount. So, I would request the hon. Finance Minister, to give direction to the banks asking them to give full amount, which is required by the farmers, as the farmers are getting a part of it. Many States are affected due to drought during the last four years and the farmers are facing great difficulty in getting the return for their produce.

Then, I would come to the point regarding the interest rate and other charges being paid by the farmers for this crop loan. The farmers have to pay 20.20 per cent towards Insurance Premium for Chilly-Dry; 17.20 per cent towards Insurance Premium for Chilly-Irrigated; 11 per cent towards Insurance Premium for Onion; 13.50 per cent towards Insurance Premium for Cotton-Dry; and 9.65 per cent towards Insurance Premium for Cotton-Irrigated, which is very much higher in percentage. Like this, they have to pay 10.25 per cent as interest cost for all products. I urge upon the Finance Minister to reduce the Insurance Premium at the rate of 2 per cent and the rate of interest to 2 per cent on all crop loans, so that the small farmers will be benefited greatly. I would also suggest that the cost of stamp duty for mortgage and other charges, which is now being charged at 2 per cent, should be removed at all.

Most of the recommendations of the National Commission for Farmers have been ignored, such as the creation of a price stabilisation fund for agricultural commodities and extension of crop insurance to all farmers and crops. No additional protection from imports has been provided for cultivators of raw cotton.

The Finance Minister has reduced the budgetary allocation for the food subsidy, which is also a great concern for the common and poor people.

Sir, Bellary District, which is also a backward district in Karnataka, is one of the worst drought-affected districts in the State, especially, for the last five years. People are facing a lot of difficulties for their livelihood. I urge upon

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri G. Karunakara Reddy]

the minister to include Bellary District under the National Food for Work Programme, so that the people can earn little money for running their life.

Since, Bellary District is also a backward district, it has to be included in the Rashtriya Samvikas Yojana for the development of the District.

The Union Government is allocating Rs. 4,680 crore for supplementing the States in their effort to provide safe drinking water to all rural habitation. I would like to mention that in Bellary, nearly 90 per cent fluoride contaminated water is being supplied, which causes great health problems to the people. I would suggest that a huge amount be allotted to Bellary District, Karnataka for providing safe drinking water to the people.

Sir, I am given to understand that under the Rural Sanitation Programme, an amount of Rs. 625 is being given per house for the people living below poverty line. It is very difficult to provide rural sanitation with this small amount. I would urge upon the Minister that this amount should be increased to Rs. 4000 per house for the people living below the poverty line, which is practically required to construct a house. The amount allocated in the current Budget for the Rural Sanitation Programme is also very meager and the Union Government should increase the allocation to a great extent.

The Finance Minister has allocated the sum for Mid-Day Meal Programme, which I feel, is very much low. A sum of Rs. 1 is being given per student for this Mid-Day Meal Scheme. The students are not able to get proper healthy food because of this low amount. I would suggest that this amount should be increased to Rs. 5 per student so that the students, who are the future younger generation, can get healthy food.

Sir, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which is meant for development of education in the country, especially in rural areas, is a welcome step. Sir, though the Finance Minister increased the allocations from Rs. 7,156 crore last year to Rs. 10,041 crore for this year, that is, 2006-07, it is not sufficient. I visited personally nearly 90 per cent of the schools in my Bellary Constituency. The classrooms in these schools are in a bad condition and these

classrooms should be repaired immediately. Many school students in Bellary Constituency, Karnataka are facing a lot of difficulties due to non-availability of proper classrooms. The students of the class are increased to a great extent. Nearly, 100 students are studying in a single class but no classrooms are available for occupying these students. Sir, the Central Government have not taken any step to provide proper class rooms to these students and the funds available for this purpose are in very much shortage. There is an urgent need to construct at least 3 classrooms in each school. I would urge upon the Minister to provide sufficient funds for construction of class rooms immediately, through SSA.

In the month of October-November and March-April, there is a big water crisis in Karnataka, especially, in Bellary District. The farmers are not getting proper water supply for their crops. The farmers are frequently agitating for not providing water to them. The storage capacity of the Tunagabadra Dam is drastically reduced nearly by 30 TMC because of silt formation in the Dam. There is an urgent need to construct 7 mini Dams of capacity of 13 TMC for which the Government of Karnataka has made survey and made estimates. An amount of Rs. 650 crore is needed for this purpose. I would urge upon the Union Government to provide necessary financial assistance to the State Government of Karnataka for this purpose for the benefit of farmers.

The farmers in Karnataka, especially in Bellary, are facing great difficulties to lead their lives as they are not able to produce crops due to drought for last more than five years and in the absence of canal system. In some drought affected/dry areas, farmers are getting small quantity of iron ore in agricultural land within 3 to 5 feet and they are doing it manually. But, procedure for getting permission for this mining is very lengthy. So, they should get permission from State Government and then from Central Government. There is an urgent need to simplify procedure so that farmers can earn a little for their livelihood. Farmers are willing to pay royalty fixed by Government for this purpose. There is an urgent need to simplify the procedure for getting permission keeping in view of problems being faced by the farmers.

Sir, regarding health care, the population of our country has crossed more than 100 crore. But most of

our population is very poor and do not have any access to quality healthcare. As everybody is aware, the cost of healthcare has gone up many a times and it is skyrocketing everyday. When this is the situation in urban areas, I do not emphasise here about the situation in rural areas. People living in villages have to travel a long distance to reach hospitals and many a time, when they are critically ill, they find it difficult to travel and sometimes they die before they reach the hospital. This is the condition of health service in the rural India.

The Government should set up a health centre in every village. If it is not possible at least in every Gram Panchayat, the Government must set up Primary Health Centres, and that health centre should have all the basic facilities and the facility of handling emergency cases. It should have the facilities for pregnancy, laboratory and other first-aid facilities. The Government should set up one hospital with all modern facilities in every Taluk Headquarters and that hospital should have all facilities including facilities to handle all major operations and emergency cases, surgeries, etc. At the district level, the Government should set up one Referral Hospital and Research Centre, which would cater the needs of the whole district.

I would like to state that in several hospitals, especially in Bellary, Karnataka, no medicines are available and a number of doctors are very much in shortage in Primary Health Centres. A large numbers of patients are facing hardships because of this non-availability of medicines and doctors, The amount, which the Union Government has allocated for health care facilities, is not sufficient and there is an urgent need to increase the funds for this purpose.

There is one Government Ayurvedic Hospital by name Taranath Ayurvedic College, functioning in Bellary, Karnataka. This is the only hospital functioning in this area. This hospital is functioning in an old building and it requires a new building. For this purpose, a sum of Rs. 5 crore is required. If this amount is released by the Central Government as grant, this hospital can develop its functioning and it will be beneficial for patients also. Hence, I would urge upon the Minister to release a sum of Rs. 5 crore towards grant for this hospital for the benefit of public at large.

In total, the projected increases in health and education spending are disappointing. The small increase in spending for the crucial ICDS programme will not be enough. Health expenditure levels are far below than those required to fulfil the promises of the National Rural Health Mission.

The Government is manufacturing landline telephone instruments and the cell phone instruments are being manufactured by the private manufacturers. The private manufacturers are charging heavy amount for these cell phone instruments, which causes a great loss to the cell phone users. I would urge upon the Union Government that the cell phone instruments should also be manufactured by the Government and the instruments should be sold at normal prices. This would enable the people to purchase the cell phone instruments at cheaper rates.

As regards electricity, the situation in the country is very, very poor. A large number of villages in the country are still without electricity. The rural people are facing great difficulties to lead their day to day life. The Union Government should take immediate steps to provide electricity to all villages in the country at the earliest.

As regards textiles are concerned, I would like to mention that in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country, the weavers, especially, handloom weavers are facing a lot of problems. Hundreds of suicides have occurred in the last few years. The rate of interest for their loan is on the higher side and their product yields low income. Because of these huge gaps, they are not in a position to clear their debts and to the extreme, they commit suicide, which is a very grave situation and needs to be addressed immediately. But, nothing has been mentioned about the problems being faced by the weavers, especially handloom weavers, in the country, in the Budget. The Union Government should form a Commission to look into the problems being faced by the weavers and to finance the weavers at lower interest rates and see that their products are sold at higher rate, so that they can lead their normal life and committing suicides can be avoided.

Regarding tourism, especially in Karnataka, the large numbers of domestic as well as foreign tourists are visiting Karnataka. After Kerala, Karnataka is having wide

[Shri G. Karunakara Reddy]

scope of developing tourism. The World Heritage Centre of Hampi in Bellary District, the famous Fort of Chitradurga, Badam Pattadakallu in Bagalkot District, Mysore, Belgaum and many more important tourist spots are in Karnataka. Lots of coastal parts of Karnataka are also having tourism potential. The State Government of Karnataka have sent proposals to Government of India to develop tourism in Karnataka. I would urge upon the Union Government to clear all the proposals pending with the Tourism Ministry for financial assistance and other purposes in respect of Karnataka.

Despite the increase in revenue collection, the Budget fails to utilise the opportunity to fulfill the Government's major commitments.

I would request the Finance Minister to consider the above mentioned suggestions and urge him to take immediate necessary steps to implement the same at the earliest.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA (Chikballapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Budget presented by our hon. Finance Minister.

First of all, I would like to dwell upon agriculture. I am really thankful to the hon. Finance Minister for having set apart Rs. 1,75,000 crore towards agriculture credit. He has also set a target of enrolling 50 lakh additional farmers to rural credit during this year. This means, he has allotted Rs. 33,000 crore more than the last year's Revised estimate and I welcome it. This rise in the allocation will go towards the renewal of loans to the farmers who had borrowed previously. How long can this go on? Is it for 5 years to 10 years or 20 years?

Sir, in my college days, I read that the Indian farmer is born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt. Even in the year 2006, the position has not changed. So, I would urge upon the Finance Minister to get the details as to how many individual farmers have been borrowing for the last 50 years. This should be put an end to. If a person borrows Rs. one lakh during this year, next year he must be allowed to borrow only 90 per cent of what he has borrowed earlier. Suppose I borrow Rs. one lakh during this year, I should be given only Rs. 90,000 during the next year.

Like that, for the next ten years, the entire loan should be phased out and no further loan shall be given to him. That means, the Government should make the farmer stand on his legs. How can we achieve this?

Now, this Minimum Support Price, which we are giving is not reasonable. The consumer's interest is taken into consideration and not the farmer's interest is being taken into consideration. While you fix the support price, set-off should be given to the farmer for his losses due to natural calamities, droughts, etc. That is not being done. I urge upon the Government that at least 25 per cent margin must be allowed to him after deducting his expenditure, including input, loans and the expenditure to be contributed by his labour. So, at least, if he gets 25 per cent as net profit every year, he will be able to stand on his legs after ten years, and he will live a comfortable life. So, this factor must be taken into consideration.

the hon. Finance Minister has stated that he might charge 7 per cent to the farmer for crop loan. Then, what about the long-term loans? What about the development loans? He has to sink a bore well, he has to purchase a tractor, he has to construct a farm house, he has to construct a farm ponds, etc. What is the interest he is charging? It is again 12 per cent to 14 per cent. This shall be stopped for all the loans borrowed by farmers. It should be only four per cent and not even seven per cent. He cannot manage if this interest is charged.

I am a farmer. I know what are the problems that the farmers face. Sometimes, we feel like running away from the pressures of the banks, So, I urge upon the Finance Minister to see that all loans borrowed by the farmers shall be charged only four per cent. After all, if the exchequer were to lose a sum of Rs. 500 crore or Rs. 1,000 crore, it does not matter very much. This has to be looked into by the hon. Finance Minister.

Sir, marketing facilities also must be made available at the door step of the farmer. At the Panchayat level, the marketing facility should be provided to the farmer. Unless we provide these facilities, we cannot do good service to the farmer. Even today, most of these middlemen go to the doors of the farmers and purchase the commodities there. They sometimes indulge in under weighing of the commodities and pay less price because the farmer is in need of money and he will sell at any rate to

discharge his liabilities. This has to be stopped immediately.

With regard to irrigation, I would say that the irrigation outlay is Rs. 7,124 crore. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is sufficient in achieving the slogan of Bharat Nirman. It is not at all sufficient. It has to be raised to at least Rs. 10,000 crore.

Sir, we are spending a sum of Rs. 4,000 crore towards uplifting of the water bodies. Where is the water? If there are rains, it is all right. But if there are no rains, as was there in Karnataka for the last four years—there were no rains at all and we suffered a lot—improving the water bodies will not help. So, I urge upon the Government to see that mould afforestation is taken up. They must also insist on the State Governments that afforestation should be given priority or else they will not be given their their grants.

20.00 hrs.

This has to be done. Also, Sir, while the State Governments take up the irrigation project, 50 per cent of the cost of the irrigation project shall be met out by the grants of the Central Government. That has to be done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly conclude.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Kindly allow me to speak, Sir. I speak very rarely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is 8 p.m. There are ten more speakers listed to speak. So, I would request the House to extend the time.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the time for proceedings of the House be extended upto 10 o'clock....(Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): Tomorrow, at

12 o'clock the Finance Minister wants to give the reply. So, the time of the House should be extended up to 9 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Time is extended up to 9 p.m. On no account it will be further extended. We will complete it by 9 p.m. Hon. Members may kindly cooperate. We will finish it by 9 p.m. provided you confine your speeches to five minutes so that all the speakers can speak.

20.02 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: I now come to 'Education'. My hon. colleague, Shri Rahul Gandhi in the morning was speaking about the necessity of education. I need not press that education is more important, even when we want a good 'Bharat nirman'. What is going on now? We are spending not even 2½ per cent of our GDP towards education. One hon. Member has already mentioned it. Private education has to play its role especially in professional education. For the last 10 years litigations are going on in the Supreme Court. The Bench consisting of seven Judges of the Supreme Court in their last judgement has said that autonomy will be restored. Autonomy is given to the professional colleges. But, in our State, Karnataka, it is a peculiar situation there. They have introduced the Bill wherein they have brought some draconian laws. Suppose, if any student is given a seat; jumping the merit one seat is given, a fine of Rs. 10 lakh is going to be imposed. Suppose, some rules framed by the Government are flouted, there is a fine of Rs. 10 lakh or 3 year's imprisonment. Is this the democracy we are living in? My young friend was telling to start more and more universities and invite the students from outside. He was referring to Cambridge and Harvard Universities, but what is going on here? Something has to be done to find out these things whether to run the professional institutions or close the professional institutions. This has to be attended to.

One more thing is there. My friend Shri G. Karunakara Reddy is sitting here.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Kindly conclude. You have taken more than 10 minutes.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Sir, I have been waiting since morning. I am 80 years old. You should have some sympathy for me....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can lay your speech on the Table of the House. It will form part of the proceedings.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: There is one more point. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can lay it.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: I will require only two minutes to finish my speech.

MR. DEPUTY -SPEAKER: No, kindly conclude.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Sir, it is very important. Please listen to me for two minutes....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can lay it on the Table of the house.

Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, what is our fault if we were left. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will be given an opportunity to speak but how much time it takes, will be decided later on.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam's speech.

(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: Sir, the Opposition is hundred per cent cooperating! ... (Interruptions)

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Sir, last year we have exported approximately 2,21,00,000 tonnes to China, and that

means we are exporting daily 60,000 tonnes. Why should we... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam. You take only five minutes.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Jalappaji, nothing is going on record of what you are saying.

... (Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Jalappa, if you want you can lay the rest of your speech on the Table.

Now, Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam.

[Translation]

**SHRI SITA RAM YADAV (Sitamarhi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir I support the budget 2006-07 presented by the Finance Minister. This budget has been presented for the benefit and development of villages, the poor, women, sheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes. The budget has provision for adequate funds for health, education, drinking water, irrigation, electricity and roads. There is a provision for providing more loan to farmers at lower interest rates in this budget.

Education is being imparted universally to all in the country under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. It is a good thing. It needs to be monitored strictly. Irregularities on a large scale are taking place.

The girls belonging to the scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes, backward classes in the villages will get an opportunity to get higher education with the setting up of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas.

There is a need to open a central school and a Navodaya Vidyalaya in Sitamarhi.

Aprovision for Rs. 24,115 crores has been made in the budget for upgrading the standard of education.

*Not recorded.

**The speech was laid on the Table.

Arrangement for mid-day meal has made. It is a good thing.

A provision of Rs. 18,696 crores has been made under the head of Bharat Nirman.

Villages having population of upto 500 have to be connected with roads.

There is a need for monitoring for speedy completion of work.

Work on large scale is being carried out under Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojna. I thank the Minister for Rural Development also for it.

At the same time, there is need for more allocation. Golden Quadrilateral Scheme is a very important scheme. The previous government was constructing 1.8 km road per day. The present UPA Government is constructing 4.48 km road daily.

At present, the Employment Guarantee Scheme is being implemented only in 200 districts of the country. It needs to be implemented in each district.

This scheme is a very important one. It provides for employment to the member of every family for 100 days in a year.

But it is being monitored.

Irregularity on large scale is taking place.

Only the labour oriented schemes are to be taken up under this scheme. I think, constructing permanent infrastructure should be obligatory alongwith their being labour oriented programmes.

Irregularity on a large scale took place under the scheme taken up under food for work Programme during the last year in Orai and Katara blocks of Muzaffarpur districts in Bihar. There is a need to inquire into the entire scheme.

I am sorry to say that district Sitamarhi fulfills all the criteria. Despite that, this district has not been included in the 'food for work' scheme.

The Government of India has provided adequate

allocation for flood and irrigation schemes but It is not being utilized properly in Bihar.

Twenty districts of northern Bihar face devastation every year due to floods.

Particularly the entire district of Sitamarhi gets drowned in the flood. All the infrastructure and the crops get destroyed.

The discontinued Bagamati Scheme should be revived.

Having conducted survey and constructing the dam, the Adhwara group of river may be utilized for irrigation.

It will be best if the farmers are provided handpumps, boring for irrigation at 75%-90% of the cost.

The Government has provided adequate funds for electrification under Rajeev Gandhi Electrification Scheme but the progress of work is low.

There is acute shortage of power in Bihar.

It is good thing that Government of India will provide electricity to all villages by the year 2009.

No office of the Government of India has so far been opened nor any work is being carried out at Sitamarhi in Bihar.

It is a good thing that all the poor are to be provided with electricity connection.

It is a tourist place as Maa Janaki was born here and it is bordering on Nepal. But Sitamarhi has not been developed to attract the tourists.

Therefore my proposal is to develop Sitamarhi by connecting it to Budhist circuit or Janaki circuit and bring it on the tourist map of India.

An amount of Rs. 4680 crore has been allocated under Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission to provide drinking water facilities to 56,270 villages.

An amount of Rs. 4,995 crores has been allocated for the (urban) poor.

It is laudable that old age pension for the poor has been increased from Rs. 75 to Rs. 200.

[Shri Sita Ram Yadav]

The condition of most of the National Highways is very bad.

N.H. 77 passes along Hajipur-Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonvarsha. The Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi road remains closed for four months in a year and thirty lakh population has to suffer.

N.H. 77 was handed over to NHA in June 2004 and was sanctioned for four laning but no tender has been passed nor any work has started either.

The Karaau bridge, which is being constructed for the last eight years, be completed at the earliest to keep the Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur road functional.

The height of Saidpur-Jhapaha road be increased by five feet and road be kept functional by constructing bridges at several places.

Sitamarhi Sursand Bhatta Mod road is ready but road 7 is devastated. Out of them only two has been sanctioned and 5 are still left. They should immediately be sanctioned otherwise the road constructed by UPA Government will be of no use.

Sitamarhi district has been kept out of Sam Vikas Yojna whereas it fulfils all the criteria. Therefore Sitamarhi should be included in Sam Vikas Yojna.

F.M. relay center of Akashvani be set up at Sitamarhi.

[English]

DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM (Bhadrachalam): Sir, I support this Budget with deep discontent because this Budget on the one side going away from the commitments of the National Common Minimum Programme and on the other side helping the corporate sector and the new liberal policies are throwing our country into deep crisis.

The Budget proposals neither enhance the livelihood needs of our common people nor promote the small and medium scale industries of our nation. The overall direction of this Budget is to placate the financial capital with some more financial liberalisation measures and towards the advancement of foreign monopoly investment

into our economic, agricultural and service sectors. This is exactly going against the spirit of NCMP.

Sir, even though the GDP is said to be grown at a faster rate from 7.5 per cent to 8 per cent especially in the manufacturing sector, this grown up economic growth was only reaped by the corporate sector and not by the common man, that is *aam aadmi*.

Sir, the gap between poor and rich, have and have-nots is widening day by day, budget after budget, and we observed this in the following fields.

The rate and absolute number of BPL families are ever increasing. Skilled and semi-skilled unemployment is growing fast. The measures to resolve the crisis in agriculture fall short of the gravity of the situation. The products of small and medium scale industries and handicrafts are taxed heavily. The steps to ensure social justice and women empowerment were ignored and neglected. The Defence Budget increase reflects the insecurity, both internal and external.

In the speech of the Finance Minister, it is said: "Growth will be our mount; equity will be our companion; and social justice will be our destination." ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You are reading your speech. You can lay rest of your speech on the Table of House.

DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM: After speaking for one more minutes, I will lay the rest of my speech.

Sir, this Budget reduced the price of cars and the aerated drinks have become cheaper but the people are suffering with so many difficulties.

So, this Budget cannot provide any relief. The only relief that was given is the Employment Guarantee Scheme for which about 200 districts have been selected but the allotment was only about Rs. 11,000 crore. Sir, 75 per cent of the amount will be contributed to these 200 districts by the Centre. It should allot, at least, Rs. 15,000 crore. So, this is a lapse between its commitment and its performance.

Like this, in the social justice sector also, for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people under Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan, money is

being allotted but that money is not being spent at the State level. So, the Centre must create a mechanism to monitor this special fund which is intended to create social justice among the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people.

Sir, with your permission, I want to lay the remaining part of my speech on the Table.

*In fact growth, only for the haves; equity continues to allude the poor; the circari social justices is sans distributive justice.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the present allocations and previous performance clearly show that this budget is an exercise in negation of sitributive and social justice as its destination.

I may quote allotment and expenditure pattern on SC and ST welfare measures.

As per the figures given in the budge proposal, it is evident that out of the total amount allocated toward tribal welfare, an amount of Rs. 100.00 crores was not spent. Within this, Rs. 28.19 crores allotted to TPS was also not spent.

Demand No. 87: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment 20% allocation:

1. Speical Central Assistance for Scheduled Castes Component Pain: In this, out of Rs. 491.22 crores allotted in the year 2005-06, an amount of Rs. 398.28 only was spent and Rs. 92.94 crores was left unspent. Futher, this year the amount allotted is Rs. 440.12 crores i.e. Rs. 51.1 crores less than the last year budget. While there is a growth in population of the SCs, the reduction in allocation defies any rationale.
2. There is no increase in the budget allocation of 2006-2007 to machinery for implementation of Civil Rights Act 1955.
3. There is no rise in budge allotment to Pre-Metric Scholarship Scheme for SCs.

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

Demand No. 93: MOTA

1. There is only Rs. 10 lakhs increase in the budget for Vocational Training in Tribal Areas: From Rs. 5.40 crores to Rs 5.50 crores.
2. TRIFFD: Only Rs. 4,00 crores was spent in the last year against allocation of Rs. 10.00 crores. There is no additional amount allocated in this budget.
3. The rise in the budget for Forest Produce is only Rs. 5.2 crores. This is not sufficient.
4. The budget allotted to PTGs is only Rs. 6.75 crores. This is also insufficient.
5. An amount of Rs. 27.00 crores was allocated towards State Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation in the previous budget, but not a single paise was spent. Further this year in 2006-2007 budget, the allocatioln is only Rs. 11.50 crores.
6. It seems in the proposed budget that an amount of Rs. 1.00 lakh was allotted towards Adivasi Bhavan. How is it possible? Perhaps even a hut is not possible?
7. Out of Rs. 230.65 crores allotted in the previous budget towards Schemes for PMS, Book Band and Upgradation of Merit of ST Students, only an amount of Rs. 188.09 crores was spent. There is an unspent balance of Rs. 42.56 crores. This year the allocation is only Rs. 189.78 crores.
8. Budget allotted to TPS in the previous year i.e. Rs. 38.19 crores was not spent. Nor there is a rise in the budget allocation this year.
9. Out of the amount of Rs. 80.00 lakhs allotted in the previous year budget, only Rs. 70.00 lakhs was spent and Rs. 10,00 lakhs remained unspent. Futher, this year the allocation is only Rs. 40.00 lakhs.
10. Budget allotted towards welfare of Physically Challenged persons is Rs. 7.32 crores in the

[Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam]

previous year and out of this only Rs. 4.68 crores was spent. This year, only Rs. 2.72 crores was allotted.

Demand 57: Dept. of Women and Child Development:

1. Previous budget allocation towards Integrated Child Development Services Scheme is Rs. 754.14 crores, but only Rs. 703.46 crores was spent. Rs. 80.68 crores remained unspent.

Demand 78: Dept. of Rural Development:

1. The amount allotted towards SGRY (SC/ST) in the last year budget was Rs. 2007.50 crores and the total amount was utilized. But this year allotment is only Rs. 1095.00 crores i.e. less by Rs. 912.5 crores over previous year.

The bane of apathy on social justice is two fold

- First there are not enough allocations in the budget.
- Even the meager allocations are not utilized as is evidenced by the foregoing details.

Who is accountable for the unspent amount in budget allocations? Is it not time to have an effective mechanism in place to prevent these perversities?

Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister may please initiate necessary steps and inform the Parliament.

I should not be faulted, if I say, the budget proposals are totally disappointing on social justice perspective.

The Government does not have the requisite commitment to uplift the SC/ST and other deprived sections of the society.

The apathy of the administrative machinery to implement the measures should be overcome and then only the talk of social justice would have any meaning.

Further I urge that additional allotments to a substantially higher level be made on

- Civil Rights Act, 1955 implementation machinery.

— TRIFED

— TPS

— Forest Produce

— ICDS

— SGRY

— Pre-Metric Scholarships

— Special Central Assistance for Schedule Castes Component Plan

This should be supported by a firm mind set at the implementation level.

As quoted by the Hon'ble Finance Minister, it is true that vessels whose sails are unfurled catch the wind and go forward on their way. But the moot point is which way and in what direction? It should be in the direction of National Common Minimum Program. It should be in the cause of the weak and disadvantaged. It is the solemn commitment to the people by the UPA Government. There should be no escape form it.*

*SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPAPARAI (Sivakasi): Sir, with its anxiety to achieve the target of ten per cent GDP growth rate and with its perplexity to meet the need fulfill the Common Minimum Programme, Union Finance Minister has presented the UPA Government's Budget for the year 2006-2007 and I would like to extend my support and Welcome the same on behalf of my party Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and on behalf of our leader VAIKO.

Raising infrastructure and ensuring social security can be likened to two eyes when we eye on the development of the country. Bearing in mind this essential need, allocation has been increased to the tune of 54% and has been set apart as part of the budgetary provision to 'Bharat Nirman' to establish a strong infrastructure. Education, Public Health, Women Development are among the eight social security areas which get increased allocation in this year's Budget. Such salient features are among the welcome aspects this Budget.

At this juncture, I would like to point out that ours is

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

basically an agro-economy with sixty per cent of our population taking up cultivation as their occupation. It has announced that interest rate on agricultural loans will henceforth be reduced to 7%. Budget for this year spells out that an allocation of Rs.1,75,000 crores of rupees is to be extended towards farm and rural credit. It is to be distributed through our public sector banks. It is true that this is quite unimaginable a good measure. But still long term loans are not covered by this. When small term loans are addressed, the budget does not talk about other long term debt burden. Agriculture produce must get remunerative prices. In order to ensure this, setting up of a Market Stabilization Fund is necessary. This is one among the important recommendations by Dr. M.S.Swaminathan. But the Union Budget has not proposed to translate that into action. Towards that fund, no allocation has been made in this budget.

As per last years Budget more than one lakh small and minor irrigation schemes were to be re-structured, reconstructed and renovated. But that has not been taken up as yet. Budget for this year is also silent on it. Crop Insurance Scheme remains to be a model and pilot scheme still for the past three years. That has to be widened and must be taken to all the farmers in the country. All the crops must get insurance cover.

Small Scale Industries do play a major role in country's economic growth. But unfortunately 180 items here been deserved this year which will greatly affect the Small Scale Industries sector. This will force our small entrepreneurs to face an unequal race with the Multi-National Companies. In order to help this small scale sector, credit facilities at lesser rate of interest must be made available through public sector banks. In order to save this sector further, there is a need to increase the ceiling limit to Rs. 2 crores from Rs. 1 crore for levying excise-duty. In this decade, country has witnessed significant economic growth but at the same time employment generation is a cause for worry as unemployment is on the increase. All these problems can be overcome only by increasing investment and capital. With 30%, we have achieved 8 per cent growth rate. To realise the dream of our Prime Minister to achievement 10 per cent growth rate. We need to augment our capital investment to 35%. I wish and hope this UPA Government and our Union Finance Minister do their best to achieve this.

While attending to the problems faced by the farmers, irrigation must get the due attention to improve the lot of the farmers of the country. This is very important. A long time dream of the people of Tamil Nadu, the Mullai-Periyar Dam improvisation, has taken a good turn for the better through the intervention of the Hon. Supreme Court of India after a long wait of more than twenty five years. This must be implemented fully to benefit Tamil Nadu. Cauvery dispute is still pending for long. Paalar river dispute with Andhra Pradesh due to their steps to construct a dam across Paalar near the borders of Tamil Nadu against the interest of Tamil Nadu is also cropping up. In order to put an end to these disputes, the Union Government must take up the linking of southern rivers. This is a long pending demand from our leader Vaiko. We do not find any budgetary provision for this project. I urge upon the Government to commence this project with necessary allocation. On behalf of our party MDMK and on behalf of our leader VAIKO I am welcoming and expressing my support to this Budget, let me conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI JAI PRAKASH (Hissar): Mr. Deputy- Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to thank you for allotting me time to speak despite the fact that it is getting too late.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What can I do, the list of speakers from your party is very long.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Sir, you are so magnanimous as you have assured all to give time to speak.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, there is no difference of opinion that the budget presented by the hon. Minister of Finance has been praised by all and sundry. I would like to present just a few points regarding this budget. I belong to a farmers family and India is predominantly an agricultural country. The condition of farmers and agricultural labourers is worst in this agricultural country. For example, take the issue of interest. Cultivation is no longer a profitable occupation, it has become a loss incurring business. I would like to request that the rate of interest which is fixed at 7 per cent in golden card should not be more than three four per cent because the prices of all agricultural inputs, whether it is diesel, or electricity, fertilizers, pesticides or drugs, continue to soar while the prices of agricultural produce continue to go down.

[Shri Jai Prakash]

Therefore I would like to request the government to provide seeds at cheaper rates to farmers to increase, produce, provide subsidy on pesticides and especially on electricity. I would also like to point out that our government has announced to import wheat from abroad. This is likely to affect the farmers of Haryana and Punjab most. There is acute shortage of power in Haryana because we have no resources of either water or coal. If the Central Government gives a package of five thousand megawatt of electricity to Haryana state, Haryana can fill the empty godowns of country with wheat and rice.

My second suggestion is regarding tractor. When a farmer buys a tractor on loan, he has to pay an interest rate of 11-12 per cent against that loan beside mortgaging his 5-6 acres land with the bank. But if his crop fails then the entire land of the farmer is attached by the concerned bank of the cooperative. I regret that he has lowered the prices of car for the benefit of the wealthy traders but did not lower the prices of tractors. I would request that prices of tractors and other agricultural implements such as harrow, trolley etc. may also be lowered and they should be made cheaper and the interest rate of loan on these items be fixed at three-four per cent. Besides this, arrangements should also be made that the farmer may not have to pledge his land to purchase the tractor. I am against all this because it was the decision of our UPA Government that this is the country of the farmers and we would work for their betterment.

My third suggestion is about agriculture universities. Hissar Agricultural University is situated in my constituency. As you all are aware that Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon, the then Chief Minister of undivided Punjab took initiative to set up this university. After the creation of Haryana state this agriculture university progressed a lot and today this university is at the first notch not only in India but in Asia in developing wheat seed. This university has developed a variety of wheat seeds for which there is no need of preparing land after paddy harvesting or it can be directly sown in the wasteland i.e. zero drilling. It can be sown directly. In this way it saves expenditure on Diesel, piper etc. as well as time of the farmers. I do not oppose the allocation of Rs. 100 crores to Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, it is a good

gesture because Punjab is also a agriculture predominant state but special package should also be given to our agriculture university which have earned fame in the world in the field of agriculture.

Now I would like to say something about BPL. The previous government had made provision of issuing yellow and pink ration cards for the poor people. Disappointed with this system, poor and Harijans come to us. I would request that a new survey should be conducted now and these yellow and pink cards should be done away with. The dalits in Haryana and Punjab are not covered under the existing BPL guidelines because as per these guidelines a person having kuccha house with no fan and electricity is considered to be living below the poverty line. Therefore, this guideline should be revised and the Harijans should get ration as per their requirement at cheaper rates. Besides, these poor Harijans should get free insurance cover particularly medical insurance cover because these people die for want of medical treatment. Therefore, free medical and should be provided to these people.

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana is a good scheme. The due share of our state under this scheme should be released to the state. The Union Government has formulated a scheme for the national highways under which Delhi-Chandigarh, Delhi-Jaipur, Delhi-Meerut and Delhi-Agra National Highways have been covered. I request that the National Highway No.10 from Delhi to Hissar should also be included in the DBFO Plan as it was there in the plan earlier. This highway leads to Hissar via Rohtak. Therefore, this road should also be doubled. You intend to ease traffic load in Delhi. Rohtak is in the National Capital Region and this highway further leads to Madina. If this highway is extended, the distance up to Sri Ganganagar, Abohar-Fazilka will be reduced considerably.

So far as education sector is concerned, adequate allocation has been made for this sector. Sarva Sikha Abhiyan is being implemented with a good pace. But that should be classified. In rural areas, where children of poor people are studying, funds should be directly allocated to those schools.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been implemented in 200 districts all over the country

and only two districts of my state have been included in the said scheme. The districts covered under the said scheme have not been selected on the basis of total number of districts in a state because there are twenty districts in our state and only two districts have been selected for the said scheme. In this way all the districts of the state cannot be covered under the said scheme within next three years. Therefore, districts should be selected for this purpose keeping in view the total number of districts in a particular state. This is a very good scheme, therefore, the benefit of this scheme should also reach to the poor Harijan brethren and landless people of Haryana state.

In the end while thanking you and supporting this budget I would like to add one thing more before I conclude. The plight of the farmers and agriculture labourers in the country for the last 10-12 years is pitiable. The prices of the farmer's produces in determined by the Prices Commission in Delhi. I demand that more prices of agriculture produces should be given to the farmers. I don't want to inflict a loss to the poor people because several hon. Members have said that if more price of wheat is paid to the farmers then what the poor people will eat. I suggest that Rs. 900 quintal should be paid to the farmers for wheat and flour should be provided to the poor people at the rate of Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3 per kilogram. It will benefit both. I have seen that after becoming the Chief Minister of Haryana, Shri Bhupendra Singh Hooda has paid maximum rate of Sugarcane to the farmers of the state. It has resulted that sugarcane has now been cultivated on such a large scale in the state this year that there will be no shortage of sugar in the country and there will be no need to import sugar. Same is the case of wheat and paddy. I would like to say something about cotton and mustard in particular. At present 'NAFED' is procuring these commodities. I would like to request the hon. Minister that procurement of these commodities should be done through traders instead of 'NAFED' so that the farmers could get remunerative prices of their mustard. I thank you very much for giving me time to speak.

DR VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA (Rajkot): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the budget 2006-07 of the Government of India. Before I express my views about the budget, I would like to state that the UPA Government has

made a commitment of social justice but when mid term appraised of the 10th plan was undertaken then our government's total public investment stood at Rs. 12,12,802 crores but this Government brought it down to Rs. 9,81,113 crores is reflected in the mid term appraisal that means the investment has reduced by Rs. 2,31,689 crores. On one hand the government says that it wants to provide employment opportunists and on the other public investment is reducing. I strongly feel that the government will not be able to achieve the desired results in the field of social infrastructure and service sector or cannot do good for farmers an agriculture tradition.

The Government says that the fiscal deficit has been coming down but as per the actual figures of the year 2004-05 your budget was perged at Rs. 4,27,829 but in actual budgetary provisions this figure was Rs. 4,65,773 that means a deficit of Rs. 12 thousand crores owing to which fiscal deficit has come down.

Similarly for the plan expenditure, the budget for the year 2004-05 was Rs. 1,73,720 but actual expenditure was only Rs. 1,50,818 crores that means there was deficit in the plan expenditure. The Government says that It has increased the budget but when actual figures is received, the fiscal deficit remains static due to less plan expenditure.

All have spoken about agriculture sector. I would like to state here that I myself belong to farmer community and I do know that our agriculture policy needs to be radically changed. It is said farming is the first choice, business, the second choice and the service the last one. Therefore, more budgetary provision needs to be made to promote agriculture. Hon. Minister belong to Tamil Nadu, Great Saint and social reformer Sh. Tiruvallur stated, *[English]* "if the farmer's hand is shaken, then the sacred kingdom will also fall. The best of the rules will also lose power." *[Translation]* If the farmer is in trouble then it happens. But today, the farmers are being pushed to suicide. Like separate railway budget, there should be a separate budget for agriculture also. Today, our 70 per cent population lives in villages and only 24 per cent of GDP is spent for them. Our Government has spent Rs. 88 thousand crores on telephones, communications but had that investment been made in agriculture, what would have been the outcome? I have with me the data of the returns of investment wherein it is mentioned that if any investment

[Dr. Vallabhbai Kathiria]

is made in industry then its returns is available in 7.7 years.

Similarly, if investment is made in electricity, then its full returns is available in 15 years. If one invests in the Railways its full returns is available in fourteen and half years and in transport, it takes 5.3 years time to get returns. But so far as the agriculture is concerned, the full returns of investment made therein is available in just two years. But if one invests in minor irrigation projects or micro water harvesting projects, it takes only eight months to get full returns and this is our practical experience. We undertook the water-harvesting work in Gujarat resulting in an increased crop yield there. I would like to make a mention of one village only. There is one village named Hamirpur. Earlier, the total income of this village was Rs. 4 lakh 10 thousand only, how its income has rise to Rs. 33 crores. So one can see the vast difference that has come about in the level of income then and now. If we want farmers to be prosperous, then the rate of interest on loans provided to farmers should be reduced to 5 per cent from the present 7 per cent. Meanwhile the intermediary agencies should be done away with. Agriculture insurance also needs a huge amount of flexibility. Similarly, organic farming also needs to be promoted. There is a need for providing sufficient budget for the Food Processing Industry. Rs. 944 crore has been provided for water harvesting, total irrigation and other related works for one year. I want point out the insufficiency of the budget for the purpose? In fact, Rs. 90 thousand crore are required for the purpose then only can one expect the full returns of the investment. As for water bodies, you have said that restoration of water bodies would be undertaken in 23 districts of 13 states. How it would be done? How many districts would be left out under the scheme? I think that you should change policy in this regard and more and more districts should be brought under this scheme besides other schemes should also be converged with it and more and more water bodies should be restored under the water harvesting scheme.

So far as the Swajal Dhara Scheme is concerned, it is said that 56 thousand habitats would be provided funds under the Swajal Dhara. Our Government had said

that they would provide funds against as many applications as were received under the Swajal Dhara. But they have provided only Rs. 100 crore in the budget. I want to say that with this budget so many villages of a country like ours are not going to be benefited a soon.

I want to say something about the problems faced by cooperative banks too. The Government has brought them under the income tax net. Economy of the country is on the move and the country is going to be a super power, corporate sector is moving forward and cooperative system is the only alternative before the country is our democratic system then it is not going to benefit it. Cooperative movement is going through a crisis. Numerous suggestions have come after Madhopur crisis but still there is a need to refinance and restructure them. These urban cooperative and agricultural cooperative banks are giving loan to small people. A big bank may give loan of Rs. 5000 crore to an industrialist or at the most, to 1000 people but a cooperative bank can provide employment to 50,000 people by giving them loan of 500 crores of rupees. I want to say that they use their surplus or income for education, medical services or charity help. Therefore, in today's time of competition, in order to provide level playing field to them which is a basic thing, the income tax imposed on them should be rolled back. Scheduled banks get exemption under section 80C, they too are required to file again. I would like to say something about industries. Several provisions are due to be made, the government has been talking about bringing a bill on small scale and medium scale industries but no such bill has yet been brought. They talk of extending the limit upto 5 crore rupees and giving bank credit and other assistance. Industries involved in organized as well as in unorganized sectors need loan facilities for their promotion. Little has been done in this sector too. Therefore, I would like to say that maximum investment should be made in this sector.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: Special Economic Zones have been set up in the country, on the same lines, Special Educational Zones are required to be set up.

Rehulji has also said that maximum investment should be made in higher education. Only 6 per cent students embark into higher education after 'ten plus two'. Only 10 per cent students are likely to embark into higher education after 2010. At that time, there will be great shortage of infrastructure. In such a time, campuses should be developed for higher education where education in different courses may be imparted. Education satellites are orbiting in the space but that is not being utilized. There is a need to start the educational satellite.

I would like to state about sanitary tiles. Its business is in Gujarat. Imported tiles are undervalued and are being imported from China. Loss is being incurred to indigenous business as a result of this.

The excise-duty levied on raw-material is higher whereas, it is less on finished goods. The local industries which imports raw-material and manufacture finished goods have to bear hiked cost. The government of Gujarat is celebrating tourist year this year. Porbunder, Gandhinagar and Junagarh be included in National Urban Renewal Mission as these are historical, heritage and tourist places.

The government has made special provision in the budget for Gandhian Institute for the first time. Special grant be allocated to Porbandar, which is the birth place of Gandhiji, Sabarmati Ashram and Rashtriya Shala Rjakot....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing is to be recorded now.

(*Interruptions*)*...

**DR. VALLABHBHAI WATHIRA: Sir, National Highway from Bagodara to Bhavnagar to Kodinar to Somnath to Porbandar to Dwarka to Okla to Jamnagar to Jodia to Malia is to be declared, being coastal area.

There is no Amnesty scheme for disclosing black money from the market. Government should think over it. There is no mention about Rashtriya Mahila Kosh started by NDA Government.

*Not recorded.

**This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

The allocation of Rs. 720 crore is mere wastage of money in rural sanitation campaign where money is going to be utilised for awareness only. As far as electrification is concerned, only 10,366 villages are covered. When will the six lakh villages be covered with this speed? Export has increased from Rs. 3,61,819 crore in 2003-04 to Rs. 3,71,771 crore in 2004-05 while import has grown at the rate of 39.7 per cent, which has never increased more than 25 per cent in the last 25 years. These are alarming signals for economy.

The non-conventional energy resources require more attention as we are having almost 300 days out of 365 days in a year full sun light for solar energy. Vast geographic and bio-diversity requires much more attention for wind and biogas energy alongwith cheap technology, indigenous one.

As far as health is concerned, wide spectrum scheme for health insurance covering all sections of people requires urgent declaration. More Budgetary allocation should be there for promotion of yoga and naturopathy for better health. Like Rural Health Mission, Urban Health Mission requires full attention. It is because due to urban slum and urban lifestyle, diseases are more in urban population.

Regarding globalisation, we have to be careful, watchful and slow in implementation of WTO norms in each and every field. We have to protect our national spirit of Swadeshi, indigenous industries, SSIs and agro-rural industries, and agriculture sector from detrimental effects of WTO. We have to follow China in that respect. We may become somewhat cunning (diplomatic) even in exercising the norms for national interest.

The Bill "Be Indian, Buy Indian" requires to be introduced in Parliament. We need not become over-enthusiastic.

Sir, 12 per cent Excise duty imposed on additional nutritional food requires to be withdrawn as it will harm women and child development, who are the main culprits of malnutrition.*

*SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN (Baramulla): Sir, the budget proposal for the financial year 2006-07 presented by the Finance Minister is before the house for

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Abdul Rashid Shaheen]

discussion and vote, I will make a brief submission about a few points concerning category states and hilly areas of the country.

There is no doubt that we are poised to achieve a considerable speed in our developmental take off, to become the most favoured destiny for FDI's and it is a matter of satisfaction the investment is coming in on a considerable speed, as Finance Minister has mentioned in his budget speech that "the investment rate has increased steadily from 25.3% in 2002-2003 to 30.1% in 2004-05." Indications point that capital formation in economy is buoyant. GDP growth is likely to be around 8.1% that assures us that process of development is healthy. But we have to go a long way there is no scope of complacency.

I do agree that growth is the best antidote to poverty but it is also a fact that breeze of fortune accelerated by growth; sometimes leave certain distant groves untouched may be because of the opportunities which favourites enjoy or the high of privileged which other have attained.

So, welfare state has the responsibility to bring such areas and inhabitants living under such circumstances, into the loop and provide them equal opportunities. Category states and bad pockets deprived of may privileges and opportunities; need to be given special attention. Every year the annual budget estimates must give the parliament an account of the outcome of constructive planning and 'viable development strategies', adopted for energizing the economies of such states. It is also imperative that equal opportunities are given to all such areas.

But some times different criteria is being adopted. For instance the appreciable programme of 'non-lapsable pool of resources' of the 10% of budgetary allocation to Central government Departments, except a notified few is operating for NER only. We have been vehemently demanding that Jammu and Kashmir also should be taken into the fold of this programme but Government avoids by orchestrating a few, so called economic packages; which are generally of a very meager help to the economy and infrastructural development of the state.

I remind Hon'ble Finance Minister about his announcement that 'Tourism is an employment creating sector, but what is the allocation made to this sector? It is only 830 crore, given a small step up from previous year's 786 crore allocation. I would like to know isn't it a gross neglect towards this employment generating sector. What a paltry sum of 830 crore can do to develop the tourism industry is whole country. I want to inform Mr. Finance Minister in order to develop infrastructure and some of the new tourist destinations in Jammu and Kashmir alone more than 10 thousand crore are required in 1st phase only.

My party National Conference firmly demands that Jammu and Kashmir should be covered under "Non-lapsable Pool of Resources Programme", of course, the allocation to this pool may be increase to 15% from the invogue 10% routine.

Development of water potential for microhydel generation in Jammu and Kashmir has been totally neglected, though every policy maker in the central Government is aware of this fact that economic development in Kashmir is totally stunted by the shortage of electric power.

I may hurriedly make mention of Khadi and Village industries sector, small, industries and handicrafts and handloom sector, in his budget proposal Hon'ble Finance Minister has not done justice to these sectors.

Employment generation has come to a halt in Kashmir and qualified boys and girls are excessively falling prey to neural and cardiac disorder. Psychological complications are enhancing among unemployed youth.

Sir, I urge upon the Government to take firm steps to rehabilitate category states economically and make viable development strategies to bring the less privileged areas and states of the country out of the morass of the economic instability.

Last of all I reiterate the demand that a yearly compensation schedule to Jammu and Kashmir State may be worked out and announced in this financial year in lieu of the losses under gone by the state due to the Indus Water Treaty finalized on the back of erstwhile starwart leaders of Jammu and Kashmir like S.M. Abdullah.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I would also like to make a request with regard to primary education. There is a shortage of teachers in Punjab and Haryana and also in the adjoining areas. Please do something in respect of primary education. In this sector, there is a shortage of teachers.

Now, I give the floor to Shri Gurjeet Singh Rana.

*SHRI GURJEET SINGH RANA (Jalandhar): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on Budget 2006-2007. Sir, this is a balanced Budget. Under the stewardship of our able Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and our Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram, The G.D.P. is growing at the rate of 8.1% the manufacturing sector is growing at the rate of 9.4% and the agriculture sector is growing at the rate of 2.3%.

Sir, I want to thank the Hon. Finance Minister for granting Rs. 100 crores to Punjab Agriculture University. It was the demand of all Punbabis. Last time, grant of Rs. 100 crores had been given to the Science and Technology. Institute, Bangalore, now, the Hon. Minister has accepted our demand and we are thankful to him.

Sir, Rs. 460 crores have been given as annual pension to about 12 lakh ex-servicemen. I thank the Hon. Minister for this.

My colleague Shri Hooda had raised the matter of Hisar Agriculture University. It is the sibling of Punjab Agriculture University. Credit for establishing this institute goes to Shri Kairon. Haryana is our neighbour. The Hon. Finance Minister should also provide a grant to Hisar Agriculture University. Punjab and Haryana should work together. I thank the Hon. Finance Minister for making special provisions in the Budget regarding improving of infrastructure in the fields of road, Railways, Power the Civil aviation. Special provision has been made for the Indian Airlines. This is a commendable step.

Some Hon'ble Members have talked about BPL families. Very few people fall under the norm of BPL families. In Punjab, fans, refrigerators and electricity connection are common in households. Due to strict norms, many poor people do not qualify as BPL families.

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

So, I appeal to the Hon'ble Finance Minister that he should reconsider these norms in the interest of our SC brothers.

The National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government made a promise to encourage agriculture. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has reduced the interest rate on all agricultural loans by 2% for the year 2005-2006. It now stands at 7%. This is a commendable step.

The farmers can take loans upto Rs. 3 lakhs. I think, it is difficult for farmers to return these loans. We must provide remunerative MSP to farmers for his produce as farming entails a lot of expenditure.

Our Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab Captain Amarinder Singh is very enthusiastic about diversification of crops and irrigation. He has sought funds for this purpose. Similarly, for the overall development of Punjab, he has sought a package of Rs. 1940 crores from the Centre. The Centre should provide this amount to Punjab.

Sir, States that face terrorism should be helped by the Centre. A few days ago, there were bomb blasts in Varanasi. Sir, today, there is a debt of Rs. 3772 crores on Punjab. It goes back to the days of terrorism in Punjab. We fought terrorism in National interest. It should be waived off.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister has promised to provide relief to the victims of 1984 riots. I thank him and Hon'ble Soniaji. However, several people are still missing and no death-certificates have been granted to their families. Properties of several people were burnt down by rioters. No assessment of their properties have been made. Assessment of their properties should be done. The date for assessment should be further extended, so that affected people can avail the benefit.

Sir, give me just two minutes, you are so kind.

20.41 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, Please excuse me. Hon'ble Member, you may give your speech in writing.

SHRI GURJEET SINGH RANA: Sir, during the time of terrorism in Punjab, people were pulled out of buses

[Shri Gurjeet Singh Rana]

and trains and killed in cold blood. My colleagues from the BJP never raised this issue. They only talk about the morning 'Shakha' or drill of the RSS. Many Hindus had to migrate from Punjab. Just give me a minute, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI GURJEET SINGH RANA: Please give me more time. Hindus who migrated from Punjab at the time of terrorism should also be given financial assistance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will be recorded now.

*SHRI GURJEET SINGH RANA: Sir, I would like to bring to the attention of the House during the period of terrorism in Punjab, many innocent Hindus and other communities were pulled down from houses, trains and were shot dead while in Shakhas, i.e. Moga incident. Some of them left the State and migrated. These people should also be given compensation like the victims of the riots during their period. A survey should be conducted to identify these people. They should be granted waiver of loans, shelter and jobs in Government organisations. Provision for this must be made in the Budget of the year 2006-07.

It is pleasing to observe that all sections of the house have appreciated the speech of Shri Rahul Gandhi today. This is good and I join in expressing my own appreciation to Shri Rahul Gandhi.

I conclude with my support for the Budget proposals*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have 10 speakers. Each Member should conclude the speech within three minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA (Etawah): Hon'ble Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very much grateful to you for providing me an opportunity to speak on general budget 2006-2007. Together with this, I express my gratefulness to Hon'ble Finance Minister for presenting a good budget but it is not so in respect of farmers,

Agriculture is a major profession in India. Eighty per

cent people depend here on farming. But the irony is that only a provision of 1.4 per cent has been made for agricultural that the general budget which is being discussed. The farmers of India are in trouble these days. The prices of fertilizers, diesel, electricity and other essential things are on the increase. But the price of the crops produced by the farmers goes on decreasing. The cost of the crop which was provided to the farmers ten years before is still being provided. I want to request the Hon'ble Finance Minister that a provision of at least 20 per cent amount be made in the budget for farmers and this should be spent on farmers and agriculture. I think, if 20 per cent amount of the budget is spent on the farmers, India and its farmers may very well compete with the developing countries. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister to provide subsidy to the farmers. All the members have just said that the government has provided relaxation in cars. But no relaxation has been provided on tractor for farmers and other agricultural implements. We demand that subsidy be provided also on tractor for farmers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my next suggestion is that the Government has made a provision of Rs. 33 thousand crore on adult education. But the money being spent on adult education is a wasteful expenditure. That is being spent by all the touts and officers. This money is not spent on stipulated item and in the interest of common man. Hence it should be stopped and this amount should be spent on primary education. If this amount is spent on primary education, the primary education will improve very much. The standard of primary education is going down today.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. We have no time. You can lay the remaining part of your speech on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Sir, I praise the Mid Day Meal Scheme launched by the Central Government. The government has made a provision to spend 4813 crore rupees on it. But it is certain that the motive of the government behind launching this scheme is not being fulfilled. The way in which the amount

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

allocated from the budget for this scheme should have been spent is not being done in the manner. Hence the Mid Day Meal Scheme be withdrawn. Since the children are not provided meal in time under the scheme, the teachers are engaged in cooking food at the time of study, the time when they should teach the children. That is why they are unable to teach the children properly. Although, this is a good scheme, but I want to request that this scheme be stopped and the amount should be spent on primary education and all the children should be provided with school books, dress and scholarships. I think that the motive of the government behind this scheme has not been fulfilled.

Sir, there are crores of unemployed people in our country. I want to request that all these unemployed people be provided with unemployment allowance. Besides this, the government has decided to deposit Rs. three thousand in the account of the girl who passes class eight. It is a good scheme. But I think, this amount be increased to twenty thousand rupees. The government of Uttar Pradesh has decided to provide 20 thousand rupees to each girl under this scheme. In the similar manner, the Central government also should pay twenty thousand rupees to girls.

I again request the government through you that provision be made for expenditure of 20 per cent of the budget on agriculture and with this I conclude my speech.

[English]

*SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (Nagercoil): Sir, the Union General Budget for the year 2006-2007 is perceived to be a welcome budget without any new tax proposal that seeks to address to rural development. But, in my opinion, considering the present Indian context, this is inadequate. Mahatma Gandhi said self-sufficiency in villages and improving rural economy must be given thrust to ensure overall economic growth of the country. Due to droughts and floods in the last four years agricultural growth has retarded and there is a decline to the tune of over 7.5%. Floods and drought alone was not the reason behind it. It is also because of the previous BJP regime's attitude towards the rural India and in their neglect. The people of this country do expect change in attitude with a new

Government assuming power, but proper care is not there in keeping pace with the expectations of the people. In order to lift up people who are languishing below the poverty line and to avoid starvation deaths, farmers must be protected with effective and viable measures like land reforms and irrigation development. Minor irrigation schemes all over the country must be improved. Adequate attention must be paid in this area. Farmers in the rural India must be helped to come out of the debt burden. The cooperative sector must be streamlined and strengthened to distribute loans to needy farmers. This budget does not spell out much about rejuvenating cooperative sector in conformity with the democratic principles of the country that needs to be guaranteed and ensured.

The agricultural produce, the yield, the farmer gets after a hard labour, must fetch remunerative price or at least a minimum support price so that the rural agro-economy does not collapse. Hence, I urge upon the Government to implement guaranteed procurement. When harvest is plenty, adequate storage facilities as part of infrastructure build must be there.

To protect the crops from diseases, droughts and floods, effective management with adequate fund allocation must be there. We find a situation where one hand does not know what the other hand does. Due to this lackadaisical approach, improper import policies are evolved. For instance, in Kanyakumari district, we witnessed the fall in prices in the procurement of Rubber, Coconut, Honey and spices like pepper and cardamom. In the last year's Budget, it was announced that education would get 6% of GDP, but it has not crossed 4% as yet. More and more privatisation in the education sector. It has become a saleable commodity.

MBBA seats are sold for 30 lakh of rupees and engineering admissions fetch several lakhs. In the name of deemed universities unregulated education shops are mushrooming in the country. This not only affects the quality of education, but also the education that must be imparted to the future generation. This has resulted in students' agitation and disquiet in educational institutions. Higher education is increasing and becoming an unattainable target to the poor masses of the society. Unless and otherwise, the Government comes forward taking upon itself as its duty to provide education to the

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri A.V. Bellarmin]

poorer sections of the society, much headway can never be made.

Hence, I urge upon this Government to apportion more share in the GDP for providing education. When it comes to public health and medical facilities, the prevailing situation is disheartening. This essential service sector has become a hot bed of commercial exploitation. Corporate hospitals are emerging more in numbers. These are beyond the reach of the poor masses. More and more of public hospitals in the Government sector must be there till the time when we contain the population. This is necessary from the poor masses' point of view. Better health and basic sanitation facilities must get more allocation from the budget. One after the other, many of the health schemes are being dropped and abandoned. I would like to welcome the reduction in excise duty levied on some essential drugs to treat Cancer and AIDS. We need to evolve ways and means to contain the ever-increasing menace of Cancer, Diabetes and Heart diseases. Preventive methods and medicine must get priority. At this juncture, I would like to urge upon the Government to establish a Cancer Treatment Unit in the Medical College Hospital situated in Kanyakumari.

The country's infrastructure does not merely rest with roads, railways and airports. The basis for the country's development rest on healthy and educated citizens. We must have to approach the socio-economic development from this angle. It needs to be pointed out that employment generation schemes have not been spelt out. In Tamil Nadu, the educated unemployed, who had registered with employment exchanges, were 50 lakhs in number in 2001. Now, it has increased to 57 lakhs in 2005. If we take into consideration the unskilled non-professional unemployed graduates, uneducated and illiterate masses, unorganised labour, this unemployment figure could be high. The Government is talking in terms of Foreign Direct Investment. Such of the investments must aim at employment generation. President's Address also mentioned about the Governmental efforts towards employment generation and creation of new jobs. But, we do not find any concrete measure in this Budget. Even soap, phenyl and bricks are attracting excise duty. I would like to urge upon the Government to abolish tax levied

on goods that come of cottage industries, Khadi and Gramodyog Industrial Units and goods manufactured by Women self-help groups. Apart from that, such of those manufacturers must be provided with marketing facilities and opportunities. Customs duty reduction as an incentive to encourage import of goods must be withdrawn if such goods are manufactured within the country.

The labour force in the unorganised sector, especially those labour in construction industry contribute to the country's growth and building up of infrastructure in a big way. But will date they have not got a social security scheme for them at a national level and such a measure has not even been mentioned in this Budget. It remains as a mere announcement. The fishermen who earn a lot of foreign exchange and found spread along the vast stretch of our Indian coasts must get a proper social security cover at the instance of the Centre.

Though the President's Address mentioned about the Constitution or the setting up of Sixth Pay Commission, the Budget is silent on it. I urge upon the Government to ensure that the demands of the Government employees are taken into consideration.

Rare Earth available in plenty in India are being exploited by private sector people. Many of the quarries remain with them and they are earning crores of rupees exploiting our entapped natural resources. I urge upon the Government to take it upon itself to handle directly the natural resources like minerals, granites and metals. This would help to tread with caution to pursue our mission to help the helpless people living below the poverty line and in the rural areas. with this, I conclude my speech.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, I rise to support the Budget presented by the hon. Finance Minister for the year 2006-07, but with some strong reservation.

Even though the Finance Minister has claimed 8.1 per cent growth, yet the impact of that much growth is not to be seen in the society especially among the common man—*Aam Admi*—the upliftment of whom, the UPA Government is committed to. The GDP growth might have resulted in the creation of millionaires and billionaires, but the gap between the poor and rich people have been widened. The GDP growth has not percolated

to the common man and the per capita income has not increased. One of the reasons for this is that our programmes are not targeted the common man or programmes targeted are not properly implemented.

Majority of our population depends on agriculture and traditional industry for their livelihood. In the Budget, there is no concrete measures suggested for the sustainable growth of this sector and creation of employment opportunities. In the last Budget, hon. Finance Minister had declared that the food processing industry would generate 2.5 lakh jobs every year; textile sector 1.2 crore jobs in the next five years and the IT sector, 70 lakh jobs by 2009. I would like to know as to how much job opportunities have been created during the last year. Downsizing of the public services, ban on new appointment, contract labour and outsourcing of services have further decreased the job opportunities for the employed youth. There is no concrete proposal to solve the unemployment problem and to meet the agrarian crisis and the suicide by the farmers. There is no proposal for enrichment of traditional industry.

Most of the flagship programmes of the UPA Government are actually similar to the old wine in new bottles. For example. the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme has two components, Food for Work Programme and the Swarna Jayanti Gramin Rozgar Yojana. These two programmes were clubbed and converted into the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme.

For National Rural Health Mission, an allocation of Rs. 8.207 crore is there and total allocation for health is Rs. 11.688 crore. Last year, it was Rs. 10,280 crore. Even after including the National Rural Health Mission, the allocation is only Rs. 2000 crore more.

Regarding the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the funds can now be utilized for construction activities. This fund should be made available for making furniture and utensils required for classrooms.

Regarding the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme, it should be extended to cash crops also. About fisheries, the proposed National Fisheries Development Board will be constituted with Fisheries college Kochi or

CMFRI Kochi as the headquarters. The traditional industries sector is neglected in this Budget. Last year, even though a meagre amount of Rs. 100 crore was allocated for traditional sector but this time, not a penny is earmarked for traditional sector. In this Budget, Kerala is badly neglected.

Regarding tourism, Kerala is ranked as number three in the world tourism destinations.

But in the Budget, there is no proposal for Kerala. There are proposals for creating so many tourism infrastructruer in the country but for Kerala, there is absolutely nothing.

Sir, regarding Maritime development also, Kerala has been neglected. There is no provision for Kerala.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Manoj, you may lay the remaining part of your speech on the Table of the House.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Just give me a few minutes. I am concluding.

Sir, under the Maritime Development Scheme, Chennai could be converted into a National Maritime Academy, but there is no provision for Kerala. There was a proposal for Transshipment Terminal at Kochi but it is not included even as a regional centre. So, Kochi should be included as a regional centre under the Maritime Development Scheme.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I am calling Kunwar Manvendra Singh.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Sir, just one minute, Sir.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Mr.Chairman, Sir, nothing can be spoken in two or five minutes on budget speech. No member would like to speak for less than ten minuts.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

(*Interruptions*)*...

*Not recorded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Manoj, please conclude now.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: There is a strong move for the opening up of various sectors to the private hands.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Manoj, rest of the speech you may lay on the Table.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Let me finish, Sir.

Sir, as regards Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana, until now the electricity supply is through State Electricity Boards. Under this RGGVY, engagement of franchises and contractual arrangements for distribution, billing and collection is sought for. This will lead to privatisation of the electricity supply in every States. This will, in turn, lead to escalation of cost for the domestic consumers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are still a large number of speakers. You should lay the remaining part of your speech on the Table of the House.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Sir, the Budget presented by the hon. Finance Minister is similar to that of a sugar coated tablet. Solutions to the core issues like agrarian crises, unemployment problems and economic divide are not there in the Budget but creates an impression that the Budget is for *Aam Aadmi* while promoting enough and more for the corporate sector.

I would lay the remaining part of my speech on the Table.

*Sir, subsidies provide a measure of protection for the poor and underprivileged. If it is helpful to the poor and underprivileged, there is no point in branding the issue of subsidies as a divisive one. The Government must have a strong will to continue all the subsidies for food, fertilizer and petroleum.

Students from weaker sections of the society, who cannot afford technical education in engineering colleges and polytechnics, are coming in ITIs for their studies. Courses in ITIs are affordable because of the low fee structure. The Government has announced that 500 ITIs will be upgraded. Last year, 100 ITIs were covered with the help of private sector thereby opening up the

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

Government resources to private players. This should not be allowed.

The permission to some of the mutual funds to invest in overseas exchange traded funds will result in the drain of national wealth to abroad. This should be reconsidered.

Even though in the Budget document it is said that the Government is committed to a strong and effective public sector and PSEs have investment plans amounting to Rs. 1,22,757 crore in 2006-07, but providing only Rs. 16,901 crore as public equity and rest from private sector thereby disinvestment of the public sector enterprises, is a departure from NCMP.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Kunwar Manvendra Singh. You have to finish your speech within five minutes.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura): How can I finish my speech within five minutes? I should be given more time, sir....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq, you may also lay your speech on the Table of the House.

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad): No, Sir. I would like to make a speech on the floor of the House.

[*Translation*]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I rise to support the budget presented by the hon. Finance Minister. I congratulate him for that.

Sir, my first demand is that the MPLADS funds given to an M.P. should be enhanced from existing Rs. 2 crore to Rs. 5 crore. I had made this demand earlier as well. Moreover, the rate of interest on agricultural loan should be reduced from 7 per cent to 4 per cent. The same demand has been made by other hon. Members as well. This step can improve the financial condition of the farmers and they can mobilize new and other means for agriculture.

21.00 hrs.

In the year 2004-05, farm credit was increased from Rs. 1,25,309 crore to Rs. 1,41,000 crore and the target for the year 2006-07 has been fixed at Rs. 1,75,000 crore. It

is very good step and the farmers are likely to be benefitted thereby. Irrigation is one of the major requirements for agriculture. I am grateful to the hon. Finance Minister for providing Rs. 7121 crore for this purpose including mobilization of external funds. The issue of interlinking of rivers had come up last time but nothing has been done so far in this directions, Dams need to be constructed over the rivers to generate hydro electricity. This will improve the level of underground water and also make available more facilities of irrigation. ...*(Interruptions)* Mr. Chairman, Sir, it would be better if I do not speak and sit down.

I congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for enhancing the allocation for Employment Guarantee Scheme under the Bharat Nirman Yojna by 54 per cent. So far as the issue of roads is concerned, a provision of Rs. 5000 crore has been made for the villages. This amount seems to be very little because roads are in very bad shape. Besides, the provision of Rs. 4300 crore for the first year and Rs. 11300 crore for the second year made under the Employment Guarantee Scheme is going to open up a lot of employment opportunities. There is no doubt about it that employment opportunities have to be increased.

Provision under the Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojna has been increased to Rs. 4000 crore during the year 2006-07. Monitoring is required in this scheme as there are many shortcomings in this scheme. Besides, there is a great problem of drinking water...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, now it is already 9.00 p.m. I think the House would agree to extend the time because there are a few more speakers.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Please extend the time of the House till 10 O'clock...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We may extend the time by half-an-hour. You please conclude no. If you do not conclude, how can we complete the discussion? You are all in Ruling Party. Why do you take so much time?

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, I would conclude as soon as possible...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: Sir, we can continue our discussion but the only condition is that those hon. Members who would speak now, they should remain present in the House till the House adjourns.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, let me speak ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you can place rest of your speech on the Table of the House. I am doing it for the sake of verybody. Now, Shri Owaisi to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, this is not fair...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I take this opportunity for congratulating the Finance Minister for presenting the second full-fledged Budget of the UPA Government. I dedicate my speech to the 53 widows of the farmers who have come here all the way from Wynad District in Kerala. They protested in front of Kerala House to demand relief and redressal of their problem...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, I have not concluded my speech. This is not fair...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not get angry with me. I am a poor man here.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: You stopped him because you had to extend the time of the House. His speech is continued...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Had you denied me, I would not speech...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: How does your speech go when you sit here?...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your support is not necessary for Shri Manvendra Singh. He is strong enough to defend himself. Why do you stand up?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you can finish your speech in one sentence, I would allow you.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, my name is in the list. You should give me time. What is thi? This is our right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is for your sake that I am doing this job.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: I am waiting since morning for my turn. What about that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What can I do about that? How could the Budget be passed if you do not co-operate?

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Where is the question of co-operating?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can understand this from a Member of the Opposition benches, but I cannot understand your doing like this.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: You have extended the time of the House, so let me speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is for your sake that I am doing this job

...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: You may refuse me the opportunity to speak....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is that you want? Do you want the House to adjourn now?

I am doing this painful job for your sake. It is a Constitutional requirement that a discussion on the Budget takes place and the Budget is passed. That is why I am sitting here. But you cannot control yourself. I could have understood if the Members of the Opposition were doing this. But I cannot understand your sense of doing this. I have been a Parliamentarian for the last 50 years. I have the experience.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: I am also not a new Member. This is my fourth term...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry. What can I do?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, so far as drinking water is concerned the hon. Finance Minister has increased the allocation for the year 2006-07 by 30 per cent. A provision of Rs. 4680 crore has been made to provide drinking water to 1,40,000 schools and 56,270 habitations. But even after 58 years of independence, women in villages in my constituency have to fetch water from the distance of 3 kilometre. I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister to accord priority to rural drinking water schemes. There is acute shortage of water and no arrangements for the same have been made there. As about Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Shri Rahul Gandhi has already elaborated on it. I do not want to repeat all that. But I am of the view that education should be nationalized so that we can impart better education to the people through out the country. When I was campaigning for the elections, a child came to me and caught my Kurta and asked something what he said is an un-parliamentary expression of Brajbhasha, the child asked that if I won...* the teacher would go to teach or not.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unparliamentary word may be deleted from the proceedings.

(Interruptions)...*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: We are ready to sit here and listen to the debate till after 12 mid night. But let us try and understand the difficulty of the staff of the Lok Sabha Secretariat also. There are a lot of lady reporters working here. We have not provided meals to the staff. So, please take this aspect also into consideration....*(Interruptions)* If the Members are ready, then we can conclude.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Government should have provided this.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: We did not decide to extend...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: We also are sitting here since the morning for our turns...*(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: You please first listen and then react. We did not decide to extend the House till 10 p.m. and so we did not provide ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sripermbudur): The Lok Sabha Secretariat should take care of this and provide dinner...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now here the problem is that the hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs had written to me saying that I should allow only five minutes to the Members from the Ruling Party. But he has taken more than 15 minutes.

Is it the way of doing things? Are you obeying the dictates of the hon. Minister? He has written to me to allow only five minutes for each hon. Member. This is what he has written to me. Now, in spite of his request, I have given you 15 minutes to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have dealt with many people but I have not come across a person like you, a person who is unable to understand the significance of a thing. Unfortunately, yesterday, there were unprecedented blasts in Varanasi. Otherwise, we could have finished the discussion yesterday itself. We are sitting late today because it is a constitutional necessity, we have to complete the discussion and the hon. Minister will be replying tomorrow. You must realise it. You are representing a Party and I am sitting here to control the House for the sake of the Government. It is the Government business that we are transacting now. I am really sorry to say such things. You are a grown up man. Why do you not realise it?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: You should have controlled in the beginning itself...*(Interruptions)* Sir, so far as electrification is concerned, you have provided Rs. 597 crore for the same...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you concluding now or not?

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Two more points are there.

[Translation]

Sir, Rs. 597 crore have been provided for electrification. Even today, numerous villages in the country are not electrified. The Power Minister is also present here. I would urge him to increase this provision.

Sir, nothing significant has been done in the field of agriculture insurance. This scheme is under consideration since late Rajiv Gandhi's time. My request is to push through this scheme. For the BPL people ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record now. There is a limit to everything.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: All right, Sir. Then I am taking my seat...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad): Sir, the Finance Minister, in his speech, has concluded from a famous philosopher saying that the world is his who does his job with compassion. But the same compassion was not shown in the allocation of funds to the minority welfare schemes. A new Ministry has been formed and one of the most senior Members is heading that Ministry. But what has been the allocation given to the minorities welfare? Its population is 19 per cent. In his speech, the Finance Minister has said that he has increased the corpus fund for the Maulana Azad Education Fund to Rs. 200 crores. This corpus fund is there since it was established in 1992. It was meant to be Rs. 500 crores. It has not even touched Rs. 500 crores. Are you doing favour to the minorities? An amount of Rs. 16 crores has been allocated to NDFC for a minorities population of 19 per cent. How much does it come to? You have increased Rs. 300 crores only for the National Council of Promotion of Urdu. How are you going to help the minorities? Let the hon. Minister tell the literacy rate of Muslims. The national average is 65 per cent and the Muslim minorities average is 59 per cent. What is the participation or the ratio in voting? It is much less than all the communities. Despite this, is the Government really serious about it? Do you have any compassion for the minorities or not? The hon. Finance

[Shri Asaduddin Owaisi]

Minister should answer this question. Mere words will not help. We are sick and tired of hearing sweet words for the last 45 years. We want some action to be taken now. We want you to give more allocation to the minority welfare schemes.

Sir, he says that he has achieved economic growth of seven to eight per cent. I congratulate him for it. But what is the percentage of unemployment? The Economic Survey of 2005 says that unemployment of males has increased from five to six per cent to nine per cent in rural areas and from six to seven per cent to eight per cent in urban areas. In the case of females, it has increased from 5.6 per cent to 9.3 per cent in rural areas and from 10.5 per cent to 11.7 per cent in urban areas. It is a very big challenge for the UPA Government to ensure that unemployment level comes down.

My third point is about education cess. The media has praised the Finance Minister that he has increased education cess to 31.5 per cent. You are getting Rs. 8746 crores in this financial year by imposing the education cess of 2 per cent. What is the backing which the Government is giving? You are solely relying on this education cess and it is a fact that this education cess is in direct taxes as well as indirect taxes thereby burdening the common man.

Arithmetic jugglery will not work. We would like to know what is the Government's share in this. You say that you want to achieve the target of allocating six per cent of GDP towards education, as has been laid down in the National Common Minimum Programme. But at this rate, you are not going to achieve the target. We are blatantly violating the promises that have been made in the National Common Minimum Programme. It is promised that our education Budget will get six per cent of the GDP. What is the percentage now? It is only 2.8 per cent.

Justice has not been done to the agriculture sector. This Government has formed a National Farmers' Commission headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan. He has made various recommendations. One of his recommendations was to decrease interest rate of bank

loans to four per cent. Why have you not implemented that recommendation given by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan?

You have increased the rural credit. It is a welcome step. You have brought down the interest rate from nine to seven per cent. That is also a welcome thing. But why has not the Finance Minister bothered to provide protection to the raw cotton growers? Despite all the Congress Chief Ministers making a strong recommendation that raw cotton growers should be helped by increasing the import duty, the hon. Finance Minister has failed to do it.

Regarding allocations being made to the State Governments, I would like to state that under National Central Assistance Programme Rs. 2700 crore have been cut. You had promised to give Rs. 1,500 crore to the States under the National Central Assistance Programme....(Interruptions) But that has also been not given....(Interruptions) You have promised that you will promote six hospitals on the lines of AIIMS. I have figures with me. Out of Rs. 250 crore, only Rs. 6 crore were given. Now, what is your target? Your target is Rs. 75 crore. How much money will be released?

These are very important points. Due to paucity of time I am not able to speak about them. If you permit me, I will lay the rest of my speech on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The matter that you are raising is very important. You may please lay it on the Table of the House.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: I have many points to raise. If you permit me, I will lay the rest of my speech on the Table of the House.

*Sir, I would like to take this occasion to congratulate the Finance Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram, for presenting the United Progressive Alliance Government's second full-fledged budget. This year, I will dedicate my speech to the 53 farmer's widows, who have down all the way from Wayanad district, Kerala and have launched a huge protest front of the Kerala Bhawan, New Delhi in demand of relief and redress. Their sufferings reflect a miniscule amount of the gigantic crisis, which the poor person of

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

our country is today suffering due to the callous attitude of the Finance Minister toward these people. All the political parties that had and are continuing to provide support to this government laid special emphasis on the National Common Minimum Programme (hereafter NCMP), which provides a basic shift from the neo-liberal policies and also furnishes some respite to the above-mentioned people of the country.

This budget speaks a lot about the rural areas and investment in social sectors. But, it would be much better for the economy if the Finance Minister would reduce doing lip services and actually allocate something concrete to these sectors. On the other hand, the government has continued to carry on its policies of appeasing the big business houses and the international capital.

In the last two budgets, the Finance Minister had claimed that maintaining growth, stability and equity were the main objectives. He had announced a target of 7-8% Growth for the economy in accordance with the NCMP and this year's budget shows that the target was achieved. The economics of the last decade has experienced a lopsided focus of the Government in maintaining a high growth rate, even at the cost of equitable distribution. The above perspective shows that even after more than half a century, since the inception of 'Development Economics', it is certainly the poverty of conventional wisdom, which still fails to recognize that growth rate is not a sufficient condition to alleviate unemployment; leave alone the other developmental aspects. The statistics of the last few years from the Economic Surveys reveals that the country has experienced a "jobless growth": though the Finance Minister denied such a fact in his budget speech of 2005-06.

The Economic survey of 2005-06 states that in between 1993-94 to 2003-04 the unemployment rate (on the basis of current daily status) for males increased from 5.6 per cent to 8.1 per cent in the urban areas. Similarly, over the same period, the unemployment rate for the females increased from 5.6 per cent to 9.3 per cent in rural areas and from 10.5 per cent to 11.7 per cent in urban areas. This is quite disturbing for our economy, which already has been facing the challenge of a high level of unemployment. Thus, it demanded a serious attempt on the part of the UPA government to concentrate

on a growth strategy, which gives due attention to employment generation.

On rural employment programmes, the increase is only 10 per cent in nominal terms, from 11700 to 12870 crore (excluding the NREG component). This year's budget saw an increased allocation in NREG Act and 3000 crores under the Sampooran Grameen Rozgar scheme. While the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme comes into being. The Food-for-Work programme disappears, and the cut. The major purpose why we all were pushing forward the demand for the NREG was to inject purchasing power into the hands of the rural poor, but if the NREG only substitutes existing programmes then the benefit which the poor people will get becomes marginal. Even in the matter of NREG therefore there is a renegeing on the promise made in the NCMP.

As far as the education sector is concerned, the Finance Minister has been highly praised in the media for enhancing the expenditure on this sector by 31.5 per cent over the last year. But this is not at all praiseworthy since the government's levying of 2 per cent cess should have expected more allocation on this front. The Budget's own estimation shows that an amount of Rs. 8746 crores worth of funding would come from the education cess to be collected in the forthcoming fiscal year. Thus, it seems that the government is relying heavily on the instrument of education cess to fund the Government's commitment to universalize its elementary education. In my last budget speech, I pointed out that the Tapas Majumdar committee Report estimated a sum of rupees 1,37,000 crores required over a period of 10 years to achieve the goal of universal elementary education. It is quite unfortunate to note that the government despite collecting a substantial amount of money from the common public for raising the expenditure on education is not matching the same with increased funding from other sources than the education cess. I would like the House to note that this education cess is imposed on the direct as well as indirect taxes, and its incidence also falls on the large number of the poor and marginalised of this country too. So, the government should stop doing jugglery with this money as this puts more burdens onto the shoulders of the already distressed people. If the Finance Minister is serious in his efforts to universalise education, then it

[Shri Asaduddin Owaisi]

should necessarily allocate more funds over and above what the education cess it is mobilizing. Otherwise, the promise made in NCMP of spending 6% of GDP on education would remain a distant dream. In 2005-06 the government also proposed to build up six AIIMs-like institutions to augment medical education in deficient states. In 2005-06 Rs. 250 crores had been provided for this purpose. In the budget documents, the actual allocations show that this allocation has been drastically reduced to a meagre Rs. 6 crores. In this year's budgetary allocations towards this project, the allocation has been pegged at Rs. 75 crores only, which shows the lack of commitment on the part of the centre to carry forward its promise on this regard. Out of the many pro-poor promises, the NCMP also sought to increase public spending on health to at least 2-3 per cent of the GDP, with main focus on the primary healthcare. This means an additional allocation of Rs. 5600 crores (for a total public expenditure of 2 per cent of GDP by 2009). As against the promises of NCMP mandated increase in allocations to the tune of Rs. 5600 crore, actually the increase in allocations lags far behind.

Nonetheless, the allocations have been increased by roughly Rs. 2000 crores, which is a move in the positive direction. With regard to the ICDS programme, the Supreme Court has ordered the government to universalise this programme, which will require an allocation of Rs. 8000 crores. But, this year the Finance Minister allocated less than Rs. 5000 crores for the programme.

The inhumane approach of the Finance Minister was candidly exposed on the issue of making allocations to the agricultural sector and the food economy in this budget. Sir, the poor of this country expects some relief from us. In this context, is it too much to expect that the Finance Minister should show some sensitivity to the acute agrarian distress in large parts of India, especially in my state Andhra Pradesh? Is the Finance Minister unaware of the fact that 50,00 farmers are known to have committed suicide in the last eight years, driven by debt caused by huge increases in input costs and fluctuating prices of their produce? The National Farmers Commission set up by this very Government under the eminent scientist Professor M.S. Swaminathan recommended, among other

things, immediate debt relief bringing down interest rates on bank loans to 4 per cent, and importantly, setting up a fund to stabilize prices. In the absence of such support, how far will the increased rural credit, welcome though it is, be able to make a substantial change in the present dismal situation of farmers with smaller holdings? The only concession was in the form of bringing down interest rates from 9 to 7 per cent is hardly fair or adequate. Even such a necessary step as increased protection for raw cotton producers by raising import duties on cotton, has not been taken despite the fact that the several Chief Ministers of even the Congress-ruled states have asked for this. In the event, the budget utterly fails to address the most burning issue of the Indian economy.

Another issue, which disturbs me highly, is the issue of food subsidy. Far from extending the coverage of the Public Distribution System for food in the context of growing evidence of food insecurity and hunger deaths across the country, the finance minister has actually reduced the budgetary allocation for the food subsidy. Given the high rates of malnutrition confirmed in recent studies, there is every reason to enhance and strengthen the different aspects of the food economy including production, procurement, and distribution of foodgrains. Instead this budget cuts food subsidy by Rs 2,000 crore. To justify its stand, the Finance Minister has claimed that there was a saving of around Rs. 3,000 crore in transportation and storage costs because of disposal for surplus stocks. Instead of curtailing the expenditures, the budget should have shifted the money from storage saving to implement the NCMP assurance of a universal public distribution system.

Next I would like to draw the attention of the House to my core annoyance with this Budget for advancing economic reforms. The Budget seeks to aggravate the problems of the Small-Scale Industry (SSI) sector. This year too the Finance Minister has put forward a proposal of de-reserving 180 items, for an attempt to strengthen the reform process, which will definitely have a negative impact on this sector. SSI sector in fact provides much more employment per rupee of investment than large-scale, capital-intensive sectors. Though some concessions are given to this sector, but the accelerating pace in which the Finance Minister is de-reserving it would eventually lead to a confinement of these benefits to minor section.

Sir, now I would like to draw the attention of the house to the tax front. It must be acknowledged that there are some positive features in this year's budget. The first is the revelation that in the current fiscal year there is evidence of increased tax revenues and an increase in the tax-GDP ration. This has come after nearly one and half decade and surely is a positive sign in itself. While some of these tax collections reflect the growth of the economy, others are the result of higher imports and higher prices of oil imports, which sharply raised the government's tariffic collections.

However, my strong reservation about the whole process of fiscal management is centred to the fact that, with a projected growth rate of 10 per cent in the coming fiscal year 2006-07, there has been a minuscule amount of for resource mobilisation. The Finance Minister should have utilised this golden opportunity to heavily tax the corporate sector, levied long-term capital gains tax and should have levied a short term transaction tax of at least. 5 per cent for substantial allocation in various social sectors.

As projected by the budget, the economy would experience a 20 per cent increase in the amount of corporate taxes over the last year. However in the same period, the profits of this sector are going to be much more given the trend of exceptionally high profits earned in the last year. There is no justification that the Finance Minister has not taxed the corporate sector more to spend more on social sectors and check the growing inequality in the economy. A commendable point is the increase of the service tax rates from 10 to 12 per cent in th Budget proposal is a welcome step. The concessions given to aerated drinks and at the same time increasing the cess on domestically produced petroleum crude is extremely ridiculous. This will inevitably hurt the common masses as the burden will be passed on to them in near future and will also have inflationary consequences, which can hardly be supported.

This year's Budget has brought accentuated the obscurity of the already burdened State Governments by cutting grant component in the National Central Assistance Scheme by almost 2,700 crores. This is the only unconditional assistance given the Governments and

a cut will hit them hard. This goes against the suggestion of Planning Commission that this assistance should be raised. Shockingly, the revised estimates of this Budget reveals that under this component the Centre has given almost rupees 1,500 crores less than what was budgeted for in the last fiscal year. May I have the attention of the House to enquire into the fact about the reason behind such an fact that will put the State Governments in shamble despite the suggestion of the Planning Commission? This proposal should be resolutely opposed by everybody concerned and I therefore demand a reconsideration of the proposal.

Another crucial factor in this year's Budget is the proposal for allowing banks to offer government securities for sale and allowing FIIs to buy up government securities to a large extent than before. This essentially means that we are putting lucrative assets in the hands of foreign speculators. If this continues then we are bound to experience a day when the state of public finance will become dependant on the whims of international speculators. This is because the amount of money the government will raise and the market's proposal that the domestic mutual funds have been given the permission to invest in the foreign markets. This actually means that we are using our own savings to finance the investments of the "bideshis" which could rather have been used for our won developmental purposes. I strongly request the Minister to re-consider these proposals and not to put our economic sovereignty at the behest of the speculators.

I would request the Finance Minister to retreat from the World Bank and ADB guided policises and follow more those policies that help in the generation of employment and increase the purchasing power of the rural India, which will decrease the inequality in the society. The time has come for fulfilling the promises made in the NCMP. The people of India need jobs to sustain and food to live and the Budget should have been overlooked and the proposals are only to benefit the richer section of the society. I would request the Finance Minister not to commit the mistakes of the pervious NDA government. I would like to remind the UPA that they should not under-estimate the strength of democracy in India. A day might come when this government too is given a fitting rebuff by the "aam aadmi" as was given to the NDA."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I would like to share an information with the House. Let me read out the letter written by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. He says:—

"Sir, you may kindly consider giving five to seven minutes for every Member. I am also reducing the number of speakers by allowing them to lay their speeches on the Table of the House."

Kunwar Manvendra Singh belongs to the same Party. Shri Singh, do you follow? This is what he has written to me. Even then he won't submit. Shri Singh, you are a very learned and an elderly man. But you cannot understand manners. I am sorry.

SHRI MANI CHARENAMEI (Outer Manipur): Sir, in the first place, I would like to thank the hon. Finance Minister for taking special care of the poor, particularly of the North-Eastern Region. This year the total allocation for the North-East Region is shown as Rs. 12,041 crore, which includes an amount of Rs. 1,350 crore provided to the Ministry of DONER which is also said to be 18 per cent step up from the Budget Estimates of 2005-06. This indicates that Rs. 12,041 crore minus Rs. 1,350 crore, that is Rs. 10,691 crore would be contributed by various Ministries. This amount will be spent by different Ministries and the unspent balance amount will be returned to the Finance Ministry. Then, the Finance Ministry will subsequently allocate the balance amount towards the DONER.

In the year 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, the unspent balances were Rs. 230.90 crores, Rs. 613.47 crore and Rs. 657.23 crore. The unspent balance fluctuates, and at times there could be no unspent balance left if the Ministries spend all the 10 per cent allocation by themselves. Consequently, there would be no allocation for DONER. It will not be wrong to say that the future of DONER is at stake.

In the circumstances, I wish to suggest that a fixed percentage should be earmarked out of the 10 per cent allocation for the DONER so that the DONER can continue to carry out its mandatory obligations for the development of the North-Eastern Region. Also, the Government should make the allocation to the State 100 per cent instead of 90:10 ratio of sharing between the

Centre and the States. It should make all the exempted Ministries mandatory to contribute 10 per cent of the Budget allocation towards the development of the North-Eastern Region.

Further, the North-Eastern Council needs to be strengthened by enhancing the Budget allocation by keeping not less than 50 per cent in view of the extreme backwardness of the region but, at the same time, impregnated with rich untapped resources. It is also very important to make the NEC a Research and Planning Body of the North-Eastern Region keeping in view the uniqueness of the region in terms of the fragile ecology, rich bio-diversity, district traditional and cultural practices of the people of this region, the topography and climatic conditions of the region.

The country should be aware that the North-Eastern Region is one of the mega diversity hot spots of the world and it functions as the lung for the purification of the air. This should be taken into account.

Scientists and experts have suggested that while making any developmental planning in the North-Eastern Region, be they horticulture, agriculture, forestry, cash crop or any developmental programme, environmental protection should be accorded top priority. I would, therefore, request the Finance Minister to earmark a special fund as special incentives to the North-Eastern States starting from this year for environmental protection and preservation of the rich bio-diversity of the region. Similar steps may also be taken up for the Alpine Region, the western and the eastern ghats and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands which are declared as Bio-diversity Hot spots of the country....(Interruptions)

The tourism potential of the North-Eastern Region is yet to be fully tapped. This is one area where the North-East can contribute resources and revenues to the nation's coffer. Till date, the revenue from the North-East has been only from crude oil, tea industry and forest resources. Some of these resources are not renewable and are diminishing.

Almost all the North-Eastern States have common boundary with foreign countries. Many illegal trades have been going on through the porous borders. In order to

earn more revenues through foreign trade, more trade centres in the State of Manipur may be opened.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, you are reading. You can lay it on the Table of the House. Nobody will do that!

SHRI MANI CHARENAMEI: Finally, Sir, the proposed sum of Rs. 550 crore for the Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for the North-Eastern Region for the year 2006-07 is too meagre keeping in view the extremely poor road connectivity in the hilly region. Due to the inability of the State Government to provide good and all-weather roads, the tribal people of the region have been tempted by unscrupulous timber contractors with temporary roads in exchange of crores of rupees worth forest resources. I, therefore, request Finance Minister to double the allocation so that construction of roads can be accelerated in the real sense.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal East): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I cannot support this Budget because the UPA Government's Bharat Nirman seems to be '*Bharat Barbaad*'. When the Prime Minister of India has announced the 'Look-East' policy, the Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram, instead of going straight from Delhi to the North East, has taken a long route covering the United Kingdom, America and looking to the North East at the end. This is a very bad situation.

Sir, the North East is a land-locked area and a lot of border trade routes were supposed to be opened, but nothing has been done so far in this regard. Myanmar was supposed to be connected through railways. All the North Eastern States should have been connected with border trade routes, but nothing has been mentioned about it in the Budget.

Without road and without electricity there cannot be any development in the North Eastern Region. I would like to give one example here. On the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, there is NH 52 and within a distance of 50 kms even today there are 17 wooden bridges on that road. If this road is to be developed, all the wooden bridges should be converted to RCC bridges.

I would like to mention another point here and this

has been mentioned by my friend from Manipur also. Our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh is a famous economist and our Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram is also a good economist, but both of them have totally failed in geography. Why do I say so? It is because there is no proper budgetary allocation for the development of North East. In the Himalayan range, not only to the North East, but to all the States starting from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal to Sikkim, for the entire Himalayan range States, the budgetary allocation should be double that of the allocation made to the States in the plain area. In the plains, we can construct one kilometre of road in Rs. 22 lakh, in the Himalayan range, we cannot construct even a few metres of road with this amount. Therefore, geography should be kept in mind while allocating funds.

We are discussing about industrial development, agricultural development and many other things in this House, but nothing happens in the North East as money has not reached there. I would like to point out one thing here. The Ministry of DONER has been created during the NDA regime and it should have taken a final shape during the UPA regime, but this has not happened. Today, had I been the Minister of DONER, I would have resigned for the cause of the people of the North Eastern Region. If you see the Budget, you will see that the allocation made to the Ministry of DONER is only Rs. 50 crore. Out of that, Rs. 2.84 crore goes for mining in Sikkim, the NEDFI has got Rs. 31 crore and all other agencies have got Rs. 10 crore. Ultimately, only Rs. One lakh is remaining with the Ministry of DONER. Again, under non-lapseable Central Pool, Rs. 600 crore has been given to the NEC for Indo-Bangladesh border fencing. Out of that, the Government of India has directed the NEC to allot Rs. 100 crore to Bodoland. We are not against Bodoland. But this amount of Rs. 100 crore should be given separately by the Central Government in addition to the allocation of Rs. 600 crore which has already been made and the NEC should not be directed to spend this money from its allocation.

Therefore, without bridge, without road and without electricity there cannot be any development. The Power Minister is sitting here. I would like to submit to him that the North East alone can generate power that is required for the entire country. But adequate provision is not there

[Shri Tapir Gao]

for this purpose and no fund has been earmarked for the North Eastern States for power generation.

Therefore, I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister that while preparing this very good Budget, the geography of this country should be kept in mind. The Himalayans and the mountainous regions should be one of the important factors. Therefore, all Centrally sponsored schemes or any other schemes for agriculture, education, etc. should be kept in view while considering these factors.

We have to process all the raw material from Assam and again it has to be taken to the hilly areas. Therefore, it should be doubled in any Budget for the development of the North-Eastern Region, whatsoever subject it may be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is already 9.30 p.m. The time of the House is extended till 10 p.m.

SHRI TAPIR GAO: Sir, as far as NLCPR is concerned, the ten per cent unspent money was supposed to be put under NLCPR, but this is put under national pool and on the mercy of the Finance Minister these funds are released. Why can the Government of India not put all the NLCPR Budget under the DONER's budgetary head? Otherwise, it will be a long process and we will have to go through all the procedures.

Sir, the time is passing out and we have six more rainy seasons in the North-Eastern Region. So, the geographical factor should be taken into account while preparing the Budget, especially for the North-Eastern region.

[Translation]

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak in support of this budget. But I want to say that there is not as much allocation for the minorities, the Muslims in this budget as it should have been. Since a Separate Minority Ministry has been set up for the Minorities, but it is not full-fledged because it does not encompass education. Similarly it has yet to cover many more subjects to earn the status of a full fledged Ministry. Therefore my demand is that education should be within the ambit of this ministry so that the

education related issues of the Muslims may be solved. That will facilitate fulfilling/resolving our other demands/issues.

This country is known as a country of farmers. Farmers live in this country but the budget for farmers has been reduced. As much as 80 per cent population of this country consists of farmers and for them electricity, water, roads are needed. In my view the budget earmarked for them is scanty. Chaudhary Charan Singh said that all the ways of our country pass through the fields and barns. Unless we help, develop the farmers, the country cannot make advancement. Similarly unless the Muslims of this country develop educationally and economically, the country will remain backward. No country can be called a developed country if it is educationally and economically backward. Just as a paralysed man can not be called a healthy man similarly a country can not be called a developed one unless its entire population and the people belonging to all sections are given opportunity to develop themselves and make progress. Therefore, my demand is that an amount of Rs. 2 thousand crores be allocated for the education of Muslims so that their children are educated and they can provide their children proper education to ensure the progress of this country.

At present, I will not talk about our other issues. Since you have given me an opportunity to speak, I am thankful to you for this. I would like to conclude after elaborating one point. I have a complaint against Minister of Finance because he has made no provision in the budget for the progress and education of minorities nor has he made any provision to address the problem of their unemployment. For that purpose, allocation in this budget should be increased so that the Muslims of this country can also get education and they should be provided employment also in services. With this I conclude.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the normal course, I would not have allowed you to say a word. Since you are an elderly man, I have allowed you as a special case. Once giving a statement and then retracting is not permissible.

Now, there are three speakers from the Indian national Congress. If they cooperate, we will conclude in

time. I will call them one by one. Please conclude your speech within the specified time. Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli. Please cooperate.

[Translation]

*DR. ARVIND SHARMA (Karnal): Sir, I am thankful to you as you gave me an opportunity to speak on the General Budget of the year 2006-2007. After the presentation of budget, the reaction of the Members in favour and against the budget is quite natural and the common citizen also think as to what kind of benefits have been provided to them in this budget. Hon'ble Members are expressing their views in this House both in favour and against the budget. I think this budget is a big step forward for realizing the dreams of great patriot leader Late Rajiv Gandhi under the leadership of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, the chairperson of UPA and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singhji for the common people and the farmers, labourers, agricultural labourers, delits, backward classes, youths, employees, traders, freedom fighters, women and the unemployed people of this country.

In this budget an amount of Rs. 7000 crore has been allocated more in comparison to the last budget but it is not possible to provide each person every possible facility in such a big country and there are certain shortcomings in this budget also. I think it would be right first to elaborate upon positive points of this budget. Hon'ble Minister should be congratulated as he has tried to provide relief to the farmers, weaker sections of society, dalits and backward classes by allocating every possible amount for all the sectors be it rural development, or urban development, HRD, social justice and empowerment or education. The Ministry of Rural Development has tried to develop the rural areas by implementing the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the entire country. For this the chairperson of UPA hon'ble Sonia Gnahdiji and hon'ble Prime Minister should be congratulated. Initially it has been taken up in 200 districts to ensure that there is no dearth of funds and it should be implemented in the entire country at the earliest.

The farmers of the country, who provide food to lakhs of people and feed the entire country, are on the verge of starvation, their children do not get proper

education and proper medical facilities are not available to their family members. More loans at nominal rate of interest should be provided to small and poor farmers alongwith big zamindars and farmers to strengthen their occupation and economic condition. All the farmers should get maximum support price for their crops so as to strengthen their economic position. Free training should be imparted to the farmers so as to train them in growing and nurturing new crops and in undertaking scientific farming and they should be given free traveling allowance to attend such training centers and they should be given some money as incentive so as to encourage them to attend these centers. Agro-industries should be promoted so that more and more employment avenues are generated for the unemployed. Educated and unemployed people should be imparted training to start agro based small and medium industries so that they can earn their livelihood.. All the small agro based industries should be developed and they should be provided loan at cheaper rates. The farmers and agriculture labourers should immediately be provided economic assistance to make up the loss they suffer due to droght, flood etc. The minimum wages for agriculture labourers and other workers who work on the farm alongwith the farmers should also be increased. They should be provided foodgrains and all other basic facilities at cheaper rates.

Financial Assistance should be provided to the poor and windows to encourage them for attending training programmes on khadi, textile and domestic industries so that their upliftment is ensured and they should be encouraged by giving them financial assistance annually for their performance in the skilled works.

Delhi is the capital of India and the entire world sets its eye on Delhi. The world has recognized India's capacity. Now, it depends on us as to how we rediscover the greatness of the country and the potential of its people. I think that the limit of the National capital region should be increased from 90 km to 150 km and the way one looks at the national capital Delhi, basic facilities and amenities like electricity, water, transport, road, rail and housing should be provided there and simultaneously the NCR should also be developed.

Sir, the pace with which the development of the metro rail is taking place in the capital, actually, this facility should have come in place 10-15 years back from now.

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. Arvind Sharma]

But better late than never. Today metro has solved our transport problem, everybody understands it. Mr. Chairman, Sir, more and more funds should be provided for the expansion of metro network in the National Capital Region, viz from Delhi to Panipat via Sonapat, Delhi to Rohtak via Bahadurgarh, to Rewari via Gurgaon, to Faridabad via Palwal.

Security should be strengthen in the NCR in the wake of incidents of crimes taking place in the capital daily because most of the criminals taking refuge in the NCR committing after crimes here. Therefore, security should be beefed up in the NCR by recruiting more and more police jawans on the lines of the Delhi police so as to rein in criminal activities and the Governments of the NCR should be provided more and more amount for the purpose. More and more telephone exchanges should be set up in the entire NCR to provide telephone facilities there in order to develop telecommunication system. Good schools, hospitals and affordable housing should be provided to the poor and those living below the poverty line in the NCR so that they can also avail of these facilities. Beautification of the NCR should be undertaken. Sonapat, Panipat, Karnal, Bahadurgarh, Rohtrak, Faridabad, Ghaziabad should also be covered under the Jawarhar Lal Nehru National Renewal Mission.

The amount for the welfare of SCs/STs has been increased to Rs. 2902 crore by effecting an increase of 14 per cent in this budget. This amount should be increased. This is my demand. Only by increasing this amount we can take care of 40 per cent population of the country.

I want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Finance Minister towards the drinking water and irrigation problems. More and more funds should be provided for the purpose as envisaged in the National Common Minimum Programme because even today lots of villages and urban settlements are facing acute shortage of water. Therefore, the hon'ble Finance Minister should allocate maximum funds for the programme.

I agree with our young colleague Dipendra Hooda that the Union Government should allocate more and more funds to Haryana to augment the supply of power

for the farmers and common public in the State and our Chief Minister of Haryana takes special care of the common man alongwith the farmers, agriculture labourers, dalits and the poor of the State. And he is making all out efforts to tide over the problem of electricity in the State as also to augment the power generation there. And in the coming days if at all there would be a third world war, it would be fought over water. So, there is a need for deepening of the rivers besides inter-linking them so that the problems of drinking water and irrigation could be solved on a large scale and that can also get rid people of pollution. And for this a huge lump-sum amount needs to be provided in the budget. Besides, there should be proper distribution of water also. SLY canal which is a life line for the common men, farmers and labourers of Haryana needs to be completed soon.

The Central Government should contain the day by day increasing prices of domestic gas and take measures to deal with the acute shortage of gas. The restriction on supplying kerosene oil to poor people having gas connection on their ration cards should be removed so that they could also get kerosene oil and other essential commodities on lower price. The price of gas should be decreased by subsidizing it. Stringent steps should be initiated to prevent black marketing of gas. The advertisement for setting up of gas agencies in the areas where gas agencies are being demanded should be published and problem of the people of that area should be solved immediately. The quantity of wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene oil being distributed among the people living below poverty line should be enhanced and their prices should be decreased. The poor people of the country have a lot of expectation from the UPA Government. Moreover there is a need to contain the increasing price of diesel keeping in view the interests of the farmers.

The Central Government had launched an Integrated Textile Industry Park Scheme in October 2005. The purpose of the scheme was to set up 25 textiles industry parks. So far, 7 parks have been approved, the locations for development of 10 parks have been identified and 8 are still to be worked out. I request the Hon'ble Minister to include Panipat which is an industrial and historical district under my parliamentary constituency, under textile industry park scheme so that the labourers, businessmen and weavers of that area may be benefitted. Panipat district is

the front-runner is Asia in the handloom and power loom sector.

There is a huge potential of a heavy investment and employment in petroleum, chemical and petro-chemical sector. In this area, the Government has constituted a work force for promoting investment in petroleum, chemical and petro-chemical sectors. The development of global standard would be the key area in the work force and investors are being included in this work force. Panipat is an industrial area in Haryana. There is a refinery located there and a petro-hub is going to set up there. Hence, you are requested that Panipat be certainly included in those zones which are being developed for investment in petroleum, chemical and petro-chemical sectors. Panipat district falls within NCR region.

Hon'ble Finance Minister, while supporting the work of public interest proposed in your budget, I conclude my speech with the above suggestions.

SHRI ARUNA KUMAR VUNDAVALLI (Rajahmundry): Sir, I have entered into politics just to make the poor happy.

[English]

I want to keep the poor people always happy. As you have declared that you are poor, I want to make you happy; I am concluding with one sentence that it is an excellent Budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are people like you also. Now, Shri Harisinh Chavda.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA (Banaskantha): Sir, I support the budget, for the year 2006-2007 presented by the Finance Minister in Lok Sabha and want to express my views on the budget. The budget presented by the Finance Minister is one that will take the nation forward and usher in development of the country. He has tried to please everyone. The Finance Minister is a good and erudite economist. He is of the view that an effort should be made to make the country progress. He seems to have a kind of commitment to give our country a dignified place among the developed countries in the whole world. Keeping this in view, he has prepared this Budget after

lot of deliberations. He has taken care of everyone, be it the poor people, middle class and common man, students, youth, women, businessmen, the people engaged in industries. He has taken care of every thing, be it removing poverty, removing unemployment, developing industries, providing good transport facilities and all round development of the country. I think the Minister for pleasing all by presenting a good budget for the country. The economic growth rate has increased and our economic condition is improving....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are three speakers from your Party. It would have been better if you would have laid your speech. Time would be saved.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Sir, you have ushered in the path of progress of the country by making provisions for Bharat Nirman Yojna, drinking water, connecting the villages with roads, Indira Aawas Yojna for the poor, electrification, telephone facility in villages, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Employment Guarantee Scheme, Rural Health Mission, Rural Sanitation Scheme, Integrated Child Development, Rural Employment Scheme, Development Programmes for women child and SC, ST, Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Programme etc. in the budget. Looking at all these things I am reminded of an episode from the Ramayana. When Hanumanji a devotee of Lord Shri Rama was offered a garland made of precious beads he started breaking each of beads from the garland and looking some thing inside them. Upon this someone asked him what he was doing and what he was trying to find inside in the precious beads of this garland by breaking them? Hanumanji replied that by breaking these beads he was trying to see whether Lord Shri Rama was there in those beads or not. Further he added that in Lord Shri Rama was not there in the beads of garland it was of no use for him.

Similarly while preparing the budget we should keep those poor people in mind, whom Mahatma Gandhi called Daridranarayan. We should also keep in mind toiling labourers, and peasants. I do not think that this budget has any special provision for the development of poor states, despite containing certain very good features. My

[Shri Harisinh Chavda]

parliamentary constituency Banaskantha in Gujarat is industrially and educationally very backward area. This area continues to be prone to famines. People do not get drinking water. There is too much starvation and unemployment there. Hence, the people there have no option but to migrate to other areas in search of work. They are unable to make adequate arrangement for education of the children in such a situation. The good budget has no meaning, until the condition of such poor people is not improved.

I urged upon the Finance Minister in person as well as by writing to him repeatedly to make special provision of Rs. 500 crore for such areas but to no avail. As small children are cared much in a family likewise it is the duty of the government to take care of the poor and backward people, so that they may also develop. If the people dwelling in huts, and those facing starvation are unable to educate their children, unable to get medical treatment for them are in mind while preparing the budget, it will be a good budget in the true sense and then we shall be pleased. By making such a provision in the budget, the problem of unemployment will be solved and the economic condition of the people living in huts will be improved. Please see the predicament of the poor and Harizans in the country, today. There has been no change in the condition of those tolling millions even after so many years of achieving independence. The farmers are unable to get remunerative prices of their agricultural produce. There is still a lack of good education in the country.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House so that time of the House can be saved.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Just after speaking a little more I would lay my remaining speech on the Table of the House. I have said at the outset that I would take not more than 10-12 minutes, but not even five minutes are over.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are having so many pages to

read. It will take a long time for you to read all these pages.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: I am only seeing points and not reading it out.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: As per rules, you are not allowed to read. You can make a speech extempore but still I allowed you to read.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: There are no pucca buildings for schools in my parliamentary constituency. The government should allocate adequate amounts for that. The state government and the central government have taken no steps in this direction and hence I have started making arrangement for doing the same by accepting donations and have made effort to make them pucca. But that is not sufficient, hence the Government of India should think in this direction.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: No Member will be allowed to read his speech. You are strictly not allowed to read when you take part in the discussion. I allowed you to read it. You are taking advantage of it.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: I request the Finance Minister to provide special package to the poor and undeveloped areas like Banaskantha and to declare tax-holiday for five year in that area for promoting industries in that area since there is no industry in that area. Similarly, the farmers should be given loans at the rate of four per cent interest, be provided seeds at low prices, make adequate arrangement for irrigation, tractors and other agricultural inputs should be made tax-free. Mahatma Gandhi had talked of promoting small scale industries in this country.

I am not reading out and want to draw the attention of Mr. Finance Minister towards the last point made.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

Nothing will go on record if he reads his speech further. You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record. He is reading only.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

**SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: I lay my speech on the Table.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

***SHRI DHANUSKODI R. ATHITHAN (Tirunelveli): Sir, I rise to support the Budget 2006-07 introduced by our Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram which is a tax-free Budget. The Budget is well prepared to make a reality to the spirit and letters of NCMP envisaged by the UPA Government.

India is an agricultural country. Naturally the Government would promote agriculture and the farming community in greater manner. The agricultural loan target was raised last year from Rs. 1,25,000 crore to now estimated at Rs. 1,50,000 croe. It clearly shows the UPA Government is pro-farming community and major stress will be given to develop agriculture.

Sir, if we make farmers happy and make them feel comfortable, then only we can create a strong India. A farmer having five acres of land could lead a life equivalent to that of upper middle class. The Government will give all-out support to the farmers to ameliorate their sufferings. In each taluk or union centres, cold storage godown will be created to store or stock the extra production of the

farmers and enable them to sell it in higher prices. Farmers should be given minimum rate for their farm product not only rice and wheat but also fruits and vegetables, and ensure them bright livelihood.

The Centre pays more attention to the farmers for their genuine problems. In Tamil Nadu, thousands of farmers are not able to get electricity for their pump sets because the State Government discourages new connections which again gives financial burden. So, thousands of farmers opted for diesel engines for lifting water and paying more and more money for diesel and oli.

I would like to suggest that the Central Government should come forward to help the farmers by providing free electricity for their pump sets or give diesel subsidy.

I have visited the village Thalaiyal Nadanthanoon in Kayalthur union. Hundreds of Adhidridida farmers are denied the electricity connection for their pump sets and for diesel; they are paying three-fold money due to the hike in the prices of oils. I would request the Finance Minister to come forward to help the SC farmers by providing subsidised diesel for their pump sets.

I appreciate the Finance Minister for taking all possible steps to put agriculture in the growth path. Last Budget he exempted the Excise duty on all agricultural instruments from small instruments to tractors.

Agricultural loans are doubled in two years. The funds for Accelerated Irrigation Programme also increased by 40 per cent. Since the agricultural workers form 59 to 60 per cent of the work force in our nation the similar GDP grants in agriculture should be emphasised and achieved in the coming years. Otherwise we cannot expect real growth in India.

So, I appreciate the Financial Minister for taking adequate steps to increase the GDP growth in agriculture in our national economy. The UPA Government in the guidance of our leader Sonia Gandhi is making policies and programmes for the development of poor.

Perunthalaivar Kamaraj introduced the Mid-Day Meals Programme for the poor students in Tamil Nadu and implemented the historical programme successfully in the State. The Congress Government under Narasimha

*Not recorded.

**The hon. Member laid his speech in Gujarati but he did not furnish English or Hindi translation of his speech.

***The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Dhanuskodi R. Athithan]

Rao's leadership introduced Free Noon Meals Scheme throughout the country. Now, our UPA Government enhanced the Scheme and, Sir, more than 12 crore students in India are being benefited by the Scheme.

I appeal the Finance Minister that the Noon Meals Programme should be named after Shri Kamraj who was the pioneer and the first Chief Minister in India who introduced this marvellous scheme in Tamil Nadu and made revolution to upgrade and develop the downtrodden people of the society to acquire education.

I appreciate the Budget speech of our Finance Minister who enhanced the corpus fund of Maulana Azad Educational Foundation from Rs. 100 crore to Rs. 200 crore. It will definitely boost the development of minority institutions in our country. I would request the Finance Minister to enhance the amount to Rs. 500 crore and give more financial assistance to minority institutions all over India.

It is highly appreciable for giving priority to develop the infrastructure in our country. Without the basic infrastructure we cannot expect foreign investment and industrial growth in our country.

In telecommunication, more than 50 million rural connections will be rolled out in three years which would be a great achievement. I welcome the Finance Minister's announcement of Rs. 1,500 crore to provide from the Universal Service Obligation Fund in 2006-07.

As far as power generation is concerned, India will produce 33,000 MW capacity of electricity from 82 projects within three years. Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana is a boon to developing States and providing electricity connections to 10,000 villages in one year is a marvellous achievement of the UPA Government.

In road transport, the NHDP continue to achieve more progress. I welcome to increase the Budget provision for NHDP to 9,945 crore in 2006-07. I request the Finance Minister to allot more fund for the Four Laying Road Programme for Tamil Nadu especially the Thuthukudi Aruppukottai to Madurai Road and Kanyakumari (via Tirunelveli) to Chennai Trunk route.

For Defence, we have enhanced our budgetary provision from Rs. 83,000 crore to Rs. 89,000 crore. I appreciate the Finance Minister for allotting funds for modernisation of Defence Forces to equip the Armed Forces to face any threat from our enemies.

I appreciate the Finance Minister for allotting Rs. 128 crore for Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme and for additional fund of Rs. 172 crore during the current year. Sir, Rs. 3000 will be given and deposited in the name of girl students belonging to SC/ST and OBC category who have completed eighth standard. It is a marvellous announcement which will attract more girl students to continue their studies.

I welcome the Government's decision to enhance the subsidy amount which benefits the poor sections of our society. I would suggest that instead of giving subsidy, the Government should come forward to give monetary benefit to the poor families directly.

Sir, in my constituency Thuthukkudi is one of the major ports. After Sethu Canal project implemented in 2008. Thuthukudi Port's traffic will be enhanced five-fold. So, I would suggest that the Government should come forward to create the Thuthukudi Port as a 'hub Port' and make this as an international harbour by providing Rs. 5,000 crore to develop the Thuthukudi Harbour which caters to the transport needs which also in future will be envisaged five-fold traffic.

Sir, the airport in Thuthukudi also is designed for low and small flights only. Since Thuthukudi is developing industrially, many major industries are coming one after one, Thuthukudi Airport may be upgraded and enabled to land bigger flights and introduce direct flights to Mumbai, Delhi and other capitals of the States in our country.

I would also request the Finance Minister to allocate at least Rs. 500 crore for doubling the Kanyakumari (via Tirunelveli Chengalpet Railway BG route as well as Maniachi to Thuthukudi route to ease the Railway Traffic between the Southern districts and Chennai.

As the Budget tries to give more stress to make NCMP a reality, I wholeheartedly support the Finance Budget for the year 2006-07 which is growth-oriented and pro-poor.

Under the guidance of the UPA National Council Advisor, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Budget shows a new path and a new way for vibrant India.

With this, I would like to conclude my speech with my full support for the pro-poor and elite Budget.

[Translation]

- PROF. CHANDER KUMAR (Kangra): Hon'ble Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the general budget. At the same time, I am also grateful to the Hon'ble Finance Minister for presenting a very good budget. This budget is very much beneficial to the farmers, labourers, government employees and people belonging to other classes and those classes have praised it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir the rolling plan of this budget is of one year.

[English]

"If you plan for one year, grow food. If you plan for 10 years, plant trees, and if you plan for 100 years plant men".

[Translation]

The man-management that we have is not right. We have not been able so far to use the human potential that we have. No provision has been made in this budget for the use of human potential and hence I request to make a provision therein for the same.

We have China and other North-Eastern countries in our neighbourhood, which have made the best use of their human potential but our budget makes no provision for its use. Youth are unemployed in our country and our doctors, engineers and skilled labourers are migrating out of our country. We want them to stay here and we want to formulate for them some programme, some policies so that the human potential of this country may be put to proper use.

When Rajiv Gandhiji was Prime Minister of this country, he had told that there should be a Himalayan Development Authority in this country. But we have no

planning in this regard for the last 20 years. We are pining even for water today, you can think as to what will be the condition of water in the coming 20 years. The programmes on environment, forestry, our ecology need to be changed today.

I got a chance to visit Germany. They have formulated forest functional planning for the next 20 years to keep intact a certain number of catchments areas. What is the number of those Himalayan regions whose catchment areas can be kept intact by us. Now-a-days there is a moratorium on forest felling in Himachal Pradesh. All the big rivers originate from the Himalayas. But there is no plan, no provision in this budget as to which area would be given priority there. How do you propose to compensate those areas? It is right that you talk of building India, of infrastructure, in the Rolling Plan. Certainly these are basic things and are necessary but there should be a perspective plan for that.

Himachal Pradesh has provided for gender budgeting i.e. the Panchayats which will maintain male-female ratio will get rupees five lakh for which provision has been made in the budget. If there is one female child in any family Rs. 25000 are deposited in her bank account so that she could withdraw that amount for marrying on attaining the age of marriage. This is the type of measures being taken by the Himachal Pradesh Government. I am sorry to say that packages are given to such States which are disturbed or affected by terrorism. But no provision has been made for those states where peace is prevailing, where peace loving people live. I would like to request their hon'ble Prime Minister that package should be given to the States like Himachal Pradesh which has earned name and fame in the horticulture sector and to all the States which have utilized properly the entire budget allocations made to them by the 9th, 10th and 11th Finance Commissions.

I was going through the performance budget of States and I am surprised to see that States have utilized only 25 per cent of their allocation in sectoral planning which include electricity, drinking water and roads and remaining amount is lying unutilized. Some State Governments have started programmes of outcome and performance budget. The States which are lagging behind in outcome and performance budget should be put to

[Prof. Chander Kumar]

reevaluation and direction should be given to those states that budget allocation to them should be utilized properly and the States whose performance on the basis of outcome budget is outstanding should be allocated more and more funds by way of furthering this programme. At that time Shri Rajiv Gandhi set up the Ganga Development Authority and desired that all the nullahs emptying into Ganga should be cleaned to restore the sanctity of Ganga. In this budget no provisions of funds have been made for the Ganga Development Authority. Hon'ble Finance Minister Sir, the Government should have incorporated the long perspective plan in this budget in which it should have been envisaged as to what will be the situation in regard to potable water and irrigation after 20-25 years. Today we are dreaming of linking of rivers of the entire country. We wish to link the rivers of South India for which provision of funds have also been made but I would like to know as to where from the water for it will come? Have you ever deliberated on this issue? For this purpose a long term plan should have been incorporated in this budget.

I am grateful to you for making provision of pension for the ex-servicemen. I congratulate the hon'ble Finance Minister for this. I hail from Himachal Pradesh where there is a large number of ex-servicemen. I once again express my gratitude to you for making provision of funds for this in this budget.

Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me time to speak.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I would like to take this opportunity to express my regret if I have spoken anything which is not liked by Kunwar Manvendra Singh and other hon. Members. But it is all in the best interests of conducting the proceedings in the House that I have to speak in strong words. Now forget about it.

Kunwar Manvendra Singh, it is all in the best of intentions. The discussion should be completed today. With the best of intentions if I have spoken in a very harsh language, then please bear with me.

Now, today, 40 hon. Members have participated in the discussion. So, I thank you all for having cooperated with me.

Now, the House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 10th March, 2006 at 1100 hours.

21.52 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, March 10, 2006/Phalgun 19, 1927 (Saka).

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