

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

## (English Version)

**Eighth Session**  
**(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)**



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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
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# LOK SABHA DEBATES

## LOK SABHA

11.01 hrs.

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Thursday, August 03, 2006/Sravana 12, 1928 (Saka)

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 161, Shri Sunil Kumar Mahato.

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*Translation*]

#### Advertisements by ONGC

[*Translation*]

\*161. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker Sir, the issue of pesticides is very serious. It should be discussed in the House. ...(*Interruptions*)

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has been incurring sizeable amount of expenditure on advertisements on Television and other media;

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you after the Question Hour. I have already committed to you. You will get an opportunity after the Question Hour.

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

...(*Interruptions*)

(c) the reasons for incurring such huge amount on advertisements; and

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: It is a very serious matter....(*Interruptions*) Sir, please ask the hon. Minister to be present in the House. ...(*Interruptions*)

(d) the benefits accrued/likely to be accrued therefrom?

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Malhotra, you will have the opportunity after the Question Hour.

[*English*]

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

Q. 161—Shri Sunil Kumar Mahato.

...(*Interruptions*)

#### Statement

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I earnestly appeal to you.

(a) to (d) As part of their business activities and statutory requirements, ONGC incurs expenditure on advertisements of various activities and themes. The number of advertisements issued and amounts spent vary from year to year based on the activities of the Corporation and the prevailing market rate. The expenditure incurred during each of the last three years is as under:

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you after fifty-nine minutes.

...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, please ask the hon. Minister to be present in the House. ...(*Interruptions*) You please ask the hon. Minister to come. ...(*Interruptions*)

Year	Amount (Rs. in Crores)
2003-04	43.77
2004-05	26.00
2005-06	36.33

MR. SPEAKER: How can I dictate that?

The average total expenditure on advertisements by ONGC on Audio, Video and Print Media during last 3 years was about 0.08% of the Turnover of ONGC. A majority of the advertisement expenditure has been made on publication of financial results, tender notices, communication to share holders and brand promotional activities. The benefits that have accrued to ONGC are in terms of compliance of statutory requirements, transparency and corporate image building. The direct visible benefit was seen during public issue in 2003-04 when it was oversubscribed in less than one hour.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO: Mr. Speaker Sir, the purpose of raising this question is to draw the attention of the Government towards the expenditure of Rs. 25 crore per annum on advertisements being incurred by ONGC. It is a company which enjoys monopoly in the market and has no competitor and does not even require a market, despite that Rs. 25 crore are being spent on advertisements. Due to this the cost of diesel and petrol increases and consequently the public has to suffer the loss. Is it justified on the part of ONGC to spend Rs. 25 crore on advertisements and what is the reaction of the Government thereto?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, ONGC spends less than 0.08 per cent on advertisement. The advertisement expenditure is particularly on tender notice, annual report and other announcements. This company spends a very meagre amount on advertisements. It is a Fortune 500 company with a market cap of about Rs. 1,80,000 crore. So this expenditure is very less.

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO: Mr. Speaker Sir, it has been given in the written reply that a majority of expenditure is on results, tender notices, communication to share holders and brand promotional activities. What are the impact of this expenditure on the company?

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: Those expenditures have to be borne. People should know about them.

...(Interruptions)

*[Translation]*

SHRI MURLI DEORA: The benefits of advertisement accrue to ONGC. I can cite some of them like people become aware of the programmes of ONGC. Therefore, I would reiterate that none of the advertisements of this company is unproductive.

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker Sir, as stated by the hon. Minister ONGC is capable of spending crores of rupees of its turnover on advertisements. However, there is a petrol depot in my constituency that was set up during the British regime. It is being closed. The company is expressing its inability to operate that depot. I would like to ask why it is so?

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: It has nothing to do with the advertisement.

...(Interruptions)

*[Translation]*

SHRI GANESH SINGH: It is related to that.

MR. SPEAKER: How is it related?

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is stated by the Company that it is incurring losses that is why it is being closed down.

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, Shri Ganesh Singh, you are a very articulate Member.

...(Interruptions)

*[Translation]*

SHRI RAJESH VERMA: Mr. Speaker Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that ONGC spent Rs. 43.77 crore, Rs. 26.00 crore and Rs. 36.33 crore during the years 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 respectively. Through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether ONGC is engaged in some social work as well, if it is spending so much on advertisements and if so, the year-wise details of that work?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Speaker, very respectfully I would like to tell the hon. Member that ONGC supports many such activities which are related to social work. At present I do not have its figures however I will send it to the hon. Member in writing.

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL: Mr. Speaker, through you, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the government would look into such extra and unnecessary expenditures and set up a Committee thereon?

MR. SPEAKER: He did not admit that there were unnecessary.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If necessary, you may inquire into the matter. It should have some relevance to the main Question. Let us not raise doubts about one of our Navratnas.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Yes.

DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM: Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the ONGC has got any advertising agents in-between or the ONGC is directly giving the advertisements.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: They are directly give the advertisements as well as giving them through the DAVP. It saves just a lot of money in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker Sir, may I be allowed to ask the hon. Minister if the Government has pondered over the requirement of giving advertisements by MRTP Commission and the companies related to it, if so what are its outcome? Will a ban on advertisements not check the unnecessary expenditures which may be utilized to reduce the retail prices.

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, he said something about two per cent. What is that?

MR. SPEAKER: I am prepared to be the agent!

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as stated by me earlier it is not an unnecessary expenditure, rather it is important. If he would cite an example of unnecessary expenditure then I shall try to do dispel his apprehension.

[English]

#### **Autonomy/Powers to CPSEs**

\*162. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has examined the recommendations of the Group of Experts headed by Dr. Arjun Sengupta regarding grant of more autonomy/powers to Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs);

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations which have been accepted by the Government and follow-up action taken thereon; and

(c) the details of the recommendations which have not been accepted by the Government alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV):  
(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of House.

#### **Statement**

(a) and (b) The Ad-Hoc Group of Experts (AGE) headed by Dr. Arjun Sengupta has made various recommendations on empowerment of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). The Government has accepted some of the recommendations of AGE relating to enhancement of financial powers of Navratna, Miniratna and other profit-making CPSEs and the Office Memoranda have been accordingly issued in August 2005 itself.

(c) Most of the remaining recommendations made by the AGE concerning Ownership issues, Audit of Government companies by Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), Applicability of Article 12 of the Constitution, Accountability to Parliament, Vigilance

management in PSEs, etc. relate to the jurisdiction of Constitutional/Parliamentary authorities, and therefore, require further in-depth analysis and deliberation.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Sir, it is exactly one year ago—today is the 3rd August—on the 3rd August, the same question was put here in Parliament on the same subject. It was the same answer which was given then.

MR. SPEAKER: Consistency is there.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: It has been said that the remaining recommendations made by the AGE concerning Ownership issues, Audit of Government companies by Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), Applicability of Article 12 of the Constitution, Accountability to Parliament, Vigilance Management in CPSEs, etc. are under examination. Today, the hon. Minister has given the same answer except saying that it requires an in-depth analysis and deliberation. So, one year ago, the Ministry had taken up the issue and has not yet finalised it. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to give a categorical reply. The matter being important, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to complete it and come to a conclusion in this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: At least, now they are going deeper into it!

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Sir, those issues which are pending are of important nature like the relationship of public sector with the C and AG, the public sector's financial powers and others. It went to the Cabinet after circulation to all the public sector enterprises. It took time to come back. After it has come back, we have discussed it in the Cabinet. A Group of Ministers under the Chairperson of Shri Pranab Mukherjee has been appointed.

After the Session they will have a discussion on this—fortunately he is present here—and hearing the urgency of the Member, some decisions will be taken.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Sir, even now the Minister is unable to clearly mention that he would be coming out with a report within a few months or days. Two committees have given reports on the same subject, but the Ministry is not able to come to a conclusion on these reports. He is one of the seniormost Ministers in the Governments, he is an experienced Minister and he is an active Minister. So, will he get the report as quickly as possible and will he mention the time by which he will get the report?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Sir, I cannot mention the date. The seniormost Minister in the Cabinet is handling the matter. So, there is no need to worry, things will be done.

MR. SPEAKER: It is most seriously looked into.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question is so important, but unfortunately the answer is so casual and it raises the most important question and that is the accountability of the Government in dealing with issues of such great importance.

The National Common Minimum Programme of this Government lays great emphasis on providing not only autonomy, but more functional freedom to public sector undertakings. The Department of Public Enterprises is functioning for many years. Now, if the Ministry requires another Committee to go into the functioning of public sector undertakings, does it mean that the Government does not know about their functioning? Therefore, it raises very important questions.

First of all, I would like to seek your protection. When the Ministers give answer to a question as important as this, they should not be so casual by saying that there was a committee and that committee has appointed a Group of Ministers which is headed by somebody else. We should have a time-bound programme to make sure that there is enough autonomy to our public sector undertakings. Instead of thinking about the health of public sector undertakings, either we are thinking of having over control or privatisation. There is a second way possible and that is giving autonomy and functional freedom.

I would like to know from the Minister in how much time such a proper framework will be put in place.

**SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:** Sir, the matters which are pending are important and they have far-reaching consequences. All public sector undertakings have got different opinion on this and just for the information of the House, I would like to state that some of them are saying that they would understand what are the issues. One recommendation is that the ratio of the share of public sector undertakings can come down to 51 per cent or less with the approval of Parliament and joint venture parties should get more. This is against the National Common Minimum Programme. Even then, in certain cases where the companies are in very bad shape, we are going in for joint venture or privatisation, but a dialogue is needed not only with the public sector but also with the trade unions. This views will be known. The supervisory body provides an institutional arrangement to ensure that there is a harmonious relationship with the Board of Directors and the management. There also they have suggested some changes. On certain matters they said that the Presidential directive should be taken instead of going to court and all that. It will help us to cut short the judicial procedure which is being followed now.

Then, a functionary of the Government can go and examine a public sector undertaking only twice a year. There is such a restriction. So, all these sensitive issues are there. Some decisions have already been taken. Let the hon. Member wait. The highest committee will examine it and we have an open mind. Taking into consideration the opinion of different trade unions and 21 major public sector undertakings and also after discussing with the Navratna companies, we will come to a decision.

**SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:** Can you give a time frame?

**SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:** I cannot give a time frame because if I don't comply with it I will attract a privilege motion.

**SHRI RUPCHAND PAL:** Sir, besides Dr. Sengupta Committee, there has been another committee, that is Dr. J.J. Irani Committee. In one of the recommendations

made by the Dr. J.J. Irani Committee, it was observed that the Central public sector bodies should be taken out of the purview of the C and AG. There have been several seminars, discussions, protests and all these things on this. Since then, the Government has not been reacting to this particular thing and encouraged by the silence, what is happening is that the public sector bodies are not submitting the Action Taken Reports and these reports are mounting day by day.

May I know from the hon. Minister what is the reaction of the Government to the recommendations of the J.J. Irani Committee with regard to taking out the PSUs from the purview of the C and AG and on the question of mounting of the Action Taken Reports by these PSUs which they are not submitting and which are pending?

**SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:** Sir, this is an issue which is tackled by the Ministry of Company Affairs. But I know the position, so I may try to answer this. The position today is that the Group of Ministers will also examine this along with that particular point and this is being examined now.

**SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir. The public sector undertakings and Navratnas are the pride of our country. If this is the case, then it is very important to have the best leadership at the helm of these companies.

My question is, whether the Government is only looking at the bureaucrats and Government officials or whether the Government is also willing to look at the private sector and management professionals to put at the helm of these companies.

There is always a funding problem in these companies. The Government is in fear of dilution and therefore, does not allow these companies to expand by raising funds. Is the Government ready to look at allowing these companies to raise funds in the domestic market and the international market? If they are not allowed to raise funds, they will not be able to compete in the long-term.

Today's '*Economic Times*' carries an article that the loss making units will have to take parliamentary approval

before funding or before any partnerships. If this is the case, these companies will go further into the red and therefore, I am very concerned.

**SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:** Sir, the Navratna companies have already been given power, as per the recommendations of this Committee. They can go and fetch money up to Rs. 1,000 crore either from the commercial banks or from the international market. There is no restriction from the Government. This is one of their demands and that has already been met by the Government.

As far as the other part of the question is concerned, it is related with the Ministry of Company Affairs. So, they will be able to answer that part.

**SHRI PRAKASH PARANJPE:** We want a time-frame for that...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. SPEAKER:** Please take your seat. I have not allowed you to ask a question.

**SHRI PRAKASH PARANJPE:** Sir, but he should give us a time-frame...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. SPEAKER:** He has been saying, 'as soon as possible'.

**SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA:** Sir, the hon. Minister has said that the Government has accepted some of the recommendations of the Committee and of the group of experts. My supplementary is on this. They have also accepted enhancement of financial powers to Navratnas.

In view of this, is the hon. Minister or the Government aware that there are numerous complaints by the profit making public sector management that even for a small thing, they will have to wait for the clearance even at the lower level? The complaint is that the independence and freedom to take decisions by the Board of Directors is almost on paper, but in actual practice the freedom, that should be given to them so that they can compete with the private sector, is seldom given by the Government.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I believe, these are matters being looked into.

**SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:** Sir, I have been a

Minister for the last two years and not a single Board of Directors came to me for help and there is not a single case where I have interfered. If there is any case, bring it to my notice and I will sort it out.

**SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA:** They are afraid to come to you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is over. If it is between two of you, then do it outside.

Q. 163—Shri S.K. Kharventhan—Not Present.

### Hike in Air Fares

+

\*163. SHRI ARJUN SETHI:

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times the air fares of public sector airlines have been hiked during the last three years;

(b) whether the public sector airlines have hiked air fare recently;

(c) if so, the details and the reasons therefor and its likely impact on air travellers; and

(d) the steps taken to facilitate air journeys among middle class people in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

### Statement

(a) to (c) Air India has not carried out any fare hike during the last three years. In fact, the fares have declined by an average of 2-3% on Air India network. To partially offset the impact of escalating fuel prices, Air India has resorted to increase in levy of fuel surcharge from June, 2004 in line with and at par with route specific surcharge levied by other foreign carriers operating on the given route. Given below is an account of increase effected since June 2004 on routes to USA, UK/Europe:

USA		UK/Europe	
June '04	USD 14.00	June '04	USD 9.00
October '04	USD 30.00	October '04	USD 20.00
May '05	USD 50.00	May '05	USD 30.00
July '05	USD 80.00	July '05	USD 45.00
February '06	USD 100.00	February '06	USD 55.00
June '06	USD 125.00	June '06	USD 65.00

Indian Airlines and Alliance Air domestic rupee fares have been revised five times during the last three years (viz, 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06) on the domestic network. Details are as under:

Date	% of Increase
26th March, 2003	15
21st June, 2004	10
14th October, 2004	10
15th April, 2005	12
18th October, 2005	10

In order to offset the increase in the ATF price which touched Rs. 41,950 per kilolitre on 1st May, 2006 and Rs. 43,600 per kilolitre effective 1st July, 2006, Indian Airlines levied Fuel Surcharges as follows:—

- (i) Fuel Surcharge of Rs. 300 per flight coupon on Rupee fare level and USD 6.80 on USD fare level for domestic travel effective 4th May, 2006.
- (ii) Fuel Surcharge has been revised from Rs. 300 to Rs. 500 and USD 6.80 to USD 11 w.e.f. 7th July, 2006.

Air travel has become costlier due to increase in fare/fuel surcharge. However, this increase is largely on account of increase in input costs and is in line with the practice adopted by the competitors.

(d) Both Air India and Indian Airlines are commercial organizations and have to act on business principles. Both airlines constantly endeavour to upgrade and add value to the product offered to passengers. In order to remain competitive, they also introduce market driven schemes taking into account factors like competition, seasonality, supply and demand equation, etc.

Based on above mentioned market factors, which are highly dynamic in nature, Indian Airlines launches short/long term promotional schemes from time to time. Introduction of special fares/schemes are today market based such as: (i) Easy Fares; (ii) Unchecked Fares; (iii) Lean sector Promotional Fare; (iv) Excursion Fares; (v) Smart Business Class Companions Offer; (vi) Class Apart Fares; (vii) Common Interest Group Concession — Domestic Sectors; (viii) Super Saver and (ix) Sport Fares.

Air India has launched a Low Cost Carrier i.e. Air India Express in April, 2005 with a view to provide economic and safe travel to people in the middle class and those who are employed in the Gulf with modest salaries.

Air India also provides special discounts to students traveling to Europe, UK and USA to cater to this special market segment. During specific periods, Air India issues special fares for senior citizens offering discounts ranging around 10%.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the air fare between Delhi and Bhubaneswar is the highest in the

country. If it is a fact, whether the State Government as well as the other public sector units are demanding the introduction of apex air fare from Bhubaneswar to Delhi? I am told—I do not know how far it is correct—recently the Ministry has agreed or the Indian has agreed for apex fares for a few seats. Sir, as you know and as the hon. Minister knows, one of the tourist destinations is the State of Orissa. To give impetus to tourism in Orissa as well as to help the middle class travelling passengers to Orissa, I would like to know whether he is agreeable to implement apex fair system not only for few seats but also for the entire aircraft or the flight.

MR. SPEAKER: Let him answer now.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: My second question is this. I would like to know whether it is the highest in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Then, you have already put two questions.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: No, Sir.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I would just like to give a little background of air fares in the country. None of the air fares on any sector of any airline is regulated by the Government. In fact, the Members will appreciate that because of this kind of approach and the non-regulation of fares, we are seeking new profile of air travellers now in the country. Air travel is one of the fastest growing sectors in the country in the last two years. In fact, this year, domestic aviation is seeing close to 50 per cent growth in one single year. That I would say is thanks to the approach which we have taken not to get into the business of regulating fares.

However, the hon. Member has raised a valid point. On some sectors the fares are higher than proportionately what one sees on some other sectors. That is also a situation which we cannot ignore. In fact when it was brought to our notice about the fares on the Delhi-Bhubaneswar route that these fares are slightly higher than the other fares, I do agree and concede that probably fares are higher on some sectors where the competition is less. But, in view of what was brought to our notice, we did speak to the Airlines; and Indian Airlines in its endeavour to look into this issue more sympathetically

introduced apex fares. Apex fares again is an issue where every airline has some seats which they give on a discounted price. They cannot give every seat on a discounted price. After all, the economics of the business also have to justify at what price the seat is sold. However, Bhubaneswar will in the days to come, as aviation is growing, witness the decentralization of aviation. It is because earlier it used to be only driven in the few major cities and specially in Mumbai and Delhi. Now, you will be happy to note that including Kolkata is witnessing a big boom in aviation. The new cities will be connected, and I hope that the trend of lower fares will justify the demand made by the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your second supplementary.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Sir, I seek your protection.

MR. SPEAKER: You have got what you wanted.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: He did not say 'it is the highest'; he said: 'probably'.

My second question is this. In different Airports, especially in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata etc., because of congestion, parking system has been allowed in the neighbouring or nearby Airports.

MR. SPEAKER: It does not relate to this. You cannot have all the issues of aviation; it is only on air fares.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Fares on the Delhi-Bhubaneswar route are higher because of the monopoly of the Indian. I would like to know whether they will allow more private airlines so that there will be competition and automatically the fares will come down on the Delhi-Bhubaneswar route.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The hon. Member has answered my question or the thoughts in my mind, and he is fully aware that no more in Bhubaneswar also only Indian Airlines is operating; there are many Airlines operating.

In fact, across the country we have a policy whereby the airlines are free to operate on any route as they so wish at any price as they so wish. As I said, Bhubaneswar is not only connected by Indian Airlines but by other airlines also. I do not want to list out all the names



because many an airline which is now in the private sector is also operating to Bhubaneswar. I can assure you that in the days to come, you will see many more flights to many a city which is already connected or which is yet to be connected.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Sohan Potai.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry. Shri Swain, nothing is being recorded. Please sit down.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not record it.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Swain, you have no authority to point out anything without my permission. I have called another hon. Member of your party. Please do not disturb him.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Swain, nothing is being recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate. If senior Members do this, then how do I conduct the House? You are a very able spokesman in Shri Arjun Sethi. He has already extracted many good information.

Now, Shri Sohan Potai.

[Translation]

SHRI SOHAN POTAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the one hand the hon. Minister says that Air India has not hiked the fare during the last three years, on the other he is also admitting that he has hiked the fare w.e.f. 7th July, 2006 by way of revising the fare whereas the price of fuel has increased on six occasions during the last two years. I would like to know whether the air fares have been revised six times. If so, then it is quite natural that the air fares are increasing. Similarly, I find that the air fares of Private

\*Not recorded.

airlines in the public sector are higher than the fares of private airline companies. Though private sector airline companies provide better facilities to the air travellers despite their fares being comparatively lesser than the Public Sector Airlines. I would like to know the reasons for such a difference in air fares. Similarly, the distance between Delhi and Bhubaneswar is more than the distance between Delhi and Raipur. In spite of that why the fare for Delhi-Raipur is more than the fare between Delhi-Bhubaneswar?

MR. SPEAKER: But he has not fixed the fare.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with the hon. Member that the air fare should be reasonable. However, the question is that the fuel prices are increasing in the international market. The Minister of Petroleum Shri Murli Bhai is sitting here. He knows better than I about such things. The fuel prices are continuously rising. The ATF price which was Rs. 27,500 per kilolitre in the year 2004-05 is presently Rs. 42,000 per kilolitre. Beside this, I would also like to submit that on the one hand while basic price of ATF is higher and on the other hand there is phenomenal increase in it on account of taxation policy of the State Government. This is the reason why I would request the State Governments to decrease taxation. The Members should also request the State Governments to cooperate and reduce taxation. ...(Interruptions)

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: You are telling the State Government. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not worry. You are a veteran parliamentarian. Do not get upset. You carry on with your reply.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the Central Government is much under control. It is only eight per cent. It is not 16 per cent which used to be earlier. ...(Interruptions) I am not talking about any particular State. It is my request to all the State Governments. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Kripal Yadav, you cannot put your question at the same time. This is not the way to disturb the House.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I hope that the Members would appreciate about taxation of pricing. The hon. Member has said about the fuel surcharge. The airline has not increased the basic fare but if the fuel price keeps going up, then it is a practice of all the most international carriers to levy a fuel surcharge. This has been done in the past by Air India. All of us are aware that our public sector carriers—Air India or Indian—do not get any kind of budgetary support from the Government to run their operation. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Kharabela Swain, you cannot get up on every Question.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: You had asked a good question, you have got appropriate reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: I have called the hon. Member, Shri Brajesh Pathak to ask his Supplementary. Nothing else would go on record except the Supplementary of Shri Brajesh Pathak.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

*[Translation]*

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has admitted that some low fare seats are available in all the flights for common people. However, when we go to ticket window of Indian Airlines, we are told about non-availability of low priced tickets but travel agents outside make available low priced tickets after charging some more money. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will check such a practice.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: If the hon. Member has such information he should certainly pass it on to me. I would like to assure him in this matter.

*[English]*

Sir, the basic point, which I hope, the entire House

would appreciate, is that we do not regulate the fair, not only for any airline but for any sector. However, I just want to deviate. The hon. Members, Shri Kharabela Swain and the other hon. Members were agitated about a particular sector. Sir, it is only at the request of the Members from Orisa that we asked the Indian Airlines to get the apex fare introduced on this route. Therefore, they must appreciate that it is at their request and behest that these things have been done.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav.

Mr. Yadav, I have called you not because you had interrupted.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you, however, I would like to request you that you should not get angry with us. While calling our names. Please call our names affectionately.

MR. SPEAKER: I have much affection for you. However, you should also reciprocate, it should not be one sided.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are like father to me. I always respect you.

MR. SPEAKER: The youth of present times do not respect even their fathers. You please put question.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has stated that he is compelled to hike fare due to increase in fuel surcharge. The hon. Minister is certainly compelled, however, if the business policy is formulated in properly it will certainly be profitable because all seats in the flights are not booked because of high fare. These vacant seats can be filled up by charging low fare from the passengers. Private airlines like Deccan Airlines are charge low fares. I would not like to say much about this. I would like to know the policy of the Government in this regard. The Government should ponder over providing air services to more and more travellers by way of charging low fares but it should be ensured that all the seats of the plane are filled. The

railways have adopted such a policy to ensure that no seat remains unfilled. I would like to know whether the Government propose to adopt such a policy so that the travellers could be benefited and may travel by air at low fares and the quantum of business of the airlines may also increase. The hon. Minister is also a good businessmen.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want that everybody should travel by air instead of rail? One should travel by railway as well. You have put very a good question.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Our colleague Ram Kripalji will also admit one thing that these days it is said about airports that they have become like railway stations and Shri Laluji has formulated plans to make the railway stations like airports. As far the hike in air fare is concerned, you will at least admit that a new class of people who till date did not travel by air have started to avail this service. I would also like to reply the question of Shri Brajesh Pathakji. The Indian Airlines have started spot fare system. One may directly go to airport and if there is vacant seats he or she may get ticket at much lower fare than the fares charged by other airline companies. He asked a question and I gave him on the spot reply.

[English]

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY: Sir, the hike in air fare mostly affect the Malayalees working in the Gulf countries. The air fare is more in all the three airports in Kerala compared to the other airports, like in Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad.

This happens mainly during the festival season like Onam, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, what do you want?

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY: For example, normally Calicut-Sharjah fare is around Rs. 10,000. But during festival season, it is Rs. 18,000. Sir, I invite your special intervention in this issue. Our public sector airlines are looting the Indian passengers coming from Gulf countries. Why does this happen? Thank you.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I would not be happy if any Member spoke about our public sector airline as in terms of the world 'looting'. ...(Interruptions) I do not want to take up issues with you. But it is only the public sector airlines which come to the rescue of the country in times of need. We needed for people to be rescued from Lebanon. Which airline would have cancelled its flight overnight and got the people airlifted and rescued? So, let us not use the word 'looting'. I do appreciate that yes, we are interested in getting the fares reduced.

MR. SPEAKER: Probably, even at this fare of Rs. 18,000, all seats are full.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I have no immediate data to justify either way but I can only say that keeping in view the sensitivities of the working class of Kerala people working in the Middle-East and the Gulf region, Air India endeavours this. It is only in the last year and a half that Air India started a low cost subsidiary called 'Air India Express' which has a special focus to operate on the route between Kerala and the Gulf. This has been substituting the earlier services of Air India, and because it is low cost, the fares have also come down.

I will look at some of the issues raised by the Members. ...(Interruptions) Let me answer. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, nothing will be recorded. Please do not stand up. I will not allow.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, please do not respond to any hon. Member whom I have not asked him to put a question.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hike in fare is so steep that the fare for Mumbai to Delhi which was earlier Rs. 5200 has increased to Rs. 7200 in seven-eight months. It is a fact that the prices of fuel keep on increasing. It is reasonable to hike fare up to Rs. 200-300, however, the Government are making steep increase in the air fares. These days it so happens that if one travels

\*Not recorded.

between Mumbai to Delhi or vice versa, he covers this distance in two hours or one hour fifty minutes. It is also observed that before landing planes have to hover around airports for hours on the instructions of air traffic control and it consumes excess fuel. I would like to know from the Government whether the hike in fare is on account of this factor.

**SHRI PRAFUL PATEL:** Sir, hon. Ramdas have asked whatever he wanted to ask in his typical style. I would like to tell that we do not charge more for extended air journey time.

*[English]*

The fuel surcharge is again based on the compulsions of the fuel pricing, and there is no reason. I am sure that, whether it is the public or the private carriers, they would charge this kind of surcharge until and unless they were forced to do so because of economic considerations.

Sir, since you are saying do not answer out of turn, still I want to assure my friends from Kerala that not only Air India Express but also we have allowed more traffic rights between Gulf and Kerala for airlines like Emirates, Qatar Airways, Air Arabia and Kuwait Airways in the recent past so that capacity increases; competition increases; and the fares then come under control.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Allow a few more to and from Kolkata.

*[Translation]*

Question 164—Shri G. Karunakara Reddy—Absent.

*[English]*

**Airports Economic Regulatory Authority**

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\*164. **SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:**

**SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:**

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any authority exists for regulating pricing and competition in air transport, particularly in view of the entry of private companies in the arena;

(b) if not, whether the Government has taken any decision regarding setting up of an independent Airports Economic Regulatory Authority;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL):** (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**Statement**

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Inter-ministrial consultations are in progress for the draft Bill to set up the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority.

*[Translation]*

**SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said nothing in his reply, he has handed over just a plain paper. Through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware that in view of the ongoing expansion of airports "M.K. Kaav" Committee has recommended reorganization of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and the recommendations also for administrative and economic autonomy of the authority.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the light of the Kaav Committee's recommendations whether the hon. Minister proposes to reorganize the airports authority?

**SHRI PRAFUL PATEL:** Sir, hon. Prabhunath Singh has made a mention of Kaav Committee. In this regard, I would like to say that we had constituted a new committee for inviting suggestions for making improvements from security and technical points of view to meet the pace of increase in air services or the country. As far as this question is concerned, this supplementary does not arise from it, but even then I would like to say that we had made an effort and many suggestions given by the Kaav Committee have been accepted and study in regard to other suggestions is needed to be conducted. We are taking action in that regard also. I would like to say that Kaav Committee's report is definitely very important for us and we are moving ahead on its basis.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if reply to a question is given, then supplementaries are asked. Since no reply has been given, therefore no supplementary arises. Therefore, I am asking supplementary on my own.

MR. SPEAKER: When you do not want to ask supplementary, then why are you asking?

[English]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the first supplementary that he asked did not arise from the main question.

MR. SPEAKER: He is irresistible.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, so far I know...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Are you giving information?

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am furnishing information and asking question also. As per my information above 4000 pilots would be required by the year 2010. At present also, there is a shortage of pilots and engineers and as such the timings of flights are changed on account of technical reasons and shortcomings in its maintenance also crop up. On the other side, such information is also being received that some foreign pilots have been offered working opportunities in various companies. Therefore, I would like to know the way being found to meet the demand of highly skilled engineers and pilots by the year 2010.

MR. SPEAKER: Your supplementary does not arise from this question.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my supplementary arises from this question only.

[English]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, this does not arise out of the main Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly, I agree with you. If you know the answer you tell him.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, actually it is arising out of the next Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well, I will take the next Question.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I think if you club both the Questions, it will automatically answer this question also.

The basic point which the hon. Member has made is about shortage of pilots. I have attempted to answer earlier that the growth is very dramatic and pilots are not a category training people who can be given the command of an aircraft overnight, unless they complete certain number of hours of flying and it is in the interest of safety. There is also a well-laid down procedure both by our DGCA as well as the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

There is a shortage. But we have not allowed this to come in the way of the growth of the sector and, therefore, for some limited time we have allowed even foreign pilots to operate within India, of course, subject to security and other clearances being well-approved as per technicalities required by the DGCA and other agencies.

I would also like to say that training of pilots within the country has now become a very important need. In the past, such growth and the output of pilots used to be quite matching each other. But now there are almost more than 15 flying training institutes in the country. We have our own premier institute of the Government of India at IGRUA at Fursatganj and the second institute is also coming up in Maharashtra. We have promoted people to come and set up institutes. I would be more than happy to see that the supply of indigenous pilots, not people who come from abroad, increases. More than that, no airline is also happy to hire foreign pilots because it costs then more. It is a natural advantage for us to have our own pilots and we are attempting towards it.

MR. SPEAKER: Let us club the next Question.

[Translation]

#### Development of Civil Aviation Sector

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\*165. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the major schemes/projects implemented/being implemented for development of Civil Aviation Sector during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) the funds allocated for implementation of these schemes/projects, scheme/project-wise; and

(c) the present status of each scheme/project at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**Statement**

(a) to (c) With respect to Part (a), (b) and (c) of the Question the reply is as under:

(Rs. in crores)

Sl. No.	Name of Scheme	Cost of the Scheme	Present Status
1	2	3	4
1.	Restructuring and Modernisation of Delhi Airport	7438.00	Scheme being funded under PP pattern. Equity of AAI in joint venture is upto 26%. The airport has been transferred to Joint Venture in May, 2006.
2.	Restructuring and Modernisation of Mumbai Airport	10015.00	Scheme being funded under PP pattern. Equity of AAI in joint venture is upto 26%. The airport has been transferred to joint venture in May, 2006.
3.	Construction of New Greenfield Airport at Bangalore	1411.79	The project is being constructed on build own, operate and transfer basis under PP participation. Civil work for ATC tower, runway and terminal building, boundary wall and airport security wall is in progress. The project is likely to be operational by April, 2008.
4.	Construction of New Greenfield Airport at Hyderabad	1760.00	The project is being constructed on build own, operate and transfer basis under PP participation. The project is likely to be operational by middle of 2008.
5.	Development of Visakhapatnam Airport	159.00	The work is in progress and is likely to be completed by December, 2008.
6.	Construction of new International Terminal Complex at Ahmedabad Airport	291.00	Work is likely to be awarded by September, 2006.
7.	Expansion and modification of Terminal 1-B at Mumbai Airport	107.00	Work is in progress, 90% of the work is completed.

1	2	3	4
8.	Construction of Departure block of International Building at Kolkata Airport	225.18	Approval of competent authority to the project is being obtained.
9.	Construction of new International Terminal complex at Trivandrum Airport	167.00	Tenders have been invited.
10.	<b>Schemes In the North Eastern Region</b>		
(a)	Construction of New Terminal building, control tower cum technical block, fire station, residential quarter at Lilabari Airport	18.45	Work completed.
(b)	Construction, extention and modification of terminal building and air-conditioning at Agartala Airport	27.61	Work completed.
(c)	Construction and extension of runway, construction of isolation bay and allied works at Agartala Airport	28.70	work completed.
(d)	Construction of new terminal building including land acquisition at Dibrugarh Airport	54.52	Work in progress.
(e)	Construction and extension of Runway from 9000 ft. to 12000 ft. and construction of apron at Guwahati Airport	22.37	Scope of the work under review.
11.	Satellite Navigation Area Augmentation System (GAGAN Project)	420.00	In progress, likely to be completed during 11th Plan period.
12. (a)	Development of Amritsar Airport	80.00	Except aerobridges, rest of the works have been completed.
(b)	Moduler extension of terminal building at Amritsar airport	80.00	Pre-qualification bids have been invited.

1	2	3	4
13.	Development of 35 Non-Metro airports	6162.00	Development of 35 non-metro airports is likely to be completed by the year 2010-11.
14.	Acquisition of 50 aircraft by Air India Ltd.	30276.00	Delivery of aircraft is to be completed by February, 2012.
15.	Acquisition of 18 B737-800 aircraft by Air India Charters' Ltd.	4339.00	Delivery of aircraft to be completed by October, 2009.
16.	Acquisition of 43 aircraft by Indian Airlines Ltd.	9890.00	The delivery of the first aircraft is scheduled for October/November, 2006 and that of the last aircraft for March, 2010.
17.	Acquisition of medium helicopter by Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd.	310.00	6 Helicopters have been acquired and another 3 are in the process of acquisition.
18.	Upgradation of IGRUA so as to increase the capacity of the Akademi for training 100 Pilots per year	70.14	Delivery of 6 trainer aircraft has been completed. 11 additional aircraft are proposed to be acquired. As regards development/upgradation of infrastructure such as runways, construction of hostel buildings etc., approval of competent authority is being obtained. Scheme is likely to be completed during 11th Plan period.
19.	Setting up of Flying Training Academy at Gondia, Maharashtra	364.31	Approval of the competent authority to the project is being obtained in accordance with prescribed procedure.
20.	Procurement of one multi-engine and eight single engine training aircraft	12.79	Aero Club of India is in the process of evaluating tenders for procurement of aircraft.

*[Translation]*

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a good thing that the Ministry of Civil Aviation has formulated an ambitious plan for developing many airports, and for upgrading and modernising the metro airports of the country, but despite it being an ambitious plan, in the absence of adequate funds the work of modernisation, upgradation, and development is progressing at a very slow pace. Extra cost is incurred on this. Trade, business, and passengers are suffering heavily due to it. Through you, I would like to ask whether the Ministry has arranged adequate funds in view of the

implementation of such an ambitious plan? As work on the Ahmedabad Airport should have been completed by now, but just now it has been said in the reply that *[English]* work is likely to be awarded by September, 2006. *[Translation]* I would like to know as to when that work would be completed which is to be awarded by September, 2006 and whether the hon. Minister would do something in this regard? Delay is being caused in all the airports due to lack of funds. What provisions are being made in this regard?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I know that Shri Kashi Ram Ranaji would ask the question and without taking



the name of Surat and slow pace of work over there, he has indirectly asked about Surat. Some delay has definitely occurred in case of Surat, the reason was that the contractor....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He is asking about Ahmedabad and you are replying about Surat.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I know that somebody else will ask about it. Therefore, I am pre-empting any such thing. In Surat, there was some minor dispute and it is sorted out. As we are upgrading it further than what was originally planned, we are making it capable of carrying out A-320 operations. That work will be completed by March, 2007.

About Ahmedabad airport, he himself is saying that we have agreed that we will award by September, 2006. It should not take more than two months to complete. The environmental clearance for Ahmedabad has not yet been received which we are expecting to get any time. The moment it comes, we will start the work.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: But when will it be completed?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: It will be completed within four months.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: If you have a second supplementary, please put it.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Sir, as it has been replied that the work would be completed in two months, I would like to ask as to the time by which the work of the Ahmedabad International Airport would be commenced and by when it would be completed? My second supplementary is in respect of the reply in which it has been stated that there are 35 non-metro airports and the hon'ble Minister has suggested that all non-metro airports would be developed by the year 2010-2011. I would like to know that as the government is modernising metro airports on P.P. bases, on what base all these 35 non-metro airports would be developed? Will P.R. base or any other system would be used? Surat falls under the non-

metro airports. It is good that the hon. Minister has given the reply. Surat is a very big city, it has a population of 40 lakh. What steps are being taken for its early completion?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He has replied. Why are you raising it again? Otherwise, he will reconsider. Do not do that.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: When I spoke about the environmental clearance in respect of Ahmedabad Airport, it has only arrived on 31-7-06, just few days back. Now we will immediately take the next step and start work at the earliest.

About 35 non-Metro Airports, I would say that we have specially conceived this idea to facilitate the growth of the second tier cities across the country. We all appreciate that one of the reasons why we went for joint-ventures for Mumbai and Delhi Airports was to be able to free the Airports Authority of India to take up these works. Therefore, the Airports Authority of India will be the nodal agency which will be developing and modernising all these 35 non-Metro airports. We have also thought that while the airports will be run by the Airports Authority of India, there will be city-side development of these airports. We can bring in various developments as we have seen in the bigger cities and bigger airports. That can be done through another model, which is yet to be decided. But the Airports Authority, *per se*, develop the airport.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Sir, what about the Surat airport?

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry, please do not reply to that question. Please sit down.

Shri Anjan Kumar M. Yadav—not present.

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Sir, I want to ask a straightforward question regarding the upgradation of Dibrugarh Airport in Assam. I am thankful to the hon. Minister for giving Rs. 54.52 crore for upgradation, particularly, for construction of a new terminal building, and acquisition of land for the Dibrugarh Airport.

Now, the local airport authority officials have informed me that the acquisition of land for the expansion of the

runway would be difficult because that particular land belongs to the Indian Air Force, and Indian Army. Until and unless the Defence Ministry supports us, this expansion proposal would not be possible, particularly, with regard to the runway. Therefore, through you, I want to request the hon. Minister to take up the issue with the hon. Defence Minister, so that they allow this expansion project to be made possible there.

MR. SPEAKER: A request is not a question.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, we have anyway taken up the work there. We have sanctioned the money, and work is in progress. You are also aware about it.

As regards certain other things that need to be taken up with the Indian Air Force, I will definitely take it up with Shri Pranab Mukherjee—who is present here—as well as the other officers from the Air force.

MR. SPEAKER: I have a request about the Panagarh airport.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Thank you, Sir. The expansion and modernisation of the Chennai Airport is pending for more than five years. I have come to know that 1,500 acres of land was allotted for expansion of the Chennai Airport, but people have converted that land into a residential area. Now, it is very difficult to evict those people, as they are continuously agitating against it.

I want to know this from the hon. Minister. What is the proposal of the Ministry to speed up the expansion work of the Chennai Airport to bring down air traffic over there? I am asking this because the Chennai Airport gets a lot of traffic from all over India. Is there any plan to construct a new additional international airport like being done in Bangalore and Hyderabad? When will the work for this be completed?

MR. SPEAKER: Now, hon. Members will ask this question for every city. How can it be asked under this Question?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the Chennai and Kolkata Airports have been the two major airports, which have been amongst the six major metro airports to be modernised. Actually, we are in discussion for it. The Chief Minister has also written to me about this.

We also have some communication from the West Bengal Government. The Prime Minister's Committee on Infrastructure is also seized of the matter. We hope that in the next few months an early solution would be there, so that the work can commence and get completed on time with the other airports of the country.

MR. SPEAKER: If money is also available for it.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Sir, according to the reply of the Minister, the Bagdogra Airport is the most important airport, but there is no scheme for expansion and upgradation of the Bagdogra Airport.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: What is the thinking of the Government for the development of the Bagdogra Airport?

Secondly, the progress of work for the Cooch Behar Airport is also very slow. When will the Ministry start the airport there?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the Bagdogra Airport—to be the best of my knowledge because I do not have the details for the same—has a reasonably good terminal. The facilities there are not totally of our own, and they are shared with the defence establishments. But if the hon. Member has any suggestion as to what we can do further to improve the situation there, then I will be happy to respond.

As regards Cooch Behar, it is already under an advanced phase of development. I hope that by 2007, we will be able to fly to Cooch Behar, and hopefully have you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, also on board. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This cannot be a Question-Answer session for every city, and every town about which you ask from him.

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI: Sir, the open sky policy was announced before the Ninth Five-Year Plan, and at that time the Government envisaged a general across the board growth of nearly 10 per cent, but it surpassed everything. Now, we have recorded between 20 per cent and 25 per cent growth. But there is huge congestion in all the metro airports. Therefore, when the Tenth Five-Year Plan started, the Government decided to go for expansion of these airports, and to increase their capacity.

In the reply of the Minister, we have seen that most of the projects have not yet been started, as far as upgradation of airports in all the metros is concerned. There is still a huge congestion in all the metro airports, including at the Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi Airports, which is even contributing to the price hike.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your question?

SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI: My question is whether you have a time-bound planning to implement all these projects. In case of Kolkata, you have not yet decided though the West Bengal Government very categorically given their view on modernisation of the Airport. Therefore, I would like to know whether the spill over is resulting in price escalation, and second is when you are going to complete it.

MR. SPEAKER: It is because you are not able to agree.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The maximum congestion is, of course, in Mumbai and Delhi. There is no denying that other airports, if not upgraded on time, will face this kind of a problem in the near future. There is no denying the fact that Kolkata, Chennai and all other airports need to be upgraded. Even places like Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Amritsar, etc., are facing such a situation that in a few years, this kind of a problem will arise there. I fully agree with the hon. Member when he talked about time-bound upgradation. We are looking at time-bound upgradation. That is why, all these 35 non-metro projects will be taken up at one go. On some issues, even the hon. Members should help us. At every airport, there are some issues relating to land required for further expansion. The State Governments are willing, but sometimes, there are delays on account of that also. I would urge all hon. Members to help us in this process.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Shailendra Kumarji, which city do you belong to?

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: Mr. Speaker Sir, this is my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: I am asking about your city.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: Allahabad.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to tell the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation that Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh has been a central place of freedom struggle and most of the offices of the Central as well as State Government are located there, including a runway of Indian Air Force. Not only this, the office of CATC. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please tell the name of your city only....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: The first aeroplane from India had taken off from here. Ardh Kumbh Mela is scheduled to be held in the month of January in Allahabad and neither and nor private public sector Airlines service is available here. Domestic as well as foreign tourists keep visiting here. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether in view of it, the Government propose to construct any runway there and start air-service.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not for every city. It is too much.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member and Shri Rewati Raman Singh, who has not spoken, meet me often with regard to Allahabad. The Government would make endeavours to start as many flights as possible from there. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: For every city, a different demand is being made. Chaudhary Lal Singh, no 'Zero-Hour' today.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in view of inadequate run-ways at Jammu airport, the aircraft lands with a thud and not normally. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All right, what will happen if run up is not there.

...*(Interruptions)*

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to what the Government propose to do about the airport there? He has repeatedly said that the run-up will be increased. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He will look into it.

...(Interruptions)

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Why are you ignoring my question? What is this?

MR. SPEAKER: I believe, last Session, I allowed a special discussion on Civil Aviation, and every hon. Member only asked about their own cities.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Mr. Speaker Sir, hon. Minister has not replied to my question. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He will let you know; he will write to you.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you send him a reply.

### Rail Wagons Manufacturing Units

\*166. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a substantial manufacturing in the rail wagons manufacturing units in public sector has been lying unutilized;

(b) if so, the number of rail wagons produced by each public sector enterprises during each of the last three years and the reasons for under-utilisation of installed capacity; and

(c) the steps contemplated by the Government to enhance the capacity utilization of these units?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

#### Statement

(a) and (b) The manufacturing capacity and production of railway wagons by the Public Sector Enterprises during the last three years are as under:—

(in FWUs units)

Sl. No.	Public Sector Enterprises	Current Manufacturing Capacity	Production		
			2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1.	Burn Standard Company Ltd. (BSCL)	5250	2190	2282	1982
2.	Braithwaite and Company Ltd. (BCL)	3000	1225	1000	1302
3.	Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company Ltd. (BWEL)	2200	285	440	702
4.	Bridge and Roof Co. (India) Ltd. (B and R)	450	265	390	285
Total		10900	3965	4112	4271

Major reasons for the underutilization of the current manufacturing capacity are:

Delayed and inadequate receipt of matching free

supply items like Bogies, Couplers, Wheel Sets, Steel and Bearings; shortage of working capital for purchase of bogies and couplers from outside vendors; sudden fall in wagon

prices due to adoption of open tender policy by the Railways making some of the PSEs in competitive due to high overheads coupled with increase in input price; lack of consistent supply order by major consumers; etc.

(c) To improve the capacity utilization, the Government have sanctioned revival schemes for Bridge and Roof Co. (India) Ltd. (B and R) in 2005 and Braithwaite and Company Ltd. (BCL) in 2006. Revival plans for Burn Standard Company Ltd. (BSCL) and Bharat Wagon Engineering Company Ltd. (BWEL) are in process. Constant follow up action is being taken up with the Railways to improve supply of free issue critical items and enhance order booking.

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: From the figures given by the hon. Minister in his reply, it is evident that production has been declining. There is a sharp decline in production compared with the manufacturing capacity of the public sector enterprises. The hon. Minister mentioned in his reply that lack of consistent supply orders by major consumers is one of the reasons for it. I would like to know from the Minister through you, the steps being taken to fill up the gaps of this supply order.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: We are getting enough order. Unfortunately, the factories are not gearing up to meet the demands of the Railways. We are taking the help of the Members of Parliament from West Bengal and Bihar. Now it has improved. I hope that further improvement will be there. I met the Railway Minister. He assured us that order will now be sufficient. I shall appeal to the trade unions to cooperate with us, which they are doing, and improve the production.

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

### Cereal Scam

\*167. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a cereal scam has been unearthed in the Army recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry in this regard;

(d) if so, the findings thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Complaints alleging irregularities in procurement of rations were received during the period from July, 2005 to September, 2005. As there was a prima facie case, the Army Headquarters got the matter investigated through a Court of Inquiry.

(d) and (e) Certain omissions/lapses in the functioning and discharge of duties by various functionaries with respect to provisioning and supply of Masur Whole, Kabuli Chana, Barley Crushed and Gram Kibbled have come to light. The Court of Inquiry has submitted its report on which the competent authority has directed to initiate action as per procedure laid down in the military law.

### Industry Status to Hotels

\*168. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to accord industry status to the hotels in the country;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

### Revenue Generation from Superfast Trains

\*169. SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have made any assessment regarding revenue generation from mail/express trains upgraded/proposed to be upgraded into superfast mail/express category as reported in the *Dainik Jagaran* dated July 5, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of trains which are selected so far for such upgradation;

(c) the additional surcharge levied on such trains;

(d) whether, apart from the reduction in the journey time, the passengers are provided any extra facilities in such trains;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether there is also any proposal to withdraw superfast status of some recently upgraded trains; and

(g) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise. List of 70 pairs of trains upgraded w.e.f. 01-07-06 is enclosed as statement.

(c) The additional surcharge levied per journey for travel by all superfast trains (past or present) is as under:

Class	Surcharge per passenger
Second	Rs. 10
Sleeper	Rs.20
AC Chair Car, First, AC 3-tier and AC 2-tier	Rs. 30
AC First	Rs. 50

for first and second class season ticket holders, charges for monthly and quarterly superfast surcharge ticket is equivalent to superfast surcharge for 15 and 45 single journeys respectively.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

#### **Statement**

#### **Trains made Superfast w.e.f. 1-7-2006**

Sl. No.	Trains No.	Revised Train No.	Train name with originating/destination stations
1	2	3	4
1.	1423	2115	Mumbai-Solapur Siddheshwar Express
2.	1424	2116	Solapur-Mumbari Siddheshwar Express
3.	1403	2117	Lokmanya Tilak (T)—Manmad Express
4.	1404	2118	Manmad-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Express
5.	1025	2125	Mumbai-Pune Pragati Express
6.	1026	2126	Pune-Mumbai Pragati Express
7.	1033	2133	Pune-Darbhanga Express

1	2	3	4
8.	1034	2134	Darbhanga-Pune Express
9.	1451	2143	Nagpur-Gaya Dikshabhumi Express
10.	1452	2144	Gaya-Nagpur Dikshabhumi Express
11.	1053	2147	Shri Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj (T)—Nizamuddin Express
12.	1054	2148	Nizamuddin-Shri Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj (T) Express
13.	1159	2175	Howrah-Gwalior Chambal Express
14.	1160	2176	Gwalior-Howrah Chambal Express
15.	1181	2177	Howrah-Agra Chambal Express
16.	1182	2178	Agra-Howrah Chambal Express
17.	1469	2181	Jabalpur-Jaipur Dayodaya Express
18.	1470	2182	Jaipur-Jabalpur Dayoday Express
19.	1273	2183	Bhopal-Lucknow Express
20.	1274	2184	Lucknow-Bhopal Express
21.	1267	2187	Bhopal-Rewa Express
22.	1268	2188	Rewa-Bhopal Express
23.	1449	2189	Jabalpur-H. Nizamuddin Mahakoshal Express
24.	1450	2190	H. Nizamuddin-Jabalpur Mahakoshal Express
25.	4025	2225	Azamgarh-Delhi Kaifiat Express
26.	4026	2226	Delhi-Azamgarh Kaifiat Express
27.	4231	2231	Lucknow-Chandigarh Express
28.	4232	2232	Chandigarh-Lucknow Express
29.	3073	2331	Howrah-Jammu Tawi Himgiri Express
30.	3074	2332	Jammu Tawi-Howrah Himgiri Express
31.	3027	2333	Howrah-Varanasi Vibhuti Express
32.	3028	2334	Varanasi-Howrah Vibhuti Express
33.	3447	2335	Bhagalpur-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Express
34.	3448	2336	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Bhagalpur Express

1	2	3	4
35.	3015	2337	Howrah-Bolpur Shantiniketan Express
36.	3016	2338	Bolpur-Howrah Shantiniketan Express
37.	3029	2339	Howrah-Dhanbad Coalfield Express
38.	3030	2340	Dhanbad-Howrah Coalfield Express
39.	3035	2341	Howrah-Asansol Agniveena Express
40.	3036	2342	Asansol-Howrah Agniveena Express
41.	3231	2351	Howrah-Danapur Express
42.	3232	2352	Danapur-Howrah Express
43.	4847	2479	Jodhpur-Bandra Suryanagari Express
44.	4848	2480	Bandra-Jodhpur Suryanagari Express
45.	4721	2481	New Delhi-Sriganganagar Intercity Express
46.	4722	2482	Sriganganagar-New Delhi Intercity Express
47.	5623	2507	Ernakulam-Guwahati Express
48.	5624	2508	Guwahati-Ernakulam Express
49.	5625	2509	Bangalore-Guwahati Express
50.	5626	2510	Guwahati-Bangalore Express
51.	5012	2511	Gorakhpur-Trivandrum Raptisagar Express
52.	5011	2512	Trivandrum-Gorakhpur Raptisagar Express
53.	5637	2513	Secunderabad-Guwahati Express
54.	5638	2514	Guwahati-Secunderabad Express
55.	5221	2521	Ernakulam-Barauni Raptisagar Express
56.	5222	2522	Barauni-Ernanakulam Raptisagar Express
57.	5090	2589	Gorakhpur-Secunderabad Express
58.	5089	2590	Secunderabad-Gorakhpur Express
59.	5092	2591	Gorakhpur-Bangalore Express
60.	5091	2592	Bangalore-Gorakhpur Express



1	2	3	4
61.	6601	2601	Chennai-Mangalore Express
62.	6602	2602	Mangalore-Chennai Express
63.	6523	2609	Chennai-Bangalore Express
64.	6524	2610	Bangalore-Chennai Express
65.	6205	2613	Mysore-Bangalore Tippu Express
66.	6206	2614	Bangalore-Mysore Tippu Express
67.	6039	2669	Chennai-Chhapra Ganga Kaveri Express
68.	6040	2670	Chhapra-Chennai Ganga Kaveri Express
69.	6033	2687	Chennai-Dehradun Express
70.	6034	2688	Dehradun-Chennai Express
71.	6069	2689	Chennai-Nagercoil Express
72.	6080	2690	Nagercoil-Chennai Express
73.	6703	2693	Chennai Egmore-Tuticorin Pearl City Express
74.	6704	2694	Tuticorin-Chennai Egmore Pearl City Express
75.	7001	2701	Mumbai-Hyderabad Hussain Sagar Express
76.	7002	2702	Hyderabad-Mumbai Hussain Sagar Express
77.	7005	2719	Tenali-Secunderabad Nagarjuna Express
78.	7006	2720	Secunderabad-Tenali Nagarjuna Express
79.	7021	2721	Hyderabad-H. Nizamuddin Dakshin Express
80.	7022	2722	H. Nizamuddin-Hyderabad Dakshin Express
81.	7007	2727	Visakhapatnam-Hyderabad Godavari Express
82.	7008	2728	Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam Godavari Express
83.	7601	2729	Pune-Nanded Express
84.	7602	2730	Nanded-Pune Express
85.	7423	2733	Tirupati-Secunderabad Narayanadri Express
86.	7424	2734	Secunderabad-Tirupati Narayanadri Express

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1	2	3	4
87.	7047	2737	Kakinada-Secunderabad Gautami Express
88.	7048	2738	Secunderabad-Kakinada Gautami Express
89.	7053	2753	Chennai Central-Hyderabad Express
90.	7054	2754	Hyderabad-Chennai Central Express
91.	7685	2785	Kacheguda-Bangalore Express
92.	7686	2786	Bangalore-Kacheguda Express
93.	7697	2797	Kacheguda-Chittoor Venkatadri Express
94.	7698	2798	Chittoor-Kacheguda Venkatadri Express
95.	8017	2827	Howrah-Purulia Express
96.	8018	2828	Purulia-Howrah Express
97.	8033	2833	Ahmedabad-Howrah Express
98.	8034	2834	Howrah-Ahmedabad Express
99.	8613	2835	Hatia-Yesvantpur Express
100.	8614	2836	Yesvantpur-Hatia Express
101.	8007	2837	Howrah-Puri Express
102.	8008	2838	Puri-Howrah Express
103.	8253	2853	Durg-Bhopal Amarkantak Express
104.	8254	2854	Bhopal-Durg Amarkantak Express
105.	8561	2861	Vishakhapatnam-Nizamuddin Link Express
106.	8562	2862	Nizamuddin-Vishakhapatnam Link Express
107.	8003	2863	Howrah-Yesvantpur Express
108.	8004	2864	Yesvantpur-Howrah Express
109.	8311	2871	Howrah-Sambalpur Ispat Express
110.	8312	2872	Sambalpur-Howrah Ispat Express
111.	8603	2873	Hatia-Delhi Jharkhand Swarna Jayanti Express
112.	8604	2874	Delhi-Hatia Jharkhand Swarna Jayanti Express
113.	8475	2875	Puri-New Delhi Neelanchal Express

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1	2	3	4
114.	8476	2876	New Delhi-Puri Neelanchal Express
115.	8023	2883	Howrah-Purulia Rupasi Bangla Express
116.	8024	2884	Purulia-Howrah Rupasi Bangla Express
117.	8025	2885	Shalimar-Adra Aranyak Express
118.	8026	2886	Adra-Shalimar Aranyak Express
119.	8413	2893	Bhubaneswar-Sambalpur Express
120.	8414	2894	Sambalpur-Bhubaneswar Express
121.	9315	2913	Indore-Nagpur Trishatabdi Express
122.	9316	2914	Nagpur-Indore Trishatabdi Express
123.	9367	2919	Indore-Jammu Tawi Malwa Express
124.	9368	2920	Jammu Tawi-Indore Malwa Express
125.	9021	2921	Mumbai Central-Surat Flying Rani Express
126.	9022	2922	Surat-Mumbai Central Flying Rani Express
127.	9317	2923	Indore-Nagpur Express
128.	9318	2924	Nagpur-Indore Express
129.	9057	2929	Valsad-Vadodara Express
130.	9058	2930	Vadodara-Valsad Express
131.	9035	2935	Bandra-Surat Express
132.	9036	2936	Surat-Bandra Express
133.	9045	2945	Surat-Varanasi Tapti Ganga Express
134.	9046	2946	Varanasi-Surat Tapti Ganga Express
135.	9271	2971	Bandra-Bhavnagar Express
136.	9272	2972	Bhavnagar-Bandra Express
137.	9777	2987	Jaipur-Gwalior Express
138.	9778	2988	Gwalior-Jaipur Express
139.	9679	2989	Mumbai Central-Ajmer Express
140.	9680	2990	Ajmer-Mumbai Central Express

**Recruitment in Armed Forces**

\*170. SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any assessment regarding the total vacant posts of officers in the Army;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacant post;

(d) whether the Government has made any assessment regarding the decreasing interest of youth in Armed Forces; and

(e) if so, the corrective measures taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) The total number of vacant posts of officers in the Army is approximately 11,000.

With economic progress and opening up of new avenues of employment, there are other options available to the youth, other than employment in the Defence Services.

However, several steps have been undertaken by the Army to attract the youth for joining the Service. These include:

- (a) granting of accelerated promotions to the ranks of Captain, Major and Lt. Colonel after 2, 6 and 13 years of reckonable service, for both Permanent Commission as well as Short Service Commission officers;
- (b) extending the tenure of Short Service Commission from 10 years to 14 years of service;
- (c) Sustained Image Projection and Publicity Campaigns, to create awareness among the youth on the advantages of taking up a challenging and satisfying career in the Army;
- (d) regular interaction with the media by the

Directorate of Public Relations of Ministry of Defence;

- (e) providing career related information on the Websites of the three Defence Services.

*[English]***Accessibility for Disabled Persons**

\*171. SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPIPARAI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether inaccessibility to public buildings and present transport system have deprived the disabled persons from getting education and job opportunities;

(b) if so, whether the Government has taken any measures to ensure barrier free designs and access features for disabled persons in all future construction; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) Although there is no specific study to show that lack of barrier free built environment has been one of the impediments for access to education and job opportunities, yet, this can generally be said to be the situation.

(b) and (c) In addition to the enactment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, which provides for, besides other matters, barrier free access in trains and buses and lifts with Braille and auditory signals in public buildings, the following measures have been taken in recent years:—

(i) Financial assistance is provided to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, Central Public Works Department and Universities to provide barrier free facilities in their buildings/hostels.

(ii) Ministry of Urban Development has prepared Model Building Bye Laws containing provisions for barrier free built environment. These guidelines and space standards have been circulated to the State Governments and Union Territories for adoption. Ten States and four Union Territories and 438 Municipalities and Local bodies have reported adoption of Model Building Bye Laws.

(iii) Financial assistance is also being provided for removal of architectural barriers in existing/new schools under the scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC).

(iv) Funds to the extent of Rs. 1.04 crore have been provided to the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) for construction of disabled friendly bus stands on the route where disabled friendly buses have been introduced by the DTC.

*[Translation]*

#### **Compensation on Land Acquired by ONGC**

\*172. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

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

(a) the total land acquired by the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited for carrying exploration and production activities during the last year and the current year, State-wise;

(b) the amount of compensation paid to the land owners during the said period;

(c) whether the Government has received complaints regarding discrepancies in payment of compensation;

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

(e) the action taken by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) Details of total land acquired by ONGC for carrying out exploration and production activities during last year (2005-06), and the current year (2006-07, up to July '06) and compensation paid to the land owners, state-wise, are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) to (e) ONGC has informed that no complaints regarding discrepancies in payment of compensation have been received. However, requests for enhancement of rate of compensation have been received. ONGC has revised the rates of compensation based on the recommendations of Revenue Depts of concerned states and compensation is being paid according to revised rates.

#### **Statement**

*State-wise details of Land Acquired and Compensation paid during 2005-06 and 2006-07*

Sl. No.	State(s)	Year	Total Land Acquired/Compensation Paid for E and P Activities	
			Land Acquired (On Rent/Lease Permanent basis) (in Acres)	Compensation Paid (Rs. in Lakhs)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Assam	2005-06	108.16	273.08
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	66.70	179.51
2.	Tripura	2005-06	92.97	102.43
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	122.39	238.25

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Gujarat	2005-06	920.90	1743.74
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	168.36	88.33
4.	Andhra Pradesh	2005-06	108.36	41.32
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	9.29	0*
5.	Tamil Nadu	2005-06	93.37	272.93
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	14.97	47.97
6.	Himachal Pradesh	2005-06	11.12	6.67
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	0	0
7.	Uttar Pradesh/ Madhya Pradesh	2005-06	0	0
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	17.46	12.72
8.	Maharashtra	2005-06	0	0
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	0.52	0.09
9.	West Bengal	2005-06	8.48	21.03
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	0	0
10.	Jharkhand	2005-06	88.38	93.67
		2006-07 (up to July '06)	20.45	239.27

*[English]***Taxes on Petrol/Diesel**

\*173. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

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

(a) whether in some States the petrol and diesel

prices are much higher than the average prevalent prices in the country even prior to the Government's decision to raise the prices in the month of June this year;

(b) if so, the comparative prices in different States;

(c) whether the Union Government has appealed to the State Governments to absorb part of the increase petrol/diesel prices by curtailing the Sales Tax imposed thereon; and

(d) if so, the response of the State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) Yes, Sir. The retail selling prices of petrol and diesel differ from State to State on

account of variation in rate of sales tax, State-specific irrecoverable taxes, freight charges depending upon distance of deport from refinery and delivery charges from deport to retail pump outlet, etc.

(b) The retail selling prices of petrol and diesel at state capitals are given below:—

**Retail Selling Prices of Petrol and Diesel**

(Rs./Litre)

State Capital	State	Petrol	Diesel
1	2	3	4
Mumbai	Maharashtra	52.71	39.68
Delhi	UP Delhi	46.85	32.25
Chennai	Tamil Nadu	51.83	35.51
Kolkata	West Bengal	51.07	34.96
Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh	51.33	37.87
Gandhinagar	Gujarat	52.06	37.50
Panjim	Goa	48.44	35.35
Rajpur	Chhattisgarh	48.97	36.35
Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh	50.63	35.83
Shimla	Himachal Pradesh	48.85	33.13
Chandigarh	Chandigarh	48.14	32.62
Srinagar	Jammu and Kashmir	50.13	33.93
Dehradun	Uttaranchal	48.75	34.86
Jaipur	Rajasthan	50.76	35.21
Ambala	Haryana	46.80	32.33
Jalandhar	Punjab	52.13	32.21
Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	53.28	36.00
Trivandrum	Kerala	50.34	35.94
Bangalore	Karnataka	55.15	37.51
Pondicherry	Pondicherry	45.78	33.81

1	2	3	4
Ranchi	Jharkhand	47.98	35.15
Patna	Bihar	50.73	35.12
Bhubaneswar	Orissa	48.61	35.67
Guwahati	Assam	49.71	33.44
Shillong	Meghalaya	47.20	32.58

(c) and (d) Yer, Sir. Based on the request made to the State Governments to forego the incremental sales tax on the price increase of petrol and diesel for moderating its impact on the common man, ten State Governments, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu (diesel only), Uttaranchal, Manipur and Assam, have reduced the sales tax on Petrol and Diesel, thus reducing the burden of the recent price hike.

[Translation]

#### Commercial Use of Subsidised LPG

\*174. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:  
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

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

(a) whether subsidised domestic Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is being illegally used for commercial use;

(b) if so, the number of cases of black-marketing of LPG reported during each of the last three years and the current year;

(c) the action taken against the distributors found guilty;

(d) whether the Government has taken any steps to stop commercial use of subsidised LPG; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported instances of diversion of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes by their LPG distributors.

(b) and (c) During the last three year period, 2003-04 to 2005-06, and also April-June, 2006, the number of LPG distributors penalized by the OMCs for diversion of domestic cylinders for commercial purposes under their Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) were as under:—

Year	Number of LPG distributors penalized
2003-04	13
2004-05	484
2005-06	517
April-June 2006	40

In addition to the action by the OMCs under the MDG, State Governments are empowered to take action against illegal use of domestic LPG.

(d) and (e) The following measures have been taken to prevent the diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes:

(i) Under the LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 the diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes by the distribute of OMCs is prohibited. The State Governments are empowered to take action against erring distributors under the provisions of this Order. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

(ii) The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributors godown, delivery points, as well as en-route



to ensure that no diversion/black marketing takes place. As per the MDG, in case of establishment of any diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinder for commercial purposes, the following action is taken against the distributor:—

- (a) Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.
- (b) Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence; and
- (c) Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

[English]

#### **Procurement of Wagons**

\*175. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:  
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have initiated any talks with some of the foreign countries for procurement of wagons and also for technology transfer for improving wagon design;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the private sector companies have also shown interest for supply of wagons to Railways;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the further action taken/being taken by Railways in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Railways have not initiated any talks with foreign countries for procurement of wagons. However, designs of wagons in foreign countries are being studied for adoption, if found suitable.

(c) Yes, Sir. A number of private sector companies supply wagons to Railways.

(d) Some of the private sector companies that supply wagons to Railways are M/s Texmaco Limited, Kolkata; M/s BESCO Limited, Kolkata; M/S Titagarh Industries Limited, Kolkata; M/s Modern Industries, Sahibabad;

M/s Hindusthan Engineering and Industries Limited, Kolkata and M/s. Jessop and Company Limited, Kolkata etc.

(e) Procurement of wagons and improvement in their designs is a continuous process so as to match traffic needs and also to improve productivity.

#### **Central Assistance for Schemes**

\*176. SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether central assistance is provided to the States and Union Territories under the centrally sponsored schemes for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;

(c) the details of utilisation of central assistance by each State/Union Territory during the said period;

(d) whether the Union Government has directed the State Governments to identify the atrocities prone sensitive areas in their States; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the response of the State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A Statement showing the details of central assistance released to the State Government/ Union Administrations during the last three years viz. 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 and during the current year 2006-07 (up to 31-07-2006) and the utilisation thereof during the said period is enclosed.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Advisories are issued from time to time, *inter alia*, requesting the State Governments to identify atrocity prone areas. The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have identified the atrocity prone/sensitive areas in their respective States.

**Statement**

*Details of Central Assistance released and Utilisation thereof under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 for the year 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2006-07 (as on 31-07-2006)*

Sl. No.	State/UT	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07*	
		Central Assistance released	Central Assistance utilised	Central Assistance released	Central Assistance utilised	Central Assistance released	Central Assistance utilised	Central Assistance released	Central Assistance released (up to 31-07-2006)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	464.41500	433.46500	615.75500	328.29500	388.38325	NR	NR	82.00
2.	Bihar	85.82000	29.28125	0	32.86250	13.00000	NR	NR	—
3.	Chhattisgarh	30.09500	46.09000	71.74500	48.88000	46.38000	NR	NR	12.000
4.	Goa	0.72500	0.50000	1.00000	0.35000	0.10000	NR	NR	—
5.	Gujarat	256.63792	253.43500	337.79000	279.83000	281.03000	287.17000	287.17000	62.000
6.	Haryana	22.23000	18.37525	14.84450	13.35400	73.96025	99.92250	99.92250	4.000
7.	Himachal Pradesh	—	36.74572	37.00000	NR	—	NR	NR	—
8.	Jharkhand	—	8.54500	—	7.30500	—	NR	NR	—
9.	Karnataka	—	300.62500	531.17350	493.14000	852.66150	NR	NR	124.000
10.	Kerala	43.69575	45.03250	30.39700	87.29036	117.52000	NR	NR	22.000
11.	Madhya Pradesh	1280.97000	517.94000	314.96500	774.39500	820.01000	NR	NR	193.000

12.	Maharashtra	150.40000	217.95601	343.49000	294.35944	426.86000	NR	35.000
13.	Orissa	4.95000	0.08750	08.18000	2.08913	1.20000	4.70963	7.780
14.	Punjab	40.43300	0	57.50000	Nil	21.37500	97.93000	55.867
15.	Rajasthan	33.67844	54.28500	200.00000	84.32500	87.00000	127.89000	21.000
16.	Sikkim	0.95000	0.95000	1.50000	1.25000	1.75000	1.87500	2.425
17.	Tamil Nadu	124.61000	184.62500	218.34000	172.57000	160.72000	NR	43.000
18.	Uttaranchal	—	12.39500	22.00000	16.31250	37.00000	NR	4.000
19.	Uttar Pradesh	1030.22000	570.20450	610.70000	553.10500	414.10500	NR	138.000
20.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	33.42000	32.39646	30.00000	30.00000	50.00000	49.36190	7.000
21.	Pondicherry	34.63000	30.88924	28.62000	31.26457	37.94500	36.36321	8.000
Total		3637.88011	2793.82343	3475.00000	3250.96750	3831.0000	705.22224	821.072

Legend: NR—figures not received so far.

\* Figures of utilization of central assistance for the year 2006-07 would be known only on receipt of proposals for central assistance for the year 2007-08.

Note: Other State Governments/Union Territory Administrations have either not submitted the proposal for or do not need any central assistance under the Scheme.

### **Asia Security Summit**

\*177. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minister of Defence has attended the Asia Security Summit held recently in Singapore; and

(b) if so, the details of participant countries alongwith the issues discussed and decisions arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Raksha Mantri attended the 5th Asia Security Summit, 'Shangri-La Dialogue', held in Singapore from 2-4 June 2006, annually organized by the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS).

2. Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Timore-Leste, UK, USA and Vietnam participated in the 5th Asia Security summit.

3. Asia Security Summit is a conference of Defence Ministers, high-level defence military officials, defence/security think-tanks and media of the Asia-Pacific region where views on political and military issues are exchanged.

4. the issues deliberated upon during the Asia Security Summit included the following.

- (a) The United States and Asia's emerging security architecture
- (b) India: A rising Global Player
- (c) Deploying Forces for International Security
- (d) Advancing Maritime Security Cooperation
- (e) The Challenges of Force Modernization
- (f) Counter-Insurgency in the 21st Century
- (g) Setting National Security Priorities
- (h) Constructing a Regional Security Community.

### **Safety Norms at Airports**

\*178. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has recently inspected several airports to check their safety standards;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the discrepancies found in the safety norms: and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to ensure safety norms are adhered to at all the airports in the country?

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

(b) During the year 2006, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) inspected ten airports managed by Airports Authority of India (AAI) for ensuring the compliance of safety standards and Recommended Practices as contained in Annexure 14 of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Manual as well as procedures contained in Aerodrome Manual of AAI. Some general discrepancies were observed relating to infrastructure deficiencies like non-availability of adequate basic strip, non-availability of Runway End Safety Area (RESA), inadequacy of safety lanes in apron rescue and fire fighting services, Safety Management System (SMS) etc.

(c) DGCA conducts safety audits prior to licensing an aerodrome as well as subsequently to ensure compliance of the safety norms laid down in the Aircraft Rules, 1937 and DGCA procedures which are in line with International standards, procedures and recommended practices. AAI also endeavours to maintain its airports as per ICAO norms and standards. Wherever it is not feasible to adhere to these norms, the AAI files a difference, which is duly notified. AAI has a Directorate of Aviation Safety with regional establishments in the Five Flight Information Regions of India, which conduct periodical inspections of various airports. The follow-up action is taken by all the concerned Directorates for remedial action.

*[Translation]*

### **Attacks on Ships**

\*179. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:  
SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of attacks on ships are increasing in Indo-Asian sea territory;

(b) if so, the details of such attacks reported during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government has chalked out any plan to increase patrolling in the sea territory of the country;

(d) if so, whether the Government has also discussed this matter with other Asian countries; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), the piracy incidents in the seas adjoining India and the South-East Asian Region have declined during the last three years. The reduction in the piracy incidents has been largely attributable to the increased patrolling by the Navies and Coast Guards of the countries of this region, including India. The details of attacks during the last three years are given below:—

Year	Seas adjoining India	Seas adjoining South East Asian Region
2003	27	170
2004	15	158
2005	15	102

2. The IMB has defined Piracy and Armed Robbery as "An act of boarding or attempting to board any ship with the apparent intent to commit theft or any other crime and with the apparent intent or capability to use force in furtherance of the Act". The reported incidents of piracy attacks in the seas adjoining India are actually stray incidents of petty thefts on board ships at anchorage to steal paints, ropes etc. which have been reported as piracy attacks according to the above definition of IMB.

3. The Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard conduct regular patrolling by ships and aircraft in the seas adjoining India, which acts as deterrence against piracy attacks on ships.

4. Discussions have been held with other Asian countries to ensure security of sea lanes of communication in the region. In a meeting held in Japan in June 2004, a resolution was adopted by Coast Guards of 17 countries called Asia Maritime Security Initiative 2004 (AMARSEC-TIVE 2004) to promote action on piracy and armed robbery against ships. A Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against ships in Asia (ReCAAP) was proposed by Japan in November 2004. 12 countries, including India, have ratified the agreement.

5. The Indian Coast Guard has also concluded an agreement in March, 2006 with South Korea for action against piracy and safety of sea lanes of communications.

6. In addition, agreement are already in force between the Indian Navy and the Navy of Indonesia since 2002 and the Navy of Thailand since 2005 for coordinated patrols along the International Maritime Boundary Line.

7. Indian Navy and Coast Guard and the Sri Lankan Navy conduct regular patrolling on their respective sides of the International Maritime Boundary.

[English]

#### **Welfare Schemes for Disabled Persons**

\*180. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provides financial assistance under various schemes being implemented for the welfare of disabled persons;

(b) if so, the progress made under the said schemes during the last three years;

(c) whether the funds earmarked for the purpose have not been fully utilized by some State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations and NGOs;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the remedial measures taken by the Government for the proper and full utilization of funds allocated for the welfare of disabled persons?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) and

(b) Yes Sir, the details may be seen in the enclosed statement.

(c) and (d) Funds are not earmarked State/Union Territory Administration/NGO wise under any scheme of the Ministry for the persons with disability. In the Schemes in which the funds are released to State Government/NGOs the allocation is on a demand basis.

(e) In case of projects implemented through NGOs; funds are released on the basis of the recommendations of State Governments/UT Administration/Any Other Agency designated by the Ministry in this regard. Proper utilization of funds is being ensured through audit of accounts for the projects sanctioned and inspections carried out annually.

**Statement**

*Statement of Expenditure 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 Disability Division, M/o SJ and E*

(Rs. in crores)

Sl. No.	Scheme	2003-04 Expenditure	2004-05 Expenditure	2005-06 Expenditure
1	2	3	4	5
1.	National Institute for Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata	3.00	3.00	2.50
2.	National Institute for Visually Handicapped, Dehradun	6.50	0.55	3.45
3.	National Institute for Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai	7.50	5.86	6.15
4.	National Institute for Rehabilitation, Training and Research, Cuttack	7.00	6.25	7.23
5.	Institute for Physically Handicapped, New Delhi	1.34	1.50	1.00
6.	National Institute for Mentally Retarded, Secunderabad	7.76	9.62	10.99
7.	National Institute for Multiple Handicapped, Chennai	0.00	1.00	7.49
8.	Spinal Injury Centre	2.50	2.62	2.98
9.	Rehabilitation Council of India	2.09	2.01	2.86
10.	Employment of Handicapped	0.25	1.54	0.00
11.	National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation	0.00	1.00	5.00
12.	Scheme for Implementation for Persons with Disability Act, 1995	2.53	10.04	13.75

1	2	3	4	5
13.	Technology Development Projects in the Mission Mode	1.00	0.37	0.62
14.	Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme	71.00	67.31	66.80
15.	Aids and Appliances for the Handicapped (ADIP)	55.00	63.19	57.91
16.	Technology Centre for Visual Hearing and Orthopaedically Disabled Persons	0.00	0.00	0.00
17.	UNDP Assistance to Support to Children with Disabilities	0.35	0.29	0.00
Total		167.82	176.15	188.55

**Concessional Finance to OBCs in  
Andhra Pradesh**

1209. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) has been set up to provide concessional finance to backward classes;

(b) if so, whether from the year 2003-04, the number of beneficiaries have come down drastically and also the amount of disbursement has come down from Rs. 204 crore in 2001-02 to just Rs. 2 crore in 2005-06 in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the 'Creamy layer' has any role to play in identification and disbursement of financial assistance etc.; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (e) NBCFDC provides loans through State Channelling Agencies (SCA) to beneficiaries from the backward classes living below double the poverty line. The disbursement in Andhra Pradesh came down from Rs. 20.40 crore in 2001-02 to

2 crore in 2005-06 as the SCA could not draw funds due to non-repayment of outstanding dues. Consequently, the number of beneficiaries was also reduced.

**Installation of Wind Power Projects**

1210. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited is planning to install the Wind Power Projects in Gujarat and Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the projects are likely to become functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. ONGC has reported that they plan to develop two power projects of 50 MW capacity, one each in Gujarat and Karnataka during the period 2007-08.

*[Translation]*

**New Scheme for Senior Citizens**

1211. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to launch a new scheme for the benefits of senior citizens; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

[English]

#### **Recognised Railway Ticket Booking Agents**

1212. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAIISI:

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway propose to do away with the services of recognized railway ticket booking agents and now these agents to operate through the Indian Railways tourist Catering Association (IRTCA) by paying fee;

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

(c) whether the proposed move is likely to put the agents into hardships and the burden posed by the Railways on agents is likely to pass on to the passengers who purchase tickets through these agents; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, an application has been moved in Hon'ble Supreme Court in which Hon'ble Court has been prayed to grant permission to modify the existing Rail Travellers' Service Agents (RTSA) Rule 1985, to the effect that the RTSAs will be entitled to do reservation only through Internet and not through railway reservation offices. In the meanwhile instruction have been issued for providing additional facility to RTSAs for booking of tickets on Internet through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). Any person who books ticket through Internet has to pay specified service charges to IRCTC. In case a passenger intends to book ticket on Internet through RTSAs, he/she has to pay additional service charges of Rs. 15 per ticket in case of second/

sleeper class ticket and Rs. 25 per ticket in case of other classes.

#### **Failure of Momentary Communication**

1213. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a momentary communication failure between the Air Traffic Control at IGI Airport and the Prime Minister's Aircraft on June 24, 2006;

(b) if so, the details and the reasons for this lapse;

(c) whether any probe has been ordered into the incident;

(d) if so, the details and the findings thereof;

(e) the follow-up action taken thereon; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to avoid such incidents in future?

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

(b) During the final phase of landing of Prime Minister's aircraft, communication was being given through specially designated Operational frequency provided at the control tower. The aircraft did not receive tower transmission for a period of 09 seconds only. The communication remained intermittent for a period of 04 minutes and 40 seconds. The incident occurred due to the intermittent contract in mike provided at the control tower which caused momentary failure of communication between the control tower and the aircraft.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The preliminary inquiry was conducted by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The salient findings of the inquiry were that there were some technical defects in some equipments and monitoring of navigation aids was not done.

(e) As per the findings, two executives on duty were placed on suspension.

(f) To avoid recurrence of such incidents, instructions have been reiterated to all concerned with respect to handling of VVIP aircraft and additional guidelines circulated for strict compliance.



[Translation]

**Disappearance of Historical Monuments**

1214. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the historical monuments in Delhi and other States/UTs have disappeared;

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

(c) whether the land mafias are behind disappearance of these monuments; and

(d) if so, the corrective steps taken/being taken to protect the historical monuments?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The details of 35 centrally protected monuments/sites (State/UT-wise) which are not traceable all over the country including Delhi are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) The major cause for the disappearance of the historical monuments is rapid urbanization, construction of multistoreyed residential and commercial buildings, and implementation of development projects.

(d) In 1992, ASI has issued a notification declaring areas upto 100 metres from the protected limits of monuments of national importance as prohibited areas where all construction and mining activities are banned. Another 200 metres beyond this had been declared as regulated area where construction/mining activity is permitted only in accordance with the terms and conditions of a licence issued by the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India.

**Statement**

*List of Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites  
which are not Traceable*

**Name of Monument/Site**

**Assam**

1. Guns of Emperor Sher Shah at Na-sadia, Distt. Tinsukia

**Arunachal Pradesh**

1. Ruins of Copper Temple near Paya, Distt. Lohit

**Delhi (UT)**

1. The Moti Gate of Sher Shah's Delhi, Mauza Babarpur Bazidpur, Distt. New Delhi
2. Pool Chadar, Mauza Chaukri Mubarakabad, Distt. North Delhi
3. Alipur Cemetery, Alipur encamping ground, Distt. North Delhi
4. Bara Khamba Cemetery, Imperial City, Distt. Delhi
5. Tomb of Capt. Mc. Barnett and others who falls in an attack on Kishanganj, Kishanganj, Distt. North Delhi
6. Tomb with three domes near railway station, Nizamuddin, Distt. South Delhi
7. Site of Siege Battery bearing the inscription:— "Right Attack, Lieutenant F.R. Mansell, R.E., Directing Engineer, No. 1 Battery-Right, Major James Brind, R.A., Commanding, Armament five 18-pounders: one 18-inch howitzer. To silence Mori Bastion.", East of the hospital in Police line, Distt. North Delhi
8. Site of Siege Battery with following inscription:— "No. II Battery-Right, Major Edward Kaye, R.A., Commanding Armament two 18-pounders; seven 8-inch howitzers, to breach Kashmir bastion.", Compound of Curzon House, Distt. North Delhi
9. Inchla Wali Gumti, village Mubarak Pur Kotla, Distt. South Delhi
10. Mound known as Joga Bai comprised in part of Survey plot no. 167 as shown in the plan reproduced below, Jamia Nagar, Distt. South Delhi
11. Shamsi Tallab together with both the platform entrance gates, Mehrauli, Distt. Delhi

- Nicholson Statue, its platform, its surrounding gardens, paths and enclosure wall, out side of Kashmiri Gate, Distt. North Delhi

**Gujarat**

- ancient Site, Sejakpur, Distt. Surendranagar
- Historic Site S. No. 431 to 435, Vadodara, Distt. Vadodara

**Haryana**

- Mughal Kos Minar, Mujjesar, Distt. Faridabad, Haryana
- Mughal Kos Minar, Shahbad, Distt. Kurukshetra, Haryana

**Jammu and Kashmir**

- Rock carving of Sitala, Narada, Brahma and Radha Krishna, Basohli, Distt. Kathura
- Rock Carving of Devi riding a lion, Basohli, Distt. Kathura
- Visveswara and other cave temple, Basohli, Distt. Kathura

**Karnataka**

- Pre-historic Site, Kittur, Distt. Mysore.

**Rajasthan**

- Inscription in Fort, Nagar, Distt. Tonk
- 12th Cent. Temple, Baran, Distt. Baran

**Uttaranchal**

- Kutumbari Temple, Dwarahat, Tehsil Ranikhet, Distt. Almora
- Khera Ki Bandi, Old Cemetery, Tehsil Roorkee, Distt. Haridwar
- Remains of ancient buildings locally identified with Vairatapattana, Dhikuli, Tehsil Ramnagar, Distt Nainital

**Uttar Pradesh**

- Closed Cemetery, Katra Naka, Tehsil Banda, Distt. Banda

- Large ruined site called Sandi Khera, Pali, Tehsil Shahabad, Distt. Hardoi
- Cemetery, Jalaun (Bus Stand), Tehsil Jalaun, distt. Jalaun
- Gunner Burkill's Tomb, Rangaon, Tehsil Mehroni, Distt. Lalitpur
- Imambara Amin-ud Daula, Lucknow, Tehsil Lucknow, Distt. Lucknow
- Three Tombs, Lucknow Faizabad Road at miles 3, 4 and 5, Tehsil Lucknow, Distt. Lucknow
- Cemeteries at miles 6 and 7, Jahraila Road, Tehsil Lucknow, Distt. Lucknow
- Cemetery at Gaughat, Lucknow, Tehsil Lucknow, Distt Lucknow.

*[English]***Hyderabad Airport**

1215. SHRI DHANUSKODI R. ATHITHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received complaints regarding sub-standard construction at Hyderabad Airport;

(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) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

*[Translation]***Facilities at Madan Mahal Railway Station**

1216. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether basic passenger facilities are not available at the newly constructed Madan Mahal Railway Station located at Jabalpur;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to provide the facilities at the said station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Passenger facilities are available at Madan Mahal Station as per norms.

(b) and (c) do not arise.

*[English]*

#### **Pre-Matric Scholarship to Children**

1217. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government provides Central assistance for Pre-matric scholarship to the children of those parents engaged in unclean occupation;

(b) if so, whether Central share under the scheme has not been released for 2003-04 and 2004-05;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the proposal under the scheme for 2005-06 was held up by the union Government; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the time by which the Central share is likely to be released and proposal to be cleared?

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

(b) to (e) Central assistance was released to various State Governments during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 and no proposal of any State is held up.

*[Translation]*

#### **Compensation to Daily Wage Mazdoors**

1218. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some daily wage mazdoors employed by the Border Roads Organisation have died or were physically handicapped while at work;

(b) if so, whether any compensation is paid to the mazdoors under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923;

(c) if so, the number of mazdoors paid workmen compensation during the last five years; and

(d) if no compensation is paid, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) All eligible (579) mazdoors have been paid compensation under Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 during the last five years.

(d) Does not arise.

*[English]*

#### **Setting Up of LPG Plants by GAIL Abroad**

1219. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the GAIL (India) Ltd. has acquired contracts for setting up of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) plants in various countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefit likely to be accrued from those contracts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

*[Translation]*

#### **Changes in Time Table of Railways**

1220. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are contemplating to bring changes in the Time Tables for the trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) 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) to (c) Yes, Sir. As announced in the Railway Budget 2006-2007, Indian Railways have initiated action to review the All India Time Table de-novo. In the first phase of the exercise, 140 trains have been made superfast. These timings have been reflected in the July-November, 2006 edition of time table. Second phase of the exercise, for further reviewing the Time Table, is still on and the results will be reflected in the Time Table to be released in December, 2006.

#### **Reservation for Physically Challenged Persons**

1221. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has urged the State Governments to appoint full time Project Director or Commissioner to ensure recruitment of the physically challenged persons to the three percent posts reserved for them;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government proposes to implement any new scheme to provide wheel chairs to the physically challenged persons; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) yes, Sir. The State Governments/U.T. Administrations have been urged to appoint full time Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities for a tenure of 2-3 years with requisite infrastructure for implementation of various provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

*[English]*

#### **Integrated Food Law**

1222. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to enact an Integrated Food Law to protect the interests of farmers and consumers of food products and regulate Agri-retail business and production to achieve higher farm sector growth;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAL): (a) to (c) An Integrated Food Law which is named as "Food Safety and Standards Bill, 2005" introduced by Ministry of Food Processing Industries in Parliament on 25-8-2006 has been passed by Lok Sabha. The objectives of the Bill are: (i) to consolidate the laws relating to food; (ii) to establish the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for laying down science based standards for articles of food; (iii) regulate manufacture, storage, distribution and sale and import of articles of food to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption; (v) Pool infrastructure, manpower, testing facilities for better standard fixation and enforcement through their proper re-deployment.

*[Translation]*

#### **Repairing of Old Railway Bridges**

1223. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have taken any decision for repairing the old and dilapidated railway over-bridges in Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the number of bridges where construction work has been completed; and

(c) the details of overbridges where work could not be completed as the State Government has not provided its share of funds?

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

of old and dilapidated railway over bridges is a continuous process. All the Railway bridges are inspected every year at various levels as per laid down schedule. Repairs are taken up as and when warranted. Special watch is kept during rainy season.

(c) No such case has been noticed.

[English]

### Ongoing Railway Projects

1224. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat has requested for higher allocation of funds in the railway sector in order to secure speedy development of the backward areas of State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a request has also been made for expeditious completion of on-going railway projects and for sanction of new ones to keep pace with the development in the region; and

(d) if so, the action plan of the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) As per available records requests have been received from Government of Gujarat for allotment of adequate funds for completion/ taking up of following ongoing/new proposals:—

- (i) Extension of Rajkot-Veraval-Somnath line upto Kodinar
- (ii) Connecting Gandhinagar with Ahmedabad-Delhi BG line
- (iii) Rail connectivity to Hazira Port
- (iv) Bhavnagar-Tarapur new line
- (v) Surendranagar-Dhrangadhara gauge conversion
- (vi) Viramgam-Mahesana-Patan-Bhildi gauge conversion

(vii) Bharuch-Dahej gauge conversion

(viii) Ahmedabad-Botad gauge conversion

(ix) Dhasa-Jetalsar gauge conversion

(x) Dhasa-Veraval gauge conversion

(xi) Additional track between Ahmedabad-Mumbai

Gauge conversion of Samakhiali-Gandhidham (65 kms) and Adraj Moti-Gandhinagar (10 kms) and Veraval-Somnath (5 kms) new lines are targeted for completion during 2006-07.

Gauge conversion of Bharuch-Samni-Dahej has been included in the Budget 2006-07.

An outlay of Rs. 266.88 crore has been provided for works under new line, gauge conversion and doubling plan head falling fully/partly in the State of Gujarat during 2006-07 against the allotment of Rs. 184.35 crore during 2005-06. This amount is considered sufficient to execute the works planned during the year.

### Development of FPIs In North Eastern Region

1225. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether, in view of the high potential for food processing industries development in Assam and the North East, any plan has been chalked out for development of such industries in different States of the North Eastern region;

(b) if so, the details of such plan; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by them to implement it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAJ): (a) to (c) The Government have implemented central sector plan schemes to provide financial assistance for establishment and modernization of food processing units, creation of infrastructure, support for R and D, human resource development besides other promotional measures to encourage development of food processing industries. For development of food processing

industries in North Eastern states including Sikkim, 10% of the total outlay is earmarked for development of North Eastern Region. Under Mini Mission IV of higher level of incentives than admissible under the normal plan schemes of the Ministry are available in the form of credit link and back ended financial assistance through designated financial institutions to the extent of 50% of the capital cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 4.00 crore for promotion of new units and upto Rs. 1.00 crore for upgradation or modernization of units.

#### **Expenditure on Maintenance of Charminar**

1226. SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) The amount allotted and released for the maintenance and upkeep of Charminar in Hyderabad during each of the last three years;

(b) whether Charminar is fully protected from constant vibrations caused by vehicular traffic and pollution;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the corrective steps taken/being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The funds allotted/released and the expenditure incurred on maintenance and upkeep of Charminar in Hyderabad during last three years is given in the statement enclosed.

(b) to (d) To ascertain the effect of vibrations caused by vehicular traffic and the effect of pollution on the monument the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad was engaged by the Archaeological Survey of India. The NGRI carried out studies on the magnitude of the noise and vibrations emitted due to vehicular motion around Charminar on different occasions and the effect at different levels of the structure. Based on the recommendations of NGRI, requisite structural repairs and development works have been implemented. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been requested to consider the possibilities of diverting the vehicular traffic and convert it into a complete pedestrian zone.

The exhaust from vehicles has deteriorated the exterior lime plaster of Charminar by depositing soot and tarry matter which is regularly removed by the Chemical Branch of Archaeological Survey of India. Besides the levels of suspended particulate matter in the ambient air at Charminar is regularly monitored.

#### **Statement**

Statement showing the funds allotted/released and the expenditure incurred on maintenance and upkeep of Charminar, Hyderabad during last three years

(Amount in Rupees)

Year	Funds allotted/ released	Expenditure
2003-2004	23,25,000	13,36,312
2004-2005	17,00,000	16,94,399
2005-2006	8,07,600	5,75,491

#### **Serving/Selling of Liquor in Trains**

1227. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of serving/selling foreign liquor in Rajdhani Express and other trains at Nagpur station by coach attendants and pantry workers came to the notice of the Railways;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the action taken against the personnel found guilty; and

(c) the steps taken to prevent such illegal activities in trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. On 8-6-2006, six bottles of liquor were seized from the bedroll supplier working under private contractor in AC Coach of Train No. 2442 Nizammudin-Bilaspur Rajdhani Express at Nagpur Railway Station. Similarly, on 18-7-2006, two bottles of liquor were seized from the bed-roll supplier working under private contractor in AC Coach of Train

No. 2441 Bilaspur-Nizammudin Rajdhani Express at Nagpur Railway Station. Both the bedroll suppliers have been prosecuted under section 144 of the Railways Act, 1989. Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways to conduct surprise checks in Rajdhani Trains to prevent such activities.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation's officers conduct surprise and random checks to prevent serving/selling of liquors in trains and take deterrent action as per extant rules to curb such illegal practices.

#### **Frequency of Dankuni Local**

1228. SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are considering to increase the frequency of Dankuni Local in the Eastern Railway; and

(b) if so, the time by which the said proposal is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There is no proposal at present to increase the frequency of Sealdah-Dankuni Locals. However, HS-1/HS-2 Howrah-Sealdah Local has been diverted to Dankuni as DK-597/DK-600 Sealdah-Dankuni Local from 01-07-2006. This train thus gives additional connectivity between Sealdah and Dankuni, which serve as the originating and terminating points.

#### **Shatabdi Train between Ahmedabad-Jaipur**

1229. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are planning to introduce Shatabdi train from Ahmedabad to Jaipur; and

(b) if so, the time by which the said proposal is likely to be implemented?

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

(b) Does not arise

[Translation]

#### **Encroachment in New Delhi Railway Station**

1230. SHRI SITARAM SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether encroachments have erupted in New Delhi Railway Station, Paharganj complex and around it by the retail shopkeepers and hawkers in connivance with R.P.F.;

(b) if so, whether passengers are being harassed by these hawkers and shopkeepers due to which the passengers are facing many problems; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Railways against these shopkeepers and R.P.F. personnels?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

#### **Selling of Marker Kerosene**

1231. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to sell Kerosene with markers to check adulteration of subsidized kerosene in diesel;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the sale of marker kerosene is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) propose to implement the Marker System in Kerosene all over the country by 1st October 2006. Under the proposed system, the marker will be closed in kerosene at the supply locations of OMCs. The samples of diesel/petrol would be drawn to detect whether the same have been adulterated with the marked kerosene. In case of detection, necessary punitive action would be taken by the OMCs.

*[English]***Coal Gasification Project**

1232. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the GAIL (India) Ltd., has entered into an agreement with the Coal India Limited for coal gasification project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated cost and the capacity of the said project; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) GAIL and Coal India Limited (CIL) are in discussion for jointly participating in above ground coal gasification project.

(c) In terms of the feasibility report prepared by GAIL, the estimated cost of the proposed complex is around Rs. 2400 crores. The plant would have a capacity to handle about 5000 Tonnes of coal per day and would produce around 7.7 million standard cubic metre per day (MMSCMD) of Synthesis Gas per day.

(d) The completion time of the project would be around 36 months from the date of approval of GAIL's board.

**Foreign Pilots Working for Airlines in India**

1233. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign pilots working for Indian private and public airlines;

(b) whether any Indian pilos are working for foreign airlines operating to and from India;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether arrangements have been made for imparting specialised training for helicopter pilots; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) A total number of 398 foreign pilots are working for scheduled airlines in India, with 325 pilots working in Private airlines and 73 pilots in Public airlines.

(b) and (c) Government does not maintain records regarding employment of Indian pilots with foreign airlines.

(d) and (e) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is an approved Flying Training Institute imparting helicopter training to pilots upto Commercial Helicopter Pilot Licence (CHPL) level.

**Terminal Facilities at Railway Stations**

1234. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the East Coast Railway has submitted any proposal to enhance the terminal facilities at Bhubaneswar and Cuttack Railway Stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any fund provision has been made during 2006-07 to creat additional terminal facilities at these railway stations; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to release the funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The following works, as proposed by the East Coast Railway to enhance the coaching terminal facilities at Bhubaneswar, are included in the Budget 2006-07 and the outlays provided in 2006-07 are also indicated:—

(i) Bhubaneswar—Augmentation of coach maintenance facilities. Outlay (2006-07): Rs. 1.40 crore.  
(ii) Bhubaneswar—Augmentation of infrastructural facilities of the coaching depot. Outlay (2006-07): Rs. 0.05 crore.

A work of improvement to goods terminal facility at Cuttack is already in progress. For this, an outlay of Rs. 1.00 crore has been provided during 2006-07.



(d) The funds are already available with the Railway for progressing the works.

**Tourism Development Projects in  
Daman and Diu**

1235. SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is immense tourism potential in Daman and Diu;

(b) if so, the details of the tourism development projects being implemented by the Union Government in Daman and Diu to tap this potential; and

(c) the funds allocated and released for this purpose during each of the last three years?

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

(b) and (c) The following projects have been sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism for integrated development of tourism in Daman and Diu during the last three years:—

(Rupees in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Amount Sanctioned
1	2	3
<b>2003-04</b>		
1.	Development of Diu as a Destination	265.07
<b>2004-05</b>		
1.	Production of Walk Through CD Roms on Daman Diu and multimedia interactive information Kiosk	5.00
<b>2005-06</b>		
1.	Infrastructure and Destination Development of Park/Recreation Centre opposite bus stand, Diu	84.00

1	2	3
2.	Illumination of various Tourist Sports/Buildings/Monuments	79.58
3.	Infrastructure and Destination Development-Beautification of Diu by Fixing China Mosaic	54.58
4.	Destination Development of Bunder Chowk, Diu	44.12

**Air-Worthiness of Jaguars**

1236. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:  
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:  
SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any dispute between the Indian Air Force and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited over the air-worthiness and tardy serviceability of Jaguar deep-penetration strike fighters as reported in *Times of India* dated June 16, 2006;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the number of Jaguar aircraft crashed during each of the last three years and the current year; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to make Jaguars more air-worthy?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) HAL and IAF work very closely to address serviceability and maintenance issues of Jaguar fleet. Constant efforts are made by both IAF and HAL to improve the serviceability of the Jaguar fleet and also to tackle the numerous issues concerning upgrades.

(c) The number of Jaguar aircraft that have crashed in the past three financial years and till date in the current year are as follows:—

Financial Year	Number of Jaguar Aircraft crashed
1	2
2003-04	02

1	2
2004-05	03
2005-06	02
2006-07 (till 29-7-06)	Nill

(d) The Jaguar aircraft supplied by HAL to the IAF are fully air-worthy. They are supplied to the IAF after exhaustive ground and in-flight testing by experienced test pilots. No aircraft in the IAF is flown unless it is certified as fully air-worthy. IAF is constantly striving to achieve a reduction in accident rate across all fleets as an ongoing process. In the case of the Jaguar, a joint quality audit of IAF bases and HAL divisions on maintenance issues and inspection of Jaguar bases to review operational and maintenance procedures has also been carried out.

#### **Right of Minorities**

1237. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any incidents of affecting the rights of minorities reported from certain parts of the country during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Minority Commission has accorded minority status to certain educational institutions; and

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

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Details are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) The functions of the National Commission for Minorities are laid down in Section (91) of the National Commission for Minorities Act 1992 and these do not include granting minority status to any educational institution.

#### **Statement**

Some complaints were received about harassment of Christian communities in Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh

and Rajasthan. The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) has enquired into the complaints of harassment in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and has submitted its report.

Besides, from 1-4-2006 to 31-7-2006 around 485 complaints have been received by the NCM regarding police atrocities, service matters, encroachment of religious properties, etc. On receipt of reports regarding the complaints the Commission makes appropriate recommendations to the respective authorities for redressal of the grievances.

*[Translation]*

#### **Reservation on Economic Grounds**

1238. SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI:  
SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:

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

(a) whether the Government has received representations from various quarters for giving reservation on economic grounds;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Request was received from the then Chief Minister of Rajasthan in 2003 for extending benefit of reservation on economic criteria. Several other representations have been received from other individuals/organizations.

(c) A Commission for Economically Backward Classes has been constituted to suggest, inter alia, criteria for identification of economically backward classes, recommend the welfare measures and quantum of reservation in education and Government employment.

*[English]*

#### **Construction of Railway Over Bridge in Amritsar**

1239. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any representations regarding construction of two Railway over Bridges at Verka and Chehherhta in Amritsar;

(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) and (c) The Hon'ble MP has written a letter to the Minister for Railways on May 28, 2006 in this respect. Exact location or level crossing No. where Road Over Bridges (ROBs) are demanded have not been mentioned. However, it has been found that there are 3 Level Crossings (LCs) in vicinity of Verka and Chehherhta with traffic density as under:

B-27 km 208/3-4 Amritsar-Sanewal Sec. 104076 Train Vehicle Units (TVUs)

C-5 km 0/8-9 Amritsar-Pathankor Sec 273462 TVUs

B-20 km 517/18-17 Amritsar-Attari (Chehherhta) 26594 TVUs. LC No. B 27 and C-5 qualify for replacement by Road over/under bridges on cost sharing basis and at B-20 replacement can be considered on deposit terms under extant rules. No proposals have yet been sponsored by the State Government. On receipt of firm proposal, duly fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites, it will be examined.

#### **Sexual Harassment of Women in Armed Forces**

1240. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether women officers in Armed Forces are facing insecurity from sexual harassment by their superior officers;

(b) if so, the number of cases reported during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government is taking any special measures for protection of women officers in Armed Forces; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the number of such isolated cases reported during last three years is given below:—

	2003	2004	2005	2006 (till date)
Army	Nil	03	01	02
Navy	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Air Force	Nil	Nil	02	Nil
Medical, Dental and Nursing services	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

(c) and (d) The Defence forces take appropriate measures for the safety and security of its personnel including women. Any instance of sexual harassment of women officers is viewed seriously and dealt with in accordance with relevant provisions of respective Services Acts.

#### **Reserved Vacancies for Ex-Servicemen**

1241. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the government is aware that a large number of vacancies reserved for ex-servicemen are shown as "not utilised" and merged in general pool;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to ensure that the vacancies reserved for ex-servicemen should be carried forward till these are filled up by re-employing them;

(c) whether the Government has issued any instructions to the concerned Departments of the Union Government and State Governments in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) to (d) The Central Government has reserved 10% of vacancies in

Group 'C' posts and 20% in Group 'D' posts for ex-servicemen. Central Public Sector Undertakings and nationalized Banks provide 14.5% reservation in Group 'C' and 24.5% in Group 'D' posts with them. Besides, 10% vacancies of Assistant Commandants in Para Military Forces are reserved for ex-servicemen. Similarly, 100% posts are reserved for ex-servicemen in Defence Security Corps. The Department of Personnel and Training (DOP and T) and Department of Public Enterprises have issued instructions on the subject to all Central Ministries/Departments and Central Public Enterprises.

2. The Supreme Court has imposed an overall ceiling of 50% on the reservations to be provided in Government jobs. However as reservation for SC/ST/OBC already sums up to 49.5%, DOP and T had considered the method of affecting the available reservation for ex-servicemen and decided that as held by the Supreme Court in a case on the subject, ex-servicemen be provided horizontal reservation as against the vertical reservation being provided to SC/ST/OBC. In other words, an ex-servicemen selected under the reservation provided for them should be placed in the 100 points roster in the appropriate category viz. SC/ST/OBC/General category depending upon the category to which he belongs. The system of horizontal reservation does not deprive ex-servicemen of the benefit of reservation. However, there is no provision for carry forward of unutilized vacancies to subsequent recruitment years.

3. Most of the State Governments are providing reservations for ex-Servicemen in the Government jobs, which varies from state to state. The Department of Ex-servicemen Welfare has been requesting State Governments from time to time to ensure proper utilization of the vacancies reserved for ex-servicemen.

*[Translation]*

#### **NHRC Report on Handicapped Persons**

1242. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has submitted any report on upliftment and advancement of handicapped persons;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by the Government on the report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. The report relates to constitution of a Task Force on Accessibility, formulation of a National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, nomination of a nodal officer on Disability in Central Ministries/Departments, inclusion of disability component in the course curriculum of higher education. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities has been formulated after wide consultations with concerned Central Ministries and other stakeholders including non-governmental organisations, activists and experts. It highlights the thrust areas where interventions are required. The policy document has been sent to all the Central Ministries and State Governments/U.T. Administrations for implementation of the action points made in the Policy.

#### **Construction of Foot Over-Bridges on Railway Stations**

1243. SHRI THAWARCHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the railway stations on the Ratlam-Nagada-Ujjain-Bhopal railway line where there is no foot over-bridge for going from one platform to other platform;

(b) whether any action has been taken for construction of foot over-bridges on the said stations;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the details of railway stations out of them at which the construction of foot over-bridge has been sanctioned; and

(e) the time by which the construction of these foot over-bridges are likely to be commenced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Aslaoda, Bercha, Baktal, Bolai, Bakaniabhoori, Jabri, Kalapipla, Kalisindh, Mohammadkhera, Naikheri, Pingleshwar, Panchawan,

Piploda bagis, Parbati, Palsodamakravan, Phanda, Pirumrod, Sehore, Tajpur, Unhel, Berawanya, Runkhera, Bhatisuda, Chakrod, Kisony, Shivpura total 26 stations on Ratlam-Nagada-Ujjain-Bhopal section have not been provided with Foot over bridge (FOB).

(b) and (c) The work for providing FOB at Kalapipla and Bercha stations is in progress. As per norms, FOB's are not essential at the other stations, based on their category.

(d) The work of construction of FOB's at Kalapipla and Bercha has been sanctioned.

(e) The FOB's are planned for completion by 31-12-2006.

[English]

#### **Non-Recognition of Castes in SCs List**

1244. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Namasudra, Poundra and Majhi castes have still not been recognized by the Government as Scheduled Castes (SCs) in their respective States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which these castes are likely to be recognized as SCs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Namasudra community is specified as Scheduled caste in the States of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Orissa, Tripura and West bengal. Pod and Poundra communities have been specified as Scheduled Caste in West Bengal. Proposal for inclusion of Namasudra, Poundra and Majhi communities in the list of Scheduled Castes in Andhra Pradesh, Andman and Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal had been referred to concerned State Governments/Union Territory Administration for furnishing ethnographic information. Proposal for inclusion of Pod,

Poundra communities in the list of Scheduled Castes in Orissa has been referred to the Registrar General of India for their comments.

No time frame can, however, be assigned in the matters, as the proposals require consultation with various agencies.

#### **Rush at Railway Ticket Counters**

1245. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware that the passengers are facing a lot of difficulties to get/purchase tickets at New Delhi/Old Delhi Railway Station due to heavy rush at the ticket counters;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to do away overcrowding at ticket counters in these railway stations;

(c) whether the Railways are contemplating to provide Unreserved Ticket System (UTS) at certain stations to reduce the rush at ticket counters of major stations;

(d) if so, the names of stations where such facilities are proposed to be provided during the current year;

(e) whether target set for opening of such counters during 2005-06 has been achieved; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Adequate booking arrangements have been made at New Delhi and Delhi stations. Additional booking counters, however, are opened at these stations during rush periods to clear the extra rush.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. All balance A, B, C and D and few important E category stations, numbering 806 have been sanctioned for provision of Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) in 2006-2007. Zonal Railway-wise list of names of stations is enclosed as Statement-I

(e) and (f) The overall target of making UTS available at 425 stations on Indian Railways was exceeded and, against it, 591 stations were provided with this facility. Zonal railway-wise break up is enclosed as Statement-II.

**Statement-I****Railway-wise list of sanctioned Unreserved Ticketing System locations in 2006-07****Central Railwah (85)**

1. Airoli
2. Akurdi
3. Ambernath
4. Ambivli
5. Asangaon
6. Atgaon
7. Badlapur
8. Baramati
9. Begdewadi
10. Belapur
11. Belapur CBD
12. Bhandup
13. Bhivpuri Road
14. Byculla
15. CHembur
16. Chinchpokli
17. Chunabatti
18. Cotton Green
19. Currey Road
20. Dehu Road
21. Deolali
22. Dhule
23. Diva
24. Dockyard Road
25. G.T.B. Nagar
26. Ghansoli
27. Ghoradongri
28. Ghorawadi
29. Govandi
30. Hinganghat
31. Igatpuri
32. Juinagar
33. Kalva
34. Kamshet
35. Kanjur Marg
36. Karad
37. Kasara
38. Kasarwadi
39. Khadarvali
40. Khadki
41. Khandeshwar
42. Khardi
43. Kharghar
44. King's Circle
45. Kopargaon
46. Koparkhairne
47. Latur
48. Malavali
49. Malkapur
50. Mankhurd
51. Masjid
52. Matheran
53. Matunga
54. Multai

55. Mumbra
56. Murtijapur
57. Nahur
58. Nandura
59. Neapanagar
60. Nerul
61. Parel
62. Reay Road
63. Sandhurst Road
64. Sanpada
65. Saswad Road
66. Satara
67. Seawoods Darve
68. Sewagram
69. Sewree
70. Shahad
71. Shelu
72. Sion
73. Thakurli
74. Tilaknagar
75. Titwala
76. Turbhe
77. Ulhasnagar
78. Vadala Road
79. Vadgaon
80. Vangni
81. Vashi
82. Vasind
83. Vidyavihar

84. Vikhroli
85. Vithalwadi

**East Central Railway (27)**

86. Anugraha Narayan Road Rly. Stn.
87. Bagha
88. Banmankhi
89. Begusarai
90. Betiah
91. Bhabhua Road
92. Chakia Rly. Stn.
93. Dalsinghsarai
94. Hasanpur Road
95. Janakpur Road
96. Jayanagar
97. Jhanjharpur
98. Laharia Sarai
99. Madhubani
100. Motihari
101. Muraliganj
102. Naugachia
103. Nirmali
104. Parasnath
105. Rafiganj
106. Raghapur
107. Raxaul
108. Simri Bakhtiarpur
109. Singrauli
110. Sitamarhi
111. Sugauli

112. Tori

**East Coast Railway (23)**

113. Angul

114. Barang

115. Bargarh Road

116. Bobbili

117. Chhatariput

118. Chhatrapur

119. Chipurupalli

120. Dhenkanal

121. Hirakud

122. Ichchapuram

123. Jagdalpur

124. Jeypore

125. Kaluparaghat

126. Kantabanji

127. Keshinga

128. Khariar Road

129. Mahasamund

130. Mancheswar

131. Nawapara Road

132. Nirakarpur

133. Paradeep

134. Parvathipuram

135. Parvathipuram Town

**Eastern Railway (200)**

136. Adisaptagram

137. Agradwip

138. Akra

139. Ambika Kalna

140. Aranghata

141. Asokenagar

142. Azimganj

143. Badkulla

144. Bagbazar

145. Baghajatin (F)

146. Bagila (F)

147. Bagnapara

148. Bagula

149. Baharu (F)

150. Bahirkhand

151. Baidyabati

152. Bainchi

153. Bainchigram (F)

154. Balagarh

155. Balarambati (F)

156. Ballyghat

157. Bamangachi

158. Banpur

159. Bansberia

160. Barakar

161. Baranagar

162. Barharwa

163. Bariarpur

164. Baruipara

165. Bashirhat

166. Basuldanga

167. BBD Bag



- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| 168. Begampur (F)                         | 197. Dhapdhopi        |
| 169. Behula (F)                           | 198. Dhatrigram       |
| 170. Belanagar                            | 199. Dhulianganaga    |
| 171. Belerhat (F)                         | 200. Duela            |
| 172. Belmuri                              | 201. Dumurdaha (F)    |
| 173. Belurmath                            | 202. Durganagar       |
| 174. Bhadreswar                           | 203. Duttapukur       |
| 175. Bhandartikuri (F)                    | 204. Eden Garden      |
| 176. Bhasila (F)                          | 205. Fulia            |
| 177. Bidyadhar Pur (F)                    | 206. Gade             |
| 178. Bira                                 | 207. Gangnapur        |
| 179. Birati                               | 208. Gangpur          |
| 180. Birnagar                             | 209. Garifa (F)       |
| 181. Bisorepara Kodalia (F)               | 210. Ghutiarisharif   |
| 182. Brace-Bridge                         | 211. Giridih          |
| 183. Burra Bazar Circular Railway Station | 212. Gobordanga       |
| 184. Chakdaha                             | 213. Gobra (F)        |
| 185. Champa Pukur                         | 214. Gocharan         |
| 186. Champahati                           | 215. Gopalnagar       |
| 187. Chandanpur                           | 216. Guma             |
| 188. Chandpara                            | 217. Guptipara        |
| 189. Dainhat                              | 218. Gurap            |
| 190. Dakhines War (F)                     | 219. Gurudasnagar (F) |
| 191. Dakshin Barasat                      | 220. Guskara          |
| 192. Dakshin Durgapur (F)                 | 221. Habibpur (F)     |
| 193. Dankuni                              | 222. Habra            |
| 194. Dearah                               | 223. Haisahar         |
| 195. Debipur                              | 224. Haripal          |
| 196. Dhamuah (F)                          | 225. Harua Road       |

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 226. Hasnabad              | 255. Khanyan               |
| 227. Hazigarh (F)          | 256. Khardah               |
| 228. Hooghly               | 257. Kulti                 |
| 229. Hoogly Ghat           | 258. Kumardhubi            |
| 230. Hotor                 | 259. Kuntighat             |
| 231. Hridaypur (F)         | 260. Lake Garden (F)       |
| 232. Ichhapur              | 261. Lakshmi Kantapur      |
| 233. Jagaddal (F)          | 262. Lakshmiপুর            |
| 234. Jamtara               | 263. Loknath (F)           |
| 235. Janai Road            | 264. Madanpur              |
| 236. Jangipur              | 265. Madhu Sudanpur (F)    |
| 237. Jaugram               | 266. Madhyam Gram          |
| 238. Jhapandanga (F)       | 267. Magrahat              |
| 239. Jirat                 | 268. Majhdia               |
| 240. Joynagar Mojilpur     | 269. Majher Gram           |
| 241. Kaikala (F)           | 270. Majher Hat            |
| 242. Kakdwip               | 271. Malatipur (F)         |
| 243. Kalikapur (F)         | 272. Mallikpur             |
| 244. Kalinarayanpur Jn.    | 273. Mandarhill            |
| 245. Kalyani Ghoshpara (F) | 274. Mankundu              |
| 246. Kalyani Silpanchal    | 275. Masagram              |
| 247. Kalyani Simanta       | 276. Mathurapur Road       |
| 248. Kalyanpur (F)         | 277. Memari                |
| 249. Kamarkundu (F)        | 278. Mirzapur Bankipur (F) |
| 250. Kanchrapara           | 279. Mogra                 |
| 251. Kankinara             | 280. Monger                |
| 252. Kashinagar            | 281. Murarai               |
| 253. Khagrahat             | 282. Nabadwipdham          |
| 254. Khamargachi           | 283. Nabagram (F)          |

- |                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 284. Malhati       | 313. Sangrampur (F)               |
| 285. Nalikul       | 314. Santoshpur                   |
| 286. Nangi         | 315. Shashan Road                 |
| 287. Nasibpur (F)  | 316. Shyamnagar                   |
| 288. Netra (F)     | 317. Sibaichandi (F)              |
| 289. New Alipore   | 318. Simlagarh                    |
| 290. Newbarakpore  | 319. Simulatala                   |
| 291. Nimitita      | 320. Simurali                     |
| 292. Nischindipur  | 321. Singur                       |
| 293. Pakur         | 322. Siuri                        |
| 294. Palla Road    | 323. Somrabazar                   |
| 295. Palpara (F)   | 324. Sondalia                     |
| 296. Palsit        | 325. Surjyapur (F)                |
| 297. Palta (F)     | 326. Taherpur                     |
| 298. Pandaveswar   | 327. Taki Road (F)                |
| 299. Pandooah      | 328. Tala                         |
| 300. Patipukur     | 329. Talandoo                     |
| 301. Patuli        | 330. Taldi                        |
| 302. Payradanga    | 331. Thakurnagar                  |
| 303. Piali         | 332. Tinpahar                     |
| 304. Porabazar (F) | 333. Titagarh                     |
| 305. Prinsepghat   | 334. Tollygange (F)               |
| 306. Purbasthli    | 335. Tribeni                      |
| 307. Rajmahal      | <b>North Central Railway (35)</b> |
| 308. Rasulpur      | 336. Achnera                      |
| 309. Sainthia      | 337. Ajaibpur                     |
| 310. Saktigarh     | 338. Atarra                       |
| 311. Salar         | 339. Babina                       |
| 312. Samudragarh   | 340. Bherthana                    |

- 341. Bhuteshwar
- 342. Chitrakut Dham
- 343. Chola
- 344. Dadri
- 345. Dankaur
- 346. Datia
- 347. Dholpur
- 348. Fatehpur
- 349. Gobindpuri
- 350. Harpalpur
- 351. Hathras
- 352. Hodal
- 353. Jhinhak
- 354. Khaga
- 355. Khurja
- 356. Kosikala
- 357. Mahoba
- 358. Mainpuri
- 359. Maitha
- 360. Mauranpur
- 361. Meja Road
- 362. Naini
- 363. Orai
- 364. Pata
- 365. Phaphund
- 366. Rundhi
- 367. Shikohabad
- 268. Sikandarpur
- 369. Vindhyanchal

- 370. Wair

**North Eastern Railway (70)**

- 371. Allahabad City
- 372. Anand Nagar
- 373. Aunrihar Jn.
- 374. Azamgarh
- 375. Babhnan
- 376. Badaun
- 377. Badshah Nagar
- 378. Bahraich
- 379. Ballia
- 380. Balrampur
- 381. Bareilly City
- 382. Barhni
- 383. Basti
- 384. Belthara Road
- 385. Bhatni
- 386. Bhatpar Rani
- 387. Captainganj
- 388. Colonelganj
- 389. Deoria Sadar
- 390. Dullahapur
- 391. Duraundha
- 392. Ekma
- 393. Farrukhabad
- 394. Fatehgarh
- 395. Gainsari
- 396. Ghazipur City
- 397. Gola Gokaran Nath

- |                       |                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 398. Gomti Nagar      | 427. Purnapur                     |
| 399. Gopalganj        | 428. Ramnagar                     |
| 400. Gursahai Ganj    | 429. Rasera                       |
| 401. Gyanpur Road     | 430. Rawatpur                     |
| 402. Haldwani         | 431. Rudrapur City                |
| 403. Hathras City     | 432. Salempur                     |
| 404. Indara Jn.       | 433. Sarnath                      |
| 405. Izzatnager       | 434. Siswa Bazar                  |
| 406. Kaimganj         | 435. Sitapur                      |
| 407. Kannauj          | 436. Suremanpur                   |
| 408. Kanpur Anwarganj | 437. Tahsil Fatehpur              |
| 409. Kasganj          | 438. Tanakpur                     |
| 410. Kashipur         | 439. Tulsipur                     |
| 411. Kathgodam        | 440. Varanasi City                |
| 412. Khalilabad       | <b>North Western Railway (40)</b> |
| 413. Lakhimpur        | 441. Adarshagar                   |
| 414. Lalkuan          | 442. Balotra                      |
| 415. Lar Road         | 443. Bandikui                     |
| 416. Lucknow City     | 444. Barmer                       |
| 417. Mailani          | 445. Basni                        |
| 418. Mairwa           | 446. Beawar                       |
| 419. Manduadih        | 447. Bhagat Ki Kothi              |
| 420. Mankapur Jn.     | 448. Bhilwara                     |
| 421. Mathura Cantt.   | 449. Charkhi Dadri                |
| 422. Nanpara          | 450. Churu Jn.                    |
| 423. Naugarh          | 451. Dahar Ka Balaji              |
| 424. Nautanwa         | 452. Dausa                        |
| 425. Palia Kalan      | 453. Degana                       |
| 426. Payagpur         | 454. Durgapura                    |

- 455. Gandhinagar (Jaipur)
- 456. Getore Jagatpura
- 457. Hansi
- 458. Jaisalmer
- 459. Jawai Bandh
- 460. Jhunjhunu
- 461. Khairthal
- 462. Kishangarh
- 463. Lalgarh
- 464. Madar
- 465. Makrana
- 466. Mandi Dabwali
- 467. Marwar
- 468. Merta Road
- 469. Nagaur
- 470. Nim Ka Thana
- 471. Phulera
- 472. Rana Pratapnagar
- 473. Rani
- 474. Ratangarh Jn.
- 475. Reengus
- 476. Sadulpur
- 477. Sikar
- 478. Sirohi Road
- 479. Sirsa
- 480. Sojat Road

**Northeast Frontier Railway (33)**

- 481. Alipurduar Jn.
- 482. Aluabari Road

- 483. Arariya Court
- 484. Barpeta Road
- 485. Coochbehar
- 486. Dalgaoon
- 487. Dalkhola
- 488. Darjeeling
- 489. Dharmanagar
- 490. Dhupguri
- 491. Dibrugarh
- 492. Diphu
- 493. Fakiragram
- 494. Furkating
- 495. Jalpaiguri
- 496. Jogbani
- 497. Jorhat Town
- 498. Kamakhya
- 499. Kokrajhar
- 500. Kumedpur
- 501. Lanka
- 502. Mariani
- 503. Naharkatiya
- 504. Nalbari
- 505. New Alipurduar
- 506. New Bongaigaon
- 507. New Misamari
- 508. Raiganj
- 509. Samsi
- 510. Simaluguri
- 511. Sonali

512. Tihu

513. Tinsukia Jn.

**Northern Railway (43)**

514. Amroha

515. Badshahpur

516. Barara

517. Baraut

518. Batala

519. Bulandsahar

520. Deoband

521. Dhampur

522. Dhuri

523. Faridkot

524. Fazilka

525. Gajraula

526. Ganaur

527. Garhmukteshwar

528. Gauriganj

529. Giddarbaha

530. Jagadhari

531. Jais

532. Jakhai

533. Jaunpur City

534. Jind

535. Khurja City

536. Kot Kapura

537. Kotdwar

538. Kunda Harnam Ganj

539. Laksar

540. Malerkotla

541. Malipur

542. Maur

543. Modinagar

544. Musafirkhana

545. Nangloi

546. Narela

547. Narwana

548. Nihalgarh

549. Palampur (Himachal)

550. Pataudi Road

551. Phapha Mau

552. Phillaur

553. Phulpur

554. Rudauli

555. Sampla

556. Unchahar

**South Central Railway (22)**

557. Akividu

558. Basar

559. Bhongir

560. Chittoor

561. Cumbum

562. Dr.K.L. Rao Nagar

563. Dwarapudi

564. Gooty

565. Kakinada Port

566. Koduru

567. Mantralayam Road

568. Miryalaguda

569. Nagarsol

570. Narasapur

571. Razampet

572. Sattenpalli

573. Srikalahasti

574. Tadipatri

575. Umri

576. Vejendla

577. Washim

578. Yerraguntla

**South East Central Railway (17)**

579. Amlai

580. Anuppur

581. Balaghat

582. Bishrampur

583. Chindwara

584. Chirimiri

585. Dalli Rajhara Station

586. Howbagh

587. Korba

588. Mandla Fort

589. Manendragarh

590. Nainpur

591. Pandra Road

592. Seoni

593. Shahdol

594. Umaria

595. Wadsa

**South Eastern Railway (36)**

596. Abada

597. Barajamda

598. Barbhum

599. Basta

600. Bero

601. Bhaga

602. Birshibpur

603. Chaibasa

604. Chakulia

605. Chandrakona Road

606. Dasnagar

607. Deulti

608. Digha

609. Garbeta

610. Ghoraghata

611. Haur

612. Jhalida

613. Joychandipahar

614. Kherai

615. Madhukunda

616. Madpur

617. Manoharpur

618. Muradih

619. Muri

620. Namkom

621. Nandai Gajan

622. Narayanpakuria Murail

623. Radhamohanpur



624. Rajghat  
 625. Rajkharswa  
 626. Ramgarh Town  
 627. Ramkanali  
 628. Rupsa  
 629. Shalimar  
 630. Sini  
 631. Soro

**South Western Railway (25)**

632. Adihali  
 633. Ajjampur  
 634. Alnavar  
 635. Bagalkot  
 636. Bangalore East  
 637. Belgaum  
 638. Bellary  
 639. Gadag  
 640. Ghatprabha  
 641. Harihar  
 642. Hindupur  
 643. Hospet  
 644. Hosur  
 645. Krishnarajapuram  
 646. Kuppam  
 647. Londa  
 648. Mandya  
 649. Ranebennur  
 650. Saunshi

651. Sharavanabelagola  
 652. Sri Satyasai Prashanthi Nilayam  
 653. Vasco-Da-Gama  
 654. Whitefield (Bangalore)  
 655. Yelahanka  
 656. Yeshwantpur

**Southern Railway (69)**

657. Ambur  
 658. Anuppampattu  
 659. Atthipattu  
 660. Badagara  
 661. Basin Bridge Junction  
 662. Chalakudi  
 663. Chennai Chetpet  
 664. Chennai Fort  
 665. Chepauk  
 666. Chintaripet  
 667. E-Depot  
 668. Ennore  
 669. Feroke  
 670. Haripad  
 671. Irinjalakuda  
 672. Kadambattur  
 673. Kanhangad  
 674. Kankanadi  
 675. Kanniyakumari  
 676. Kathivakkam  
 677. Kavaripettai

678. Kodaikkanal Road  
679. Kodambakkam  
680. Korattur  
681. Korukkupet  
682. Kulitturai  
683. Light House  
684. Manavur  
685. Mayiladuturai Jn.  
686. Meenambakkam  
687. Mettupalaiyam  
688. Minjur  
689. Moore Market Complex  
690. Nagappattinam  
691. Ottappalam  
692. Palghat Town  
693. Paramakkudi  
694. Parapanangadi  
695. Park Town  
696. Pattambi  
697. Patravakkam  
698. Perambur Carriage Works  
699. Perambur Loco Works  
700. Piravam Road  
701. Ponneri  
702. Quilandi  
703. Ramanathapuram  
704. Rameswaram  
705. Sattur
706. Sevwapet Road  
707. Shertalai  
708. Srirangam  
709. Tambaram Sanitorium  
710. Thirumaylai  
711. Thirunintravur  
712. Tiruchchirappalli Fort  
713. Tirumangalam  
714. Tirupattur  
715. Tirusulam  
716. Tiruvalangadu  
717. Tiruvallikeni  
718. Tiruvottiyur  
719. Tondiarpet  
720. Vaniyambadi  
721. Varkala  
722. Veppambattu  
723. Vriddhachalam Jn.  
724. Vyasarpadi Jeeva  
725. Washermanpet
- West Central Railway (21)**  
726. Ashok Nagar  
727. Bayana Jn.  
728. Bharatpur Jn.  
729. Bhawani Mandi  
730. Dakaniya Talav  
731. Gadarwara  
732. Gangapur City

733. Ganj Basoda

734. Guna

735. Hindaun City

736. Hoshangabad

737. Kareli

738. Maihar

739. Narsinghpur

740. Pipariya

741. Ramganj Mandi

742. Rewa

743. Sanchi

744. Shamgarh

745. Shri Mahabirji

746. Vikramgarh Alot

**Western Railway (60)**

747. Alau

748. Amalner

749. Amalsar

750. Bardoi

751. Barnagar

752. Bhachau

753. Bhilad

754. Botad

755. Chitourgarh

756. Dahanu Road

757. Dahisar

758. Dhrangadhra Jn. BG and MG

759. Fatehabad C

760. Gandhigram

761. Godhra Jn BG and NG

762. Jaora

763. Jhabua

764. Jogeshwari

765. Junagadh Jn.

766. Kach Road

767. Kalol

768. Kelve Road

769. Khambaliya

770. Khardivali

771. Khasaliya

772. Kim BG

773. Kosamba Jn. BG and NG

774. Laxmibai Nagar

775. Lower Parel

776. Mahalakshmi

777. Mahebadabad Kheda Road.

778. Matunga Road

779. Meghnagar

780. Mira Road

781. Mumbai Central Local

782. Naigaon

783. Nalla Sophara

784. Navapur

785. Palghar

786. Patan

787. Rajendra Nagar

788. Sabarmati Jn. MG  
 789. Samakhiali Jn.  
 790. Sanjan  
 791. Saphale  
 792. Sehore  
 793. Shujalpur  
 794. Surendranagar  
 795. Than  
 796. Udvada  
 797. Umergaon  
 798. Una (Gujarat)  
 799. Unjha  
 800. Vaitarna  
 801. Vangaon  
 802. Veraval  
 803. Viramgam Jn. BG and MG  
 804. Virpur  
 805. Vyara  
 806. Mankaner

**Statement-II**

*Railway-wise number of Unreserved Ticketing System locations commissioned upto 31-03-2006*

Railway	Number of Locations
Central	52
East Central	44
East Coast	15
Eastern	58
North Central	03

Railway	Number of Locations
North Eastern	07
North Western	05
Northeast Frontier	13
Northern	96
South Central	100
South East Eastern	23
South Eastern	29
South Western	38
Southern	73
West Central	13
Western	22
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>591</b>

**Food Adulteration Cases**

1246. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of food adulteration cases registered during each of the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) As per the information of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which is responsible for the implementation of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and rules made thereunder, the Statement indicating number of Food adulteration cases during three years, state-wise, is enclosed.

(b) Action is taken by the concerned State/U.T. Government under the provisions of the PFA Act, 1954 and Rules framed thereunder.

**Statement**

Sl. No.	States/UTs	No. of cases found adulterated reported during the years		
		2001	2002	2003
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1273	966	1022
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	12	6	02
3.	Assam	157	117	212
4.	Bihar	690	N.A.	555
5.	Goa	2	09	19
6.	Gujarat	N.A.	N.A.	499
7.	Haryana	370	356	504
8.	Himachal Pradesh	93	62	176
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	292	67	70
10.	Karnataka	302	316	437
11.	Kerala	299	308	408
12.	Madhya Pradesh	497	476	237
13.	Maharashtra	2413	1973	2162
14.	Manipur	03	6	Nil
15.	Meghalaya	13	Nil	3
16.	Mizoram	Nil	Nil	Nil
17.	Nagaland	02	Nil	13
18.	Orissa	161	218	145
19.	Punjab	290	318	360
20.	Rajasthan	595	698	465
21.	Sikkim	04	10	Nil
22.	Tamil Nadu	376	668	Nil

1	2	3	4	5
23.	Tripura	08	14	8
24.	Uttar Pradesh	2361	2773	3171
25.	West Bengal	124	124	87
26.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Nil	Nil	Nil.
27.	Chandigarh	107	74	50
28.	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	5	1	3
29.	Daman and Diu	2	4	Nil
30.	Delhi	392	350	218
31.	Lakshadweep	Nil	Nil	Nil
32.	Pondicherry	12	21	21
33.	Chhattisgarh	77	70	101
34.	Jharkhand	31	N.A.	48
35.	Uttanchal	45	20	32
<b>Total</b>		<b>11008</b>	<b>10025</b>	<b>10928</b>

[Translation]

**Population of OBCs**

1247. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

SHRI K.S. RAO:

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether contradictory figures have come up regarding population of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the country through various reports;

(b) if so, the contents of the reports of the National Sample Survey Organisation for 1999-2000 and that of the Mandal Commission regarding population of OBCs in the country;

(c) the report which has been accepted by the Government for providing reservations to OBCs; and

(d) the reasons for rejecting the other report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Report of the National Backward Classes Commission (Mandal Commission) in 1980 gave an estimate of OBC population as 52% of total population based on 1931 Census. National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) in its sixth quinquennial survey on Employment and Unemployment and Consumer Expenditure in 1999-2000 estimated that the OBC population is 36% of total population. Both the reports are in public domain.

(c) and (d) Reservation to OBCs in Government and public sector employment in 1990 was based on the

Mandal Commission report whereas the NSSO Report pertains to the year 1999-2000.

#### **Medical Tourism**

1248. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

SHRITUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE PATIL:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted any Task Force with a view to promoting India as Health Tourism Destination across the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

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

(d) the other steps contemplated by the Government to promote medical tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) A Task Force, headed by Secretary (Health) with Senior Officials of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Tourism and experts in the medical field has been constituted to assess the opportunities and to recommend action to be taken by the Government and private industry for promoting India as a health tourism destination.

(c) The Sub-Committees on accreditation and price banding constituted by Ministry of Tourism have submitted their reports with the accreditation norms and price banding worked out for identified hospitals and identified specialized medical services. Indian Healthcare Federation, a Non-Governmental Organisation affiliated to the Confederation of Indian Industry, on advice by Government, has prepared a guide on select Indian hospitals of the country, which could be used for health tourism purposes.

(d) The other steps taken by the Government to promote medical tourism include promotion in overseas market through brochure, CDs, films and other publicity materials, introduction of new category of 'M'-Visa for medical treatment purposes to foreign tourists coming to India, specific promotion at various international travel fairs such as World Travel Mart, London and ITB, Berlin etc.

[English]

#### **Impact on Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir**

1249. SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE:

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI B. MAHTAB:

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR:

SHRI MILIND DEORA:

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tourists visited Srinagar during the current year;

(b) whether there has been any adverse impact on tourism in Jammu and Srinagar this year due to terrorist attacks on tourists in the State;

(c) if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the corrective measures being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) As per the report of the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir 3,59,483 tourists including 10,317 foreign tourists have visited the Kashmir Valley up to 26th of July, 2006 during the current year.

(b) and (c) The report also mentions that there has been a slight decline in domestic tourist traffic to the valley as compared to last year. Upto 26th of July 2006 3,49,166 domestic tourists visited the valley this year as compared to 3,65,818 during the same period last year. However, there has been a slight increase in foreign tourists arrival to the valley during the period. Upto 26th of July 2006, 10,317 foreign tourists visited the valley this year as compared to 9,777 during the period last year.

(d) The steps taken by the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir and Security Forces in an endeavor to make the security environment progressively safe for tourists include—deployment of separate tourist police and enforcement wing at Srinagar/Jammu and other tourist places to look after and protect the interests of the tourists; adequate deployment of Security forces/State police with regular patrolling and anti-sabotage checks around the tourist spots and roads leading to such places; permanent security arrangements at the Shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi at Katra and its proximity; arrangement of special security arrangements for pilgrims visiting Shri Amarnath Ji Cave, Pahalgam and Kheer Bhawani; organising special FAM tours of travel trade from Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad to Kashmir from 2nd to 6th August 2006.

#### **Increase in Inflow of Foreign Tourists**

1250. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently formulated any Action Plan to increase the inflow of foreign tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the Action Plan?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and b) During the years 2002 and 2003, Government had prepared 20 Year Perspective Plans for the State/UT Governments with the broad objectives of:

- (i) assessing the existing tourism scenario in the States, like services and infrastructure available, heritage and other socio-cultural assets, natural resources, etc.;
- (ii) reviewing the status of existing development/ investment plans for development of tourism in the States;

(iii) evaluating the existing potential tourist destinations on the basis of inventory of attractions, infrastructure available and volume of tourist traffic, etc.;

(iv) developing sustainable tourism in a time period of 20 years;

(v) giving plans with short term and long term targets, indicating activities to be undertaken by different agencies within a time frame;

(vi) indicating the likely investment on infrastructure development under different heads covering the next 20 years; and

(vii) preparing an action plan for implementation of identified potential development schemes/projects, and for development of infrastructure in conformity with policy objectives.

(c) As development of tourist destinations/circuits in the responsibility of the State/UT Governments, the 20 Year Perspective Plans were forwarded to them for taking up their future tourism projects accordingly. The Ministry of Tourism, however, provides Central Financial Assistance to the States/UTs for development of specific destinations, tourism circuits and organization of festivals based on the discussions organized with all the States and UTs at the beginning of each financial year. During the 10th Five Year Plan, so far more than 900 projects have been approved for the States/UTs and around Rs. 1400 crore have been sanctioned.

#### **Construction of Patan-Bhiladi Railway Line**

1251. SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY:

SHRI HARIN PATHAK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any representations from Government of Gujarat for construction of Patan-Bhiladi railway line on priority basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to take up the said project on priority basis?



THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per available records, a letter had been received in July, 2004 from the Government of Gujarat requesting for gauge conversion of Viramgam-Mahesana-Patan-Bhildi line.

(c) On this project, gauge conversion work has already been completed between Viramgam-Mahesana and gauge conversion between Mahesana-Patan has been taken up. Action has been initiated to defreeze new line work from Patan to Bhildi which had earlier been frozen in view of its low operational priority.

#### **Commemoration of Darjeeling Himalayan Railway**

1252. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the North-East Frontier Railway is planning to commemorate the completion of 125 years of existence of heritage Darjeeling Himalayan Railway;

(b) if so, whether any plan has been chalked out in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) On 23rd August 2006, Darjeeling Himalayan Railway will be completing 125th year of its existence and Northeast Frontier Railway plans to celebrate the occasion in accordance with its historic importance.

At Siliguri Jn. Station of Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier Railway three different gauges viz. Broad Gauge (BG), Metre Gauge (MG) and Narrow Gauge (NG), exist together. It has been planned to run three steam hauled special trains on the three gauges as part of the celebrations. The special trains will run as under:—

BG—From Siliguri Jn. to Chalsa on Alipurduar Division (distance 58 KM, Chalsa is a reserved forest location).

MG—From Siliguri Jn. to Bagdogra (distance 10 KM).

NG—From Siliguri Jn. to Tindharia (distance 30 KM).

It is also planned to hold cultural programmes on this occasion.

#### **Construction of Broad Gauge Railway Line from Jhalukbari to Panikheti**

1253. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the L.C. Jain Committee had made any recommendations to construct new B.G. railway line from Jhalukbari to Panikheti;

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

(c) the action taken by the Railways on the said recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) As per the available records, there has been no such Committee in the recent past.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

#### **Wardha-Nanded Railway Line Project**

1254. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of construction of Wardha-Nanded railway line project; and

(b) the time by which the project is likely to be executed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No project from Wardha-Nanded railway line has been sanctioned.

(b) Does not arise.

#### **Model Villages**

1255. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received proposals for financial assistance from various State Governments for development of model villages for promotion of tourism during the year 2006-07;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Under the scheme of Product/Infrastructure Development for Destination and Circuit of the Ministry of Tourism, funds are sanctioned and released based on the proposals received from the State/UT Government. The Ministry of Tourism has identified 25 villages in consultation and interaction with the State/UT Governments for development as Rural Tourism sites during the year 2006-07. Following projects have been sanctioned during the current year:—

- (i) Kalady, District Ernakula, Kerala
- (ii) Anakkara, District Idukki, Kerala
- (iii) Barpali, District Bargarh, Orissa
- (iv) Haripur, District Khurda, Orissa
- (v) Padmanavpur, District Ganjam, Orissa
- (vi) Kombai, District, Theni, Tamil Nadu
- (vii) Thadyiyankudissai, District Dindigul, Tamil Nadu

#### **Fire in Mumbai High North**

1256. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the High Level Committee set up to look into the circumstances that led to the fire in Mumbai High North has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether the Government has also assessed the total loss of lives and properties due to the fire incident;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to check recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. An Independent Inquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri T.N.R. Rao, former Secretary, MOP and NG has submitted its report which is being examined.

(c) and (d) ONGC has informed that 22 people lost their lives in the MHN incident and as per the estimate of the surveyors/the loss amounts to US \$ 375 Million (Approx.)

(e) ONGC has informed that they have taken the following steps:—

1. After the incident, ONGC has reviewed and drafted a Marine Procedure for Operation of Vessels in Oil Fields within 500 meters of any installation. This procedure has been put in use.
2. Specific check lists and guidelines have been issued for operations during monsoons.
3. Steps have been taken to minimize vessel trips to installations.
4. Riser designs have been reviewed through international consultants M/s Mustang, Houston.

#### **Pricing Model of Petroleum Products**

1257. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to scrutinise the details of pricing model adopted by the Oil Marketing Companies as reported in the *Financial Express* on July 5, 2006;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Rangarajan Committee has given its recommendation on pricing of Petro-products; 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) to (d) Dr. Rangarajan Committee has

submitted its report to the Government on 17-2-2006. Government has accepted the following recommendations of Dr. Rangarajan Committee Report:

- (i) Implementation of principle of trade parity with reduction in customs duty on petrol and diesel from 10% to 7.5%.
- (ii) Permitting autonomous adjustment in prices of sensitive petroleum products by Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) without prior consultation with the Government once every month.
- (iii) Restricting 'in principle', subsidy on PDS Kerosene to BPL families only.

In the context of implementation of principle of trade parity with reduction in customs duty on petrol and diesel, it has been decided to form a group comprising representative of Ministry of Finance, Cost Accounts Branch along with Director, Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) to examine price build-up of petrol and diesel.

#### **Construction of ROBs in West Bengal**

1258. SHRI PRABODH PANDA:

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of railway overbridges (ROBs) taken up in West Bengal;
- (b) whether railway overbridge is being constructed at Midnapore, West Bengal;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the present status thereof alongwith the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) In all there are 41 works of Road Over Bridges sanctioned on cost sharing basis falling in the State of West Bengal. Out of these, construction on 18 works has already been taken up and is at different stages of execution and planning. On 23 works, execution

could not be taken up, in large number of cases, due to State Government having not yet given consent to share 50% cost of work and in few cases either General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) has not been approved or approaches' Estimate has not been furnished by State Government.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A Road over bridge at Midnapore (near Rangamati) is being constructed on cost sharing basis in lieu of level crossing No. KA-7 on southern end of Midnapore, with Railway's share of cost as Rs. 610.82 lakh and State Government's Rs. 742.75 lakh.

(d) Progress on Bridge proper (across tracks) is 60% but State Government has made no progress on approaches work. However, modified General Arrangement Drawing and Combined Estimate have been sanctioned. Railway's portion of work is targeted for completion by 31-8-2006.

#### **Shooting of Films on Heritage Sites**

1259. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government allow the heritage sites located across the country to be used as permanent venues for film shooting;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the revenue earned by the Government on this count during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) As per provision of the Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules, 1959, permission for filming at Centrally Protected monuments or part thereof is given on a payment of Rs. 5000 per monument, per day for exterior filming only with certain terms and conditions. For filming with a cast, Rs. 10,000 is charged as a refundable security deposit. In exceptional cases, where the film is for an educational or publicity of the monuments purpose, permission is given for filming the interior. Video

filming from the exterior of a protected monument (except those specified in the Second Schedule) is permitted on the payment of Rs. 25 provided it is for non-commercial purpose and does not involve any cast, use of any stand or interfere with customary and religious practice and repair work.

(c) The information is being collected from the different Circle Offices in India by the Archeological Survey of India.

#### **Profit/Loss Position of ITDC**

1260. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY:

SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the profit/loss position of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) duringt each of the last three years alongwith the reasons for losses, if any;

(b) whether ITDC proposes to expand its business by opening more duty free shops/outlets;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other steps being taken to improve the profitability of the company?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) ITDC has earned net profit (before tax) during the last three years as per details given below:—

Year	Net Profit (Before Tax) (Rs. in crore)
2003-04	02.86
2004-05	31.16
2005.06 (Prov.)	39.03

(b) and (c) ITDC has participated in the global tender for the operation of Duty Free Shops at ten Airport Authority of India (AAI) controlled airports. ITDC has also

contacted the authorities of the new airports at Bangalore and Hyderabad for the operation of duty free shops.

(d) ITDC has taken following steps to improve the profitability of the company:—

- (i) Intensification of marketing efforts, both at the corporate and unit levels.
- (ii) Ensuring better customer services.
- (iii) Adding new customer facilities/services.
- (iv) Formulation of strategies to identify new client segments.
- (v) Human resource development to improve services standards of the hotels.

#### **Modernisation of Petrol Pumps**

1261. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps modernized by introducing pollution control measures and purified petroleum products in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government proposes to modernise more petrol pumps in the country particularly in Assam during the current year; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The total number of petrol pumps modernized by the public sector Oil Marketing Companies, viz., Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and IBP Company Limited (IBP) during the year 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 and planned for modernization during the current year, i.e. 2006-07 State-wise, in the country including Assam are given in the statement enclosed.

**Statement**

*Details of Retail Outlets Modernised by OMCs during the year 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 and Plans for Modernisation during the current year i.e. 2006-07*

Name of States/UTs	No. of ROs Modernized During			No. of ROs Planned for Modernization during 2006-07
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	160	152	306	259
Assam	5	10	13	23
Bihar	44	40	77	162
Chandigarh	14	23	41	28
Chhattisgarh	46	37	67	70
Delhi	159	188	202	172
Goa	17	12	25	22
Gujarat	281	327	368	313
Haryana	197	199	244	274
Himachal Pradesh	12	12	30	18
Jammu and Kashmir	9	11	22	26
Jharkhand	28	41	93	49
Karnataka	92	82	131	146
Kerala	63	70	159	180
Madhya Pradesh	91	70	176	199
Maharashtra	215	222	355	393
Manipur	0	1	1	1
Meghalaya	0	2	8	8
Nagaland	0	0	2	1
Orissa	54	55	48	94
Pondicherry	3	6	11	8

1	2	3	4	5
Punjab	178	303	244	320
Sikkim	2	0	0	0
Rajasthan	201	194	228	322
Tamil Nadu	154	129	225	198
Uttar Pradesh	428	611	679	467
Uttaranchal	34	48	64	32
West Bengal	70	94	156	187
<b>Total</b>	<b>2557</b>	<b>2939</b>	<b>3975</b>	<b>3972</b>

**Gauge Conversion of Bharuch-Dahej**

1262. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:

SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4117 on May 18, 2006 regarding Bharuch-Dahej Gauge Conversion Project and to state:

(a) whether the formation of Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and financial arrangement has been achieved;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time likely to be taken for executing the project?

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

(b) does not arise.

(c) The project entails an equity participation of Rs. 75 crore. Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) is in the process of formation of Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). Once SPV is in place, debt will be arranged from market.

(d) Two years after the formation of SPV.

*[Translation]***Committee on Airport Infrastructure**

1263. SHRI TUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE PATIL:  
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted any committee on airport infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of meetings held by the said committee during the current year; and

(d) the decisions taken by the said committee and the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Government has constituted a Committee on Infrastructure, which covers airports.

(b) The Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister and includes Ministers of Railways, Finance, Road Transport and Highways, Power, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Communication and IT, Civil Aviation, Chairman and Members of Planning Commission.

(c) and (d) Recently, 12th Meeting of Committee on Infrastructure was held on 8th June 2006 in which the Committee has approved the following:—

(i) Instead of phasing airports in a sequentially manner, development of all the 35 airports may be taken up under the authority and responsibility of Airports Authority of India (AAI). (ii) In selected airports, particularly the larger ones, wholly owned subsidiaries of AAI may be created for development and operations of the respective airports. (iii) For Kolkata and Chennai airports, the issue of how to proceed in this matter was being discussed and would be separately decided by the Prime Minister. (iv) Development of airports in the NE region must be taken up by AAI on a priority basis. After this the financing plan was finalized in which it has been decided that whereas city-side development could be taken up by Public Private Participation (PPP), airport side could be done by AAI. Modalities are now being worked out to take up the works.

[English]

#### Financial Assistance for Development of Sabarimala

1264. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pilgrims visited Sabarimala during each of the last three years;

(b) the financial assistance provided by the Government for the development of Sabarimala during the said period; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to provide adequate facilities to the pilgrims visiting Sabarimala?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Figures with regard to visits to the place of tourist interest/sports are maintained State-wise. The number of tourists who visited Kerala during the last three years is as under:—

#### Tourist Arrivals

Year	Domestic	International
2003	5871228	294621
2004	5972182	345546
2005	5946423	346499

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Tourism provides central financial assistance for development of different tourist places on the basis of consultations with the States/UT Administrations concerned.

Project proposals received, complete in all respect, are appraised on inter-se-priority basis and funds released, subject to availability under the respective heads.

No project proposal for development of Sabarimala has been prioritised for grant of central financial assistance during the current financial year.

However, the Ministry of Tourism had sanctioned a sum of Rs. 104.89 lakh during 1998-99 for construction of Pilgrim Facilitation Centre at Sabarimala. During the 10th Five Year Plan (till 2005-06) projects worth Rs. 9278.92 lakh have been sanctioned for the State of Kerala.

#### Bureaucrats in PSUs

1265. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the bureaucrats are being attracted towards Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and permanently absorbed in these organisations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any scheme to stop the over flow of bureaucrats and encourage the technocrats/specialists in these PSUs; and

(d) if so, the steps the Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV):

(a) and (b) As per the extant Government policy, Government officers are allowed to join posts in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) only on immediate absorption basis. Deputation of Government officers to the posts in CPSEs is not permitted except for (i) the posts of Chief Executives and Regional/Zonal Chiefs of CPSEs who require continuous liaison and coordination with the State Governments and where expertise acquired

in the State Government is needed for organisational efficiency (ii) the posts of Chief Vigilance Officers and (iii) the posts of Chief Security Officers and others in security set up of CPSEs subject to certain conditions.

(c) and (d) Appointment to the posts at Board level in CPSEs is done on the basis of recommendations of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) depending on the job requirement of each post. As regards below Board level posts, the concerned Board of Directors of the CPSE is competent to take decision in matters related to appointments depending upon the specific requirement of the CPSE.

The Government have recently reviewed the deputation policy for CPSEs and reiterated that existing ban on deputation to posts in CPSEs shall continue to be strictly implemented subject to the exceptions mentioned above. The criteria for exemption of any particular category of posts from the 'Rule of immediate absorption' should be non-availability of suitable persons for particular posts. All attempts should be made to fill up the post on a regular basis. The option for filling up of a post on deputation should be used only as an exception when all other avenues have been exhausted.

#### **Wastage of Agriculture Produce**

1266. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether wastage of agriculture produce is massive in the country;

(b) if so, the details of processing level in respect of various products in the country;

(c) the average growth rate of FDI during each of the last three years; and

(d) the steps aken by the Government to curtail wastage of agriculture produce in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) and (b) Wastage of the agricultural produce is estimated to be about Rs. 58000 crore per annum occurring at various stages. The level of processing is estimated at 2.20% in Fruits and vegetables, 35% in

Milk and Milk products, 21% in Buffalo Meat, 6% in Poultry and 8% in Marine Products.

(c) The FDI inflow in Food Processing sector during last 3 years are as under:—

Year	Amount (Rs. crore)
2003-04	511
2004-05	174
2005-06	183

(d) Government has formulated and implemented several Plan Schemes to provide financial assistance for the establishment and modernization of food processing units, creation of infrastructure, support and R and D, human resource development besides other promotional measures to encourage development of food processing industries. In order to give boost to growth of FPI sector the Government has allowed in 2004-05, under Income Tax Act, a deduction of 100% of profit for five years and 25% of profits for the next five years in case of new agro processing industries set up to process, preserve and package fruits and vegetables. Excise duty of 16% on dairy machinery has been fully waived for promotion of dairy processing industries. Excise duty on meat, poultry and fish products has been reduced from 16% to 8%. Excise duty on food grade hexane used in edible oil industry has been reduced from 32% to 16%. In the Budget of 2005-06 excise duty of Rs. 1.00 per kg on refined edible oil and Rs. 1.25 per kg on vanaspati was abolished. Customs duty on refrigerated vans was reduced from 20% to 10%. In the Budget of 2006-07, custom duty on packaging machines has been reduced from 15 per cent to 5 per cent, excise duty on condensed milk, ice cream, preparations of meat, fish and poultry, pectins, pasta and yeast has been fully exempted, excise duty on ready-to-eat packaged foods and instant food mixes, like dosa and idli mixes has been reduced from 16 per cent to 8 per cent, excise duty on aerated drinks has been reduced from 24 per cent to 16 per cent and excise duty on packaging paper has been reduced from 16 per cent to 12 per cent. Taxation has been lowered with a view to encourage the growth of Food Processing industries.



**Special Force for Tackling  
Naxalite Activities**

1267. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Army proposes to create a special force from the ex-servicemen trained in the art of handling explosives to tackle the menace of violence by Naxalites;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be created and deployed in the affected areas?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, naxalism being an internal security problem, is being tackled by the State Governments and the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Union Government through deployment of State Police and Central Para Military Forces. The Army is extending assistance to the affected States in capacity building by way of providing training to the Military Forces and State Police personnel, in handling anti-Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and by setting up training institutions and re-employment of ex-Army personnel to such institutes.

**Infrastructure for Coast Guards**

1268. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any steps to improve the infrastructure of Coast Guards in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Indian Navy and Cochin Port Trust are planning to set up a jetty at Vallarpadom; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the Coast Guard Development Plan 2002-2007, a sum of Rs. 199.05 crore has been allocated for the development of infrastructure.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal to set up a jetty at Vallarpadom by the Indian Navy and Cochin Port Trust.

**Shortage of Running Staff**

1269. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of running staff recruited during each of the last three years, Zone-wise;

(b) whether the Railways are facing acute shortage of running staff for its new services;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A statement is enclosed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Occurance and filling up of vacancies is a continuous process and standing procedure exists to fill up the vacancies as quickly as possible by holding selections/suitability at regular intervals as per schedule laid down for the purpose.

**Statement**

Zone (Railway)	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
	Asstt. Loco Pilot	Goods Guard	Asstt. Loco Pilot	Goods Guard	Asstt. Loco Pilot	Goods Guard
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Central	524	342	259	8	4	195

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Eastern	106	0	0	0	723	203
Northern	2	0	837	71	853	45
North Eastern	163	67	43	2	292	9
Northeast Frontier	365	23	0	0	98	25
Southern	729	17	206	33	457	20
South Central	854	9	2	0	951	288
South Eastern	1506	4	15	76	649	126
Western	0	0	262	0	335	113
East Central	0	0	18	15	574	134
East Coast	323	28	95	61	68	52
North Central	134	59	169	3	559	0
North Western	0	0	313	0	325	103
South East Central	467	54	181	2	598	91
South Western	67	0	353	40	117	0
West Central	282	137	149	4	500	49
Metro	0	0	0	0	10	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5072</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>2902</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>7113</b>	<b>1453</b>

[Translation]

**Non-Working of Televisions at Stations**

1270. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the televisions installed at various stations to apprise the passengers for arrival and departure of trains are not in working condition giving a lot of difficulties to the passengers;

(b) if so; the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures taken by the Railways to get the

said televisions in working condition in view of difficulties being faced by the passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Televisions for apprising the passengers of arrival and departure of trains have been provided at some stations and these are normally in working order. Train Indication Boards are generally being used for this purpose. These are maintained regularly and attended to immediately in case of any malfunctioning of the system.

(c) Railways have further been instructed to ensure proper maintenance of such systems.

[English]

**Delinking of Wine and Beer from  
Hard Liquor**

1271. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Joint Working Group set up by the Government has recommended delinking of wine and beer from hard liquor for excise policy and taxation purposes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) The action taken by the Government on the said recommendation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) A draft Model Excise Act for alcoholic beverages and alcohol was prepared by an Inter-Ministerial Group including representatives from States and later circulated to various States/UTs. Alcoholic beverages sector is a State subject and accordingly, States/UTs frame their own policies and excise regime. The issue of delinking wine and beer from hard liquor is presently under consideration of Government.

**Oil Exploration Contracts in Sri Lanka**

1272. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:  
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

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

(a) whether Sri Lanka has invited Indian Oil Companies to explore oil along the coastal areas of Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any agreement has been entered into with Sri Lanka in that 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) As a follow up to a shared desire

between India and Sri Lanka to collaborate in E and P activities in Sri Lanka, and as a sequel to the visit of the then Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India to Colombo in May, 2003, a high level delegation from ONGC visited Sri Lanka in December, 2003 for discussions. It was considered that in view of the work already carried out by ONGC in the Cauvery basin, where significant reserves have been established, further exploration in the same area on the Sri Lankan side could be productive on account of geological similarity. It was, therefore, proposed that ONGC/OVL should submit a suitable proposal for acquiring the blocks in the Gulf of Mannar region in the western offshore of Sri Lanka. OVL has purchased seismic data from M/s. TGS NOPEC for Gulf of Mannar to examine the feasibility of their participation in E and P activities in the area.

GAIL (India) Limited had also approached the Sri Lankan Government in October 2005 with the objective of securing a few E and P blocks through the negotiation route. Subsequently, a GAIL team visited Colombo on 26-27 October 2005 and held discussions with the Government of Sri Lanka. GAIL was advised to examine the seismic data and inform the Board of Investments of Sri Lanka about blocks of interest to it. Regarding award of E and P blocks on nomination basis, GAIL has reported that the Sri Lankan side has informed that a bilateral MoU/Protocol would be entered between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka for awarding 2 or 3 blocks to Indian parties.

**Military Ties with Oman**

1273. SHRI K.J.S.P. REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has expressed its keenness to improve the military ties with Oman;

(b) if so, whether the talks have been held with them on military issues; and

(c) if so, the details of issues discussed and decision arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The ties between India and Sultanate of Oman are historic and are marked by friendship and goodwill. Bilateral ties have been

strengthened considerably in the recent times and the relationship is multifaceted. An important aspect of the relationship is defence cooperation, which is signified by exchange of high level visits, joint exercises between the Navies of the two countries and ship visits. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of military cooperation between India and Oman has been signed envisaging the areas of future defence cooperation. The India-Oman Joint Military Cooperation Committee (JMCC) which was constituted under the provisions of the MoU held its first meeting in India on 16-5-2006. During the meeting, both sides discussed issues of mutual interest.

*[Translation]*

#### **Vending of Ice Cream at Stations**

1274. SHRIMATI NEETA PATERIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has obtained permission for vending ice cream at all the stations of Jabalpur zone;

(b) if so, the brand of the ice cream which has been permitted for vending;

(c) whether the licenced vendors are selling sub-standard ice cream to the passengers;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto;

(e) whether use of plastic cups is banned in Railways;

(f) if so, the reasons for selling this fake braned of ice cream in plastic cups in place of paper cups;

(g) whether vending of ice candy in place of ice cream is against the rules; and

(h) if so, the action being taken by the Railways in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been authorized to manage all catering/vending activities including ice creams stalls at all A, B and C category stations of Indian Railways. However, it is not mandatory to sell ice cream at all stations and such units are awarded based on the demand of the product.

(b) IRCTC has awarded licence for selling reputed brand of ice cream on West Central Railway.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (h) As per extant guidelines use of plastic items such as pouches, cups etc. has to be restricted to the bare minimum and ice cream manufacturing companies have to explore the possibility of supply of ice cream and its products in bio-degradable paper cups or other possible alternative, which is eco-friendly. Sale of ice candy is not permitted.

*[English]*

#### **Revival of TCIL**

1275. SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering any proposal to revive Tyre Corporation of India Limited (TCIL);

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) the reaction of the Finance Ministry to the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) The Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) has recommended financial and capital restructuring of Tyre Corporation of India Limited (TCIL). the Board has also recommended revival of the company through joint venture by locating a strategic partner who will bring new technology. Based on the recommendations of the BRPSE, a revival proposal has been prepared for soliciting the approval of the competent authority.

#### **Export of Processed Food**

1276. SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether export of processed food is far below expected targets;

(b) if so, the targets vis-a-vis actuals during each of the last three years;

(c) the reasons for less exports than the targets, if any; and

(d) the steps being taken to strengthen Research and Development (R and D) in the food processing sector in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) The export of processed foods excluding the marine products in the year 2005-2006 was Rs. 8728 crores against a target of Rs. 6670 crores. The export of marine products in the year 2005-2006 was 1644 million dollars against a target of 1450 million dollars.

(d) Ministry of Food Processing Industries, in order to promote Research and Development (R and D) in the food processing sector, provides grant-in-aid upto 100% of the capital cost of laboratories and testing centres to Central/State Government organizations/IITs/Universities and 33% of the capital cost for general areas and 50% of the capital cost for difficult areas to all other implementing agencies. Such assistance has been given to 56 institutions till date.

#### **Subsidized Kerosene to Fishermen**

1277. DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether severe hardship is being faced by the coastal fishermen due to curtailment in kerosene supply and increase in its price;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government proposes to make separate allocation of kerosene for the fishermen;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the measures taken by the Government to fulfill the requirement of fishermen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (e) The Government of India allocates Kerosene to the States/Union Territories (UTs) under the Public Distribution System (PDS) for the purpose of cooking and illumination only. There is no separate allocation for the fisheries sector to any State/UT. Further distribution within the State/UT is handled by the concerned State Government/UT Administration.

With a view to assessing the genuine demand requirement of kerosene in different State/UTs, in December 2004 the Government commissioned a study of the subject through the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER). NCAER submitted their report in October, 2005. In their report, NCAER have noted that PDS kerosene is supplied for fishing in some coastal States and have inter alia recommended that the kerosene requirement for fishing may be supplied at non-PDS price. The recommendations of the NCAER have been brought to the notice of State Governments.

The price of PDS kerosene has not been increased since April, 2002. As of 17-07-06, the public sector oil marketing companies had overall Kerosene stocks at their supply locations in various State sufficient to meet 23 days requirement on all India basis. In addition to the PDS Kerosene, oil companies sell free sale Kerosene at market price as per the requirements. The fishermen may like to procure their requirements at market price.

[Translation]

#### **Extension of HBJ Pipeline**

1278. SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV:

DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to extend Hazira-Bijaipur-Jagdishpur (HBJ) pipeline upto Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) GAIL has planned to lay natural gas pipeline

from Jagdishpur in Uttar Pradesh to Haldia in West Bengal. This pipeline is proposed to be routed through Bihar.

(b) and (c) The Detailed Feasibility Report of this pipeline has been prepared. The length of pipeline is about 1450 Kms. The project implementation would be subject to firming up of the gas supply source.

#### **Extension of Civil Area in Mhow Cantonment**

1279. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending with the Government for extending the civil area in view of the growing population in the Mhow Cantonment area; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A proposal for extension of civil area from 240.60 acres to 664.139 acres was recommended by Cantonment Board, Mhow vide resolution dated 30-8-2000. However, Local Military Authority had indicated that they would not be able to spare proposed land as they are already short of land for requirements of Army. Subsequently, the Cantonment Board, Mhow reversed its decision of extension of civil area vide resolution number 20 dated 31-12-2005.

#### **Development of Remote Control Engine**

1280. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA:

DR. K. DHANARAJU:

SHRI SHISHUPAL PATLE:

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway Engineers have developed a remote control engine;

(b) if so, whether any trial of this engine has been conducted;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the further action taken/proposed to be taken in the matter?

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

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

*[English]*

#### **North India Tourism Council**

1281. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up "North India Tourism Council" to address the issues concerning tourism in the Northern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) As a Nodal Ministry, Ministry of Tourism addresses the issues concerning tourism with the concerned States/UTs and concerned Ministries and Departments. At present there is no separate proposal to set up "North India Tourism Council" to address the issues concerning tourism in the Northern Region.

#### **National Tourist Development Board**

1282. SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR:

SHRI DEEPENDER SINGH HOODA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any decision regarding constitution of National Tourist Development Board;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be constituted; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Tourism is an amalgam of various activities like accommodation, food and beverages, entertainment services, transportation (railways, roadways, civil aviation, waterways), taxes, etc. which fall within the jurisdiction of different Ministries or State Governments. As such, pros and cons of setting up of a National Tourism Board vis-a-vis the existing system need detailed examination.

[Translation]

#### **Purchase of Bofors Guns**

1283. SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Army has made any demand for Bofors guns;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to purchase Bofors guns again;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the stage at which the matter stands?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) A proposal for the acquisition of 155 mm towed guns is presently being processed in terms of the Defence Procurement Procedure-2005. At this stage no decision in this regard has been arrived at.

#### **International Flights from Hyderabad Airport**

1284. SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the International air services being operated to and from Hyderabad airport at present;

(b) whether the Government proposes to start some more International air services from Hyderabad; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) At present, 9 foreign airlines viz. Emirates (UAE), Lufthansa German Airlines (Germany), Malaysia Airlines (Malaysia), Qatar Airways (Qatar), Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudi Arabia), Singapore Airlines (Singapore), Sri Lankan Airlines (Sri Lanka), KLM (Netherlands) and Oman Air (Oman) are providing international connectivity from their respective countries to/from Hyderabad. So far as Indian scheduled carriers are concerned, they are providing international connectivity to/from Hyderabad to 9 foreign countries viz. UK, USA, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, UAE, Singapore and Thailand.

(b) and (c) The Government has granted Hyderabad as point of call to 15 foreign countries. However, actual operation of any airlines to/from any particular point is always guided by its commercial judgement.

[English]

#### **Disbursement of Pension to Ex-servicemen**

1285. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is aware that the Government of West Bengal has discontinued disbursing pension to ex-servicemen from the Government Treasuries and that ex-servicemen particularly in North Bengal area have not received their pensions for the last four to five months;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether the current procedure of disbursing pension has resulted in abnormal delay and extreme hardship to the ex-servicemen; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to resolve this issue promptly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Directorate of Treasuries, Government of West Bengal has intimated that Government of West Bengal has not

discontinued disbursement of pension to ex-servicemen from the Government Treasuries. No complaint from any pensioner from North Bengal area regarding non-receipt of pension for the last 4-5 months has been received.

(c) and (d) The current procedure for disbursement of pension to defence pensioners provides for crediting the amount of monthly pension on last working day of the month. Any grievances in pension matters are addressed expeditiously.

[Translation]

#### Investigation into Sinking of INS-Prahar

1286. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has investigated the incident of sinking of Indian Warship INS-Prahar after meeting with an accident on April 21, 2006 off the Goa Coast;

(b) if so, the outcome of the investigation; and

(c) the extent of loss suffered due to sinking of said warship?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A Board of Inquiry (BOI) was constituted on 22nd April, 2006 to investigate into the circumstances leading to the sinking of INS Prahar off

the coast of Goa. The BOI report is presently under examination.

(c) There was no loss of life in the accident. However, it is estimated that the sinking of ship caused a loss of approximately Rs. 160.45 crore.

[English]

#### Railway Projects in Karnataka

1287. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:  
SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of on-going Railway projects in Karnataka;

(b) the amount spent so far on each project;

(c) the amount earmarked for each of the project during the last three years and the current year; and

(d) the progress of each on-going project as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The details of ongoing railway projects falling fully/partly in the State of Karnataka, expenditure incurred upto March, 2006, expenditure incurred in the last 3 years, outlay provided during 2006-07 and their status is as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Project	Anticipated Cost	Expenditure upto March, 2006	Expenditure in the last three years	Outlay 2006-07	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>New Line</b>						
1.	Gulbarga-Bidar	369.7	33.46	28.1	10	Land acquisition is in progress. Earthwork and minor bridges have been taken up in Khanapur-Nadagaon (32 Kms) section.
2.	Gadwal-Raichur	108.91	22.37	18.13	20	Land acquisition, earthwork, bridge work have been taken up.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Munirabad-Mehbubnagar	497.47	31.9	17.05	5	Yeramaras-Yadalapur (14.5 Kms) section completed. On Yadalapur to Mehbubnagar (Devarkadra) (65 Kms) section, earthwork and bridge work have been taken up.
4.	Kottur-Harihar via Harpanahali	135.55	17.94	15.56	34.92	This work is in cost sharing with Karnataka Government. Earthwork and bridge work have been taken up.
5.	Kadur-Chickmagalur-Sakleshpur	274.29	44.64	27.35	10	Earthwork and bridge work have been taken up in Kadur-Chickmagalur section.
6.	Hassan-Bangalore	412.91	190.02	106.51	31	Hassan-Shravanbelagola (42 Kms) has been completed. Earthworks and bridge works on Bangalore-Neelamangala and land acquisition on Shravanbelagola-Neelamangala have been taken up.
7.	Bangalore-Satyamangalam	901.62	0.28	0.06	0.01	Final Location Survey has been completed except in 57 Kms in Reserve Forest Area.
8.	Hubli-Ankola	997.58	60.81	23.64	10	Earthwork and bridge works have been taken up on Hubli-Kirvatti section. Land acquisition for balance land and diversion of forest land has also been taken up.
<b>Gauge Conversion</b>						
9.	Solapur (Hotgi)-Gadag	342.7	291.6	128.82	20	Work on Solapur-Bijapur-Basawana Bagewadi (155 Kms) has been completed and Basavana Bagewadi-Bagalkot is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
10.	Mysore-Chamarajanagar (Ph-I) with extension to Mettupalayam	606.58	38.09	37.47	45	Work on Mysore-Chamarajanagar is targeted for completion during 2006-07. Updating of Survey report for balance length has also been taken up.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	Kolar-Chickballapur	99.42	0	0	5	New work included in the Budget 2006-07.
12.	Shimoga-Talguppa (Bangalore-Hubli and Birur-Shimoga)	441.26	401.55	4.79	22.6	Work on main line from Bangalore-Hubli and Birur-Shimoga has already been completed and work on Shimoga-Talguppa is being expedited.
<b>Doubling</b>						
13.	Bangalore-Kengeri with Electrification	26.45	2.66	1.96	5	This work is in cost sharing basis with Karnataka Government and targeted for completion during 2006-07.
14.	Kengeri- Ramnagaram	106.96	19.88	19.58	5	This work is in cost sharing basis with Karnataka Government and Bidadi section is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
15.	Yeshwantpur- Tumkur	98.47	84.31	75.33	11	This work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.
16.	Bangalore- Whitefield- Bangalore City- Krishnarajpuram	85	0.026	0.015	0.01	Work would be taken up after obtaining necessary clearances.
17.	Hospet-Gantakal	350.21	160.74	103.88	60	Work on Guntakal-Tornagaluru has already been completed and Tornagaluru-Hospet is in advance stage of completion.
<b>Railway Electrification</b>						
18.	Lingampalli-Wadi	94.93	0	0	5	New work included in the Budget 2006-07.
19.	Bangalore- Chennasandra loop	21.3	1.36	1.36	11	This work is targeted for completion during 2006-07.

**Steam Locomotives**

1288. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to run

steam locomotives on the Delhi-Agra-Jaipur route to attract more domestic and foreign tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be started; and

(c) the details of other routes identified for running steam locomotives?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Indian Railways run steam trains on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR), Kalka-Shimla Railway (KSR), Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR) and the Fairy Queen, a steam heritage train, on Delhi-Alwar Section.

Apart from the above, no other routes have presently been identified.

#### **New ITDC Hotels**

1289. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) has any proposal to set up new hotels and also to renovate the existing hotels in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the renovation plan would be taken up and the expected time of its completion?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Government has not received any proposal from ITDC regarding setting up of new hotels. However, the renovation of existing hotels of ITDC is an ongoing process.

#### **Uniform Policy for Admission in Minority Institutions**

1290. SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPAPARAI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has any proposal to frame uniform policy for admissions in minority institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government has any proposal

to grant statutory powers to State Minority Commissions to enable it to function like a judicial body; and

(d) if so, the details of proposal received from the State Governments in this regard and the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The matter of setting up State Minority Commissions falls within the jurisdiction of the State Governments. They have been requested to take appropriate action in accordance with the recommendations of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) for setting up State Minorities commissions and granting them statutory status.

#### **Force Level in Navy**

1291. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the force level in the Navy has been declining over the years;

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

(c) the corrective measures taken/being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The force level of Indian Navy is adequate to meet the security requirements of the nation. The force levels are continuously reviewed in the light of threat perceptions and technological advancements. Necessary action is taken to maintain effective deterrent and operational force levels.

#### **Abandoned Airports in Gujarat**

1292. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of abandoned airports in Gujarat;

(b) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the Government of Gujarat to hand over

abandoned airports to the State Government for the use of Government institutes; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Only one airport at Deesa in Gujarat owned by AAI is presently non-operational.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

#### **Renaming of Nagpur Airport**

1293. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to rename the Nagpur Airport in the name of Baba Saheb Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Nagpur Airport was named as "Dr. Ambedkar International Airport" on 5th May 2005. Renaming of Airport as Baba Saheb Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar would require approval of Cabinet, as is the procedure.

[English]

#### **Construction of ROB in Dankuni in Eastern Railways**

1294. SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of construction of Road over Bridge (ROB) in Dankuni in the Eastern Railways; and

(b) the amount spent on the projects so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Combined General

Arrangement Drawing (GAD) and Railway's GAD of Road over bridge (ROB) proper have been approved. Estimate has been sent to State Government for approval. Tenders were opened but had to be cancelled due to non-sanction of estimate and refusal of tenderers to extend their validity. Fresh tenders have been opened. State Government has indicated that they will be able to acquire land for temporary diversion of roads only by January 2007. The work will be started thereafter.

(b) Nil.

#### **Repairing of Platforms**

1295. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether thousands of passengers daily board trains from Ballabgarh, New Industrial Town and Old Station located in Faridabad district;

(b) if so, whether platforms of these stations are in bad conditions as these have not been repaired for the last so many years resulting in stamped frequently as the trains stop there only for a very short time; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to repair the platforms and also to improve the facilities at these Stations?

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

(b) and (c) Regular repairs/maintenance of platform surfaces at these stations are carried out as and when required. Further, facilities provided at these stations are as under:—

(i) Ballabgarh—Circulating area has been improved by providing asphalt. Platform No. 2 has been provided with extra Platform shelters of 160 square metre (sqm.). Waiting Hall has been provided with Kota stone (66 sqm.). Extension of high level Platform provided to accommodate 24/26 coach trains.

(ii) Faridabad New Town—Repairs to Platform surface has been done.

(iii) Faridabad Old station—Circulating area has

been improved by providing asphalt. Extra facilities for disabled persons have been provided. Extra toilet provided at Platform No. 1. Platform shelter (480 sqm.) has been provided at Platform No. 4. Seating benches have been provided.

#### **Light Combat Aircraft**

1296. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether deadline to Fly Light Combat (LCA) by Indian Air Force has further been delayed as reported in the *Times of India*, dated July 17, 2006;

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

(c) the details of project cost escalated due to such delay; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to expedite the induction of LCA in IAF?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The LCA Programme has encountered time overrun with respect to the estimated time frame proposed for Operational Clearance. Initial Operational Clearance (IOC) and Final Operational Clearance (FOC) of LCA is expected to be completed by 2008 and 2010, respectively. Time overrun is encountered because of time taken to overcome technological complexities, Foreign Exchange crunch in 1991, revised systems requirement by IAF and export restriction by USA.

(c) Full Scale Engineering Development (FSED) Phase-I was Rs. 2188 crore which has been completed after meeting all objectives. The FSED Phase-II cost is Rs. 3301 crore which includes development of single seater and trainer aircraft.

(d) Order by IAF and concurrent production by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is taken up through FSED Phase-II Programme.

#### **Rate of Commission on Petrol and Diesel**

1297. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether dealers commission of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies petrol pumps is fixed on the average sales of 2424 kls per annum;

(b) if so, the number of petrol pumps on OMCs are selling less than 2424 kls petrol and HSD State-wise;

(c) whether most of the petrol pumps have been converted into low selling category due to commissioning of large number of petrol pumps only on one location by OMCs; and

(d) if so, the efforts made by the Government to make the petrol pumps economically viable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Based on the Directors' Committee Report the dealers' commission of public sector oil marketing companies' (OMCs) petrol pumps have been fixed on an average MS/HSD combined sale of 170 KL per month which works out to 2040 KL per annum.

(b) The details of State-wise number of petrol pumps of PSU OMCs selling less than 2040 KL petrol and HSD per annum are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) It has come to the notice of the Government that while the OMCs have expanded their Retail Outlet (ROs) network in a big way after dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism effective 1-4-2002, adequate attention has not been paid by them to improving the institutional and technological mechanisms, resulting in not only reduction in their average throughput per RO but also complaints of malpractices. The Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas (2005-06) (Fourteenth Lok Sabha), has recommended constitution of an independent expert team to look into the issues and suggest corrective measures to improve the situation. Accepting this recommendation of the said Committee, the Government asked Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) to engage an independent agency for conducting a study of the ROs of the public sector OMCs. It has been decided that the study may be completed within a period of two months from the date of commissioning. In accordance with this decision of the Government, IOC, on behalf of all the OMCs, has since entrusted the job of study of the ROs to the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

**Statement**

*State-wise number of Retail Outlets of PSU OMCs having Petrol and HSD Sales less than 2040 KL per Annum*

States	Number of ROs
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	1880
Arunachal Pradesh	22
Assam	395
Bihar	978
Chhattisgarh	179
Delhi	53
Goa	64
Gujarat	1222
Haryana	664
Himachal Pradesh	117
Jammu and Kashmir	218
Jharkhand	363
Karnataka	1148
Kerala	1014
Madhya Pradesh	939
Maharashtra	1988
Manipur	39
Meghalaya	27
Mizoram	0
Nagaland	29
Orissa	494
Punjab	1560
Rajasthan	1272

1	2
Sikkim	18
Tamil Nadu	1821
Tripura	21
Uttaranchal	386
Uttar Pradesh	2768
West Bengal	1111
<b>Union Territories</b>	
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	13
Chandigarh	196
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1
Daman and Diu	4
Lakshadweep	0
Pondicherry	18
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21022</b>

**Blacklisted Companies/Suppliers**

1298. SHRI K.S. RAO:

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has blacklisted a number of companies/suppliers engaged in supply of equipments and other items for Defence Forces including Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO);

(b) if so, the details of those companies/suppliers alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) the action taken by the Government against such companies/suppliers;

(d) whether the mega surveillance project has

suffered following detection of fraud in supply of equipments for this project for developing a system for tracking hostile airborne targets;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the alternative arrangements being made by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) As per available reports there are more than 110 Companies/Suppliers which were banned by various organizations under Ministry of Defence for various reasons including non fulfillment of contractual obligations.

(c) After banning of Companies/Suppliers, normally no contracts are signed with them during the ban period.

(d) to (f) In a project assigned to ECIL as prime production agency, delivery of some of the subsystems, which were to be part of the main system, could not be materialized due to issuing of a directive to cease any dealings with a firm who was to procure the subsystem. It is likely to affect the progress of the project. It will not be possible to make an exact assessment of delay. However, all efforts will be made to keep it to the minimum. The alternative mechanisms are being evolved for meeting the technical requirements, and objectives of the project.

#### **Unauthorised Establishment of Army School**

1299. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that the Station Commander, Varanasi re-appropriated two Government buildings in August, 2001 for unauthorisedly opening an Army School under the aegis of Army Welfare Education Society (AWES) and also allowed construction of a building on A-1 defence land;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

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

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) A Court of Inquiry was ordered by the army authorities to ascertain the facts. The inquiry reports has been recently received and is under examination.

*[Translation]*

#### **Rules for Appointment on Deputation in CPSEs**

1300. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

SHRI TUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE PATIL:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the existing for appointment on deputation basis in the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs);

(b) whether the working of the CPSEs has been adversely affected due to appointment on deputation made under these rules; and

(c) if so, the changes proposed to be made in these rules to overcome the shortcomings therein?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV):

(a) to (c) The Government has revised the policy of deputation to Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) recently according to which Government officers are not permitted to join posts in CPSEs on Deputation basis. Government officers are allowed to join posts in CPSEs only on immediate absorption basis. However, deputation is permitted in certain cases like Chief Executives and Regional/Zonal Chiefs of CPSEs who require continuous liaison and coordination with the State Governments and where expertise acquired in the State Government is needed for organizational efficiency. The posts of Chief Vigilance Officers are exempted from the rule of immediate absorption. Posts of Chief Security Officers and others in security set up of CPSEs are also exempted from the rule of immediate absorption subject to certain conditions. The policy stresses on the point that the criteria

for exemption of any particular category of post from the rule of immediate absorption should be non-availability of suitable persons. The option for filling up a post on deputation should be used as an exception when all other avenues have been exhausted.

*[English]*

#### **Security Checks/Frisking at Airports**

1301. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:  
SHRI DHANUSKODI R. ATHITHAN:  
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to lack of managerial and technical skills, passengers are facing a lot of inconvenience at various national and international airports during the security checks/frisking;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether due to time consuming in security checks/frisking, many flights get delayed for hours;

(d) if so, the estimated loss being incurred by the public sector airlines;

(e) whether the Government has taken any steps to find out a way of increasing security without inconveniencing passengers; and

(f) if, so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) There is no delay at airports specifically due to security reasons. However, on occasions, delays could occur particularly after issue of red alert when extra precautionary measures are instituted. Immediate action is taken to rectify the situation and remove the cause for delay. Training courses for staff are also organised so that passengers are not put to inconvenience.

(d) As delays attributable solely to security are negligible no loss has been incurred by public sector airlines on this account.

(e) and (f) The Government has taken certain steps

like deployment of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs) at major airports, Sky Marshals on Indian air carriers, installation of Closed Circuit Televisions (CCTVs) etc. to strengthen security arrangements at the airports and minimise the inconvenience to passengers.

#### **Supply of Gas to Pipavav Power Plant**

1302. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government had given any commitment to the Government of Gujarat for the Pipavav Power Project from Tapti Gas fields;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government has now advised the State Government to approach Tapti JV for a gas tie up at a mutually negotiated price;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether some Members of Parliament have submitted any Memorandum to the Government in March, 2006 in this regard; and

(e) if so, the final outcome in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) On the request of the State Government of Gujarat, an 'in principle' allocation of natural gas to the extent of 2.25 MMSCMD was made in June 2000 for the 650 MW gas based power project proposed to be set up at Pipavav in Gujarat. This allocation was effective from 2003 and subject to the condition that the Management Committee of the Tapti Field take the investment decision for the additional development of the field. The development plan for the production of additional gas from the mid and south Tapti fields has been approved by the Management Committee of the field. The plan is currently under implementation and additional production is likely from mid 2007. PMT JV has been allowed to market their gas at market-related prices. The Pipavav project developers may like to tie-up gas from the projected additional production of PMT JV at market-related price.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) At present, there is no increase in gas production



by PMT JV. The additional gas from Tapti Fields is likely to be produced from mid 2007. The Pipavav project developers may like to get in touch with PMT JV to tie-up their requirements at mutually agreeable terms and conditions.

#### **Extension of Freight Corridor Project**

1303. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any representation regarding extension of freight corridor project from Sonannagar to Amritsar;

(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) Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab had represented for extension of Dedicated Freight Corridor from Delhi to Amritsar in September 2005. The Dedicated Freight Corridor on Eastern route will originate from Ludhiana in Punjab. Both the Eastern and Western Corridors will serve the State of Punjab either directly or through feeder routes.

#### **Setting Up of Stress Counselling in Defence**

1304. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to strengthen the Defence-stress counselling set up, in view of the increasing number of suicide, suicide-attempts and cross-shooting amongst the Defence personnel; and

(b) if so, the details of the stress-relieving set up at present and the contemplated augmentation plan?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) There is no increasing trend of suicide/suicide attempts and cross-shooting cases in the Defence forces. The causes of some suicide incidents in the Defence forces are mostly related to personal, medical or family problems. A system of educating and counselling on stress related issues already exists in the Defence forces. This includes increased formal and informal interaction between senior and junior officers; strengthening

time tested reporting and feedback system in the unit; using services of psychiatrists and counsellors to conduct lectures/presentations and educate officers/personnel; identifying personnel under stress and carrying out psychological conditioning and counselling of identified individuals. Officers and other personnel in the Services have been sensitized on the subject. Two Psychiatric centres in the Northern and Eastern Commands have been augmented by posting additional Psychiatrists.

#### **Running of Train Service through Naxalite Affected Areas**

1305. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to discontinue running of trains through Naxalite affected areas;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Governments are not providing adequate security to trains running through Naxalite affected areas;

(d) if so, whether any discussions with the State Government have been held in this regard;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the further plans of the Railways to run trains through Naxalite affected areas?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) 'Policing' being a State subject, prevention of crime, registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of law and order in the Railway premises as well as on running trains are the statutory responsibility of the State Police. The State Police have a separate wing called the Government Railway Police (GRP) for dealing with all matters relating to Law and Order on the Railway and as such, Ministry of Railways has to depend on them for controlling the crime over Indian Railways.

Railways have taken the following measures through

the Railway Protection Force (RPF) for protection of Railway Properties, particularly in vulnerable sections prone to terrorist/naxalite attacks:—

1. During Bandh/Agitation/Rail Roko events, Railway Protection Force personnel are being deployed in vulnerable sections for protection of Railway Properties, as a precautionary measure.
2. Joint patrolling by Tower Wagon has been introduced in various vulnerable sections prone to terrorist/naxalite attacks.
3. Deploying additional Railway Protection Force (PRF) and Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF) personnel for protecting the Railway property has enhanced the security of affected Railway stations, trains and other vital installation and Railway passengers against terrorist and naxalite attacks.
4. Apart from maintaining close liaison with Civil Police and Intelligence Authorities, surveillance at some Railway Stations is being monitored through Close Circuit Televisions (CCTVs).

(f) Trains will be run in the Naxalite affected areas unless and until the traffic is disrupted by Naxalites.

*[Translation]*

#### **Hindi Newspapers/Magazines in Flights**

1306. SHRI THAWARCHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the flights operating in domestic as well as international sector wherein Hindi newspapers/magazines are made available alongwith the details thereof;

(b) the flights wherein the above mentioned newspapers and magazines are not provided;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to make it mandatory to provide Hindi newspapers and magazines in the flights to and from the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Hindi newspapers/magazines are provided in the aircraft operated for domestic and international sectors. Details thereof are as follows:— **Air India: Newspapers—** Navbharat times, Dainik Lokmat, Dainik Jagaran, Sandhya Times, Hindustan, Punjab Kesri, **Magazines: Star Dust, India Today, Jagran Sakhi, Kamabini, Sristi; Indian Airlines: Newspapers—**Hindustan, Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Sandhya Times, Navbharat Times, Navbharat Press, Dopahar, Nirbhay Pakshik Jansatta, Sanmarg, Vishwamitra, Chhapte Chhapte, Hindi Milap, Swatantra Vrat; **Magazine: Kadambini, Stardust, India Today, Outlook, Lafz.**

(b) Hindi Newspapers and Magazines are made available in all the domestic and international flights of Government Sector. As regards private sector airlines, the Government has no central in this respect.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

(e) Hindi Newspapers and magazines are provided in the outbound international flights, but the same is not possible in respect of inbound flights.

*[English]*

#### **Construction of Road Over Bridge in Kerala**

1307. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN:

SHRI HARIN PATHAK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any proposals from the Government of Kerala for construction of road over bridges at various places in Kerala;

(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) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Only 7 proposals for works of Road Over Bridges (ROBs) were received from the State Government of Kerala for inclusion in the Works Programme of 2006-07 which have already been sanctioned on cost sharing basis. These are:—

1. ROB in lieu of LC No. 554 between Paravoor and Quilon Stations.
2. ROB in lieu of LC No. 2 between Trivandrum Central and Nemom stations at Trivandrum yard.
3. ROB in lieu of LC No. 518 between Edamann and Punalur stations.
4. ROB in lieu of LC No. 289 between Uppala and Majeshwar stations.
5. ROB in lieu of LC No. 280 between Kottikulam and Kasargod stations.
6. ROB in lieu of LC No. 230 between Tellicherry and Dharmadam stations.
7. ROB in lieu of LC No. 257 between Kannapuram and Payangadi stations.

Inclusive of these 7, now a total of 68 works of ROB/RUBs are sanctioned and are at different stages of planning and progress in Kerala.

#### **Special Programme for Minorities**

1308. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes any special programme for the welfare of minorities in the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard along with the funds to be allocated under the said programme; and

(c) the manner in which minorities in the country are likely to be benefited by such programme?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) Government have recently announced the Prime Minister's New 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities. Details of the programme are given in the Statement enclosed. The programme also envisages that, wherever possible, 15% of targets and outlays under various schemes included in the programme shall be earmarked for the minorities. The benefits to minorities will be in the form of enhanced opportunities for education, on equitable share in economic activities and employment, improvement in their living conditions, and prevention and control of communal riots.

#### **Statement**

*"Prime Minister's New 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities"*

#### **(A) Enhancing Opportunities for Education**

##### **(1) Equitable availability of ICDS Services**

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is aimed at holistic development of children and pregnant/lactating mothers from disadvantaged sections, by providing services through Anganwadi Centres such as supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral services, pre-school and non-formal education. A certain percentage of the ICDS projects and Anganwadi Centres will be located in blocks/villages with a substantial population of minority communities to ensure that the benefits of this scheme are equitable available to such communities also.

##### **(2) Improving Access to School Education**

Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme, and other similar Government schemes, it will be ensured that a certain percentage of all such schools are located in vilages/localities having a substantial population of minority communities.

##### **(3) Greater resources for teaching Urdu**

Central assistance will be provided for recruitment and posting of Urdu language teachers in primary and upper primary schools that serve a population in which at least one-fourth belong to that language group.

##### **(4) Modernizing Madarsa Education**

The Central Plan Scheme of Area Intensive and Madarsa Modernization Programme provides basic educational infrastructure in areas of concentration of educationally backward minorities and resources for the modernization of Madarsa education. Keeping in view the importance of addressing this need, this programme will be substantially strengthened and implemented effectively.

(5) *Scholarships for meritorious students from minority communities*

Schemes for pre-matric and post-matric scholarships for students from minority communities will be formulated and implemented.

(6) *Improving educational infrastructure through the Maulana Azad Education Foundation*

The Government shall provide all possible assistance to Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF) to strengthen and enable it to expand its activities more effectively.

**(B) Equitable Share in Economic Activities and Employment**

(7) *Self-Employment and Wage Employment for the poor*

(a) The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), the primary self-employment programme for rural areas, has the objective of bringing assisted poor rural families above the poverty line by providing them income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and Governmental subsidy. A certain percentage of the physical and financial targets under the SGSY will be earmarked for beneficiaries belonging to the minority communities living below the poverty line in rural areas.

(b) The Swarnjayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana (SSRY) consists of two major components namely, the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP). A certain percentage of the physical and financial targets under USEP and UWEP will be earmarked to benefit people below the poverty line from the minority communities.

(c) The Sampurna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) is aimed at providing additional wage employment in rural areas alongside the creation of durable community, social and economic infrastructure. Since the

National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) has been launched in 200 districts, and SGRY has been merged with NREGP in these districts, in the remaining districts, a certain percentage of the allocation under SGRY will be earmarked for beneficiaries belonging to the minority communities living below the poverty line till these districts are taken up under NREGP. Simultaneously, a certain percentage of the allocation will be earmarked for the creation of infrastructure in such villages, which have a substantial population of minorities.

(8) *Upgradation of skills through technical training*

A very large proportion of the population of minority communities is engaged in low-level technical work or earns its living as handicraftmen. Provision of technical training to such people would upgrade their skills and earning capability. Therefore, a certain proportion of all new ITIs will be located in areas predominantly inhabited by minority communities and a proportion of existing ITIs to be upgraded to 'Centres of Excellence' will be selected on the same basis.

(9) *Enhanced Credit support for economic activities*

(a) The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) was set up in 1994 with the objective of promoting economic development activities among the minority communities. The Government is committed to strengthen the NMDFC by providing it greater equity support to enable it to fully achieve its objectives.

(b) Bank credit is essential for creation and sustenance of self-employment initiatives. A target of 40% of net bank credit for priority sector lending has been fixed for domestic banks. The priority sector includes, inter alia, agricultural loans, loans to small-scale industries and small business, loans to retail trade, professional

and self-employed persons, education loans, housing loans and micro-credit. It will be ensured that an appropriate percentage of the priority sector lending in all categories is targeted for the minority communities.

**(10) *Recruitment to State and Central Services***

- (a) In the recruitment of police personnel, State Governments will be advised to give special consideration to minorities. For this purpose, the composition of selection committees should be representative.
- (b) The Central Government will take similar action in the recruitment of personnel to the Central police forces.
- (c) Large scale employment opportunities are provided by the Railways, nationalized banks and public sector enterprises. In these cases also, the concerned departments will ensure that special consideration is given to recruitment from minority communities.
- (d) An exclusive scheme will be launched for candidates belonging to minority communities to provide coaching in government institutions as well as private coaching institutes with credibility.

**(C) Improving the Conditions of living of minorities**

**(11) *Equitable share in rural housing scheme***

The Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) provides financial assistance for shelter to the rural poor living below the poverty line. A certain percentage of the physical and financial targets under IAY will be earmarked for poor beneficiaries from minority communities living in rural.

**(12) *Improvement in condition of slums inhabited by minority communities***

Under the scheme of Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) and Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), the Central Government

provides assistance to States/UTs for development of urban slums through provision of physical amenities and basic services. It would be ensured that the benefits of these programmes flow equitably to members of the minority communities and to cities/slums, predominantly inhabited by minority communities.

**(D) *Prevention and Control of Communal Riots***

**(13) *Prevention of communal incidents***

In the areas, which have been identified as communally sensitive and riot prone, district and police officials of the highest known efficiency, impartiality and secular record must be posted. In such areas and even elsewhere, the prevention of communal tension should be one of the primary duties of the district magistrate and superintendent of police. Their performances in this regard should be an important factor in determining their promotion prospects.

**(14) *Prosecution for communal offences***

Severe action should be taken against all those who incite communal tension or take part in violence. Special court or courts specifically earmarked to try communal offences should be set up so that offenders are brought to book speedily.

**(15) *Rehabilitation of victims of communal riots***

Victims of communal riots should be given immediate relief and provided prompt and adequate financial assistance for their rehabilitation.

*[Translation]*

**Oil Blocks of Krishna Godavari Basin**

1309. SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN:

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether the Government has decided to take back some of the blocks of Krishna Godavari Basin allotted to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) for oil exploration;

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

(c) the estimated quantum of oil and gas reserves available in these blocks;

(d) whether it has been decided to re-tender the said blocks in the next round of oil field auction; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The Government has not agreed to the proposal of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) to have a strategic alliance with one foreign company in respect of 3 blocks in Krishna Godavari deepwater namely KG-OS-DW, KG-OS-DW-Extn. and KG-OS-DW-III. The validity of Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) in respect of one of these 3 blocks has already expired while the other 2 blocks are due to expire in January and May, 2007. After the expiry of PEL period, these two blocks would also stand reverted.

Further, due to non-completion of minimum work programme by Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), within the contractual period in respect of 2 blocks namely KG-OSN-97/3 and KG-OSN-97/4, the contracts stand expired and the blocks stand reverted.

(c) Exploration work carried so far has not yielded any hydrocarbon discovery.

(d) and (e) All these relinquished blocks will be offered in the ensuing rounds of NELP upon expiry of their Petroleum Exploration License validity for exploration of oil and gas.

*[English]*

#### **Museum at Harappan Site, Dholavira**

1310. SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY:

SHRI HARIN PATHAK:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal to establish a Museum at Harappan site of Dholavira is pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Steps have been initiated for setting up of a Museum-cum-Interpretation Central at Dholavira.

#### **Increase in Freight Tariffs for Fruits/Vegetables**

1311. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have increased its freight tariffs for sending fruits/vegetables to the different States recently;

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

(c) whether the Railways have received representations from various quarters for withdrawal of increased freight tariffs; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) Indian Railways have been incurring huge losses in parcel services due to low rate despite very quick service by passenger carrying trains and special parcel trains. Increase has been made in the Premier Parcel Scale rate to reduce the losses and to meet with the increased cost of service.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In view of huge loss suffered by Indian Railways on account of transportation of parcel traffic and increase in cost of operations due to hike in diesel price it is not possible to reduce the parcel rates of fruits and vegetables.

#### **Reduction in Misdistance of Surface-to-Air Missile**

1312. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to collaborate with the friendly countries to develop the medium combat aircraft to meet the future defence needs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any efforts has been made to reduce the "misdistance" of a Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM); and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Preliminary studies have been initiated at Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), Bangalore to conceptualize Medium Combat Aircraft (MCA) with a view to exploit indigenous technologies/expertise developed under the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Development Programme. For expediting development work on MCA, Government may consider collaboration with friendly countries.

(c) and (d) Misdistance achieved is within design specifications.

#### **Setting Up of Headquarters of East Coast Railway**

1313. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for setting up of the headquarters of the East Coast Railway at Visakhapatnam; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. However, demand has been received from Members of Parliament (MPs) of Andhra Pradesh for setting up of headquarters of the East Coast Railway at Visakhapatnam.

(b) The location of headquarters office of a Zonal 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 East Coast Railway from Bhubaneswar to

Visakhapatnam will 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 shifting of Railway Zonal Office of East Coast Railway for Bhubaneswar to Visakhapatnam.

*[Translation]*

#### **Recruitment of Children of Retired Soldiers in Army**

1314. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any provision regarding recruitment of children of retired soldiers in the Army; and

(b) if so, the number of children of retired soldiers got the opportunity to serve in the Army during each of the last three years and current year?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of children of retired soldiers recruited to the Army during the last three years is as follows:—

(i)	2003-04	-	7322
(ii)	2004-05	-	3622
(iii)	2005-06	-	2373 (upto 31st March, 2006)

*[English]*

#### **Scheme for Establishment of EPIs**

1315. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme to establish the Food Processing Industries is under the consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) Government does not set up food processing units on its own. However, Government has implemented a scheme to provide financial assistance for technology upgradation/modernization/establishment of the food processing industries. Rate of assistance is 25% and 33.33% of the plant and machinery and technical civil works subject to a maximum of Rs. 50 lakh in general areas and Rs. 75 lakh in difficult areas respectively.

#### **Food Parks and Modernisation of Abattoir Schemes**

1316. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Food Parks and Modernisation of Abattoir schemes are facing financial constraints;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remove the bottleneck in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, with a view to make available infrastructure facilities to processing units, under its plan schemes, provides assistance to Food Parks and for modernization of abattoirs. Financial assistance is available @ 25% of project cost in general areas and @ 33.33% of project cost in difficult areas, subject to maximum of Rs. 4.00 crores, for provision of common facilities in Food Parks such as power supply, water supply, cold storage, warehousing facilities, effluent treatment plant, food testing analytical laboratories, common processing facilities etc. For modernization of abattoirs, the Ministry provides financial assistance to Local Bodies @ 25%/33.33% of the cost of Plant and Machinery and Technical Civil Works in general/difficult areas up to a maximum of Rs. 4.00 crores. No financial constraints are being faced so far as funds under the plan schemes are concerned. However, an exercise to restructure the schemes to make them more effective is under discussion with Planning Commission.

*[Translation]*

#### **Bill on Care and Social Security to Senior Citizens**

1317. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to bring any bill for providing care and social security to the senior citizens;

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

(c) the time by which the proposed bill is likely to be introduced?

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

(b) and (c) The State Governments, concerned Ministries/Departments and other stakeholders have already been consulted on the proposed bill. However, it is not possible to indicate a time frame.

#### **Medical Facilities in Railways**

1318. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

SHRI DHANUSKODI R. ATHITHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether adequate medical facilities are not available to the passengers in the Railways in case of emergency, particularly at the time of railway accidents;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto;

(c) whether adequate trained personnel and doctors are not available and obsolete medical equipment are being used for providing medical facilities in the Railways;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the measures taken by the Railways to provide



adequate medical facilities to the passengers, imparting training to the employees and to provide modern equipment to them?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Railway hospitals are constantly upgraded to provide proper medical treatment to the passengers. Doctors and para medical staff are regularly trained. Modern equipments are constantly installed in Railway Hospitals.

At present all victims of Railway accidents and other untoward incidences are shifted to nearest Railway Hospitals, other Government Hospitals and Private Hospitals. All the expenditure done in these hospitals are borne by Railway administration. To facilitate this, one data Bank of all hospitals close to main Railway tracks has been prepared and made available at various levels. By this method we are able to provide prompt medical treatment to Railway accident victims at the earliest.

#### **Exodus of Doctors and Engineers from Armed Forces**

1319. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Doctors and Engineers working in Defence Forces have left their jobs in the recent years;

(b) if so, the numbers thereof during each of the last three years alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to prevent the exodus of Doctors and Engineers from the Defence Forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The number of doctors and engineers, who have processed on premature retirement/resignation during the last three years is as under:—

#### **Doctors:**

Year	Army Medical Corps	Army Dental Corps
2003	71	7
2004	31	-
2005	40	2

#### **Engineers:**

Year	Army	Navy	Air Force
2003	95	49	47
2004	72	42	54
2005	95	70	52

The premature retirement/resignation applications are submitted by the doctors and engineers mainly on the grounds of supersession and compassionate circumstances. The interest of the State is kept in view while considering such cases.

*[English]*

#### **National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management**

1320. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any decision regarding setting up a National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM);

(b) if so, the time by which the said institute is likely to be set up; and

(c) if no, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) The setting up of National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management

(NIFTEM) was announced in the Union Budget 2006-07. Ministry of Food Processing Industries proposes to set up the Institute and make it partially operational this year, after obtaining necessary clearances.

#### Women Doctors in Armed Forces

1321. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of women doctors appointed in the Armed Forces during each of the last three years, force-wise;

Year	Army		Navy		Air Force	
	Lady Medical Officers	Lady Dental Officers	Lady Medical Officers	Lady Dental Officers	Lady Medical Officers	Lady Dental Officers
2003	44	13	8	Nil	4	Nil
2004	33	3	2	Nil	4	Nil
2005	41	3	11	Nil	8	Nil

The percentage of Women doctors against the held strength, force-wise, is as under:

	Lady Medical Officers	Lady Dental Officers
Army	12.58%	18.82%
Navy	15.14%	16.00%
Air Force	19.19%	22.58%

Lady Medical Officers in the Armed Forces Medical Services are being recruited, based on service requirement, through the prescribed procedure, on a regular basis.

#### Defence-ties

1322. SHRI K.J.S.P. REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(b) the present percentage of women doctors in the Armed Forces, Force-wise;

(c) whether there is any proposal to appoint more women doctors in the Armed Forces; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The number of women doctors appointed in the Armed Forces during the last three years is as under:—

(a) whether the Minister of Defence visited Japan and Singapore recently; and

(b) if so, the issues discussed and decisions arrived?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Raksha Mantri (RM) visited Japan from May 25-28, 2006 at the invitation of Japanese Minister of State for Defence Mr. Fukushiro Nukaga, RM held in-depth discussions with Mr. Nukaga on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interests focusing in particular on cooperation between India and Japan in the areas of security and defence cooperation. It was agreed during the discussions to pursue cooperation, by promoting dialogue, exchanges and mutual understanding between the two sides. RM met the Japanese Minister for Land, Infrastructure and Transport Mr. Kazuo Kitagawa and discussed mutual cooperation between the Coast Guards of India and Japan on maritime security. RM also had useful interactions with Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Shinzo Abe, and Foreign Minister Mr. Taro Aso. During the visit, the need for both

Governments to work together was reaffirmed. The broad objectives of India-Japan cooperation in defence and security fields and the specific areas of cooperation and suggested mechanisms for the implementation of these objectives were also defined. Overall, it was a successful visit, that would help in strengthening the defence and security related cooperation between India and Jaapn.

2. RM visited Singapore from 2-4 June 2006 to attend the 5th Asia Security Summit, 'Shangri-La Dialogue', held in Singapore from 2-4 June 2006, annually organized by the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS). During the visit, RM met, among others, the Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Singapore as well as the Singapore Minister Mentor, Lee Kuan Yew. During these meetings issues of mutual interests in the field of defence cooperation were discussed.

[Translation]

#### **International Airports**

1323. SHRIMATI NEETA PATERIYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of international airports in the country at present;

(b) whether there is any demands to convert some airports in the country as international airports; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) As on 3-8-2006, 16 airports in the country are declared as inernational airports.

(b) and (c) There are persistant demand, from State Governments, Members of Parliament and various Government/private agencies for upgradation of airports in Bhubaneswar, Indore, Raipur, Mangalore, Pune, Ludhiana, Chandigarh and Port Blair into international airports. Declaration of an airport as an international airport is contingent on various factors such as requirement of airline operators, traffic demand, availability of land, customs, immigration, plant and animal quarantine facilities etc. and is considered from time to time taking into account various factors involved.

[English]

#### **Reorganisation of DGCA**

1324. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of M.K. Kaw for reorganising the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA);

(b) if so, the recommendations of the committee; and

(c) the follow-up action taken by the Government thereon?

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

(b) There were a total of 276 recommendations, which are wide ranging. These recommendations relate to Roles and functions of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Statutory framework for aviation regulation, Certification of airlines, licensing of personnel, System of examination, Training requirements for industry and DGCA, Procedure for clearance of scheduled and non-scheduled flights, Re-structuring and strengthening of DGCA, Manpower policy and requirement etc.

(c) The Government have accepted majority of the recommendations made by the Committee and action is at hand to implement the acceptable recommendations.

#### **Construction of BG Railway Line from Dahod to Indore**

1325. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of construction of new broad gauge railway line from Dahod to Indore;

(b) the cost of the project and the amount spent so far thereon; and

(c) the time schedule fixed for completion of the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) On this project,

work on Dewas-Maksi new line has already been completed and the line commissioned. Necessary action has also been initiated to obtain requisite clearances to take up work on balance length.

Anticipated cost of the project is Rs. 946.16 crore and an expenditure of Rs. 58.43 crore has so far been incurred upto March, 2006.

(c) Target date not fixed.

#### **Direct Train between Bhubaneswar-Kanniyakumari**

1326. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce a daily direct train between Bhubaneswar and Kanniyakumari; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to implement the said proposal?

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

(b) Does not arise.

#### **Utilisation of Unused Airstrips**

1327. SHRI DHANUSKODI R. ATHITHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of airstrips in the country are lying unused;

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

(c) the amount spent on the maintenance of these airstrips during each of the last three years;

(d) whether any action is being taken for utilisation of these airstrips; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 33 airports/airstrips in the country belonging to Airports Authority of India are lying unused due to lack of

traffic potential and uncontrolled development around them.

(c) The expenditure incurred on maintenance of unused airports during the last three years i.e. 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 was Rs. 1.29 crores, Rs. 1.30 crores and Rs. 1.46 crores respectively.

(d) and (e) On receipt of commitment/demand from airline operators, renovation/upgradation of infrastructure facilities have been taken up for operationalisation of Cooch Behar, Behala, Mysore and Akola airports. Operationalisation of other unused airports is contingent on receipt of commitment/demand from scheduled airline operators to start operations.

#### **Funds for Railway Projects in Himachal Pradesh**

1328. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for taking up railway lines and Gauge conversion projects;

(b) whether the Government of Himachal Pradesh has requested for allocation of more funds for the State in the Railway Budget and also for conversion of railway lines; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A Statement is attached.

(b) and (c) Government of Himachal Pradesh has requested for allocation of more funds for Nangal Dam-Talwara (112 kms) new line project for which an outlay of Rs. 14.71 crore has been provided in the budget 2006-07.

#### **Statement**

(a) (i) The policy for taking up new line projects was enunciated by the National Transport Policy Committee in 1980. This policy states that new lines would be taken up on the following criteria;

- Project oriented lines to serve new industries for tapping mineral and other resources.

- Missing links for completing alternative routes to relieve congestion on existing saturated routes.
- Lines required for strategic reasons.
- Lines for establishment of new growth centers or giving access to remote areas.

(ii) The policy followed for selection of routes for gauge conversion under Project Unigauge has been as under:—

- To take up conversion of lines to develop alternative Broad Gauge (BG) routes obviating the need for Doubling existing BG lines on these routes.
- To establish new BG links between stations connected by other BG lines.
- To establish BG connection to ports, industrial centres and locations having potential for growth.
- To take up conversion of lines required on strategic considerations.
- To minimize transshipment and to improve wagon turn-around by avoiding delays at transshipment points.
- To carryout the conversion of lines as per the above policy at least cost yet providing a standard of service not lower than what the rail users were getting on the Metre Gauge.

Apart from the above, the financial viability of the project is also taken into consideration. As per extant norms, a project is considered financially justified if it yields a financial return of not less than 14% under Discounted Cash Flow Method.

#### **Illumination of Monuments in Delhi**

1329. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:  
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any scheme to illuminate major monuments in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details of the monuments identified for the purpose;

(c) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred thereon; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Tourism in partnership with the Archaeological Survey of India plans to illuminate all the key heritage monuments utilizing energy efficient technology. The scheme will be implemented prior to the Commonwealth Games 2010.

#### **Conservation of Monuments**

1330. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of monuments/sites in the country which are under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), State-wise;

(b) whether the ASI is facing shortage of manpower for conservation of monuments as reported in the *Times of India* dated July 3, 2006;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the ASI has decided to outsource the conservation of monuments;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the private agencies have been invited in this regard; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Archaeological Survey of India protects and maintains 3667 monuments/sites of National Importance in the country. A State-wise list is enclosed as statement.

(b) and (c) The existing strength of 502 personnel under various conservation cadres is inadequate considering the volume of conservation works in the

protected monuments handled by 24 circles of the Archaeological Survey of India. In addition to implementing its annual programmes, ASI has to honour the requests from state governments to carry out conservation works in the state protected monuments as deposit works and also take up such works abroad as part of the bilateral agreements.

(d) to (g) Yes, Sir. Considering the shortage of manpower in the Conservation Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India and keeping in view of the conservation needs of the protected monuments, the Archaeological Survey of India has decided to outsource conservation works in selected monuments. The conservation work of Safdarjung Tomb, Delhi has been outsourced by inviting financial bids from short-listed parties. After due process, the work was entrusted to M/s. Caltech India, Calcutta. The Archaeological Survey of India also proposes to outsource conservation works in respect of three colonial buildings within the Red Fort. The process of selecting a suitable agency is on.

Whenever conservation works would be outsourced, the work would have to be executed as per archaeological norms under the overall supervision of the Archaeological Survey of India.

**Statement**

*List of Centrally Protected Monuments under  
Archaeological Survey of India State/Union  
Territory-wise*

Sl. No.	Name of State/ Union Territory	Number of Monuments/Sites
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	137
2.	Assam	53
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	5
4.	Bihar	70
5.	Chhattisgarh	47

1	2	3
6.	N.C.T. of Delhi	175
7.	Daman and Diu	12
8.	Goa	21
9.	Gujarat	202
10.	Haryana	90
11.	Himachal Pradesh	40
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	69
13.	Jharkhand	12
14.	Kerala	26
15.	Karnataka	507
16.	Maharashtra	286
17.	Madhya Pradesh	286
18.	Manipur	1
19.	Meghalaya	8
20.	Nagaland	4
21.	Orissa	78
22.	Punjab	31
23.	Pondicherry (U.T.)	7
24.	Rajasthan	162
25.	Sikkim	3
26.	Tamil Nadu	413
27.	Tripura	5
28.	Uttar Pradesh	742
29.	Uttaranchal	42
30.	West Bengal	133
Total		3667

### **Upgradation of Shatabdi Trains**

1331. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to upgrade more Shatabdi trains as fastest trains on the lines of Bhopal Shatabdi;

(b) if so, the details thereof and progress made in this regard so far;

(c) whether there is any proposal to accord ISO certificate to some of the express trains; and

(d) if so, the number of trains identified for the same and the facilities likely to be extended to those trains?

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

(b) 2003/2004 New Delhi-Lucknow Shatabdi has been identified to run at 150 kilometre per hour as announced in Rail Budget 2006-07.

(c) No Sir, none at present. This has been done for a few trains and that knowledge is being used for others without going for certification.

(d) Does not arise.

### **Call Centres for Railways**

1332. SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPAPARAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have identified the locations for call centres to be set up for providing Integrated Train Enquiry System (ITES);

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon; and

(c) the progress made in regard to commissioning of such centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Integrated Train Enquiry System (ITES) will be set up by providing call centres in the North, East, West and South Zones of the country for dissemination of information on train running

status, PNR status, availability of accommodation alongwith other value added services.

These call centres are to be based on a self-sustainable model to the extent possible.

Commissioning of call centres is planned during 2006-07.

### **Phasing Out of Old Rolling Stocks**

1333. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are not regularly phasing out of old rolling stocks viz. coaches, wagons, engines, etc. jeopardizing the passenger safety;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Railways thereto;

(c) whether the installed capacity of Diesel Locomotive Works is not properly utilised resulting in under-utilisation of manpower and technology;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for under-utilisation; and

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to ensure passenger safety?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Rolling Stock are regularly condemned on age-cum-condition basis.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Capacity is being fully utilised.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Safety is the prime concern of Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continuing basis to prevent accidents. These measures include timely replacement of over aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signalling and interlocking systems, safety drives and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. As a result the number of consequential train accidents have come down from 473 in 2000-2001 to 234 in 2005-06.

*[Translation]***Revival Package for Sick SPSEs**

1334. SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has sanctioned any package for the sick Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs); and

(b) if so, the details along with the amount sanctioned for each CPSE?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV):  
(a) and (b) As per available information as on 30-6-2006, Government has approved revival plans in respect of 17 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) based on the recommendations of the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE). A list of these 17 CPSEs along with cash and non-cash assistance approved by the Government is given in the statement enclosed.

**Statement**

*Cash and Non-cash Assistance approved by the Government as on 30-6-2006  
in respect of BRPSE recommended proposals*

Sl. No.	Name of the CPSE	Assistance (Rs. in crores)		
		Cash	Non-cash	Total
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Industan Salts Ltd.	4.28	66.32	70.60
2.	NTC including its subsidiaries	39.23	—	39.23
3.	Bridge and Roof Co. (India) Ltd.	60.00	42.92	102.92
4.	BBJ Construction Co. Ltd.	—	54.61	54.61
5.	HMT Bearings Ltd.	7.40	26.57	33.97
6.	Praga Tools Ltd.	5.00	177.12	182.12
7.	Braithwaite and Co. Ltd.	4.00	112.91	116.91
8.	British India Corporation	47.35	—	47.35
9.	Central Inland Water Transport Corporation Ltd.	73.60	280.00	353.60
10.	Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd.	102.00	1116.30	1218.30
11.	Cement Corporation of India	184.29	1252.25	1436.54
12.	Richardson and Cruddas (1972) Limited**	—	—	—
13.	Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd.	137.59	267.57	405.16
14.	Hindustan Organics Chemicals Ltd.	250.00	—	250.00



1	2	3	4	5
15.	Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Limited	—	670.37	670.37
16.	Tungabhadra Steel Products Limited**	—	—	—
17.	Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Limited \$	—	—	—
Total		914.74	4066.94	4981.68

\*\* Revival through formation of joint venture

\$ Decided for closure

- Cash Assistance may involve budgetary support through equity/loan/grants
- Non-cash Assistance may involve waiver of interest, penal interest, GOI loan, conversion of loan into equity/debentures etc.

[English]

### Commercial Pilots in India

1335. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:  
 SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY:  
 SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS:  
 SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:  
 SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the pilot-flight ratio in India is as per the international approved ceiling;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Indian civil aviation industry is reeling under shortage of commercial pilots;
- (d) if so, the total number of qualified commercial pilots in India, at present; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken to meet the requirement of commercial pilots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In line with standard practices of international operation and recommendations of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued a Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) on 01-03-1994, which stipulates requirement of sufficient number of flight crew but not less than three

sets of crew per aircraft for scheduled operations. This CAR also stipulates that all aircraft engaged in Scheduled Public Transport operations should be flown by at least two pilots.

(c) Due to the growth in the aviation sector there is an increase in the number of scheduled and non scheduled operators with many of them going in for a fleet expansion programme. This has manifested in shortage of type rated pilots.

(d) As on date there are 3850 active professional pilots having Commercial Pilot Licence and Airlines Transport Pilot Licence.

(e) The Government has taken various steps to reduce the gap between demand and supply of skilled pilots. These include conditionally increasing the age-limit to 65 years for exercising the privileges of their licences for commercial transport operations under prescribed conditions for pilots, upgradation and modernisation of training infrastructure of Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) to enhance its training capacity, setting up of a world class flying training institute at Gondia, Maharashtra and assistance to flying clubs by allocating trainer aircraft through Directorate General of Civil Aviation/ Aero Club of India.

### Liberalised Policy for Railway Sector

1336. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:  
 SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have announced liberalised policy for faster growth of the railway sector;

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

(c) whether the Railways have initiated some projects through joint venture by floating a special purpose vehicle;

(d) if so, the details of the projects alongwith the costs thereof;

(e) the progress made so far on these projects; and

(f) the areas identified by the Railways in which private investment is being considered for public-private participation?

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

(b) Major policy initiatives include:

- Introduction of innovative freight incentive schemes based on consignment volume, cargo aggregation and volume growth.
- Policy on movement of container trains by private operators.
- Encouraging Public partnership and Public-private partnership schemes for effecting significant improvements in rail services and development and expansion of rail network.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The Infrastructure projects initiated through joint venture are:—

- Surendranagar-Pipavav Gauge Conversion project costing Rs. 373 crores. Project is commissioned.
- Hassan-Mangalore Gauge Conversion Project costing Rs. 312 crores. Project is commissioned.
- Gandhidham-Palanpur Gauge Conversion project costing Rs. 452 crores. Palanpur-Samakhiali is completed. Balance portion between Samakhiali-Gandhidham is targeted for completion during 2006-07.

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited is in the process of implementing certain projects through joint ventures.

(f) Investment in wagons, running of container trains and luxury tourist trains, development of rail-side warehouses are some of the areas identified for private investment.

[Translation]

### Night Bazars

1337. SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated 'Night Bazar' Scheme;

(b) if so, the objectives of the scheme;

(c) the details of places where 'Night Bazars' have been set up so far;

(d) whether there is any proposal to set up any Night Bazar in Hyderabad in the near future; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Tourism has evolved a concept of Night Bazar as an attempt to provide a unique shopping experience as well as preserve and nourish the traditional art and cultural forms of the country.

(c) to (e) As a Pilot Project the first Night Bazar ran from 27-03-2005 to 29-05-2005 at Lily Pond Lawns of Ashok Hotel, New Delhi. Based on proposal received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh an amount of Rs. 500.00 lakh has been sanctioned for setting up of Night Bazar, Shilparamam at Hyderabad in 2005-06 under Product/Infrastructure Development of Destination and Circuit Scheme.

### Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme for Children of Ex-servicemen

1338. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:

SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has launched a new Prime Minister's Scholarship scheme for children of ex-servicemen for technical and professional education;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and its *modus operandi*; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) to (c) A new scheme, "Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme" is being implemented from the academic session 2006-2007, under which wards of ex-servicemen/widows will be given scholarships of Rs. 1250 per month for boys and Rs. 1500 per month for girls for various technical and professional courses at graduation level in the field of medicine, engineering, information technology, MBA, MCA etc., duly approved by All India Council for Technical Education/ Medical Council of India etc. There will be 5000 scholarships in all, of which 4000 will be for the wards of ex-servicemen/widows from armed forces and 1000 for the wards of Central Para-Military Forces including Railway Protection Force.

2. The eligible wards can obtain the Brochure-cum-Application Form from Kendriya Sainik Board and Rajya Sainik Boards/Zila Sainik Boards. The completed application forms are to be dispatched directly to Secretary, Kendriya Sainik Board, New Delhi, so as to reach by 31st August. Selected applicants will be informed directly by Kendriya Sainik Board. The payment for the scholarship will be centrally made by Kendriya Sainik Board directly, through account payee cheques, to be credited in the personal account of the individual ward or through electronic clearing system.

[Translation]

#### **Modernisation of Fighter and Carrier Planes**

1339. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air Force has formulated any scheme to modernise its fighter and carrier planes by 2015;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to upgrade the fighter planes including MiG-21, MiG-29, Jaguar, French Mirage-2000; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Modernization of fighter aircraft is an on-going process undertaken from time to time to meet the operational requirements of the Air Force. It would not be in the interest of national security to disclose further details.

(c) and (d) Upgrade of MiG-21 fighter aircraft has been carried out. Upgrade of Jaguar and MiG-27 aircraft is underway at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. The Air Force has identified aircraft including MiG-29, Mirage-2000 for upgrade during the 10th and 11th Plan periods.

[English]

#### **Construction of Road Over Bridge at Mulamkunnathu Kavu**

1340. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any representations for construction of Road-over-Bridge (ROB) at Mulamkunnathu Kavu, near Trissur;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

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

(b) and (c) The work of Road Over Bridge at Mulamkunnathu Kavu is already a sanctioned work of 2001-2002 in lieu of Level Crossing No. 13 at km 21/5-6 between Wadakkancherry and Mulamkunnathu Kavu. The execution of bridge proper over railway track as well as approaches have been entrusted to M/s. Roads and Bridges Development Corporation (RBDCK) of Kerala, an undertaking of Kerala State Government under the supervision of the Railways. At present 40% work on bridge proper (across tracks) and 74% on approaches has been completed. Entire work is targeted for completion by 31st March, 2007.

[Translation]

**Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme**

1341. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

SHRI JAI PRAKASH (Mohanlal Ganj):

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT:

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

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

(a) the present status of implementation of ethanol blended petrol programme;

(b) whether the State Governments have decided to impose tax on ethanol at varying rates;

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

(d) whether this programme will adversely be affected due to high selling prices of ethanol; and

(e) if so, the corrective measures taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

(MoP and NG) had introduced the scheme of mandatorily supplying 5% ethanol blended petrol in major sugar producing states and contiguous union territories w.e.f. 1-1-2003. However, the programme could be implemented only in a staggered manner because ethanol was not available in a consistent manner and at reasonable prices. MoP and NG issued an amending Notification dated 27-10-2004 making sale of EBP mandatory in 10 States and 3 UTs if the price of sourcing indigenous ethanol for supply of ethanol-blended petrol is comparable to the price of indigenous ethanol for alternative uses; the delivery price of ethanol at the locations is comparable to the import parity price of petrol at that location; and the indigenous ethanol industry is able to maintain uninterrupted supply of ethanol for ethanol-blended petrol programme at such prices. At present the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) are implementing the programme in the areas of Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra states as per the availability of ethanol.

(b) to (e) State levies on ethanol in the States/UTs notified for covering under the ethanol-blended petrol programme under the Government notification of 27-10-04 are given in the statement enclosed.

MoP and NG has recently, inter-alia, impressed upon the concerned States not to levy any imposts—excise, entry tax, export or import fee or any other kind of levy which does not fall within the jurisdiction of the State Governments on ethanol meant for blending with petrol.

**Statement**

State/UTs	Levies	Applicable Rate
1	2	3
Punjab	Sales Tax	20%+2% Surcharge on Sales Tax
	Import Fee	Rs. 1000 per kl
	Licence Fee	Rs. 50000 one time security deposit for the State Rs. 1000 per annum for first location and Rs. 100 per annum for subsequent location.
Haryana and Chandigarh	Sales Tax	20%

1	2	3
	Import Fee	Rs 2000 per Kl
	Permit Fee	Rs. 3000 per kl
	Licence Fee	Rs. 1 lac one time security deposit per location.
Uttar Pradesh	Purchase Tax	Rs. 800 per kl
	Export fee	Rs. 1000 per kl
	Import Fee	Rs. 1500 per kl
	Licence Fee	150 per kl
	Denaturation Fee	Rs. 150 per kl
Uttaranchal	Licence Fee	Rs. 150 per kl
	Import Fee	Rs. 1100 per kl
Gujarat, Daman Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli	Sales Tax	4%
	Import Pass	Rs 50 per tanklorry
	Import Fee	Rs. 3000 per kl
	Licence Fee	Rs. 25000 per annum per location for 100 kl ethanol per month, Rs. 1.5 lac per annum per location for 500 kl ethanol per month; Rs. 3 lac per annum per location for above 500 kl ethanol per month.
Maharashtra	Sales Tax	4%
	Export Fee	Rs. 1500 per kl
	Emport Fee	Rs. 1500 per kl
	Sate Excise Admin. Fee	Rs. 300 per kl
	Licence Fee	Rs. 25000 per annum per location.
Goa	Sales Tax	19%
	Licence Fee	Rs. 12000/- one time Processing Fee per location. Renewal Fee @ Rs. 4000 per annum per location.
	Import Permit	Rs. 190 per tanklorry
Karnataka	Privilege Fee	Rs. 2000 per kl

1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	Sales Tax (VAT)	12.5%
Tamil Nadu	Sales Tax	8%+5% Surcharge on Sales Tax
	Import Fee	Rs. 1000 per kl
	Export Fee	Rs. 3000 per kl
	State Excise Admin. Fee	Rs. 1000 per kl
	Licence Fee	Rs. 25000 per annum per location.

[English]

#### Investigation into Kidney Theft Cases

1342. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Army Research and Referral Hospital, New Delhi was involved in any kidney racket;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether any investigation have been conducted in the matter;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) A First Information Report (FIR) number 558 dated 6th September, 2004 under section 420/468/471/120-B/34 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and section 18/19/20 of the Transplantation of Human Organs Act has been filed by the Delhi Police against fraudulent removal of kidney at Army Hospital (Research and Referral), New Delhi. The Delhi Police has arrested certain persons in this connection. Charge sheet has also been filed in the case which is pending trial.

#### Foreign Aid for Development of Tourist Spots

1343. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is getting foreign aid

for development of historical tourist spots in the country; and

(b) if so, the details of the tourist sports for which foreign aid were received during each of the last three years alongwith the amount thereof?

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

(b) Rs. 2.185 crore (52.844 million Yen) and Rs. 6.396 crore (168.358 million Yen) have been disbursed under Ajanta-Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project during 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively, as per the loan agreement entered with Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

#### Uniform Policy on Concessional Tickets

1344. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any uniform policy of the Government for all domestic airlines for air fare concession to the senior citizens, handicapped, Ex-servicemen, women, children below 12 years and for the students of all the categories;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps the Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No Sir, each domestic airline has its own policy to extend concessions on air fare.

(c) The tariffs in respect of airlines is not regulated by Government and it is upto the airlines to fix the tariff and related concessions as per their economic viability and market conditions.

#### **Frequency of Thar Express**

1345. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to increase the frequency of Thar Express;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of Pakistan has also been consulted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government of Pakistan thereto?

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

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

#### **Food Processing Industries**

1346. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications received by the Union Government from various State Governments particularly from Orissa for setting up food processing industries during each of the last three years and the current year;

(b) the number of applications out of them cleared/under consideration;

(c) the time by which pending proposals are likely to be cleared; and

(d) the financial assistance proposed to be provided to the State Governments for the purpose during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (d) Under the Scheme of Technology Upgradation, Modernisation and Establishment of food processing industries, the Ministry has received 1982

proposals from various State Governments, out of which 49 proposals were received from the State of Orissa.

Of these proposals, 576 proposals have been approved of which 6 pertain to the State of Orissa. The Ministry has 854 proposals pending as a whole of which 9 proposals pertain to Orissa. The rest of the cases stand closed/rejected. A total of Rs. 159.06 crore has already been passed on to the units in various states during the above period.

*[Translation]*

#### **Funds from Foreign Financial Institutions for Railway Projects**

1347. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the on-going railway projects financed by the foreign financial institutions during the last three years alongwith the estimated cost thereof;

(b) the amount received by the Railways for each project, financial institution-wise;

(c) whether the Railways have utilised the amount during the above period;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Railways have paid any commitment charges to these foreign institutions; and

(f) if so, the total amount paid by the Railways in this regard, financial institution-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The details of Railway projects for which foreign assistance is being received, their estimated cost, external aid received and utilized during the last three years (up to 31-3-2006) are as below:—

(i) Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP), which has both road and rail components, is being partly funded by World Bank. The estimated cost of the rail component is Rs. 3125 crore. A loan of US Dollar 463 million has been extended by International Bank for Reconstruction and

Development (IBRD) and a credit of Special Drawing Right (SDR) 62.5 million has been extended by International Development Association (IDA). The IBRD loan and IDA credit earmarked for the rail component are US Dollar 304.5 million and SDR 42.13 million respectively. An amount of US Dollar 44.628 million and Special Drawing Right (SDR) 21.296 million has been utilized from the IBRD loan and IDA credit respectively for the Rail portion.

(ii) Project of Modernisation of Signalling between Ghaziabad and Kanpur is being partly funded by Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), Germany. The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 425 crore. The loan amount is DM 185 million (Euro 94.5 million). An amount of Euro 3.761 million has been utilized.

(iii) the Asian Development Bank has extended a loan to finance the Railway Sector Improvement Project with the objective of enhancing capacity of the rail network and improving operational efficiency/safety. The subprojects to be funded from the loan are principally in the Golden Quadrilateral and its Diagonals and Port Connectivity projects. The estimated cost of the Project is US\$ 579.2 million. The loan amount is US Dollar 313.6 million. An amount of US Dollar 1.485 million has been utilized.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The amount of commitment charges opaid in the last three years upto 31-3-2006 are given below:—

ADB	Rs. 3.91 crores paid by Ministry of Finance
World Bank IBRD Loan	Rs. 14.45 crores paid by Ministry of Finance
World Bank IDA Credit	Rs. 1.86 crores paid by Ministry of Finance
KfW Loan	A total amount of Rs. 10.90 crores of which Rs. 8.29 crores paid by Railways and rest by Ministry of Finance.

*[English]*

#### **New/Special Trains between Karur-Chennai**

1348. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is huge rail traffic between Karur-Trichy-Chennai;

(b) if so, whether there is long pending demand for running of a new/special trains between Karur-Trichy-Chennai sections; and

(c) if so, 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.

#### **BHEL Power Project in Afghanistan**

1349. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) proposes to set up power project in Afghanistan;

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

(c) the time by which the work on each projects likely to be commenced and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. BHEL have secured a contract for setting up 3x14 MW Hydro Power Plant in Salma, Afghanistan from WAPCOS, India and an order for 230 KV Sub-station in Kabul from Power Grid Corporation of India. The cost of the two projects in around Rs. 220 crore.

(c) The Project work on Salma Hydro Power Project commenced in May, 2006 and is likely to be completed by December 2008. The Project work on Kabul Sub-station commenced in end of February, 2006 and is likely to be completed by May, 2008.



### Self-Sufficiency in Oil Sector

1350. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any road map has been prepared to make the country self-sufficient in oil sector in the near future; 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) India is self-sufficient in the Refining sector and has also developed the requisite marketing infrastructure to meet the indigenous demand of petroleum products. The refining capacity is in excess of indigenous demand and the surplus quantity is being exported. The indigenous production of crude oil has not kept pace with the growth in demand of petroleum products. However, the following measures have been taken to accelerate hydrocarbon exploration and production activities in the country to meet the growing demand:

1. Accelerate exploration activities through New Exploration Licensing Policy.
2. Enhancement of domestic production through Improved Oil Recovery (IOR)/Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) techniques.
3. Fast Track development of discoveries/reserves for early commencement of production.
4. Use of stimulation techniques for increasing production from existing fields.
5. Acquisition of exploration acreages and producing properties abroad to bring equity oil.
6. Arresting decline from ageing fields.
7. Substitution of oil through use of non-conventional sources of energy such as bio diesel, ethanol, etc.

### Endangered Languages

1351. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria being followed to declare any language as 'endangered language';

(b) whether the Government has identified the endangered languages in India;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Telugu language comes under the category of 'endangered language'; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No procedure exists to declare any language as "endangered language".

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

### Direct Flight between Bhubaneswar and Bangalore

1352. SHRI B. MAHTAB:

SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce a direct flight between Bhubaneswar and Bangalore;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Indian Airlines has no plans to introduce direct flights between Bhubaneswar and Bangalore as the existing traffic potential is not sufficient to support commercially viable operations with the type of aircraft in Indian Airlines fleet. However, Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

**Setting up of Petrol Pumps by  
Private Companies**

1353. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE:

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

(a) the number of petrol pumps set up by the private companies in the country, company-wise;

(b) whether some private companies have stopped operation or reduced the number of fuel pumps in different States/Union Territories;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Government have granted authorization to market transportation fuels to three private companies namely, M/s. Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), M/s. Essar Oil Limited (EOL) and M/s. Shell India Marketing Pvt. Limited (SIMPL).

The number of Retail Outlets (ROs) set up by these private companies so far are as under:—

Name of Company	No. of ROs
RIL	1277
EOL	900
SIMPL	14

(b) to (d) RIL and SIMPL have reported that they have not stopped operations of any of their ROs. M/s. EOL has reported that while 160 of their ROs are operating partially, the remaining ROs are not taking product due to high price difference with the ROs operated by public sector oil marketing companies. Private sector companies are free to decide on the quantities and prices of petrol and diesel sold by them.

**Procurement of Defective Equipment**

1354. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its Report No. 6 of 2005 has pointed out that due to inadequate inspection by Senior Quality Assurance Establishment (Armaments) Chennai, equipment (162 Transmission and Reception Units) worth Rs. 3.85 crore were procured from M/s. General Optics Limited, Pondicherry and subsequently found defective;

(b) if so, whether COD, Agra also placed order for Rs. 91.42 lakh on the same firm ignoring defects in previous supplies;

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

(d) the corrective steps taken for replacement of defective equipment?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) It is a fact that Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in Para 3.6 of its Report No. 6 of 2005 has pointed out that due to inadequate inspection by Senior Quality Assurance Establishment (Armaments) (SQAE (A)) Chennai, equipment worth Rs. 3.85 crores were accepted and subsequently found defective. It has also been pointed out in the CAG report that, ignoring defects in previous supplies, another order of Rs. 91.42 lakh was placed on the same firm by Central Ordnance Depot (COD), Agra.

(d) The steps taken till now for replacement of defective equipment are as follows:—

(i) The supplier has been approached several times for replacement of the defective equipment.

(ii) Instead of responding to the request for replacement, the supplier took the matter to arbitration in Court. The sole arbitrator appointed for this purpose passed an order in favour of the supplier.

(iii) The arbitration award has been challenged in the High Court of Delhi.

**Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline Project**

1355. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT "BACHDA":

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRAKUMAR:

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:

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

(a) whether the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas has held any discussions with the President of Iran recently on the Indo-Iran gas pipeline issue and the import of liquefied natural gas;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far on Indo-Iran gas pipeline project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Minister (P and NG) had a meeting with President of Islamic Republic of Iran on 15-6-2006 at Shanghai, China on the side lines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In the meeting, he raised the issue of delay in the implementation of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) contract signed by Indian companies with the National Iranian Gas Export Company in June 2005 for import of LNG from Iran. The Iranian President agreed to refer the matter to Parliamentary Committee in Iran for consideration.

(c) The Government is discussing the details of the IPI Project with the Governments of Iran and Pakistan. Two separate, bilateral Secretary-level Joint Working Groups (JWGs) were constituted to have discussions with the Iranian and Pakistan sides. So far, three meetings each of these working groups have been held. Various technical, commercial, financial, legal and related issues were discussed at these meetings. As of now, various issues relating to the Project are being discussed among the three countries at the tripartite Secretary level Working Group Meetings. So far two such meetings have been

held. The third meeting is scheduled to be held during 3-4 August, 2006 at New Delhi.

The main issues under discussion include those relating to gas pricing and project structure.

**India Tourism Offices Abroad**

1356. SHRI G. SUGAVANAM:

SHRI MILIND DEORA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the India Tourism offices operating overseas at present;

(b) the quantum of business generated by these offices during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government has any proposal to open more tourist offices abroad;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the further steps taken by the Government to attract more foreign tourists in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) There are 13 India Tourism Offices overseas located at New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Milan, Paris, London, Dubai, Johannesburg, Tokyo, Sydney and Singapore.

(b) The Overseas Offices undertake a series of promotional activities in the tourism generating markets with the objective of increasing tourist arrivals to the country and foreign exchange earnings through tourism. Details of foreign tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earning during the last 3 years are given below:—

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals	Foreign Exchange Earnings (In Rs. crore)
2003	2.73 Million	16429.00
2004	3.46 Million	21603.00
2005	3.92 Million (Provisional)	25172.00 (Provisional)

(c) and (d) Ministry of Tourism regularly reviews the functioning of its overseas India Tourism Offices to ensure effective marketing of India Tourism overseas. The Ministry also closely monitors the global trends of emerging potential markets for opening Indiatourism offices abroad.

(e) The Ministry of Tourism through its overseas offices, undertakes a series of promotional activities in tourist generating markets overseas, in order to promote tourism to India and attract foreign tourists to the country. These activities include advertising, participation in fairs and exhibitions, organizing seminars, workshops and road shows, publication of brochures, joint advertisement support and inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the Hospitality Programme of the Ministry.

#### **Regional Packaging Centres**

1357. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the Government of Kerala seeking financial assistance for setting up Regional Packaging Centres at Ernakulam, Pathanamthitta and Malapuram;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) A proposal has been received from Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department, Government of Kerala for financial assistance

for setting up of Regional Food Processing cum Packing Centres at Ernakulam, Pathanamthitta and Malappuram in Kerala. The proposal has been scrutinized and required clarifications/supporting information have been called for.

#### **BID for Extracting Natural Gas from CBM Blocks**

1358. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received bids for extracting Natural Gas from coal seams of Coal Bed Methane blocks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government proposes to offer such blocks to private companies and ignoring to offer the same to public sector companies; and

(d) if so, the facts and reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Union Government under the third round of Coal Bed Methane (CBM-III) Policy has received 54 bids for undertaking exploration and production activities in 10 blocks under the third round. The details are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) The Government under Coal Bed Methane Policy has provided a level playing field wherein it invites bids from private and public sector companies and Indian as well as foreign companies under an Internationally Competitive Bidding (ICB) system. Blocks are awarded on competitive terms on the basis of the Bid Evaluation Criteria.

#### **Statement**

Ref. No.	Coal-Field	Block Name	Area/ (Sq.km.)	CBM Resources (BCM)	Name of Bidder
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Raj Mahal	RM-CBM-2005/III	469	158	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG-Tata

1	2	3	4	5	6
					2. BPE 3. CDX-OIL-Shiv 4. ESSAR 5. GEECL 6. Indiabulls-Omimex 7. JSPL-Molopo 8. ONGC 9. REL-RNRL-GEO
2.	Birbhum	BB-CBM-2005/III	248	50	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG 2. BPE 3. CDX-OIL-Shiv 4. ESSAR 5. GEECL 6. Indiabulls-Omimex 7. JSPL-Molopo 8. Jubilant 9. ONGC-IOCL-CIL 10. REL-RNRL-GEO
3.	Tatapani-Ramkola	TR-CBM-2005/III	458	53.78	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG-Tata 2. CDX-OIL-Shiv 3. ESSAR 4. Indiabulls-Omimex 5. REL-RNRL-GEO
4.	Mand-Raigarh	MR-CBM-2005/III	634	119	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG 2. CDX-OIL-Shiv 3. ESSAR 4. GEECL

1	2	3	4	5	6
					5. Indiabulls-Omimex
					6. JSPL-Molopo
					7. ONGC-IOCL-GSPC
					8. REL-RNRL-GEO
					9. RIL
5.	Sohagpur	SP (North)-CBM-2005/III	609	16.72	1. REL-RNRL-GEO
					2. RIL
6.	Singrauli	SR-CBM-2005/III	330	31	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG-Tata
					2. Coalgas-DIL
					3. ESSAR
					4. Indiabulls-Omimex
					5. REL-RNRL-GEO
					6. RIL
7.	Kothagudem	KG(E)-CBM-2005/III	750	57.2	1. ESSAR
					2. REL-RNRL-GEO
8.	Barmer	BS(4)-CBM-2005/III	1168	82	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG
					2. CDX-Oil-Shiv
					3. ONGC-GSPC
					4. REL-RNRL-GEO
					5. RIL
9.	Barmer	BS(5)-CBM-2005/III	739	38	1. Arrow-GAIL-EIG-Tata
					2. ONGC-GSPC
					3. REL-RNRL-GEO
					4. RIL
10.	Godavari (North)	GV(North)-CBM-2005/III	386	29.65	1. Coalgas-DIL-Adinath
					2. REL-RNRL-GEO

**Crash or Aircraft**

1359. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the human error accounting for almost half of all aircraft crash in Indian Air Force (IAF);
- (b) if so, whether IAF has conducted any study to evaluate the influence of stress and fatigue in mishaps as well as psychological profile of pilots;
- (c) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and
- (d) the remedial action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. Human error accounts for almost half of the aircraft crash in the Indian Air Force (IAF).

(b) to (d) IAF has taken several initiatives to systematically evaluate the human factors such as stress, fatigue, psychological profile, etc. relating to aircraft accidents. This is an on going process. Besides, during induction of pilots, psychological profiling of all officers is also carried out. Only such candidates meeting the selection criteria are being inducted in the IAF.

Moreover, all accidents relating to human error are always analysed to uncover underlying weak areas that contributed to the accident. Based on the analysis, deficiencies in terms of selection, training, infrastructure, procedures are continuously updated.

**LPG Pipeline from Panipat to Jalandhar**

1360. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) proposes to lay Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) pipeline from Panipat to Jalandhar;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the estimated amount likely to be incurred in the said pipeline;

(d) the annual expenditure incurred by IOC in road transportation of LPG in this sector; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The Board of Directors of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has approved the project on 28-5-2006 for laying of 275 km long and 10" diameter Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) pipeline at an estimated cost of Rs. 186.72 crore from Kohand (Panipat) to Jalandhar.

(d) The annual expenditure from 1st April 2005 to 31st March, 2006 incurred by IOC in road transportation of LPG for Jalandhar and Nabha LPG Bottling Plants falling in this sector was Rs. 31.59 crore.

(e) Approved completion schedule of the project is 24 months from the date of approval of the Board of Directors or 18 months after Ministry of Environment and Forests clearance, whichever is later.

**Licence to ATC**

1361. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to give licence to Air Traffic Controllers (ATCs) on the lines of pilots; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. However, at present there is no provision in Aircraft Act, 1934 for the Union Government to make the Rules regarding issue of license to Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs) in India. Union Government has approved the draft Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2006 seeking amendment in the Aircraft Act, 1934. It is sought to acquire, inter-alia, the power in Section 5 of the Act to make Rules on licensing of ATCOs. The Bill is likely to be introduced in the current Monsoon Session of Parliament. Framing of Rules and its implementation would begin once the proposed legislation is enacted.

**Investment Plan of GAIL**

1362. SHRI B. MAHTAB:

SHRI JUAL ORAM:

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

(a) whether the GAIL (India) Limited proposes to make a huge investment in Orissa and other States during the next few years;

(b) if so, the amount of investment proposed to be made by GAIL; and

(c) the details of the projects in which the investment is proposed to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) During the current year which is also the final year of the 10th Five Year plan, GAIL proposes to invest about Rs. 2900 crores in different projects in various states including Rs. 10 crores in association with Coal India Ltd. in Orissa for surface Coal Gasification Project. The budget proposals for the 11th Five Year Plan, have not been approved yet.

**Non-Lapsable Defence Modernisation Fund**

1363. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has considered the desirability for setting up a Non-lapsable Defence Modernisation Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Defence had considered the desirability of setting up a Non-lapsable Defence Modernisation Fund in the past but while formulating the modalities, it emerged that the utility of Defence Modernisation Fund in addressing the basic

issue of assured availability of funds will be rather limited. Hence, it was decided not to pursue the proposal further.

**Setting up of Sub-station by BHEL**

1364. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) proposes to set up 230 KV sub-station in Bangladesh;

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

(c) the time by which the work on the said project is likely to be commenced and completed; and

(d) the details of the growth of BHEL export business during 2005-06 and 2006-07;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. BHEL have secured a contract for setting up 230 KV Substation at Baghabari and Extension of Ishurdi 230 KV Substation from Power Grid Corporation of Bangladesh, valued at around Rs. 54 Crore.

(c) The project commenced in May, 2006 and is expected to be completed by February 2008.

(d) Export order booking of BHEL in 2005-06 was Rs. 3348 crore as against Rs. 530 crore in 2004-05. During 2006-07, till date, the export order achieved is Rs. 459 crore against the figure of Rs. 31 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year.

**Freight Corridor**

1365. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI HARIN PATHAK:

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

SHRI BALESHWAR YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has constituted a Group of Ministers for the freight corridor project between Delhi and Mumbai and Delhi and Kolkata;



(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the estimated cost of these corridors;

(c) the manner in which the resources for these projects are likely to be mobilised;

(d) whether there is any proposal to establish more corridors in future;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Railways have conducted any survey in this regard; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Group of Ministers (GOM) has been constituted to consider the proposal of setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle for implementing Dedicated Freight Corridor project. The GOM consists of Minister of Railways, Minister of Finance and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission. The estimated cost of Dedicated Freight Corridor projects on Eastern and Western routes is Rs. 22,000 crore.

(c) All possible funding options would be explored including debt, bilateral/multilateral funding, budgetary support, public private partnerships, etc.

(d) to (g) At present, there is no proposal for other dedicated freight corridors.

#### **PTA Plant of IOC**

1366. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Purified Terephthalic Acid (PTA) plant of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC) at Panipat has started its operation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of various products likely to be produced in the said plant;

(d) whether the IOC proposes to set up more such plants in the country; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Purified Terephthalic Acid (PTA) plant at Panipat has been commissioned on 18th June, 2006.

(c) The only product to be produced in PTA.

(d) and (e) As of now, Indian Oil Corporation Limited does not have any proposal for setting up more PTA plants in the country.

*[Translation]*

#### **Disappearance of Explosives**

1367. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the 100 tonnes explosives alongwith containers sent by ship for Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to Afghanistan which had disappeared in the sea route has been used in India and is the root cause of sudden spurt in the terrorist activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the defence agencies have recovered these explosives;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the precautionary measure taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) The Border Roads Organization has been entrusted with a road building project in Afghanistan. In connection with execution of that work, in December 2005, a consignment of six containers carrying explosives which were being sent for this Project, were lost in the sea off Mumbai coast between 22nd and 23rd December 2005. The manufacturer of the explosives is M/s. Premier Explosives Ltd. Secunderabad. In accordance with the contractual conditions, the responsibility for the security, shipment, transportation, insurance and delivery to the Project in Afghanistan was that of the manufacturer. BRO was merely the consignee of these goods. The vessel MVEUGENIA was hired by the manufacturer's shipping agent M/s. Unimarine Agencies.

2. The ship was brought into Mumbai Anchorage on 23rd December 2005. From the six containers, four have been extricated and their contents verified and found to be in order. Two containers were not traced and the Navy is of the opinion that these containers may have merged with the wrecks of 2 ships, lying in the same area or may have been drifted away. The four containers have been shifted to the premises of the manufacturer M/s. Premier Explosives and explosives were destroyed. As for the remaining two containers the exposure to moisture would have rendered the explosives useless. It may be mentioned that the shelf life of these explosives is only six months. Hence there is no linkage between the sudden spurt in terrorist activities with the loss which occurred in December 2005.

3. As a precautionary measure, BRO have cancelled the supply order placed on M/s. Premier Explosives, Secunderabad. The work of the project is being carried out by procurement of explosives from Iran and local sources in Afghanistan.

*[English]*

#### **Completion of Railway Projects**

1368. SHRI FRANCIS FANTHOME: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether several projects for which 10 per cent equity has been paid to the Railways for implementation of railway lines, have not been implemented for more than ten years;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons for non-completion of these projects; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to complete these projects expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The Hon'ble Member while mentioning 10% equity is perhaps referring to the expenditure incurred on ongoing railway projects. As on 10-04-2006, out of 260 ongoing projects, there are 35 projects viz. 11 New Line, 13 Gauge Conversion, 5 Doubling and 3 Railway Electrification and 3 Metropolitan Transport Projects, in which an expenditure of 10% or more was incurred and were taken up more than 10 years

ago. These projects are progressing as per the operational priority and availability of resources. A number of initiatives have been taken like Public Private Partnership, Cost Sharing by State Government and/or declaration as National Projects to generate additional resources. Additional funds are also allocated through internal resource generation for Throughput Enhancement and other works. With such initiatives, these projects are expected to be completed in coming years as per actual availability of resources.

#### **Construction of Bridge Over Brahmaputra River**

1369. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Assam Rail Passengers' Association has protested against the decision of the Railways to build only a road bridge sans rail track, in place of the projected rail-cum-road bridge across and over the Brahmaputra river;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto; and

(c) the reasons for the change in the planned rail-cum-road bridge project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Railways have already taken up construction of Rail-cum-Road Bridge across river Brahmaputra at Bogibeel. National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has proposed a road bridge near Guwahati adjacent to Saraighat Rail-cum-Road Bridge. There has been no proposal to build another Rail-cum-Road Bridge at this location. The record of each and every reference received is not maintained.

*[Translation]*

#### **Procurement of INGPS System**

1370. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the French Defence Company, M/s, SAGEM has charged three times more than the agreement for procurement of INGPS system

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reasons for not issuing new tender for INGPS system?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A contract was concluded with M/s SAGEM in 1999 for procurement of Inertial Navigation and Global Positioning System (INGPS) with provision for the Transfer of Technology (ToT) for manufacture of the system. The ToT could not materialize due to the refusal of the French Government for a key component of the system. A communication from the vendor about the French Government's refusal was received in December, 2000 by which time the period for exercising the option for procurement of additional sets at the same price in the contract was over. Hence, a contract had to be concluded with M/s SAGEM in 2003 to meet the immediate requirement of the Air Force at a higher cost than that contracted in 1999.

(c) The INGPS were required for upgrade of MiG-27 and Su-30 aircraft. These upgrade programmes with the SAGEM INGPS had progressed to a point where any change in the INGPS would have repercussions on the timely completion of the projects. Delay in the procurement of INGPS could have attracted monetary penalties on account of delay in supply of INGPS for the Su-30 programme.

[English]

#### **Tenders for Married Accommodation Projects**

1371. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Military Engineer Services failed to accept the tenders for married accommodation projects within the time stipulated under the Fast Track Procedure (FTP) leading to re-tendering and as a result thereof an extra expenditure of Rs. 1.44 crore was incurred defeating the very purpose of FTP in April, 1997 as pointed out in C and AG Report No. 6 of 2005;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) As pointed out in the Comptroller and Auditor General (C and AG) Report No. 6 of 2005,

re-tendering was done in the four cases relating to construction of married accommodation at Kamptee, Bhopal, Meerut and Rangapahar executed under the Fast Track Procedure. The Army Head Quarters have been directed to conduct an inquiry in the matter.

#### **Expansion of Civil Aviation Industry**

1372. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India at the Annual General Meeting of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) held at Paris in the month of June this year, indicated an elaborate plan for expansion of Civil Aviation industry both in the public and private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating plans for expansion of the industry in the domestic and international sector to unshackle it from the restrictive policies of the past; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken in pursuance thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Speaking at the IATA Annual General Meeting at Paris this year, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Civil Aviation presented a broad outline of the developments and liberalization in the civil aviation sector in India. As regards the liberalization of the sector, the following significant steps have already been taken:

- (i) The Foreign Direct Investment limits in 'Air Transport Services (Domestic Airlines)' increased from 40% to 49%. However, the NRI's have been allowed 100% FDI.
- (ii) Private scheduled carriers with five years experience in domestic sector and having fleet size of twenty aircraft permitted to operate on international routes.
- (iii) Liberal policy in the exchange of capacity entitlement/traffic rights adopted by the Government which paved the way for more foreign airlines to operate to/from India.
- (iv) Amendment of the various outdated provisions of Aircraft Rules to keep the provisions abreast

with the international standards and developments in the civil aviation sector.

- (v) Tourist charter guidelines liberalized.
- (vi) Fleet expansion plans of Air India/Indian Airlines approved.
- (vii) Restructuring of Delhi and Mumbai airport and work on development of greenfield airports at Bangalore and Hyderabad.
- (viii) Upgradation/expansion/development of airports is undertaken depending upon traffic potential, requirement of airline operators and need of travelling people.

*[Translation]*

#### **Construction of Road Over-bridges**

1373. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to construct road over-bridges on L.C. No. 31A leading to Majri, Vani, Pimplekhuti and on LC No. 2 Grand Trunk Road;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have accorded the sanction to the construction of over bridges on the above roads;

(d) if so, whether a time frame has been fixed for the construction of these bridges; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The level crossing (LC) No. 31-A is located at km 843/8-9 on Majri-Rajur branch line with traffic density of 7900 Train Vehicle Units (TVUs). With such a meagre traffic density, it does not qualify for replacement by Road Over Bridge (ROB) on cost sharing basis. State Government has also not yet sponsored any proposal in this regard. There is no LC No. 2 in vicinity of the area on Grand Trunk route.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

*[English]*

#### **Diesel Run Buses at IGI Airport**

1374. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether passenger buses and all commercial vehicles at IGI airport continue to run on diesel violating the Supreme Court order;

(b) if so, the details and the reasons for violation of such orders;

(c) the number of non CNG coaches to whom Airports Authority of India has issued entry passes since the order of Supreme Court; and

(d) the action taken against the official found responsible for such violations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Movement of Vehicles in Airfield Area**

1375. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether vehicles of various agencies are always moving in the airfield area;

(b) if so, whether there are any rules/guidelines for such movement of vehicles;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there has been a demand of the security agencies to follow the vehicles of dignitaries upto take off point at IGI airport;

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

(f) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The

vehicles having valid entry permit and drivers with airside driving permit are allowed to operate the vehicle in operational area. In addition vehicles of designated VIPs are also authorized to move upto the tarmac area of civil airports in the country, on grounds of protocol/security.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

#### **Encroachment of Defence Land**

1376. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that about 3 acres of defence land under the Varanasi Contonment has been encroached upon and is being exploited commercially;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any action has been taken to get the land back; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Although the details of the defence land have not been mentioned in the question, in a case pertaining to Bungalow No. 7, Varanasi Cantonment, the Holder of Occupancy Rights of the Bungalow has unauthorisedly permitted part of the bungalow to be used for commercial purposes. There is no encroachment of defence land involved. the Defence Estate Officer has initiated eviction proceedings under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.

12.00 hrs.

#### **PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and

the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4558/2006]

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4559/2006]

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata, for the year 2004-2005, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata for the year 2004-2005.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4560/2006]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala for the year 2002-2003, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala for the year 2002-2003.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4561/2006]

[Shrimati Ambika Soni]

- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala for the year 2003-2004.

- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4562/2006]

- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, for the year 2004-2005.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Account (Hindi and English versions) of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, 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 Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, 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 4563/2006]

- (9) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, for the year 2004-2005.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Account (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, 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 Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, for the year 2004-2005.

- (10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4564/2006]

- (11) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, for the year 2003-2004.

- (12) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (11) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4565/2006]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): I beg to lay on the Table:—

A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):—

- (1) (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the IRCON International Limited and Ministry of Railways, for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4566/2006]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the RITES Limited and Ministry of Railways, for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4567/2006]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited and Ministry of Railways, for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4568/2006]

- (2) A copy of the Railways (Punitive charges for overloading of wagon) Rules, 2006 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 377(E) in Gazette of India dated the 23rd June, 2006 under section 199 of the Railways Act, 1989.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4569/2006]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English version) between the Scooters India Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4570/2006]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Oil India Limited and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 4571/2006]

12.01 hrs.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE

### Thirteenth Report

[English]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL (Kopergaon): I beg to present the Thirteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Defence (2005-2006) on 'A Critical Review of Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons'.

12.01½ hrs.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

### Fifteenth and Sixteenth Reports

[English]

SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT (Mumbai North-East): I

beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Energy (2005-2006):-

- (1) Fifteenth Report on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Ninth Report (14th Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Implementation of Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (ARDRP)' of the Ministry of Power.
- (2) Sixteenth Report on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Eighth Report (14th Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Biomass Power/Cogeneration Programme—An Evaluation' of the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources.

### Statements

SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT (Mumbai North-East): I beg to lay a copy each (Hindi and English versions) of the following Statements of the Standing Committee on Energy:

- (1) Statement showing action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I and Chapter-V of the 4th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the 2nd Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources for the year 2004-05.
- (2) Statement showing action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I and Chapter-V of the 10th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the 5th Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Power for the year 2005-06.
- (3) Statement showing action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I and Chapter-V of the 11th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the 6th Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the

[Shri Gurudas Kamat]

Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources for the year 2005-06.

- (4) Statement showing action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I and Chapter-V of the 7th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the 42nd Report (13th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the subject 'Hydro Power—A Critique' of the Ministry of Power.

12.02 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
Twenty-second Report

[Translation]

SHRI KALYAN SINGH (Bulandshahar): I beg to present the Twenty-Second Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Rural Development on 'Rural Housing'.

12.02½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE  
AND EMPOWERMENT  
Eighteenth Report

[English]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): I beg to present the Eighteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment on Action taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Ninth Report of the Committee on the subject "Working of National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation" (NMDFC) of the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

12.03 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Status of Implementation of recommendations  
contained in Sixth and Seventh Reports of  
Standing Committee on Defence

[English]

\*THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, with your permission I want to make this statement on the Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 6th and 7th Reports of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) in pursuance of the direction 73A of the Hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part-II dated 1st September, 2004.

The 6th and 7th Reports of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) were presented to the Lok Sabha on 12th December, 2005.

The 6th Report relates to 'Procurement Policy and Procedure' under the Ministry of Defence and the 7th Report is on 'Defence Ordnance Factories'.

Action Taken Statements on the recommendations/ observations contained in the 6th Report of the Committee was sent to the Standing Committee on Defence on 22nd March, 2006. Action Taken Statement on the 7th Report was sent on 23rd March, 2006.

Sixth Report contains 44 recommendations and 7th Report contains 28 recommendations where action is called for on the part of the Government. These recommendations pertain to various issues as detailed in column 2 of the Annexures I and II respectively of my statement.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee in their Sixth and Seventh reports is indicated in the Annexures I and II respectively of 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 these Annexures. I would request that this may be considered as read.



12.05 hrs.

**SUBMISSIONS BY MEMBERS**

**(i) Re: Reported Presence of Pesticides in Cold Drinks**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members I am going to allow you to raise this matter. I know it is of great importance. Please take your seats. Let me regulate. I will give the opportunity to all the hon. Members who have given notice. If any party is left out, I would see that they are also accommodated. Please cooperate. These are important issues. Allow me to conduct the proceedings. I would go according to the names I have got here.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MD. SALIM (Kolkata-North East): Our children are made to consume pesticides...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will not prevent or deny any party. If they want to associate, they can do so.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this House is already concerned over the detection of pesticides residue in cold-drinks. The facts reported by the newspapers today are horrifying. Cold drinks manufacturing companies are poisoning our lives. Three years ago, the level of pesticides in cold drinks was 32 times more than the BIS standard, whereas, as per the report of CSI, now it is 52 times more. I charge the Government that under the pressure of the cold-drinks industries it has failed to ensure implementation of the safety norms. Coca Cola and Pepsi are the major cold-drinks companies. 11 brands of these companies are found to contain 25 times more than the permissible quantity of pesticides. Some of the pesticides banned in India have been detected in cold-drinks of these companies...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): The hon. Minister of Health is not present here.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please call the Minister of Health and Family Welfare in the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Cabinet Minister is here.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: It is such an importance issue...(Interruptions) The concerned Minister should have been present...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Cabinet Minister in-charge is here.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): The Minister in-charge, i.e. I am present here, including the Minister of state, so he should not worry.

[English]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): The concern Minister should have been here...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have made your point.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: The Centre for Science and Environment has come to the conclusion after testing 57 samples of 25 units of cold drink manufacturing companies. In samples of Coca Cola and Pepsi, the quantity of pesticides was 52 times more in Kolkata, 42 times more in Nainital and in one sample in Thane it was 200 times more than the permissible limit. Hectachlorin, banned in India, too, has been detected in some of the samples. The quantity of another hazardous pesticide,

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

Linden was found many times more than the permissible limit. Annual turnover of Pepsi and Coke is about Rs. 6570 crore. As every body knows, when the cases of pesticides in cold drinks came to light, a Joint Parliamentary Committee was constituted. The said Committee had issued guidelines for specifying norms in February, 2004. And the norms were specified in October, 2005. The Committee again approved the norms in March, 2006. My charge is that despite repeated requests of the Joint Parliamentary Committee and also issuance of guidelines by it, the norms thus specified were not notified and were not enforced strictly. Most painful aspect is that when the matter regarding detection of pesticides in cold-drinks was reported by the newspapers, the reaction of the hon. Minister of Health was highly deplorable. He said that there was no need for investigation. I charge that this Government has buckled under the pressure of the multinational companies producing cold drinks and they are playing with the lives of people. It is tantamount to slow poisoning. One can easily assess that it would have devastating effect on the health of children. Despite so many incidents, the Government has not shown the kind of seriousness it should have shown in the implementation of the norms and has also failed to take action. Rather it appears that it has surrendered to these companies. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Health to make a statement in regard to the prevailing situation. The sale of pesticides in cold drinks in a country like India is definitely a health hazard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will call hon. Members from all the political parties. I have got a list of 14-15 names.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Director of Centre for Science and Environment, Ms. Sunita Narain stated it three years ago that in 57 samples of 11 cold drinks brands levels of pesticides were found to be 22 to 25 times higher the the permissible level.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: There is no good in repeating the same thing.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: These cold drinks are consumed by children in the country and small children are likely to suffer more and they are being afflicted with all kinds of diseases. This slow poison is likely to cause cancer and affect the kidneys. Therefore, these things should be banned immediately.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If everyone takes ten minutes, how can we complete it?

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: The samples of 11 cold drinks which have been taken are Pepsi Cola, Pepsi Caffeino, Mountain Dew, Mirinda Orange, Mirinda Lemon, Duke Lemonade, Seven-up, Coca-cola, Thumbs Up, Limca and Fanta. The Bureau of Indian Standards has found 22 to 25 times higher level of pesticides in these drinks. Through you, I demand that these drinks should be banned by taking action as per the standards fixed in this regard by the Committee set up by the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the Parliament in February 2004 so that slow poison being consumed by the common man could be checked.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will call all the hon. Members who have given notices. If any hon. Member from any other party is not included. I will give opportunity to him also.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Mr. Speaker, Sir, as submitted by our other colleagues the report is serious. The most unfortunate aspect in the light of facts being reported is that though standards have been set by the Bureau of Indian Standards however these have not been notified by the Government. These facts have surfaced that despite so much struggle the directives are being ignored and most of the diseases in the country are water borne. The World Bank also assists us in determininig the level of purity of drinking water. It is more painful to find that the common man gets more attracted

towards the said products due to the kind of advertisement campaign carried out by the companies. It is my request that this issue should be taken with more seriousness. Unfortunately, not even the drinking water norms in our country have been fixed as on date....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, you say that this matter is very important, but you are not even allowing me to hear the hon. Member. This is not the seriousness which is to be shown.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: We have not been able to fix drinking water norms even after so many years of independence. Even the fact like contamination of mineral water bottle is being reported then what to about cold drinks? The Government is requested to fix the drinking water norms immediately and issue directives in this regard. The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is present here. Such advertisements should be banned immediately due to which the common man is lured into drinking them.

[*English*]

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Thank you, Sir, This is a very important and a serious matter which we are debating in our House now.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members are making a mention of it; we are not debating.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Sir, you may be aware that about four years ago, in 2003, we had a debate on this very same matter in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: You do not have to repeat them.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Sir, the House constituted a Joint Parliamentary Committee headed by Shri Sharad Pawar and that Committee had submitted its report.

MR. SPEAKER: We all know that.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: My criticism is that till today, not even a single step has been taken to restrict the content of pesticide in soft drinks.

A terrifying news item has appeared in almost all the newspapers of the country. It is very harmful, especially for the children and for other people of the country. I come from Kerala and my constituency is Palghat. The well-known Plachimada is situated in my constituency only. For the last one-and-a-half years, people across the country are agitating against the Pepsi and Coca-Cola companies. These companies are exploiting our ground water for manufacturing Coca-Cola, Pepsi and other packaged drinking water. It has been found that the pesticides level in all these soft drinks manufactured by these MNCs is much higher than the permitted standard.

So, the Government should come forward and ask these companies to withdraw from the market all the packaged drinking water and soft drinks. This is my suggestion.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Sir, new reports have been published that the levels of pesticides in soft drink samples available in market exceed the Bureau of Indian Standards. Three years back the Centre for Science and Environment had released its first finding on pesticides residue in soft drinks. The new study shows that nothing much has changed and the soft drinks remain unsafe and unhealthy. Even the directions given by the JPC have been disregarded. The allegation today is, standards for safety have been finalised but are being blocked because of the opposition by the companies. I would mention that Heptachlore, which is banned in India, is found in 71 per cent of the samples at levels four-times higher than the BIS standards.

The JPC had directed the Government to set standards for pesticide residue in the products and 20 meetings of Bureau of Indian Standards were held in October 2005. The standards were finalised. Yesterday, the Minister had said that it is for the State Governments to check the quality of items available in the market. It has also been said that the standards for packaged water had already been notified but standards for sugar and concentrate are yet to be finalised. This is the statement made by the Minister yesterday....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a debate. You may raise your voice on the serious matter.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: My contention is, the Government says that already specified standards are being followed. I would urge upon the Government to impress upon the Indian Council for Medical Research to finalise the standards for sugar and concentrates, the two most important ingredients used in the manufacture of soft drinks.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Mr. Speaker, Sir, even after getting clinching evidences of slow poison being present in the contents of cold drinks manufactured by foreign companies, merely debate has been going on for so many years. Thereafter, the Joint Parliamentary Committee was set up but its recommendations were not accepted. Even today, the foreign cold drink companies are making our youth and children drink slow poison. Yesterday, again it was reported in a newspaper that a private organisation conducted a test and found that there was poison in a cold drink. We demand that a standard should be fixed whereby such harmful cold drinks should not be allowed to enter the market and action should be taken against such people who market such harmful cold drinks manufactured by foreign companies. These foreign companies contribute only one per cent of their formula and use 99 per cent of our water however, they do not even pay for that consumption. These foreign companies are earning two times and four time profit which is causing huge loss to the country.

It is my request and appeal that the Government should take steps to promote butter milk, milk and curd manufactured by our farmers in place of cold drinks so that the youth of our country would become more healthier and we would be able to compete with the cold drink companies.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajanj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today I have been pushed to back. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): If you will speak daily, it will happen.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: I am getting a chance to speak as I am giving notices daily. Your Members will also get a chance to speak if they care to give a notice.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You can discuss with him somewhere else and not here.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Ramji Lal Suman has raised a very serious issue. While associating myself with him, I would like to put forth two-three points. Firstly, soft drinks are harmful for liver. It increases the risk of cancer and adversely affects children and pregnant woman. Some standards were laid down by the JPC constituted in this regard. However, Ministry of Health neither implemented the standards nor issued any notification during the past three years. As reported in a newspaper, Secretary, Health Department has issued a letter to withhold the issuance of notification in this regard. In my view\* The Ministry of Health is under the cloud of suspicion. These soft drink companies have taken this Ministry into confidence and conspired to cause damage to the life and prestige of India. In such a situation, when standards have already been laid down after the constitution of JPC, standards have been finalized\* a probe may be conducted to inquire into the intention of causing delay in the implementation of these standards and what are the reasons behind it? I would not like to say\*...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record the serious charges made by him.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: The Ministry of Health as well as the Minister of health are involved in this matter. That is why standards were not implemented and notification was not issue. Therefore, the matter needs to be inquired into.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Sir, all of us

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\*Not recorded.

may recall that the Joint Parliamentary Committee was set up to investigate the matter and to direct the Government to finalise the standards, setting safety limits on residues of pesticides. The point is, standard has already been finalised but the situation has not changed so far.

The Centre for Science and Environment has conducted a study and it has presented a very shocking figure. It has conducted tests on 57 soft drink samples from 25 different soft drink manufacturing plants spread over 12 States, and has found pesticides residue in all the samples. A cocktail of three to five different pesticides have been detected. Coca Cola sample bought from Kolkata exceeds the BIS finalised standards by 140 times as far as toxic pesticide Lindane is concerned. Similarly, the Coca-Cola sample manufactured in Thane contained Chlorpyrifos, 200 times the same standards. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All these have come in the newspaper. We all know it.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: My point is that the Government should take it seriously and should take stringent action against the companies who have violated the norms. They should be booked. I would like to know what steps have been taken by the Government so far. It is a very serious matter. I would like to bring it to the notice of the House and the Minister....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Two Members cannot speak at the same time.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: I will call every member to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All have raised this issue.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: I do not want to repeat all those things and allegations made by the hon'ble Members. I strongly condemn and object to the reply given by the hon'ble Minister, when he was asked about this matter after this matter came to light. These companies are playing with the lives of crores of people

but he is saying that he would consider it on receipt of report in this regard. Right now there is no proposal to get it investigated. I think nothing can be more uncivilized than this. The lives of crores of people are in danger. I just want to say that you have taken the sense of the House and I think that, no member in the House is interested to allow Coco Cola and Pepsi Cola companies which are selling poison in the form of their products to continue in this country. If there is any, he may stand up. I think no one is in its favour. Why not to ban these companies, when the sense of the entire House has been observed. I feel that these soft drinks should be banned immediately...*(Interruptions)* Advertise-ment of these products should also be banned and Government should make it clear whether they are going to ban it or not. Government will be held responsible of crores of people continue to consume poison through these soft drinks. Therefore, these companies and their advertisement should be banned immediately and the Government should give an assurance in the House in this regard....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Right now, you please sit down. I will call you also.

*[English]*

SHRI L. GANESAN (Tiruchirappalli): Sir, I wish to bring to the kind attention of the Government that there is a need to bring peace in Sri Lanka....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: On what subject are you speaking?

SHRI L. GANESAN: Sir, I have given notice on the Sri Lankan problem.

MR. SPEAKER: I will come to it later.

*[Translation]*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola are poison. These soft drinks are adversely affecting the health of the people of the country. It is affecting the lives of crores of people and at the same time the basic culture of the country is being eroded gradually. Today, people are disinterested in milk and curd rather they are adopting western culture and consuming poison in the form of Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola. Is it proper to consume these

[Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav]

colas when pesticides have been found in them? Therefore, the Government is requested to ban these companies immediately and take stringent action against them. 'Mattha', easily available in rural areas should be introduced. It will help in generating employment opportunities for lakhs of people in the country. Yesterday only there was a discussion in the House to increase the employment opportunities in agriculture sector and permission should be given in villages to produce drinks with the use of curd and 'mattha' and the Government should ban Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not disturb the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I would go to another subject.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mattha was introduced in Railways the scheme should be implemented there completely.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahemdabad): Laluji, you have introduced it in Railways but later discontinued the scheme ...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Laluji, you have installed vending machines of Coca Cola and Pepsi, close down these machines immediately.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: All of you know that it is a serious matter. I still have a few more notices to be taken up apart from this subject. There are many more important subjects which the hon. Members want to raise. If you keep quiet, I would call you one by one.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Sir, I also read in the newspapers regarding the pesticides residue in the Pepsi Cola and other soft drinks. In the year 2003, when the NDA Government was in power, a similar situation had arisen and a Committee was formed

to go into the matter. But the situation could not be controlled. Again the matter regarding pesticides residue in soft drinks has come up. So, the Government has to come forward and take serious steps and stop these drinks. It is because most of these drinks are used by children. So, it should be taken up seriously.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for your co-operation.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH (Allahabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, now you remember.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are certainly not the last. I was going from Party to Party. You know my respect for you. Please do not make such remarks.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will not repeat what other hon'ble Members have stated here. I would like to make two-three points. This matter was raised in 2003 and JPC submitted its report in 2004. Why that has not been implemented till now? Through the Lok Sabha I would like to extend my thanks to Shrimati Sunita Narayan, Director, who exposed this matter. I would also like to congratulate the media people for reporting this throughout the country that deadly pesticide contents were present there in it and for making people aware about the related health hazards. Coca Cola and Pepsi are served in marriage functions even in villages. Wide publicity was given to this issue through television and advertisement. I would like to know as to why the report of JPC was not implemented. When Swami Ramdevji demonstrated that the said drinks contained that much quantity of harmful chemicals that these can be used for even cleaning bathrooms, people did not take it seriously that the same pesticides which are used for cleaning bathrooms and drains are used in these soft drinks. So, through you, I would like to submit to the Government that either the report of the JPC should be implemented or new JPC should be constituted and this committee should be asked to submit report within three months and this serious matter should be looked into.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, pesticides have been found in Coca Cola and Pepsi and the discussion is being held here to impose a ban on it. However, the point is that adulteration in soft drinks was going on even while NDA Government was in power but no action was taken at that time....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: No running commentary please.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Now our Government is in power and we should be given sometime. I demand that the Government should impose a ban on those companies which have adulterated Coca Cola and Pepsi and have mixed poison in these drinks. My demand is that ban should be imposed on them....(*Interruptions*)

MD. SALIM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Parliament is also concerned with it. I would like to submit on that aspect that the dignity of the Parliament and the Members of Parliament should be protected. You yourself have introduced that when any Parliamentary Committee submits its report, the action taken report is given on it. The issue is three year old. Till date no concrete action has been taken by the Government. I have seen two Governments since then. I would like to submit straight forward that it was media and the agencies like Centre for Science and Environment which exposed such things and would like to extend my thanks to them for this, though matter concerns advertisement and sponsorship. After all what level of sponsorship is enjoyed by the Government that is dilly-dallies in taking concrete action against such companies? About the demand of the hon. Members that standards should be laid down in this regard I would like to submit that BIS has already laid down standards by way of constituting Committees after Committees and Sub-Committees after Sub-Committees. BIS has fixed standards but the Government is not notifying it. The Government is still continuing but does not intend to notify it. On the one hand the Government says that the matter is subjudice....(*Interruptions*) Sir, I am not repeating. Sir, it is a matter of shame for us that we consider it dangerous and so it has been banned in the Parliament House. I would like to know whether the House cannot take initiative to ban it all over the country

otherwise people will think that the Members are protecting themselves by banning it in the Parliament House but are pushing crores of children of the country towards death....(*Interruptions*). Linden and other such fatal pesticides are found in them that causes mental imbalance and I feel that the Government should immediately notify it. With these companies the Government of India...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Those words will not go on record.

...(*Interruptions*)\*

[*Translation*]

MD. SALIM: This is the reason that the Government is not clarifying its position in this regard either in court nor in the Parliament. Today, there is consensus on this issue and when the entire House, cutting across party lines, is saying in one voice, then the Government should immediately impose a ban on it...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Avinash Rai Khanna.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I would not allow anybody else to speak except Shri Avinash Rai Khanna. Please do not record anything.

(*Interruptions*)...\*

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Your leader has spoken. How will your speak at the same time?

...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not disturb the proceedings now. Shri Basu, it is not being recorded. What is happening here? Nothing is being recorded, Shri Basu.

(*Interruptions*)...\*

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\*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Do not misuse the opportunity I am giving to you.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I do not know what you are talking. Nothing is being recorded.

(Interruptions)...\*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: It is not good. You are a senior Member. It is not appropriate for you to speak whatever you want.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: First thing you want that nobody should be in the Chair and the House may become wrestling ground.

...(Interruptions) •

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, all the hon. Members have expressed their concerns that slowly this poison is being given to the people of the country through these soft drinks. I feel that today drinking pesticides adulterated soft drinks or serving it to the family members and friends have become a status symbol particularly in villages. Today they consider drinking 'lassi' below their status and take it to be a drink to be consumed by people of lower class. So, they also serve this slow poison and serve them Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola. When all the Members are, while rising above the party lines demanding that these drinks should be banned, a resolution in this regard should be moved in the House and if such step is not taken by us today itself, it will undermine the authority of the House.

Second thing that I would like to submit is that no action was taken on JPC Report. Do the Government wish to control the Government may be to permit soft drink companies population of the country through permitting the unabated marketing of this slow poison! Crores of rupees are spent on their advertisement. ... (Interruptions). The whole matter should be inquired into.

\*Not recorded.

[English]

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): Sir, I have a very specific point to make.

The multinational company, Papsi Cola and Coca Cola, has refused to print the list of ingredients on the bottle. It is compulsory everywhere. But the House may kindly note that this are the only companies, Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola, which does not print the list of ingredients on the label which means that if it is printed, it would be proved that it is a slow poison drink in the country. It is not an issue that it is a multinational company. The issue is that they are violating the norms in relation to soft drink. Therefore, I join and I call upon all my colleagues here to make a simple demand that Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola should be banned in this country.

I would give you my own experience. There was a Pepsi Cola bottle lying in my house which had expired. I had used that in my toilet and I could find that the whole toilet was cleaned in a few minutes. Therefore, Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola should be asked to produce detergents and insecticides instead of producing drinks for the country. It is a slow poison.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN (Saharsa): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit three four points. This adulteration has been going on for many years irrespective of whether it was UPA Government or NDA Government in power. It had been reported for the last many years that these drink contain such harmful contents which are injurious to health. Whosoever had been in power, but why this thing was not taken seriously till now? Now when such harmful contents have been found in the product, I would like to know whether the Government propose to impose heavy penalty on such companies. Our Bollywood actors and sports persons are doing advertisements of these products. I would like to know whether such advertisement should be immediately withdrawn from media and television. Similarly, now it is being pointed out that fast foods like Pizza, Burger and Noodles and harmful for children. I would like to know whether the Government propose to lay down standards in this regard. With these points I conclude.... (Interruptions)



[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let me complete first. Shrimati Satheedevi—not present.

[Translation]

The Member remains absent even after giving notice.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If I do not call those Members whose names are in the list, they get annoyed.

SHRI GANESH SINGH (Satna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today discussion is being held in the House on the issue concerned with the lives of crores of people of the country. Today the report of the CSE has been published in the newspapers. They claim that the samples of 11 brands were collected from 12 States and were found to be having the contents of banned pesticides. These contents are very much harmful and in fureous to the health of the people. Prior to this, such incidents had occurred three years back and at that time the report of the JPC was also submitted. The Government should have taken action on that report but the Government did not take any action in this regard. The multinational companies manufacturing such soft drinks are continuously selling such slow poison all over the country and if such things are not banned in the country I feel that the Government may have to face very embarrassing situation. Not only Coca-Cola and Pepsi but several other brands of soft drinks also contain such poison content and such soft drinks should be banned immediately. Such companies should be banned and they should be fined for the damage that they have caused to the people and criminal cases should be lodged against them.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the entire House is concerned and you are also concerned with the way Pepsi Cola and Coca-Cola are harming the people by producing soft drink having pesticide contents and it is a common knowledge. We all are aware about the report that has been submitted yesterday. Prior to this as well, discussions were held on this issue in the House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that the pesticides residues were first detected in soft drinks in

1977 during the period of the then Minister\* and since then the situation is quite critical in the society in this regard. There are laid down standards in this regard despite that till now no action has been taken in this matter. Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola are widely publicized especially in rural areas through advertisements. The efforts are being made to harm people by way of producing and selling spurious soft drinks in rural areas. It is polluting the entire society and is harming the people but we all are silent on it why the action is not taken by the Government in this regard while the Government have JPC report is this regard.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, today the slow poison is being sold in the name of cold drinks and today with the exception of milk, all other drinks are available in adulterated form. So, I would like to advise to all of you that you should stop consuming all other such drinks except milk. Only milk and 'matthah' should be used....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Water mixed milk or what type of milk?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: If the people continue to drink Pepsi-Cola it will damage the health of the people. It is openly done but we are finding ourselves unable to do anything in this regard...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Your suggestion is very good, you purchase the milk and distribute it to poor people.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: The poison was detected in 1977 itself when\* was in office....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has mentioned the name...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If he has mentioned the name, it will not go on record.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded.

...(Interruptions)\*

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\*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Praohunath Singh, do not get upset.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, keeping in view the sentiments of the entire House and your sentiment that you have taken it very seriously, through you, I would like to request the Government that immediate action should be taken in this regard and till the final submission of the report all such soft drinks should be banned with immediate effect....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Twenty one hon. Members have raised this matter.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA (Faridabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, two years back, when NDA was in power and Shrimati Sushma Swaraj was the Minister of Health and Family Welfare I had demanded action in this matter but she did nothing in this regard....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members please sit down. This is very bad. This is a bad behaviour.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Avtar Singh Bhadana, I have not called you. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri N.N. Krishnadas, this is a bad habit. Do not speak sitting.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: This is very strange. You are asking the Government to respond. But when the Minister is standing up to respond, you are not allowing him to speak. You only want to hear your own voice.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I have heard the opinion, expressions and comments of the distinguished hon. Members with rapt attention. I am also part of the House. Let us not bring politics into it. Let us take it seriously....(Interruptions) First, I would like to emphatically deny the allegation levelled by hon. Members Shri Md. Salim and Shri Anil Basu that the Government was part of the ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is not being recorded. It will not be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: I emphatically deny their allegation. There is no collusion....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, if you continue like this, I will adjourn the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: You substantiate your allegation....(Interruptions) What are you talking?

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Md. Salim, it is not expected of you.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri N.N. Krishnadas, would you take your seat?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, do you want to add anything? Otherwise, I will go to next item.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is very bad. It is a condemnable behaviour.

[Translation]

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, making such allegations will not serve the purpose. I have some responsibility towards the House.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are making allegations and you do not want the Minister to refer to that. Will you not allow him to speak? This is not expected of you.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: This is one point. The second point is that, it is true that after the JPC Report came, the UPA was so conscious about the entire matter. ...(Interruptions) What is this?...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will have to ask some hon. Members to either cooperate or leave the House.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: The day our Government assumed office, it is no less than the Prime Minister himself who advised us that the time has come to ensure a comprehensive legislation on the food standards and safety, right from soft drinks, like Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola to fast food items. We did pass a legislation with the help of the hon. Members only a few days back. ...(Interruptions) It has to be assented to by the President. Then, we have to bring the law. Then we have to issue appropriate notification to all the State Governments. ...(Interruptions) Allow me.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I express my displeasure over this issue and walk out from the House.

12.50 hrs.

(Then, Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra and some other hon. Members left the House)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have called Chaudhary Lal Singh. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing else will be recorded except the speech of Chaudhary Lal Singh.

(Interruptions)\*...

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: The concern of the House shall be communicated to the appropriate Minister....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He has given an assurance. You want an immediate action. How can it be possible?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Chaudhary Lal Singh, you come to one of the front benches.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, I am not allowing you to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Only what Chaudhary Lal Singh says will go on record and nothing else.

(Interruptions)\*...

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to make a submission not irrespective of whether one is poor or rich, one traces his identity to the place of his residence. Everyone should have a house and keeping in view the objective to provide house to all, Indira Awas Yojana was started for the first time to provide dwelling units to poor persons. Those who

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\*Not recorded.

[Chaudhary Lal Singh]

do not have houses were to be provided with houses but sufficient number of dwelling units could not be constructed under the said scheme. When we visit our constituency, block areas....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri D.P. Yadav, you cannot raise two subjects.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR.SPEAKER: There should not be any running commentary in the House.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: At some of the places houses get damaged due to fire and at some other due to snowfall and heavy rainfall. Few days back when there was earthquake several houses had collapsed. We, the Members of Parliament visit our constituency but there we cannot give anything to the people except sharing their grief.

Indira Awas Yojana is a scheme. On the pattern of this scheme MPs should also be authorized to spend discretionary MPLAD funds for those poor persons whose houses have been damaged and destroyed due to fire and who have become homeless....(*Interruptions*)

It is very important that the MPs should be able to provide on the spot assistance to needy persons. One may understand the difficulties faced by poor homeless people during the summer season. When there is snowfall in my areas during the winter season....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You have completed your speech, now there is no need to repeat it.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: I would like to request that MP should be authorized and the provisions regarding the MPLAD should be changed so that the discretionary quota can be properly utilized. I would like to extend my thanks to you....(*Interruptions*). I have raised the issue other than coca-cola.

SHRI SHALENDRA KUMAR (Chail): I also associate myself with him....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: This is strange.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: What is this that you want to speak but are not ready to listen other? What is this going on.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Everyone's point is of national importance. What is this going on?

[*English*]

You all have given notices on matters of urgent public importance. Do you think that only your matter is important?

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA (Guna): Water is the prime mover in human development and the water crisis is becoming grimmer by the day. India with 16 per cent of the world's population shares only four per cent of global fresh water resources. Per capita water availability in India has come down to one-third of what it was in 1951, from 5,200 cubic metre in 1951 to 1,820 cubic meter in 2001. Fifteen States in India are endlessly squabbling over eight river water projects. They deny water, particularly drinking water to one another, an some States are sitting pretty, blocking the genuine claims of others, while allowing the river waters to flow into the sea, despite the decisions taken by independent Tribunals and Commissions. Inter-State water disputes linger on for decades on end.

The recent UN Water Development Report, underlines India's failure and mismanagement of its water resources, mainly attributable to bureaucratic and political inertia and corruption. This mismanagement results in ever increasing death toll claimed by water borne disease of which 21 per cent are children under five years of age

and two-third of the population is denied access to proper sanitation.

Besides all these, through India shares only four per cent of fresh water resources, it is placed by the UN among the top ten water rich countries of the world. Thus, what is needed is an integrated water policy with a transparent and time bound social investment plan, community participation in projects and zero tolerance approach to corruption and mismanagement. This should aim at improving water use efficiency and conserving water resources by preventing wastage of fresh water, rain water harvesting and treatment of waste water. Laws should be enacted and effectively enforced to prevent over exploitation of ground water. A realistic water tariff should be fixed and revenue should be collected. A participatory irrigation management system has to be evolved and effectively enforced.

So, I would like to request the Government to evolve such an integrated water policy, duly prioritising water security.

MR. SPEAKER: Why do you not participate in the Forum on Water?

Now, Shri S. Mallikarjuniah to speak.

SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): Sir, with your permission, I am raising a very important matter under Matters under Rule 377.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Matters under Rule 377 are not being taken up. Now, Matters of Urgent Public Importance are going on. Then, I will call you later.

Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): The issue is concerned with the national security.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, you are fully aware that one hon. Member cannot raise two matter on the same day. You have yourself decided to raise the other matter.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have not raised two issues. It is a single issue. It is concerned with national security.

MR. SPEAKER: You have finished your speech.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: It is general.  
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: All the hon'ble Members have expressed their views is that regard  
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, I am sorry.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, today is the tenth day of the relay hunger strike by thousands and thousands of Anganwadi workers and helpers who have come to Delhi from all the States....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate. Very well, I will be adjourning the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Members do not cooperate, I will adjourn the House.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a matter of joke.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The Anganwadi workers and helpers are demanding to make them permanent as per the Supreme Court's order, as per the commitment made by the UPA Government in its National Common Minimum Programme. They are also demanding regulation of Anganwai workers as Grade "C" and helpers as Grade D employees. They are further demanding

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

enhancement of honorarium of Anganwadi workers to Rs. 3000 and of helpers to Rs. 2000 per month. Further, they want linkage of Anganwadi employees honorarium to Consumer Price Index and payment of DA. They are not getting any pension or gratuity....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It was only the other day that it was raised.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: They are demanding universalisation of ICDS throughout the country which should be run by the Government. They are doing a commendable work....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It was raised last week. Again, I am allowing you. But there must be some limit.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: This is a very important issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Every matter is important.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: They are on hunger strike. Thousands of people have come to Delhi.

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed you. You have made your point.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I demand that as per the Supreme Court's order, the Anganwadi workers and helpers should be regularised, should be made permanent and there should be universalisation of ICDS throughout the country as committed by the UPA Government in its National Common Minimum Programme. Thank you. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please cooperate and help me.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You have expressed your views.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What are you speaking.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What has happened to you suddenly?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have to wait. You cannot dictate to me.

Shri Rupchand Pal.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, thousands or Anganwadi workers who are rendering such a valuable service to the people are being deprived of the minimum justice in terms of remuneration. For the last ten days, they are on realy hunger strike. The Government is not responding to them....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: How do you know the number in the List. Every day, I am saying that the number should not be given.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: My demand is that the Government should immediately respond because thousands of Anganwadi workers, coming from different parts of the counrty, are holding a relay hunger strike for the last ten days. The UPA Government is committed to its National Common Minimum Programme to do justice to the workers, to the Anganwadi workers, to provide them permanent jobs and also to provide Grade "C" and Grade "D" salaries and all these things....(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, the Government should respond. The hon. Minister is here. He should respond to it. The Government is responsible.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, it is over. I cannot compel the Government to respond.

Next, Shri L. Ganesan. I think he is not here.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that opportunity was given to all however, I have also given notice for this...(Interruptions)

13.00 hrs.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: How can I give it to you?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have given two notices. Once I allow you, I have to allow everybody else.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: I have given only one notice....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: That is over.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Why did you take part in that.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: I have given only one notice....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, you have given two notices.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: The notice that has come before nine O' clock....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Today there is two notice of yours.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: The matter is concerned with the national security....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have given both the notices.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: The notice which has been given after nine O' clock has no significance. The notice that has been given in time should be considered....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have given notice and now you yourself it telling that the notice have no significance.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: All the leaders got opportunity to speak on the issue of coca cola.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SURENDRA PRAKASH GOYAL (Hapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you please also give me opportunity to speak. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are in trouble, Mr. Goyal. You will be the first person, who will be my victim.

...(Interruptions)

13.03 hrs.

(II) **Re: News Item pertaining to Kandhar trip by the then Minister of External Affairs in connection with the hijacking of flight No. IC814 in December, 1999**

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this House and the people of this country towards the issue of the hijacking of the plane in flight from Kathmandu to Kandhar by terrorist which was taken to Kandhar. It was first landed in Amritsar. I would like to draw the attention of the House towards three issues. Some new facts have come to light in this case. He is a Member of Rajya Sabha and is a leader of opposition in the Upper House. He has written a book. All these facts are in this book, but I would like to read three-four lines, which are in English.

[English]

"The day the demands of the hijackers, two hundred million dollars as ransom money, release of some 36 proven terrorists, the interred bones of one terrorist, at least came to me. I shared them with

[Shri Madhusudan Mistry]

the Cabinet and sought advice. What should I do? The Cabinet was unanimous, of one voice: 'Reject the demands, go and tell the Press in appropriate words.'

[Translation]

There are two issue. If Cabinet had not approved, as he has written, then how come then Minister of External Affairs went over there? Who took the decision overruling decision of the Cabinet? It has been said that at that time. Shri Advani had opposed it, if he had not given the approval, then who had overruled him? Whether nobody paid any heed to the opinion of the then Minister of Home Affairs? They gave 200 million dollars. ...*(Interruptions)*. Let me speak for two minutes. ...*(Interruptions)* From where that money was arranged, which country contributed that money? Whether payment was made through some other means? Alongwith it, he has written in his book that he carried red bag alongwith him. I would like to know what was in that red bag? The entire decision was taken by then NDA Government whose leaders claim that no other leader is more nationalist than they. The very same leaders took the terrorists alongwith them, and handed them over to hijackers alongwith cash. Under what circumstances they had paid the money? How this could have happened, though entire Cabinet was against it?...*(Interruptions)*

I would like to demand from the Government to set up a Committee in this regard and facts should be brought before the people of the country...*(Interruptions)* This is a fit case for then NDA Government to tender apology to the entire country...*(Interruptions)* Those who are Member of Rajya Sabha...*(Interruptions)* [English] It is very important. They cannot run away. [Translation] The so-called nationalist people had hidden all the facts. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry. He is entitled to raise it.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: Till today, they had concealed all the facts. On the basis of concealing all

these facts....\* and nothing can be done\*....I understand that they had concealed all the facts and till date they have not been revealed...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This will not go into record.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Bishnoi, your's is not a matter of urgent national importance. I will not grant you opportunity to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

MR. SPEAKER: You have to wait Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav. If you cannot wait, you may go.

Shri S. Mallikarjuniah.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation].

MR. SPEAKER: Nowadays, the hon. Members want immediate response from the hon'ble Minister speeches.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It depends on him and not on me.

...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): I will convey your concern to the Home Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I think, nobody with any prestige can be Speaker.

...*(Interruptions)*

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\*Not recorded.



[Translation]

\*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to raise a very important issue. The number of atrocities on harijans is increasing very rapidly year after year. It is shocking to know the figures of atrocities particularly between 2000 to 2006. The latest figures have been given by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes. It was 38,000 during 2004. These are the cases that have been registered by police. The actual number of cases would be something like one lakh each year.

The reservation policy has not been implemented and that is one of the reasons for the increase in the number of atrocities on harijans. The reservation Bill is pending before the Parliament for the last two years. I hope that the Centre would pass this Bill at the earliest.

I request the Centre to take stringent measures against the culprits who are indulging in these atrocities and enable the Scheduled Caste people to lead a peaceful and honourable life.

I thank you, Sir, and conclude my speech.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, do not try to pressurise the Chair, please; already there is enough trouble.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I perceive myself to be one of the hon'ble Members who abide by the ruling given by the Chair. Just now, Chair has ordered that all national leaders will speak on Coca-Cola issue. I have given proper notice in this regard ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Listen. *[English]* Because you are raising a question, you have given a notice: you have given another notice.

[Translation]

You have give notice after 9.30 a.m.

...*(Interruptions)*

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\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: As per rule, that notice would be invalid and this notice would be valid ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Therefore, knowingly you have given a notice which should be rejected.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: That notice would be rejected, it is all right, but you will at least give assent to the notice given on time....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All right, you may speak.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: If you do not have time, I will not speak....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You may speak. I have requested you to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I never disturb the House. Comments regarding maintaining discipline and decorum in the House have been emanating from the Chair at regular interval though. I have been a disciplined Parliamentarian right throughout. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I acknowledge that you are a very disciplined Member, except today.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: You have pin pointed the lacunae....*(Interruptions)* I do not want to speak over here. A separate discussion on this should be held....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have high regard for you. You know that, we are colleagues for years.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: It is not appropriate to make comments about someone's behaviour or other things in the House....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have called you with great respect, please speak.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, crores of people are waiting with abated breath about the outcome of the revelation about the presence of a mole in PMO, at last what happened? A former Minister of External Affairs misled the country and kept it in dark for many days. I do not want to name that Minister of External Affairs. However, I would like to state that it has increased the curiosity of crores of people in this regard. A sensation was created in the entire country but nothing was unearthed. This act is tantamount to creating much cry and little wool. No result came out of it. Name of the mole was not revealed. Therefore, I would like to state that it is not appropriate to put crores of people of the country into a state of doubt, suspicion and dilemma about our national security. He talks about the dignity and national security. There is a news item published in today's newspaper under the caption "Bhedia gumnam hi raha, bhed ujarh nahi".

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the former Minister of External Affairs has mentioned about the mole in his book. It is really an unfortunate situation. Therefore, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards it. It is really irresponsible behaviour of the former External Affairs Minister. The matter is related with the national security and nuclear test. He has stated that the mole knew about the nuclear test. The incident occurred during the tenure of the then Prime Minister of 1992-93. It is really unfortunate.

The irresponsible behaviour of the former Minister of External Affairs aroused curiosity among the people to know the name of the mole. Moreover, he has also written a letter in this regard. Therefore, I would like to state that he should apologize publicly for the doubt his behaviour has created in the country. Such a conduct of a person in respect of such a sensitive issue like the security of the country, is a crime against the nation.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The other Matters of Urgent Public Importance will be taken up at the end of the day.

The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2 p.m.

13.10 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.*

14.04 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at four minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.*

(MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

### MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No. 14—Matters Under Rule 377.

- (I) **Need to provide passenger amenities at railway stations in district Hailakandi and Karimganj, Assam and complete broad gauge conversion work within the stipulated time frame**

SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIIDYA (Karimganj): Indian Railways are going to modernise a number of railway stations to the world standard. This is, no doubt, a step to give a facelift to Indian Railways as emphasised in the Railway Budget proposal. I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for his sincere attempt.

However, the railway in my constituency is also a part of Indian Railway. We do not dare dream of having any world class facilities at our railway stations in the near future. Our trains run at an average speed of 15 kilometres per hour, tracks are dilapidated, Railways are shaky and detention of trains due to landslides are random. There is definite doubt in the mind of the people here whether at all the BG conversion will ever be completed. Our important stations like Karimganj Junction, Badarpur Junction, Katakhal Junction, Baraigram Junction and Hailakandi are run down, void of passenger amenities and platforms are chipped off and unsmooth. Even in many stations in Badarpur-Dharamanagar section, Karimganj Dullavchhera section and Katakhal-Bhairavi section, there are no sheds over the platforms. The condition is worsening with the passage of time.

Considering the tremendous sufferings of the passengers in this region, I urge upon the Government to take measures on war-footing to restore the normal condition of the stations with sheds, passenger amenities, hygienic toilets, etc., and complete the BG conversion within the timeframe as declared earlier and to keep the railway service open for all days between Badarpur and Lumding by taking positive steps for protecting landslides, which is a recurring nuisance consuming huge unproductive expenditure since last few years.

**(ii) Need to reopen the closed mills of NTC in the country**

*[Translation]*

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL (Mehsana): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, more than half of the NTC mills are lying closed all over the country but the workers engaged therein are being paid wages without doing work. We can increase the textile production if we modernize these mills and also if the wasteful expenditure being incurred on paying wages could be checked. These mills have huge possibilities for modernization and can be revived by selling the surplus land of these mills. One of the benefits of modernization is that we would be able to produce good quality cloth which could be exported to other countries to earn foreign exchange. Discussion in this regard has been held in the House several times and the Government has been making commitments to take concrete steps in this regard but nothing is being done actually. Government is spending money in vain on wages.

Through this House, I request the Government to change the management of NTC and urgently revive the closed mills.

**(iii) Need to publish telephone directory in Madurai Telecom District, Tamil Nadu**

*[English]*

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul): In Tamil Nadu, Madurai Telecom District of the BSNL Department comprises of Madurai, Dindigul and Theni Revenue Districts. There are nearly 2,30,000 telephone connections in this telecom district. The annual revenue from the above telephone connections is more than Rs.150 crore.

I would like to point out that the Telephone Directory in that district has not been published since 1998. In the absence of a Directory, it is very difficult for a subscriber or the general public to find out the telephone number of another subscriber whether he is an individual or Government office or public sector undertaking.

Though anybody can contact the Toll free telephone number 198 to find out a particular number, at times it is difficult to get connection from 198 and the common man also does not know the usage of this number.

The telecom sector is a highly competitive sector now-a-days and at a time when more and more facilities are being extended, it is not fair and just to withdraw the schemes, which were in vogue for a long time.

Hence, I request the hon. Minister of Communications and Information Technology, through this august House, to take necessary steps and arrange to publish the Telephone Directory not only in Madurai District but also in other districts wherever it is necessary. If needed a nominal fee may be collected from the subscribers as done for Railway Time Table.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Harisinh Chavda—  
Not present.

**(iv) Need to include Thanagnazi, Rajgarh, Raini, Khairtal and Kathumar tehsils in district Alwar, Rajasthan under "National employment Guarantee Scheme"**

*[Translation]*

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Thanaghazi, Rajgarh and Raini tehsils of the Alwar district of Rajasthan are scheduled tribes dominated areas whereas Khairtal and Kathumar are scheduled castes dominated tehsils. These tehsils are deprived of employment opportunities as well as industrial units. In the absence of employment opportunities in the Alwar district, people from the entire area usually migrate to the cities. I request the Union Government to include this backward, poor and hilly area under the National Employment Guarantee Scheme.

**(v) Need for eviction of encroachers from railway land near Bina Station in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh**

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, hundreds of acres of railway land is lying vacant and unutilized near the Bina station in my Parliamentary constituency of Sagar in Madhya Pradesh. As the Railways are not utilizing it, some influential people have encroached upon the land. They have become undeclared owner of this land and have given it on contract for agriculture to others. On one hand, the Railway administration is formulating various schemes for the commercial use of its unused lands around the stations, on other, it is showing an indifferent attitude towards such a large vacant land near Bina. Prices of land in Beena are sky-rocketing as work on a refinery is going to start over there shortly. The most prime land of Bina is in possession of the Railways and by proper commercial utilization of this land, it can increase its revenue.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to extend support for the eviction of encroachers from this land to make it available for commercial use.

**(vi) Need for expansion of Alkaloid Factory located at Neemach, Madhya Pradesh**

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the production of Codein Phosphate is very vital with a view to earn and save sufficient foreign exchange in the country. Codein is produced with the help of opium. There is an alkaloid factory at Neemach, Madhya Pradesh for its production where it is produced in large quantity. The production of opium in Madhya Pradesh, Rajashthan and Uttar Pradesh from export point of view and its relatively diminishing consumption in the international market has increased the opium reserve in the country which is in several tonnes and in view of it there is a dire need to enhance the production of codein and opium's other by-products. The Government had taken up the issue of expansion of alkaloid factory at Neemach and the production was enhanced by doubling the shifts, however, the supply of Codein phosphate is

falling short of its demand in the country due to which it has to be imported and heavy foreign exchange is spent. I request the Government that in view of it, the production capacity of alkaloid factory located at Neemach should be increased so that the indigenously produced opium could be consumed in the country itself and foreign exchange could be saved.

It has been learnt from reports appearing in various newspapers that the Government are contemplating to entrust this work to the private sector. Therefore, it is requested that the existing factories are working very efficiently and as such the factory located at Neemach should be expanded.

**(vii) Need to open a full-fledged passport office at Mangalore**

*[English]*

SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA (Mangalore): Sir, presently there is a passport collection counter functioning in Mangalore, which more or less serves as a courier service, without any powers. Power of issue of passport vests with the Regional Passport Office (RPO) at Bangalore. Considering the fact that a large number of applicants for overseas job belong to this region, and also Haj pilgrims travelling to the Holly Mecca every year, it is necessary that a full-fledged passport centre be opened in Mangalore, which will lesson the workload at RPO at Bangalore.

Now, the Mangalore Airport will also be soon emerging as an International Airport, and international flights will start operating from September 2006. For immigration and other requirements, it is very necessary to have a Regional Passport Centre at Mangalore. I have taken up the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs to set up a full-fledged passport office at Mangalore. This would cater to a large number of applicants.

Considering the above facts, I request your good self to direct the Minister for External Affairs to take immediate action for setting up of a full-fledged passport centre at Mangalore.

**(viii) Need to check the spread of 'GUNI' disease in Nittoor, Hubli, Gubbi Taluka and surrounding areas in Karnataka.**

*[Translation]*

\*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): Sir, I would like to invite the attention of this House regarding the spread of a deadly disease 'GUNI' in Nittoor, Hubli, Gubbi Talukas and surrounding areas, which claimed several lives. It requires immediate steps to check this disease. Several people have been hospitalised, and are not getting relief in spite of the best efforts by the local Doctors and the State Administration.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to find out the cause of this deadly disease, and its effective treatment. They should rush an expert team to study in detail about this deadly disease in order to save the precious lives of the people, and also to prevent its further spreading throughout the country.

**(ix) Need to give approval for setting up a national level Centre for fluorosis mitigation at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat**

*[English]*

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA (SURAT): A special focus is given to 'quality affected' villages/habitations for providing safe drinking water to rural population by Government of India. In Gujarat, 4,341 habitations were found to be affected by excessive fluoride in 2003 survey. In view of the wide ramifications of the problem of fluorosis, Government of Gujarat submitted a proposal for establishing a Fluorosis Mitigation Centre at Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad, which may serve as a national level Fluorosis Mitigation Centre.

In this regard, Government of Gujarat made repeated requests to Government of India through various letters for its approval.

The then Minister of Rural Development, Government of India through his DO letter No. W-11044/9/99 TM-II, dated January 30, 2004 informed Government of Gujarat about the in-principle decision taken at Government of India level for establishing the main

Fluorosis Mitigation Centre at Gandhinagar, Gujarat and the Government of Gujarat was requested to make available two acres of land for this purpose. Accordingly, two acres of land, plot No. 11, bearing survey Nos. 242, 237 and 270 at Village Koba was allotted for this purpose by the Collector, Gandhinagar vide letter No. CB/Land/Vashi/123/05, dated 6-1-2006 and the same has been intimated to the Minister of Rural Development, Government of India.

In these circumstances, I urge upon the Government to approve the aforementioned proposal for setting up the Fluorosis Mitigation Centre at Gandhinagar, Gujarat without further delay.

**(x) Need to provide a lumpsum grant to the Football Academy set up by Mohan Bagan and Steel Authority of India**

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): I want to draw the attention of the whole House as well as the Minister of Youth and Sports regarding the participation of our younger generation in Olympics and other sports activities in the world. Today, I am confined only to football activities. To accelerate the football activities in our younger generation, three years ago, one of the leading clubs of Kolkata, that is, Mohan Bagan and the Steel Authority of India formed an Academy at Durgapur in West Bengal to boost the skills of our younger generation.

Over 8,000 teams from five Continents, from grass-root clubs to some of the most illustrious names in football, have fought their way through local, national and regional tournaments over the past year to win one of the twenty places at the Tenth Edition of the Manchester United Premier Cup World Finals. Manchester United will host the Under-15 Football competition from 8th to 11th August, 2006 with tournament matches taking place at their training ground in Carrington, England. The Premier Cup has grown to become a global event jointly sponsored by Nike and Manchester United as part of their commitment to youth participation and skill development.

Since its inception, the competition has become a providing ground of many talented youngsters and "Premier Cup Old Boys" is not only representing their club but also their country at the highest level.

I would just like to highlight as to how within three years, Mohan Bagan-SAIL Academy has become eligible

\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

[Shri Sunil Khan]

to participate in the forthcoming competition at Manchester from 8th to 11th August, 2006. But it is difficult to run the Academy continuously if funds are not provided by the Government.

So, I urge upon the Government to sponsor the Academy with a lumpsum grant to continue the Academy so that the club can contest in the World Cup Football Tournament in future.

**(xi) Need to Formulate Guidelines for Safety of Workers Engaged in Coal Fields**

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY (Asansol): Sir, the safety of coal workers is neglected for a long time. The safety equipment is not being supplied properly. Quality of the shoes supplied in ECL is an example. The Coal ministry should take care of the workers who are working in the underground mines. The violation of safety rules in the mines is the main cause of accidents. Occurrence of fire in the mines is a general phenomenon. The approach of the authorities in this respect is casual. This is also causing losses in the mines. The condition of open cast projects (OCPs) is also very bad. Normally it creates problems for the local people. Ministry should prepare guidelines.

**(xii) Need to provide Separate Funds for National Commission for Scheduled Castes**

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the very objective of National Commission for Scheduled Castes constituted under provision of the Constitution has been defeated. There is no separate fund for the Commission. There are no computer operators in the commission. There is no law officer in the Commission ever since its inception in the year 1978. The post of Deputy Inspector-General of Police has constantly remained vacant barring a short period. The meeting of the concerned parties cannot be convened owing to paucity of funds. Despite various constitutional provisions for the protection of social, economic, educational and cultural rights of the Scheduled Castes, the atrocities on them are increasing. Thirty eight thousand cases of atrocities on the people belonging to the Scheduled

Castes were registered in the year 2004 under the Prevention of Atrocities Act. The pace of punishing the guilty persons in the said cases is very slow. Punishment is awarded only in 3 percent cases. In Rajasthan even today the bridegroom belonging to the Scheduled Castes is not allowed to ride the mare. The condition of the Commission is even worse in the States. The Central Government should pay attention to the said Commissions.

**(xiii) Need to Provide Financial Assistance for strengthening Embankments of River Chaandan and Cheer Sukhanla in District Banks, Bihar**

SHRI GIRDHARI YADAV (Banka): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the embankments of River Chaandan and Cheer Sukhanla of my parliamentary Constituency Banka have been damaged, due to which the rain and flood water gushes into the fields of the poor farmers and destroys their crops every year. Although it is a state subject, yet, whenever the Bihar Government is asked to accomplish this task it expresses its inability due to paucity of funds. So, in view of the interests of the farmers, the Centre should provide financial assistance to repair the embankments of both the rivers immediately so that the houses and fields of the poor farmers could be saved from water.

Through this House, the Government is requested to provide Central Financial Assistance to complete this task immediately by accordingly it priority.

**(xiv) Need to Develop Vellore Airport and Make it Operational**

[English]

PROF. K.M. KADER MOHIDEEN (Vellore): Sir, in my Vellore Constituency of Tamil Nadu, Abdullahpuram Airport still remains to be developed. Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu have made representation to the hon. Civil Aviation Minister that Vellore District Airport should be developed and the long-standing demand of the people of the region should be conceded at the earliest. I am sorry to bring to the notice of the Government that the Vellore Airport still remains a forgotten project. Vellore is a historic place where the

Secular Fort is adorning the city. The region stands out as the first spot from where the Freedom Movement was begun by the Sepoys in 1806. The fort finds a place in the tourism map of the country and it needs to be included in the world map of tourism.

Internationally reputed CMC Hospital and the Medical College and the Vellore Institute of Technology attract thousands of passengers from all over the country and from abroad. It is from Vellore the leather industry is fetching more than six thousand crores of foreign exchange for our country. The airport is also situated in the centrally located place between Bangalore and Chittoor. Development and expansion of the airport is the immediate necessity. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to open the airport with all developed facilities.

**(xv) Need to declare Non-Governmental District Rural Development Agency employees as Government Servants**

*[Translation]*

SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD NISHAD (Fatehpur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, through you, while drawing the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Rural Development; I would like to submit that the Government of India and the State Government pay 75 and 25 per cent contribution respectively under the head, pay and allowances of workers/employees in the District Rural Development Agency, (DRDA) of each district across the country implementing the employment oriented schemes of the Rural Development Programmes, however, barring few states the DRDA employees of several states including a big State like Uttar Pradesh are neither considered Government servants nor do they get any benefits available to a Government servant.

Therefore, keeping in view the expenditure being incurred by the Union Government on DRDA employees and the pay and allowances payable to the DRDA employees by Government of India, necessary measures should be taken for declaring Non-Governmental Employees of DRDA in several States alongwith that of Uttar Pradesh as Government Servants.

*[English]*

Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul—not present.

**(xvi) Need to sanction the proposed railway link from Nawapada Road to Bargarh Road via Padampur in Orissa**

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): Sir, Nawapada district and Padampur sub-division of Bargarh district in Orissa is one of the most under-developed areas of the country. Padampur Sub-division is divested of irrigation facilities and both the areas do not have any industry. The percentage of people living below poverty line are highest in these areas. In spite of rich natural resources, there are reports of starvation deaths. The living standard of the people is low. To earn a livelihood a large number of people use to migrate to other areas every year. This area is not well connected by road or railways depriving it from trade, commerce and other allied activities. It remains incommunicado from all points of view. There has been, therefore, a consistent demand for construction of a new BG railway link from Nawapada road to Bargarh road Via Padampur. The Reconnaissance Engineering-cum-Traffic Survey report submitted to the railway Board during February, 2006 is positive having 18.32 per cent Rate of Return (ROR) with a project cost of Rs. 416 crore. This proposed rail link will basically cater to the coal requirement of thermal based power plants of Western India to be supplied from Talcher area and Jharsuguda area. It shall also facilitate transportation of goods from Paradeep Port to Central India through this rail link with minimum cost of transportation. The project will also give the shortest connectivity to the steel plants which are coming up in a big way in Orissa for transportation of finished products to Central and Western India. This project shall cater to the needs of the two most economically under-developed districts of Orissa State, i.e., Bargarh and Nowapada and in the process the whole of undivided Sambalpur and Kalahandi districts.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Railway Ministry to sanction the proposed rail link from Nowapada road to Bargarh road via Padampur without further delay and make provision in the next Railway Budget to commence the work of the project.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO (Parvatipuram): Sir, I would like to associate myself with this issue.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Kindly associate the name of Shri B.K. Dev.

**(xvii) Need for upgradation of Salem Steel Plant with a view to utilise the iron ore available in Kanchamalal Hills**

[English]

SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPIPARAI (Sivakasi): In the year 1981, Salem Steel Plant was started as a steel rolling mill. Recently the Central Government has allocated Rs. 1553 crore for the upgradation of the Salem Steel Plant.

In the nearby areas of Salem Steel Plant, i.e. Kanchamalal hills, plenty of iron ore is available. The ferrous content of the iron ore is only 35 per cent instead of the minimum standard of 60 per cent. The Steel Ministry with the help of latest technology and by mixing the iron ore with some other highly ferrous content iron ore can make use of the ore available in Kanchamalal hills, that will be a great asset to our country.

So, I request the Government to do the needful and upgrade the Salem Steel Plant to the level of Bokaro, Bhilai and Rourkela Steel Plants.

**(xviii) Need to extend reservation benefits to those Scheduled Castes who have adopted Buddhism**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Sir, 20 lakh people in Nagpur Maharashtra, lead by Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedker had embraced socialist Buddhism renouncing the Hindu religion on 14th October 1956. This event is going to complete its 50 years this year itself. 2550th Birth Anniversary of Thathagata Gautam Buddha is also being celebrated this year. The Government of India is requested that the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the 'Buddhism Deeksha Samaroh' and Buddha Jayanti 2550 should be celebrated with much fanfare. The representatives of all Budhist countries of the world should also be invited in this programme.

A decision was taken in the year 1990 to provide all facilities available to the scheduled castes like reservation in education, jobs to the scheduled castes people who adopted Buddhism in Maharashtra, however, they were struck off from the list of Schedule castes during the census of 2001. Amendments should be made in the Constitution to include them again in the list of Scheduled Casts.

14.32 hrs.

### ASSAM RIFLES BILL, 2006

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, we will take up Item 15, Assam Rifles Bill, 2006. The time allotted is only one hour. Shri Regupathy.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, on behalf of Shri Shivraj V. Patil, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the governance of the Assam Rifles, an Armed Force of the Union for ensuring the security of the borders of India, to carry out Counter Insurgency Operations in the specified areas and to act in aid of civil authorities for the maintenance of the law and order and for matters connected therewith, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, I may also add a few words at this stage. The Assam Rifles was raised in 1835 as Cachar Levy for watch and ward duties on the North Eastern border of the country and to assist the Civil Administration in the maintenance of law and order in the tribal areas of the erstwhile composite State of Assam. The Governor of Assam under the overall control of the Ministry of External Affairs administered the Force. The Force has grown from five battalions at the time of Independence to 46 battalions at present.

With the passing of Assam Rifles Act, 1941, it came under the control of the Central Government. In 1962,



this Force was placed under the operational control of Army and in 1965, its administrative control was transferred to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Its operational control continues to be with the Army.

The organisational structure, sphere of responsibilities and role of Assam Rifles have undergone a considerable change over a period of time. The Force has expanded both in size and responsibility. At present, the Assam Rifles is performing the following duties.

1. Counter insurgency operations and internal security duties in the North East and other areas wherever necessary, under the operational control of the Army.
2. Guarding the Indo-Myanmar border.
3. Ensuring security of rear areas in the Tactical Battle Area (TBA) during war.
4. Assisting the Army in other operational tasks as and when required during war and peace.

From the experience gathered over the years, it is felt that the Assam Rifles Act, 1941 does not adequately meet the prevalent requirement of the Force in the matter of administration and discipline. The following are the main problems or lacunae in the existing Act:

1. There is mention of officers of the rank of Commandant and Assistant Commandant only. The ranks of Director General, Additional Director General, Inspector General, Deputy Inspector General, Deputy Commandant are not specified in the Act.
2. The cadre officers, that is those promoted from the ranks of the Force above the rank of Subedar Major are not covered under the existing Assam Rifles Act.
3. There is no provision of Security Force Courts in the Assam Rifles Act, 1941; as a result the cases of the Force personnel, who commit various offences have to be handed over the civil police for investigation and trial unlike other Paramilitary Forces.
4. The Assam Rifles Act, 1941 does not provide

any departmental remedies like appeal, pardon, remission, etc. and these are appealable only in Sessions Court.

5. The Assam Rifles Act, 1941 does not specify the Force as an Armed Force of the Union.

Therefore, in order to overcome these difficulties and to make the Assam Rifles Act similar to Acts governing other Central Police Organisations, it is proposed to replace the existing Assam Rifles Act, 1941 by a new legislation.

The following are the salient features of the proposed legislation:

1. Constitution of the Assam Rifles as an Armed Force of the Union.
2. Both Assam Rifles personnel and Assam Rifles cadre officers will be brought under one Act, that is, the proposed Assam Rifles Act. However, the personnel on deputation from Army will continue to be governed by the Army Act, 1950.
3. Offences committed by the Force personnel could be tried by duly constituted Assam Rifles Courts.
4. Provisions relating to detention, custody and trial of the offenders under the proposed legislation.
5. Composition and constitution of the Assam Rifles Courts and the procedure to be adopted by such courts and other related matters.
6. Confirmation, revision and execution of sentences, pardons, remissions, etc. and other miscellaneous residuary provisions.
7. Deductions to be made from the pay and allowances of the members of the Force for certain offences.
8. Manner of execution of sentences of death and imprisonment, provisions relating to powers and duties conferrable and imposable on the members of the Force.
9. Protection for acts by the members of the Force.

[Shri S. Regupathy]

10. Power to make rules and regulations under the proposed new Act.

Out of 12 chapters in this Bill, Chapters 2 and 3 relate to Constitution of the Force and service privileges. Next eight Chapters relate to defining offences, punishment, penal deductions, arrest and proceedings before trial, constitution of Assam Rifles Court, procedures, confirmation and revision and execution of sentences, pardon, remission, etc.

The proposed new legislation is updation or improvement of the existing Act which has been duly examined and accepted by the Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee of 13th Lok Sabha on Home Affairs. As per recommendations of the said Committee, necessary changes have been made in Clauses 2 and 108 of the present Bill.

It is proposed that the Assam Rifles, which was constituted in 1835, will be deemed to have been constituted under the proposed legislation. All expenses incurred concerning the administration of this Force would be met from the Consolidated Fund of India. As the Force has already been constituted, no additional expenditure of non-recurring nature is likely to be involved when this Bill is enacted and brought into force.

With these words, Sir, I commend this Bill, as passed by the Rajya Sabha, to this august House for consideration and approval.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the governance of the Assam Rifles, and Armed Force of the Union for ensuring the security of the borders of India, to carry out Counter Insurgency Operations in the specified areas and to act in aid of civil authorities for the maintenance of the law and order and for matters connected therewith, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

[Translation]

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora):

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, my seat is in back row. I am sitting in the front row. If you permit, I may start my speech from here only.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: All right. Permission granted. You can speak from here only.

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA': Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I would like to thank the Government for bringing Assam Rifles Bill, 2006 in the House. It is a much awaited Bill. It was drafted by the NDA Government and it was brought in the august House for discussion on 8 May, 2003. Assam Rifles is contributing a lot for the security of the country and its personnel have made many sacrifices for the security of country. Therefore, it became imperative to refer the Bill to the Standing Committee. Therefore, it was sent to the Standing Committee and the Government accepted some of its recommendations in the report submitted on 19 December, since at that time Lok Sabha was dissolved therefore this bill lapsed. Therefore, the hon'ble Minister has presented this Bill in the House after it was passed in the Rajya Sabha on 16 May, 2006. He has given its background as how this force was set up in the year 1835. First, it was under the control of Assam Government, then it came under the control of Ministry of External Affairs and at present it is under control of Ministry of Home Affairs, but it is having a dual arrangement. The dual arrangement is that Army would be having operational control in fight against enemy in national area and as far as penal provisions and other administrative work is concerned, the Ministry of Home Affairs would be its controlling authority. This was much awaited bill, which has been presented here for getting it passed. I rise on behalf of Bharatiya Janata Party to welcome this bill and at the same time would like to give some suggestions and express my views.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to clarify that this bill has been presented in the House for passing it, therefore, no immediate amendments will be introduced. If any legal objection is raised or suggestion is given by us, it will not be possible to make any change or make any immediate amendment in this bill. My submission is that the Government shall keep in view any suggestion received in regard thereto. As per the provisions of Chapter 12 of the said Bill powers to make regulations and rules will vest in the Union Government.

Therefore, if these suggestions are kept in mind while enacting rules and regulations under it, it would be good for the force because it would be beneficial for the Assam Rifles soldiers who are fighting bravely against the terrorist and during peace time are helping in relief operations and extending their cooperation in maintaining law and order.

Sir, a mention about this in this regard is made in Chapter 3 of this bill which contains the details of the privileges and has been mentioned under clause 14 to 20, under which it has also been mentioned that only authorized deduction would be made from pay, an aggrieved individual who deems himself wronged by any officer or subordinate officer may be able to complain to the officer under whose command or orders he is serving and also he has been provided immunity from the attachment, if any civil or revenue court issues decree or order enforceable against him, and so long he belongs to the force, he would not be liable to be arrested for debt under any process or warrant issued by, or by the authority of any civil or revenue court or revenue officer. Thus the immunity from arrest has been given to the persons attending Assam Rifles Court. The clause 20 of this bill is very important. The rights and privileges of the persons serving in force under other law has also been saved. I have received three representations in this regard. I am making a mention of it because Assam Rifles 1941, Bill, present is in the process of implementation in form of Act, with passing of this bill, it will assume the form of new Act, then Assam Rifles Act 1941 will get lapsed and would be repealed. But till now, under the existing system, army men after retiring from Assam Rifles will work under ex-serviceman organization and would present suggestions and their needs before the force; you are aware that the provision for other state people has also been made in the constitution of the Force, as there are 37 per cent people belonging to Kumayun area and 15 per cent Sikh personnels in the Kumayun regiment, besides that there are Jaat and Ahirs etc. Likewise, the Assam Rifles in also having representation of the persons of various of parts of India and has mixed character. 10 thousand to 12-14 thousand people from Uttaranchal are serving this Force, this is not the correct figure, they have exaggerated the figures, out of it some have retired. They have sent me a representation and it also includes personnel of Assam Rifles and Ex-servicemen

organization, Uttaranchal. They have given information about privileges under chapter III, conferred on the personnel covered under the Army Act. Besides, there are certain rights and privileges in addition to any other rights and privileges conferred on persons subject to this Act generally by any other law for the time being in force, and one of such right is Right to make Will. In section 65 and 66 of Indian Succession Act, it has been provided that a person engaged in campaign or in real war without completing the formalities of verifying signature, as done by the ordinary citizen in case of making will would be given privilege of expressing his will orally.

Along with it, they should be provided exemption from tolls tax, which is not mentioned in this bill. In section 3 of Indian Tolls (Army and Air Force) Act 1901, it has been stated the all officers, airmen and NCs (E) of the regular Air Force on duty or on the march as well as their authorized followers, families, horses, baggage and transport are exempt from all tolls, except certain tolls for the transit of barges etc. along canals. The hon'ble Minister should take a note of it.

Besides that they are granted exemption in court-fee. As per section 19(A) of Court-Fees Act, 1870 affidavit not having civil planning filed by member of any of the Armed Forces of the Union is exempted from the fees. Besides that, there are many such subjects, about which I will not like to go in detail. I will dispatch the memorandums received by me to the hon'ble Minister.

Second Memorandum, about which I am making a mention has been given by President U.D. Joshi of Assam Rifles, Ex-Serviceman, organization Ranikhet. It does not make any mention of facilities. The main facility, which has not been given to them, about which I and Shri B.C. Khanduri have been continuously demanding that this Force should also be given CSD canteen facility like other Army personnels. The personnel of whether it is Assam Rifles, ITBP or BSF have to fight undeclared proxy war, while serving at borders. Besides that they are the first to counter the aggression, but CSD canteen facility is not for them. Special attention is needed to be paid in this regard. All organizations want that they should be given CSD canteen facility. This issue can be discussed with Army. If we do not want to set up a separate canteen for them, they should be given all facilities given to

[Shri Bachi Singh Rawat 'Bachda']

Ex-Serviceman whether it is liquor, ration or other utility items. They have equal pay scales, however, in the absence of this facility, they face a lot of problems in the market.

In addition to it, the special mention includes scholarship particularly to their children, relaxation in marks for admission and in addition to this the facilities which should be provided to the army jawans, ex-servicemen, D.M. or S.P. do not pay the desired attention in this regard. They face other problems as well which are mentioned separately. Secondly, in the representation forwarded by the Assam Rifles Association, Almora-Pithoragarh in a conference held recently, mainly two issues have been taken up. Among other problems, is the lesser opportunities of promotion due to induction of Officers on deputation from the army with Assam Rifles and the Bill itself has a provision for such induction....(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You have another speaker from your party. You have taken 12 minutes and the total time for discussion is one hour.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Please keep it in mind that he is the first speaker....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA': I have to make two three legal points. I am concluding the point regarding deputation. I shall send the file to the Hon. Minister. They further allege that the officers on deputation do not deem themselves to be subject to the Assam Rifles Act 1941 and maintain that it does not apply to them thus the serious corruption charges in the cases like buying meat, ration or construction do not get investigated. Hence, special attention is required to be paid to this matter. I assure to forward all their representations to the hon. Minister.

I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister and the House towards the three clauses namely clause 93, 108 and 120. The content of clause 93 needs to be amended. It should be pondered over seriously. Clause 93(1) seeks to provide that if the number of officers constituting an Assam Rifles Court after the commencement of a trial is reduced below the minimum number required by this Act, it shall be dissolved.

14.53 hrs.

(SHRI ARJUN SETHI *in the Chair*)

Secondly, Sub-clause (2) seeks to provide if, on account of the illness of the Law Officer or of the accused before the decision, it is impossible to continue the trial, an Assam Rifles Court shall be dissolved. There is another clause. Clause 93 section (4) seeks to provide that if an Assam Rifles Court is dissolved under this section, the accused may be tried again, that is, if the trial has been started and has reached the stage of evidence, however if the presiding Officer falls sick, the court shall be dissolved and the trial would start afresh. An amendment should have been made in the clause that once all the evidences have been recorded, the trial should not start afresh it should rather be continued from that stage where it was left in case of dissolution of court where it is on account of illness. The Hon. Minister should pay particular attention towards it.

Now, I refer to the second clause No. 108. It has been provided that subject to the provisions of sub-sections (2) and (3) every decision of an Assam Rifles Court be it death sentence shall be passed by a majority of votes; and where there is an equality of votes on either the finding or the sentence, the decision shall be in favour of the accused. In matters, other than a challenge or the finding or sentence the presiding officer shall have a casting vote. The word 'vote' has appeared in the English version which means that 7 years imprisonment should not be decided by a vote rather judicial decision should be mentioned. They should not only cast vote but adduce reasons as well and the entire case should be decided on the basis of vote. Attention should be paid in this regard as well. I am referring to it because when we come across incidents of suicide by jawans or a jawan firing at his superior out of rage which is attributable to his being under stress or tension and the inclement working conditions, so we should make such provision from this House and in this context it should be particularly seen that the provision of judicious decision and opinion instead of vote should be made.

In my opinion clause 120 is in contravention of the judicial principles. Clause 120(2) seeks to provide that evidence received under this section may be either oral, or in the shape of entries in, or certified extracts from,

books of an Assam Rifles Court, or other official records, and it shall not be necessary to give notice before trial to the person tried that evidence as to his previous conviction or character will be received that is oral evidence of any previous conviction shall be taken whereas it is possible that an officer may have some ill-feeling for a jawan and he may give an oral evidence that jawan was a previous convict. If there is an evidence for a previous conviction, it should be written and not oral.

Subsection (3) of the clause seeks to provide that at a Summary Assam Rifles Court, the officer holding the trial may, if he thinks fit, record any previous convictions against the offender, his general character and such other matters as may be prescribed as on his own knowledge, instead of requiring them to be proved under the foregoing provisions of this section, in my opinion free and fair justice should be effected under these two provisions whereas it is in total contravention of its principles. Hence amendment should be made in these two provisions.

I have pointed out the reasons for the stress, why such types of incidents are coming to light and why there is no system in place for them. Several times, demand for setting up of canteen has been made. The previous Government introduced a system for the ex-servicemen on the patterns of CGHS, if they provide contribution after retirement and is also recommended by Government dispensaries, then they can be treated in private hospitals, this scheme is not applicable for them. There is also no such system in place under which their wards could be given relaxation in marks. There is no provision for the resettlement anywhere. They are forced to remain in border areas regularly, be it on the Burma border or in the areas adjacent to Chinese border. After serving three years, the regular army gets peace duty when they are sent to peaceful areas, but no battalion of theirs is posted here. Like the ITBP Jawans who have been making demands that as they are always posted along the Tibetan border they should be posted outside the said area, there should be a few such battalions in Delhi and in other places after putting in three years service in permafrost areas they should get an opportunity to stay here for at least one year.

Finally I would like to say that there is provision for

family quarters for the accommodation of soldiers, but there is no such provision for family quarters for them, there is no arrangement in place for their wives and parents. They are serving in border areas and there is no provision for the education of their offsprings. This is the reason, left with no other options, under duress either they take their own lives or shoot down their fellow-soldiers. Such type of incidents are on the rise. They are not granted leave by the officers. Please take necessary actions to reduce the number of such incidents. I hope that the hon. Minister will keep these things in mind while formulating the rules and regulations and after passing this Bill. I would like to dwell on many more things, but as the hon. Chairman has granted me limited time. I am concluding now but I would be grateful if the hon. Minister takes cognizance of the issues raised by me. The hopes and aspirations of ex-servicemen and soldiers of Assam Rifles are centered on this Government and on this Bill. Therefore, they should definitely pay attention towards this direction.

While supporting this Bill, I conclude with these words.

15.00 hrs.

[English]

SHRI KIRIP CHALIHA (Guwahati): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Assam Rifles Bill and would like to make a few submissions not really about the practicalities about the clauses involved but more about some of the general feelings concerning Assam Rifles.

There is an inscription in Cohiba cemetery which is very famous and which reads like this: when you go home tell them of us, and say, for your today we gave up our tomorrow'. These are the valiant people who give up their lives to give us our today. There will not be exaggeration to say that Assam Rifles has been one of the oldest and most valiant of soldiers not only guarding the borders of this country, not only combating insurgency in this country, not only assisting law and order in this country but have even contributed towards the development of areas, growth of townships and providing relief to the people during natural calamities. In fact, Assam Rifles has rightly been described as the sentinels of the North-East. It started as Cacher Levy with about 700 or 800 and odd

[Shri Kirip Chaliha]

people and today it comprises of 46 Battalions, almost big, if not bigger than many of the regular Armies in many countries. This Cacher Levy later got transformed into Assam Military Police and then it became Frontier Police. It was in 1917 that the name Assam Rifles was given to them and in 1941, the Central Government came into the picture. Assam Rifles became part of the Central Government establishment and later on its operational control was given to the Army, but the administrative control remained with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Assam Rifles had made heroic sacrifices and contributions during the First World War. It made very significant contributions during the Second World War in fighting Japanese invasion from Myanmar towards the North-East border.

Sir, the Assam Rifles has operated not only in the North East but also in areas like Patna, in Kashmir and even in tackling law and order situation in various parts of the country.

Shri Bachi Singh Rawat has rightly talked about various problems that the Assam Rifles jawans faced. But one of the most talked about difficulties the jawans of the Assam Rifles faced was because of the archaic Assam Rifles Act where according to the old Act, I think, the Commandants and the Asstt. Commandants were the most superior officers. Even the Director Generals did not have much *locus standi* in the legal procedure. Now, this Bill has been brought about on the line of ITBP Act and as a result, lots of facilities and privileges will now come and lots of irregularities that were there earlier will now become regularized. For example, now, Assam Rifles will have their own system of court martial. The court martial is a very important regulatory procedure in a paramilitary force. Similarly, so far as the privileges and amenities of the soldiers are concerned, this Bill takes care of a lot of problems though I do not say that it takes care of all the problems. I do agree that there has been a long-standing demand for canteen facilities and there has been a long-standing demand from the Assam Rifles jawans for the retirements' benefits at par with the regular Army.

There is a lot of concern about the plight of their

children because all the time they are the standing and combating force in a very hostile terrain. Unlike the Army, the Assam Rifles do not have any peace-time or soft postings. They are all the time at war. We must pay tributes to these brave people who have kept the North-East on the national mainstream not only through the use of force but also by helping the people culturally and at social levels.

The Assam Rifles has been called the left arm of the civil administration and the right arm of the military. That is because the Assam Rifles played a very significant and unique role in the sense that at that time itself the Britishers viewed that more than a regular army, the Indian force needs a specialised battalion to tackle some of the peculiar problems that India faced at that time. It is becoming extremely relevant today. In fact, I think the battalions are fighting insurgency. They are to tackle insurgency and maintain law and order. I think, you will agree it is the call of the day.

There is a duality of opinion as to whether we should send the Army straightaway to deal with the civilian situation or not; whether the Army should be sent to combat terrorism or not. There are various Army experts who say that by doing this we are softening the Army. To fight insurgency and terrorism under a specialised dispensation is the need of the hour. Organisations like the Assam Rifles has got a lot to do about it. It is our duty to see that they are given due recognition.

As I said earlier, I will not go into the details. I would just make a few general remarks very briefly because the time is limited. I think the welfare measures which have been enumerated here are quite sufficient but definitely more needs to be done. There can be no two opinions about it. The stress factor is there. We should not over-emphasise that all the officers are all the time gunning for somebody. But stress is there. But that is not peculiar only to the Assam Rifles. It is an existing phenomenon in the case of police and the paramilitary forces. It is to their credit that Assam Rifles have shown greater resilience in dealing with the situation than the other forces.

There is a lot of clamour about the housing facilities to the paramilitary forces. We need to pay more attention to these people. There is also a necessity of seeing the

procedural fairness of the Court Martial. Right emphasis should be given to the procedural fairness of the Court Martial. The issue is whether a single officer is enough to go through the process of judicial scrutiny or whether you need a team of officials. Rawatji has talked about the voting system. I would still say that is always better to go for a consensus opinion or a majority opinion than a single opinion. We should all keep that in mind.

Lastly, I would only like to conclude by saying that when we talk of the valiant role played by the Assam Rifles, we must also not forget that there is a lady by name Irom Chanu Sharmila in Manipur who is still undergoing fast for more than two years. We must also not forget that there are, at times, certain amount of complaints against the misuse of power by the Assam Rifles personnel. I would suggest that there must be a mechanism to deal with the public complaints against the jawans.

The last submission that I would like to make is, since the Assam Rifles fights insurgency peculiarly particularly in the North East, the composition of the force should be on an all-India basis. But to deal with the insurgency situation and to fight the insurgents of the North East, a greater presence of the people of the North East in the force is necessary. Therefore, I urge upon the Minister to see that during the recruitment, youth of the North East should be encouraged to join the Assam Rifles because only if the composition comes from the local area, they will be in a better position to deal with insurgents who are also from that area. Then, the national or anti-national, regional or anti-regional question will get submerged and the Assam Rifles will become a strong instrument to fight terrorism not only at the physical level but also at the psychological level.

With these few words, I, once again, pay my tribute to the jawans of the Assam Rifles for their valiant role in guarding the North-East and I congratulate the Minister for getting this Bill passed here today.

SHRI T.K. HAMZA (Manjeri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in this discussion on the Assam Rifles Bill.

This force was initially established in 1835. At that time, it was a very small and it was formed to protect the

security of the country. Subsequently five battalions were formed and now it has got 46 battalions. With the increase in the population of this country, the personnel of this force also increased in number. Their problem have also increased in number now.

The Assam Rifles Act was enacted in Parliament in the year 1941, but there is one lacuna. It is not applicable to the officers or members of the force itself. So, these days there are problems among them. They have to modernise the law according to the present situation. Therefore, this Bill has become essential.

Sir, in this Bill severe punishment has been suggested for small offences. For small offences like sleeping at the time of fighting against the enemy and for taking drinks, severe punishments are suggested. I agree that punishment must be given for such offences, but those punishments need not be very severe. They are always posted in such areas where disturbances are going on and they are facing very serious problems on the border. So, I would request the Government that the problems of the officers and soldiers of this force should kindly be looked into. Their position is very bad. The climate in border areas is bad and they face all sorts of difficulties at the border. Therefore, their interests should kindly be looked into.

With these few words, I support this Bill.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for providing me an opportunity to participate in the discussions regarding Assam Rifles Bill, 2006. I strongly support this Bill. In the year 1950 there were only 5 battalions of Assam Rifles. Now there are about 46 battalions. Administration and Management were a complex issue. This Bill has been introduced to resolve all these problems. In my opinion everyone who is going to participate in this discussion and the people who may have read about this Bill or the armed forces are aware of its importance and I personally praise Assam Rifles as this is one of the topmost Central Forces. Assam Rifles is also known as the strength of the Army. They have a very special role to play in Union Territories. Be it the security of the Indian Borders or maintaining of internal law and order system, or operations against terrorist

[Shri Shailendra Kumar]

attacks, Assam Rifles enthusiastically participates in all these fronts and their service has been very commendable. Several provisions have been made in this Bill. It has been observed that some times the personnel posted in border areas have been found involved in the incidents of shooting their seniors owing to some mental or psychological problems being faced by them and also as a result turning down by the seniors of the leave applications submitted by them on account of some compulsions at the domestic front. They should be provided psychological as well as medical treatment. They should get benefits of all welfare programmes, be it regarding their children's education scheme or health related scheme or any other welfare scheme. We should view them from a humanitarian angle that our own brothers who opt for service in forces have got their own needs and compulsions. We should give special attention to them and I see that many provisions have been incorporated in this Bill for this purpose, especially the provision regarding courts for resolving of disputes is going to be a very effective one. In the field of administration and management this Bill will have very significant contribution.

While supporting this Bill vigorously, I conclude here with these few words.

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I express my gratitude to you for granting me an opportunity to speak regarding Assam Rifles Bill, 2006. This Bill has been introduced to resolve the problems of the jawans and their officials and to control the incidents of crimes happening along the border areas. Just now I have gone through the Bill. By dividing this Bill into 12 chapters, 168 clauses have been incorporated into it. These clauses, besides dealing with history, evolution and organizational setup of Assam Rifles also deal with the various crimes by or against the personnel of the organisation. It came to my notice now that clauses 21 to 46 deal with various types of the crimes and three types of courts also have been constituted for fixing punishment for the said crimes. One is summary court, the second petty court and the third one is general court. In all the three courts there are provisions of awarding minor punishment for 30 minor offences. Hearing for the said crimes will be conducted in small court.

I observe that there are crimes of various magnitudes. For this purpose, court has been set up. For the crimes which have been enumerated, a provision for capital punishment and life imprisonment has been made in this Bill, there is a provision for punishment upto 14 or 10 years but composition of the court does not require the services of the persons with thorough legal knowledge. Therefore my personal suggestion is that for the purpose of natural justice and for people who like to have justice as per the legal procedure, it is necessary that there should be a person with legal know-how in these courts. As regards the award of capital punishment, my suggestion is that a person not below the rank of a session Judge should be appointed as the presiding officer. Home Minister should ponder over this suggestion.

My fellow Members have stated that the nature of work of the Assam Rifles is the most difficult one and they have to carry out their duties in the most difficult terrain involving inaccessible areas and mountains. If they commit some minor mistakes, they are given punishment. They should ponder over this particular aspect.

Occasionally it is seen that when a particular jawan falls out of favour with an officer, the officer tries to punish him by levelling wrong allegations. As per the provision of the Bill an officer can not be a part of hearing involving a jawan who is said to have been having any grudge against the latter as per the latter's own revelation in this regard.

Sir, I was saying that these Jawans work in very inaccessible areas. Earlier there was Assam Rifles Bill, 1941 in force but it served no purpose. Till 1950, there were five battalions, but at present, there are 46 battalions. This way, its number has increased substantially. I would like to say that employees and officers engaged in hazardous jobs should be provided more facilities. Whether it is winter, summer and rainy season, they perform their duties. They defend our borders. The soldiers, who get involved in anti-national activities should also be checked. Assam Rifles in cooperation with local administration helps in maintaining peace and order. Therefore, they should be provided full facilities. They should be provided facilities at par with Army. They should be provided accommodation facility. The residential quarters can not be provided at inaccessible areas. The



families of these employees should be provided residential quarters nearest to the hilly or forest areas where they are deployed. Their children should be provided educational facilities. Schools should be opened over there. The medical check up of soldiers of Assam Rifles should be done regularly. It has been observed that soldiers in Armed Forces are not granted leave. If any incident take place in their family, they are not granted leave when they submit leave application. It causes great mental burden on them. Their family problems, the kind of economic and social problem being faced by them should be kept in view. They go into depression due to their separation from family. They get mentally disturbed due to separation from their families. In such a situation, doctor should be available for their treatment who should regularly examine their health and provide medical facilities to them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say that the Bill which has been presented here is a praiseworthy step, I support it and hope that the hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs will consider the points presented by me. With these words, I conclude my speech.

\*SHRI SUGRIB SINGH (Phulbani): Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to support the Assam Rifle's Bill 2006 on behalf of the Biju Janata Dal. This force is meant to protect the nation from the menace of terrorism and extremism. Starting from the soldiers to the high ranking officials, 'Assam Rifle' in a dedicated body of people. The responsibility of providing every facility to them lies with the Central Government. Although late, this bill is certainly a welcome step in the right direction. We hope that this Bill will offer a ring of protection and benefit the force as a whole. The staff of Assam Rifle have been serving our nation with dedication and sincerity.

Everybody we come across so many disturbing pieces of news on Television, Radio and Newspapers. The tentacles of terrorism is spreading far and wide in our country. As citizens we are deeply troubled by such incidents. Infiltrators are entering our country with sinister designs. Their sole aim is to disturb peace. We have witnessed the recent bomb blasts in Delhi and Mumbai. Even a peaceful state like Orissa is not free from violence and insurgency. Now naxalites have expanded their

network in this state. They are targeting the innocent citizens and disturbing normal life. Now the time has come to deal with this problem sternly. A para-military force like the Assam Rifle is very much essential for the whole country. The Central Government must think along these lines. I humbly request the Hon'ble Home Minister to act accordingly. Assam Rifle was established in 1975 with only 5 battalions. Now the number of battalions have gone up to 46. But the requisite number of posts of D.G, D.I.G. and I.G. etc. have not been increased. Several posts are lying vacant and should be filled up. Central Government has wasted a lot of time in the process. But I am optimistic that after this discussion in this House, things will improve.

Sir, we must not forget that personnel in these Border Security Forces like Assam Rifles are deployed in border areas, where the terrain is hostile, hilly and weather conditions are often severe. Life in general is very difficult. These people sacrifice a lot for the sake of the nation. They stay away from their families braving harsh winter, hot summer and torrential rains. They have no family to give them emotional support or physical comfort. In return the Government should at least ensure that these people get their due from society.

Sir, Assam Rifle's Bill presented today contains some very good points. But some of the articles enshined here are not very praiseworthy. Especially I would like to mention about the penal provision. So far as punishment is concerned the provisions are rather harsh. Keeping in mind the difficulties these people face there should be a lenient view regarding minor offences. Negligence to duty if not serious in nature should be viewed less sternly. Errors should not be projected as of deliberate intent and should not involve severe punishment. It should not be treated as conspiracy against the nation. There should be a sympathetic approach. These people who sacrifice their lives for the nation deserve all the recognition. After retirement they must be extended all sorts of facilities on a priority basis. Their children should get good education. Their families should have health care facilities. The soldiers who are valiantly keeping a day and night vigil on our borders should have peace of mind that their families are financially and socially secured. Hence apart from all the perks, they must be allotted quarters within the vicinity. Sir this Bill on Assam Rifle is sure to give a boost to the morale of the force. I believe the Central

\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Oriya.

[Shri Sugrib Singh]

Government should show its commitment and sincerity by speedily passing the Bill. On the behalf of my party the Biju Janta Dal, I extend whole-hearted support to this Bill.

[English]

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has brought forward this Bill for the approval of this House. I think, there is no divergence of opinion among the Members. Cutting across the party lines, all the Members should approve this Bill. I also support and approve this Bill.

Assam Rifles is one of the oldest battalions of our country. All the facilities should be given to the jawans of the military and paramilitary groups because they are sacrificing their lives for their motherland, they are protecting our motherland, they are facing the onslaught of terrorism and they are fighting against terrorism.

Sir, from election to natural calamity, their services are being utilized. Their services are utilized by the civil authority for the peaceful conduct of elections, and also to help people, rescue people and save people at the time of natural calamities. Not only that, whenever law and order problem arises in any State, the concerned State Government used to call the military and paramilitary groups to maintain peace and tranquillity in the State.

Sir, all these battalions, since their inception, are doing tremendous job for the country. Even they are sacrificing their lives also. So, we support this Bill, and all the facilities should be given to the jawans of the Assam battalions.

There are so many problems which the jawans of the military and paramilitary groups are facing. One of the problems is the mental problem. Deserting their houses, deserting their terrain, wife and children, they are moving in jungles.

They carry out their work and duties in the hilly areas and jungles. Sometimes, they are not even getting their leaves sanctioned. Whenever they approach the higher authority for leave, say, for the marriage ceremony of their

brothers or sisters or daughters or any relation; for the education purpose of their boys and girls; or for medical purposes, the leaves are not granted. Nowadays, we are witnessing that in a barrack, in a camp of the Army, and in the BSF paramilitary group, some jawans are committing suicides, killing themselves by opening fire from the service revolver. So, everything is happening now. These things are coming in the newspapers and electronic media also.

Not only that, whenever a jawan falls in great difficulty or his family is in the grip of a difficult position, the civil authorities are not coming forward to help his families, to assist his families. Suppose, a jawan belongs to Orissa and he is posted in Andhra Pradesh in Aurangal district or Nagar district to combat terrorism, and suppose unfortunately, his family falls in great difficulty, the civil authorities of the State are not coming forward to help his families. I do not want to mention only Andhra Pradesh. Even in my State of West Bengal also, the same is the position. When a jawan is in distress condition, he is in great difficulty; the Collector, the Superintendent of Police and other civil authorities are not coming forward to save his families, to assist his families, to help his families. This is the position.

.But I have a privilege to mention one thing. I am not maligning these Forces. I am residing in the border area; the constituency of our Minister of Parliament Affairs is also in the border area. I am pained to say that sometimes, the Border Security Forces are in conflict with the civil authorities; they fall in trouble with the people. So, in connivance with the Border Security Forces personnel, all the essential commodities are being smuggled from India to Bangladesh. Is it possible if the BSF can seriously deal with the situation? There is a lacuna in the BSF. I do not want to malign the BSF; they are protecting our motherland. But they should be friendly to the general public, people. I have told on several occasions that the BSF authorities and their jawans should be friendly to the people and not act like the enemy of the people.

Sir, I would like to refer one matter here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you referring to the BSF matter? I would request you to kindly confine yourself to the Bill only.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: It is on the same parameter. I am coming to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Within a few minutes, I am concluding.

Excuse me, Sir. Shall I mention the name of the State? It is Manipur. Manipur is now the hotbed of unrest. Isaac and Muivah of NSCN(IM) are sitting in Bangkok; they are pulling the strings behind the scene. They want to destabilize Manipur. We should fight for the unification of Manipur. Manipur has tremendous historical, political and culture background. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose hoisted the Tricolour National Flag in the Mairan of Manipur. The Manipurians sacrificed their lives in the Independence battle of the country. But nowadays, the women folk of Manipur, the students of Manipur are coming on streets against the suppression activities of the Assam Rifles jawans. Even sometimes, the naked women are doing processions protesting against the rape by jawans of the Assam Rifles on the ladies of Manipur. They should not subscribe to these things. Manipur is the hotbed of unrest. The Home Ministry knows better than us. Sometimes, they are creating blockades. This pattern should be restrained.

They should be friendly to the people. It is because there are so many allegations and so many complaints against the *jawans* of the Manipur Rifles by not only the students but also by the women folk. They are coming in the street in naked and tell them, 'rape us'. What is this? I do not malign these Forces but they should be friendly to the country. They should be apprised of their job. They are for the country. They are for the protection of the country and not for the enemy of the people. I hope the Home Ministry will look into this matter. They should control the Forces and advise them to behave friendly with the people and not indulge in activities which create law and order problem in the State of Manipur and other States.

I hope these Forces will be controlled. They should be friendly to the people. They will assist the civilian authorities, particularly in the State of Manipur and in the other States of the North-Eastern region for the peaceful establishment of those States.

Lastly, I support this Bill.

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal East): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am standing here to support this Assam Rifles Bill, 2006. This is a long pending Bill, and I congratulate the hon. Home Minister who brought this Bill.

Before going into the clauses, I would like to salute the armed personnel of the Assam Rifles. They have done a tremendous job for the development of the North-Eastern Region. If I have seen an army in my life for the first time, then I have seen the Assam Rifles as the first army in my life. Since childhood, we have got the experience in the North-Eastern region. The Bill is to bring uniformity amongst the para-military personnel of this country. It was a long pending Bill which we are going to pass in this House.

There is a very sensitive case about which I would like to inform this august House. I would like to request the hon. Home Minister to be very particular about clause 6 of Chapter II regarding enrolment or recruitment.

I am from Arunachal Pradesh. In 2004, from Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, which is infested by the insurgency of North-East, 100 personnel were supposed to be recruited in the Assam Rifles. More than 500 applicants attended that recruitment. But of the 100 personnel supposed to be recruited from that district, only 20 boys of Tirap district had been recruited against the 100 sanctioned posts. The only reason was that their height was not under the requisite prescribed standard.

Sir, in the tribal regions of the North-East, whether it is Arunachal Pradesh or Nagaland or Manipur or Mizoram or Meghalaya, the All-India Armed Forces' requisite height is 5.7 or 5.8 or something. But the average height of the North-East people is 5 point something. So, I had personally intervened with the former Director-General of Assam Rifles, and then they could relax the height up to some extent and a few boys had been recruited. So, I would request the hon. Home Minister to insert a particular point here in clause 6 of Chapter II that for the boys of the North-Eastern region, while in recruitment, the alienation may not generate any problem in future. So, I would request the Home Minister to look into this clause very seriously.

[Shri Tapir Gao]

Secondly, I would like to mention about clause 21(f) and (g) in Chapter IV related to offences. In clause 21 (f) it is stated that:

"in time of active operation...alarm or despondency; or"

This is a very particular clause in Chapter IV relating of offences.

The House, and the country cannot forget the incident of Ms. Manorama Devi of Manipur. I would like to request the hon. Home Minister to insert a particular clause as follows:

"While doing insurgency operations in the public, the paramilitary will arrest the public or the common people before handing them over to the civil court and the civil police without proper identification, if they are killed".

What will be the punishment for paramilitary personnel—whether from the Assam Rifles, BSF or any other paramilitary or armed forces—if anything happened like that happened to Ms. Manorama Devi? I would like to state that this clause is required in it. One of our hon. Members, Shri Kirip Chaliha, also highlighted that if this clause is not included in it, then it will be more dangerous in the situation that is there in Manipur, and the North Eastern regions.

If I am not mistaken, one lady by the name of Ms. Sharmila is still on a fast until death in Manipur for more than five years against the Armed Forces Special Power Act. If this clause is not included in the Chapter IV dealing with offences, then it will be a dangerous weapon in the hands of the paramilitary forces. I salute the Assam Rifles, but if this clause is missing from it, then it will be dangerous with all that is happening in Manipur. These are the two particular points, which I would like the hon. Minister to look into.

The Assam Rifles personnel are not only fighting insurgency in the North Eastern region, but the Assam Rifles personnel are also guarding three international borders. In Arunachal Pradesh, they are guarding against China; on the eastern part they are guarding against

Myanmar; and in the south they are guarding against Bangladesh.

In my Parliamentary constituency, I used to interact with these Assam Rifles personnel whenever I went there. Actually, we have to deal with them in a humane manner. They are not robots, and they are all our brothers. The main problem with them is housing. These personnel are engaged in the forest and snow-filled areas. Of course, they are doing their duty in the outposts, but their children, and friends—with whom they are living in the headquarters—are housed in residential places that have worst conditions. I have practically seen this for the Assam Rifles personnel in the States of the North Eastern region. Therefore, I urge upon the hon. Minister that the issue of housing, schooling facilities, medical facilities, etc. should be particularly specified while considering this Bill for the Assam Rifles personnel.

There is one peculiarity in the armed forces. The Government of India are categorised differently in the army, and the paramilitary forces. In paramilitary forces, the benefits of pension or any compensation given in case of death or an accident to the paramilitary personnel are lower than that provided in Army, Navy and the Air Force. If we are going to equalise the system with the Indian Army, then the pension, compensation for death, etc. for the paramilitary forces like BSF, etc. should also be equalised with the Army.

Therefore, this is my humble submission to the hon. Home Minister that he should look into it accordingly, so that our *jawans* who are guarding this country can be mentally free from thinking about all these problems.

I would like to mention one more point with regard to paramilitary forces, and the Army. If there is any property dispute or land dispute in their hometown, they are not able to face civil courts because they do not get leave. So, there should be some provision in this Bill so that their cases are taken up immediately in the civil courts. If such a provision is included, then our paramilitary brothers who are serving us in the border can be mentally free from these and do their duties.

We have seen that the personnel of Assam Rifles do many other social activities. They are not only guarding the country; they are not only fighting insurgents in the

North-East; they are doing many social activities. So, some monetary provision should be included in this Bill so that they can exercise more social activities in the interior villages, in the border villages, where they can distribute books, undertake construction of school buildings, bridges, roads, etc. So, some monetary provisions can also be included in this Bill so that people living in the border areas, where there is no communication facility, can get some facilities from these organisations.

With these words, I support the Bill.

SHRI D. NARBULA (Darjeeling): Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on Assam Rifles Bill, 2006.

I rise to support the Bill moved by the hon. Home Minister Assam Rifles is one of the oldest paramilitary forces in our country with chequered history of 171 years; it was raised in the year 1835 and has been deployed mostly in the North-Eastern region. Since then, this force has been doing its best to perform whatever duties that are assigned by the authority. Most of the top posts of Assam Rifles are filled up by the officers deputed from regular army. So, it is more a regular army than a paramilitary forces. Since the establishment of this force, it has been doing its best to perform whatever duties that are assigned by the army authority, whether in war or in peace time.

The Assam Rifles comes under the Army's command and control for any kind of operational duties. Assam Rifles has taken part in the wars and achieved glorious fame. It participated in the First and Second World Wars, Sino-Indian War in 1962, Indo-Pak wars in 1965 and 1971 and received many gallantry awards for bravery. Similarly, the Assam Rifles took part in the fight against the terrorists in Jammy & Kashmir and received many gallantry awards for their bravery. The Assam Rifles was also deployed in Sri Lanka to do the duty of IPKF. The Assam Rifles have been deployed in the remote insurgent areas to fight against the insurgents in the North East Region.

But I would like to state that after serving in the Assam Rifles when its personnel retire, the Assam Rifles Ex-Servicemen are not provided the same benefits and

facilities like that of the Ex-Servicemen of the regular Army. There is also a lot of difference and discrimination from other paramilitary forces like BSF, CRPF, SSB, ITBP and CISF. One is that the payment system of the above mentioned paramilitary forces is pay bill system whereas in the Assam Rifles, there is IRLA, Individual Running Ledger Account System like in the Army. Secondly, the Assam Rifles personnel are authorized to any army establishment for any type of duty during the service period. The LRC, Last Ration Certificate is acceptable to Army. There is no LRC system in the above mentioned paramilitary force.

Till 2005, Assam Rifles Battalion No. 30 was deployed in North Sikkim and its Rear Transit Camp was in Sevoke Road, Siliguri. So, before moving the aforesaid Assam Rifles Battalion to Nagaland, the CSD canteen and liquor were being supplied to Assam Rifles ex-Servicemen at Darjeeling District. As you know, most of the Assam Regiment retired people have settled in my constituency in the hill city of Darjeeling. After moving this regiment from Sikkim, there is no Assam Rifles Battalion now in the areas of Sikkim or West Bengal. Hence, the supply of above stores has been totally stopped. As a result the ex-Servicemen of my constituencies are totally deprived of these facilities.

I, therefore, request the hon. Home Minister to look into the grievances of the Assam Rifles ex-Servicemen, who have rendered service to the Force and help remove the discrimination. Certain re-settlement provision should also be provided to them. The wards and children of the Assam Rifles ex-Servicemen should also be provided education and medical facilities. With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (Rajapur): Assam Rifles Act, 2003 is a legislation with a very limited purpose of replacing the old law with a new one, obviously, because the old one has become out-dated, as has already been mentioned by Members and, therefore, a new law was required. If you look at it, considering the magnitude of the problem, many of these paramilitary forces, which are now working almost at par with our normal military forces, have to perform such onerous tasks. But now it is about time that we look at all our security personnel, whether they are working in full

[Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu]

military reforms, paramilitary forces and even the police forces and look at the larger issue in a proper perspective. Therefore, while this Bill is required and we really need to take it forward, it is important that the Government must think about meeting the growing challenge of terrorism, law and order, maintaining peace on international borders. We must have a comprehensive legislation, which will take care of the needs of the hour.

One of the functions Assam Rifles has to perform is, counter terrorism. I think counter terrorism requires a different type of challenge. The terrorism in modern time has assumed such a proportion that we cannot deal it with only law of this nature. As we have seen, most of the terrorists are willing to die for a cause. If that is what it is, the modern laws are made as a deterrent so that crime should not be perpetrated. In many of the crimes that are being perpetrated, we thought the highest punishment that could be given is the capital punishment. If you take away the life of a person, he will deter from committing the crime. But here people are willing to die even before the crime is committed. Therefore, the type of law that we need, the type of force required to deal with terrorism is of a different type. The Government should, therefore, come out with a comprehensive legislation and also a White Paper to deal with the border issues relating to internal security, international border security as well as to deal with the new phenomenon that is now growing in the form of terrorism, which is not just confined to the Indian borders but has the international ramifications. This Bill is required to be taken in that fashion.

The other point which many Members have already raised is, normally when we raise the Force, we actually try to talk about their duties and responsibilities and if they commit an offence or do something improper how that impropriety can be dealt with.

**16.00 hrs.**

We seldom talk about what are the rights of these Forces. It talks of responsibility but it seldom talks about the rights. Housing is one such problem. We have seen in many of the States that even the police force is supposed to fight all the time. They are supposed to be

on the street all the time. But they do not have housing facilities. They do not have enough facilities for their children. Therefore, housing facilities and educational facilities for the children are supposed to be guaranteed by the law of this type. So, while we discuss the Assam Rifles Bill, 2006, we should think about such amenities to be provided to these personnel. It should be an integral part of the legislation of this type. While I support the Bill, I think these types of issues will be taken into account.

**SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkli):**

Sir, I rise to support the Bill. The present legislation became essential in the context of a large number of people serving in the Assam Rifles. Now we have about 46 battalions. So, the law should be very definite and clear. It appears that there are some lacunae in the framing of this statute. From the arrangement of sections and different chapters, it appears that they are very narrative about the offences could be committed by the members of the Assam Rifles and it is for maintaining discipline in the Force. It may appear to be essential but it should have a reformatory approach also because they are Indian citizens working in the border areas. They are doing a very peculiar type of job in the sense that they have to safeguard our borders.

Secondly, they will have to prevent any insurgency activities in cases where the normal law and order fails. They will have to step in and help the State Governments in times of emergency. So, the work assigned to them is very material and important. When we take into consideration all these aspects, we will have to have a reformatory attitude also. They are working in peculiar conditions. But unfortunately, as I go through from the first Section to the last Section I find that the main attempt of the law is to punish them and not to reform them. The framers think that they are dealing with some criminals. This is a law which is very good for the criminals but the people who are working in the border areas are not criminals. They are normal citizens and they have come forward to do a sacred duty. So, we must have a humane approach. Now the entire statute is dealing with the offences and nothing else. I admit that there must be some discipline. There should be some provision for that. I do agree with that. But the thing is whenever we deal with such people, we should not think that there would always be indiscipline. That approach is not correct. We

must have a humanitarian approach so far as the people working in the Assam Rifles are concerned. My humble submission is that it is lacking in that. It will also have to be taken into consideration. This is my feeling.

Now the statute defines three types of courts which will function to deal with the offences. They are defined in Section 86. Now Section 86 deals with three types of courts. One is the General Assam Rifles Courts.

The second is the Petty Assam Rifles Courts and the third is the summary Assam Rifles Courts. Now, these three different kinds of courts can award different kinds of punishments. The first type of courts is meant to deal with offences, which are punishable even, by either life imprisonment or death penalty. They have the authority to award capital punishment. That is the kind of punishment which the Assam Rifles Courts can award. It has been stated in section 128 that all courts function as criminal procedure courts. I would like to read the relevant section.

"Any trial by an Assam Rifles Court under the provisions of the Act shall be deemed to be a judicial proceeding within the meaning of Section 193 and 228 of the Indian Penal Code and the Assam Rifles Court shall be deemed to be the Court within the meaning of Sections 345 and 346 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973".

Therefore, it is legally a court functioning under the CrPC. There is no doubt about that. When a decision is taken by a court of law, which is defined as a court under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Court, the question is, who should be the Appellate Authority? Lower court awards a capital punishment like death by hanging, the most barbaric form of penalty as has been provided for in this statute, or as an alternative by way of shooting, who should be the Appellate Authority? Now, in an era where all over the world there is a movement going on against awarding death penalty, we in India are discussing about statute imposing death penalty. Death penalty is the most uncivilized form of punishment that can be awarded.

16.07 hrs.

(SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL *in the Chair*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Radhakrishnan, you may please address the Chair and conclude now. You already have taken seven minutes.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, what should I do? Should I sit down?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As you wish. But please conclude quickly.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, my next point is about the Appellate Authority. A higher court should confirm a judgement entailing death penalty pronounced by a lower court. Now, who should be the Appellate Authority? In the normal sense, a death sentence would have to be confirmed by a High Court. But here, according to the provisions of this statute, the Home Secretary to the Government of India would be acting like the High Court. As per provisions of this Bill Government is the Appellate Authority. When a citizen is to be hanged for an offence, who should be the final authority to take a view on the judgement so pronounced? According to this statute, the Home Secretary will take a final decision...*(Interruptions)* When a death penalty is provided under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Act, it has to be confirmed at least by a High Court, otherwise nobody can be hanged. That is the procedure in the common law. But according to this statute the Home Secretary would act as the Appellate authority and when he would give his consent the accused could be hanged. That is not correct. The final decision regarding this would have to be left to a judicial authority. It has come out in the evidence, as per the provisions of this Act, these courts are judicial bodies. Such being the case, the final decision would have to be confirmed by a High Court. It appears, that there is a defect in the procedure.

The court has not been given any power of decision. The most interesting thing is that the Director-General himself can be the final authority to kill a person. This is too much and we are in the 21st century, where we are passing a statute giving the power of making the final decision with regard to the death sentence. We are giving it to a bureaucrat. It should not be like that.

There are many things which I would like to mention but there is no time for it. The constitution of this Rifles court is also defective. The officers alone are not sufficient

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

to do it. Who is to decide about the officer? He should be a person who deals with the legal profession. But the Rifles Court will be filled in with people who are in the Force itself. And two-third majority is enough for killing a person. So, if the members of the Force decide to kill a person, he will be killed. That is the net result of the statute. I think it is highly defective, highly undemocratic and highly unsuited to the present tendency specially in the matter of death penalty....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are a senior Member. Please co-operate.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: There are other points also but if I take them up one by one, it will be ridiculous. Now what will happen if a person is taken as a prisoner by the enemy?

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadrak): There is the Army Law for it.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: The Army Law is not functioning under this situation. It is functioning under civil court....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Where you apply Army Law, you apply it and not here. Army Law is entirely different. Clause 128 is very clear about it. It says: "This clause seeks to provide that the trial by an Assam Rifles Court shall be deemed to be judicial proceedings within the meaning of Sections 193..."(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. REGUPATHY: Sir, I thank all the hon. Members who have welcomed this Bill. Most of them have mentioned about retirement benefits, housing, education and health. Definitely, the facilities enjoyed by other paramilitary forces will be provided to Assam Rifles also.

As regards the court activities, in the Bill, we have formed three different types of courts.

I thank all the hon. Members who spoke and have supported the Bill. They have made certain general remarks related to the welfare of the members of the Force and trial of the cases by the courts constituted under this law. I have taken note of the suggestions given

by the hon. Members with respect to the welfare of the members of the force. We look after the welfare of the members of the Force. There are schemes made by the Force themselves and those schemes are implemented to help them in travelling from places where they work to the places where their family members live and in case they are injured or killed, compensation and required help are given. Sufficient amount of money is also given to them.

And this matter is constantly looked into by the officers at the higher level, and also by the Ministry. If something more is required to be done, we would be very happy to do that.

As far as the trial of the offences is concerned—Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan dealt mostly with this point—it was rightly suggested that the trial should be fair, otherwise the forces would be demoralised. Suggestions have been given as to how to make these trials fair. It is not necessary for me to go into the details of the procedures which have to be followed in conducting the cases. First of all, the matter will be looked into not by one person sitting as a judge, but by many persons sitting as judges. The law provides that if the accused objects to any person sitting as a judge, that matter can be considered by other members, and if other members also say that person should not be sitting as a judge with them, then some other person can be asked to sit with them. For summary cases, petty cases and grave cases, there is a provision for constituting Summary Assam Rifles Courts, Petty Assam Rifles Courts and General Assam Rifles Courts respectively.

I would like to inform the House that as far as the serious types of cases are concerned, the judgements given or the sentences passed by them have to be confirmed by the House Ministry or by the officers appointed in the Home Ministry. Generally, the Director-General will be given an opportunity to look into the sentences passed by these courts. The officers who are having enough experience will be appointed as judges, and they will be allowed to conduct cases.

In the Army and Paramilitary Forces there are officers who are trained to conduct the criminal cases, to get the evidences on records, to examine the evidence, to interpret



the laws and to pass the sentences. They are not the persons who are ignorant in matters of law. And then there is, at a high level, a confirmation is required. Now, this is also a sort of precaution taken to see that the serious matters are not decided lightly.

Over and above this, Sir, the matter can go in appeal also and, then it can be decided. So, all that is necessary and proper is provided in this Bill. These provisions have been lifted from other laws which are being used to manage the ITBP or the BSF and for managing the Armed Forces also. I hope that precautions have been taken to see that there are good provisions which can help in seeing that proper justice is dispensed to the accused persons. ...*(Interruptions)*

Regarding the age limit, an hon. Member, I think, from Arunachal Pradesh said that tribals average height is only 5.5 feet, so they are not getting any chance to get into paramilitary forces. But that is not correct. There is a relaxation for the tribals in height. For a Scheduled Tribe male, the required height is 162.5 centimetres and for female it is 150 centimetres. It is for Scheduled Tribes. For general candidates, it is 170 centimetres and 167 centimetres for male and female candidates respectively. So, there is a relaxation in the height itself. So, it is not correct to say that.

Regarding other facilities, hon. Members said that Assam Rifles being a paramilitary force, their personnel should be entitled to the same privileges as enjoyed by the personnel of other paramilitary forces. I have already dealt with that. The suggestions of the hon. Members would be kept in mind and we will definitely do our best in this regard.

The Bill has been approved by the Standing Committee and the suggestions given by the Committee have been incorporated. I would not like to say anything more than this. I would request that this Bill be passed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the governance of the Assam Rifles, an Armed Force of the Union for ensuring the security of the borders of India, to carry out Counter Insurgency Operations in the specified areas and

to act in aid of civil authorities for the maintenance of the law and order and for matters connected therewith, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now the House will take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 168 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clauses 2 to 168 were added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.*

*[Translation]*

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Sir, the hon'ble Minister has made a mention of paramilitary forces. I would like to say this issue is related to my State also. People belonging to Dogra community live in my State and the height for recruitment of these people in Army was fixed at 5 feet, 4 inches. But since the day before yesterday, the persons of this height are not being considered for recruitment. Shri Jorawar Singh had made all recruitment on this basis only. I would like to know whether the hon'ble Minister will take any action in this regard?

*[English]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister you want to react or not; otherwise we will go ahead.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, he wants the facility about Dogra on the lines of the Assam Rifles.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Chaudhary Lal Singh, you can talk to him later on.

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. REGUPATHY: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

1624. hrs.

PRODUCE CESS LAWS (ABOLITION)  
BILL, 2006

*[English]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will take up item number 16. Shri Sharad Pawar.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Sir, I beg to move\*:

"That the Bill to repeal the Agricultural Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966, be taken into consideration."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to repeal the Agricultural Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966, be taken into consideration."

*[Translation]*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Produce Cess Laws (Abolition) Bill, 2006 presented by the Minister of Agriculture. As the Minister has explained, the motive of bringing this bill has been to repeal the Agricultural Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966. As has been stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons that under 1940 and 1966 Act, customs duty on export of agricultural produce was imposed, to make better financial provisions for the Indian Council for Agricultural Research. The 1940 Act provided for the imposition of a cess on bones, butter, cereals other

than rice and wheat, drugs, fish, fruits, ghee, spices etc. It was all right, but now WTO agreement has been signed. Agreement on Agriculture under WTO was signed on 1 January, 1995 and world agriculture market is growing at a fast pace. Our country is an agriculture based country and India's economy is based on agriculture. Agriculture sector provides employment to 68 per cent of population. Agriculture contributes 25 per cent to GDP, but India is playing, a marginal role in world agriculture trade, it has contributed only one per cent to world agricultural trade. Therefore, he has brought this bill to abolish export duty on agricultural produce to promote export and exporters. The Standing Committee on Commerce deserves kudos for this. This Committee had a detailed discussion on this Bill. This bill has been brought about after discussion with the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and the Speaker, Lok Sabha. Earlier Cess Law Repealing and Amending Bill, 2005 was first presented in Lok Sabha. The Ministry of Commerce discussed the matter with the Ministry of Agriculture. It was decided to abolish cess imposed under two old Bills related to agriculture. I congratulate him for this. Secondly, what will be done with other Cess Act, which is also related to agriculture products. You might be well aware about it. However, I am reading their names. *[English]* The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Cess, 1985; The Tobacco Cess Act, 1975; The Spices Cess Act, 1986; The Marina Products Export Development Authority Act, 1972 and the Coffee Cess Act, 1942 are there. *[Translation]* All these are related to agriculture, which cover coffee, spices, sea produce, tobacco, processed food. The Cess Acts for them also have been enacted. They should be abolished so that agriculture may play an important role in world trade. It is essential for Indian farmers that *[English]* first is the area of market access. Second is the domestic support. The third is the export subsidies. Then there is the market-oriented trading system. *[Translation]* But, what actually happens? The bumper crop of onion in Maharashtra created a problem. The arrangement for their export could not be made. In such a situation, all onions got rotten. Under these circumstances, the farmers, whether they were of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka or Punjab were compelled to commit suicide. Recently, the Government had given a special package for the farmers of Vidarbha, he deserves kudos for it. Somewhere due to famine.

\*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

Somewhere due to drought or the other reasons the condition of farmers is very pathetic. This is a biggest challenge for India in the world trade, I support the initiative taken by him in this regard, but a lot more needs to be done.

*[English]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under the sky, everything is there. You are talking of all things.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: I am speaking for India.

*[Translation]*

Though, it is an era of globalization and liberalization, but agriculture trade was a handicap and it was a biggest hurdle in the promotion of agricultural export. A law useless from international and national point of view was there. Now, it is being repealed. He deserves kudos for it. With these words, I support this bill.

*[English]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will now call Shri Braja Kishore Tripathi. Kindly be brief and precise because the Bill is a very small one that way.

*[Translation]*

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Produce Cess Laws (Abolition) Bill, 2006. Of course, there is nothing to say about the abolition of the cess law. Hence, I am supporting the Produce Cess Laws (Abolition) Bill, 2006.

There is one thing to say. The entire country is very much grateful to the farming community for the contributions they made to make the country self-sufficient in food production. We are successful both in Green Revolution and White Revolution. So, there is absolutely no necessity to make or to continue any control on exports. Rather, we should promote export in respect of agricultural products and remove restriction whatever is there under the provisions of the 1940 and the 1966 Acts.

The entire farmers' community is facing many problems now. On this occasion, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Agriculture that there are

not enough storage facilities for the farmers in our country. I would request that sufficient storage facilities should be provided to our farmers so that they are able to export more and more.

I would like to point out one more thing here. The entire money that was coming by way of imposition of customs duty on export of certain agricultural produce was being spent for promotion of agricultural research activities of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Now, the Government will not be getting this money after the passage of this Bill and the ICAR will not get that money for their research activities.

So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Agriculture whether the Government will adequately compensate the ICAR and provide more and more money for the promotion of agricultural research because research in agriculture is very much necessary and we should not neglect it. The world is going ahead with more and more research and the developed countries are spending more and more on research and development activities. So, agricultural development in our country should not suffer and the Government should adequately compensate ICAR for the loss suffered due to stoppage of this cess.

I do not have any objection to the repeal of this Act. With these few words, I support this Bill.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SITARAM SINGH (Sheohar): Mr. Chairman Sir, I wholeheartedly support this Bill. It is not a formality since it is in the interest of the farmers and their agricultural produce. The country became independent in the year 1947 and this Agricultural Cess Act was in force ever since 1940. It was not amended even in the year 1966. We, the well-wishers of farmers have been sitting in Parliament for so many years, however, no one bothered to cast a look at it. I express my gratitude to the hon. Minister of Agriculture for introducing this Bill in the Parliament to abolish the agricultural produce cess. He has discussed in detail the excise duty being imposed on the export of agricultural produce, which is in force even now. It is a very important Bill in the interest of the farmers even if it has come a bit late.

[Shri Sitaram Singh]

He has further given some data stating that approximately 67 per cent population of the country is dependent on agriculture and the agriculture contributes 25 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product. He further states that its share is less than one per cent in the trade. Many figures have been given further. But I do not wish to discuss them. I would, however, like to suggest that several measures can be taken for agriculture on which 67 per cent population is dependent and for farmers who are providing food to the country. There have been lengthy discussions in the Parliament on several occasions yet no concrete action has been taken in that direction. I would like to submit that the facilities which could be provided to the farmers for exporting agricultural produce, as pointed out by an hon. Member, and the storage capacity of foodgrains which should be there in villages and small mandis is almost negligible. This is why the agricultural produce of farmers is sold at throwaway price and he does not even get the cost incurred by him on agriculture. I would like to give certain suggestions since the hon. Minister has a lot of interest in agriculture. Although he has taken several measures yet there is no reference of remunerative prices to farmers in this Bill but with this suggestion that he would take further action in this regard, I support this Bill.

**SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail):** Mr. Chairman Sir, I support the Produce Cess Laws (Abolition) Bill, 2006 brought by the hon. Minister of Agriculture. This Bill is to repeal the Agriculture Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act 1966.

There is a provision to impose commodity Cess on items covered under the Cess Act of 1940 like bones, butter, rice, wheat and pesticides in various foodgrains, fish, fruit, ghee, oil cake, spices, vegetables, wool of sheep or lamb or animal hair, textile. There is a provision of imposing cess on the plantation of export oriented lac and cashew nut seeds in India and the plantation and improving and developing techniques for its marketing under the Produce Cess Act, 1966. We know that the country's economy is dependent on agriculture and employment to approximately 67 per cent population is generated through agriculture. Marine products have also

been covered under agriculture export in the country. The share of oilcakes, rice, wheat, tea, coffee, cashew nut and sugar is also covered under this export basket.

As far as a special new agriculture produce scheme formulated and launched under the Foreign Trade Policy 2004 and 2009 is concerned, we propose to promote the export of fruits, vegetables, flowers and small forests' products. As far as the levy of cess on export of agriculture produce under different enactments is concerned, it is under the purview of the Department of Agriculture. There is a provision of levying cess at the rate of 0.5 per cent under Agriculture Cess Act 1940.

16.39 hrs.

[SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG *in the Chair*]

Similarly different commodities have been included under Produce Cess Act 1966. There is one Agriculture and Process Food Products Export Development Authority established under Income tax Act 1985, there is Tobacco Cess Act 1975 and Spices Cess Act 1986 and Marine Product Export Development Authority established in 1972. Under it cess is levied at the rate 0.3 per cent. Cess is levied at the rate of 1 per cent under Coffee Act 1942. Under Cashew nut Act 1966, the levy fixed is Rs. 1600 per quintal, whereas if we see the European Countries, there are several countries providing handsome subsidies to their farmers. The condition of farmers is pretty bad in our country. As we have discussed it several times in this House that we should provide maximum facilities to our farmers since our economy is based on agriculture. Through this Bill, I urge upon the Hon. Minister of Agriculture that Agriculture Produce Cess should also be abolished. Through this Bill we should try to provide remunerative price to the farmers for their yield and should also provide maximum facilities in order to give impetus to the agriculture. I would like to make another point that several farmers in the country export and promote tobacco. We should immediately abolish the Agriculture Cess in order to help them since it is also the basis of their income.

With these words I conclude and vociferously support this Bill.

**SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL (Kopergaon):** Mr. Chairman Sir, I support this Bill since it seeks to repeal

certain enactments. Ironically, we levy cess on the commodities that we export under the Agriculture Cess Act 1940 and Produce Cess Act 1966 while the foreign countries give huge subsidy to their farmers on export oriented agriculture produce. It is too late now. We should give incentive for exporting agriculture produce. They are abolishing cess which is a good measure but how much incentive should be given to the exporters so that our farmers are able to export their produce and we save him from the distress sale. The Government proposes to repeal some more enactments. I will not quote the entire list as placed by our colleague. *[English]* Repealing the APEDA Cess Act, 1985; repealing the Spices Cess Act, 1986; suitable amendments to the Tobacco Cess Act, 1975; suitable amendments to the MPEDA Act, 1972 and suitable amendments to the Coffee Act, 1942. *[Translation]* Approval has been given to repeal all these Acts. We want it to be done at the earliest since the revenue of Rs. 8.5 crore collected from it has been invested in General research. No special research has been conducted thereon owing to some reason. We want to give money for research. I do not think cess would help in enhancing research however we are face to face with several technologies like BT Cotton owing to which we can enhance our production and export.

I would urge upon the hon. Minister to increase the share of agriculture impose from present level of 1 per cent. That 1 per cent agriculture export should be to 3 per cent in five years as stated by our colleague Rawatji, by giving incentives in this regard. So I support the Repeal Bill which seeks to abolish the cess, however facilities to export the agriculture produce should be given and godowns facilities should also be given. Ordinary godowns will not be of any use. Facilities should be provided for different kinds of godowns which have more durability and are equipped with air conditioners. With these words I support this Repeal Bill. I thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak.

*[English]*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South): Sir, I rise to support this Bill. It is a good Bill. It will be helpful for the *kisans* or farmers. I would only like to make a few observations. In the Bill itself there is a limitation; so we should not discuss in detail about it. It is a limited Bill.

But, when you have given me the opportunity to speak, I would like to raise two or three points for the kind attention of the hon. Agriculture Minister.

Firstly, it is good that you are allowing the whole agricultural sector to go for export. It is a good thing. At the same time we have to take care for the import also.

There must be restrictions for import also. If we allow our people to sell their agricultural things outside, they will be really benefited but at the same time there should be some restrictions. In Punjab we had green revolution. There are other States also. I do not want to mention the names. We are proud of our agricultural sector but communication gap is there. If we keep restrictions for import especially in agricultural sector, then we can give more attention to our country in respect of production.

Dr. Swaminathan and others have said that food crisis may be there because there is a doubt in our agricultural production, and it is going to decrease. Please make a survey throughout the country as to whether food production is going to decrease or increase. I think, this is a very vital question. This is number one.

Secondly, agricultural land is going to be diverted because there is no and there are no restrictions. Just without tender, it is being done in my State. You may tell me not to do it politically. Where will I raise it? This is the forum in which we can mention something. Otherwise, we do not have any forum.

I am saying that without tender, 40,000 acres of agricultural land which totally belong to minorities have been given to a particular blacklisted industrialist in my State. Kindly show me where it is happening? Nowhere it is happening. There should be some law, some restriction. I do not want to mention the name of the company. It is an Indonesian group. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDHANGSHU SEAL (Calcutta-North West):  
It is relevant to this Bill? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Kumari Mamata Banerjee.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

**KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE:** Sir, this is too much. Can I not mention the apprehensions of the farmers? What is the harm? Why are they shouting?

They do not take care of the farmers. Let them allow us to take care of the farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Nothing is going on record.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

**KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE:** Please find out one thing. There is a memorandum of Understanding being signed between the Government of West Bengal and the Salem's Group of Indonesia. ...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Madam, you speak about agricultural land and not about industry.

*...(Interruptions)*

**KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE:** Sir, I would like to make an appeal to them. Let the good sense prevail. ...*(Interruptions)* It is not my question. It is the question of everyone of us. The agricultural land is being diverted and food production is being decreased. ...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** She is mentioning about agriculture and not about industry.

*...(Interruptions)*

**KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE:** How do we manage our livelihood? ...*(Interruptions)* At the same time, I would request the hon. Minister...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Madam, you mention about agriculture without mentioning the industry.

**KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE:** Sir, the Agriculture Minister is having a vast experience in his life. He must make a survey throughout the country as to whether agricultural land is being diverted and see how to protect that. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, we want to protect the livelihood of the farmers.

The main population of our country is of farmers. So, about saving the agricultural land, I would request the hon. Minister to take up the matter very seriously and bring a law.

Another thing is about the domestic market. I do not know the full details, but I am told that the Chinese market has captured the Indian market like anything. For example, our farmers used to supply their Basmati rice to Bangladesh at Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 a kilo, but now Chinese—North-East is the border of China—are supplying their rice to Bangladesh at just Rs. 3 a kilo, and with the result, our farmers are facing acute crises. So, how to give protection to our Indian farmers, is the main question. But our farmers need to be protected.

Sir, I am not saying that nothing should come from outside. We also believe in reforms; we also believe in globalisation; but we also believe that if you do not involve the people into these reforms, they would not be successful. So, we want our Indian domestic market to be protected. That is why I would request the hon. Minister to find out ways, and take necessary action.

I would also request him to please see the retail market of the agriculturists. It should not go out of the hands of the farmers. Here, some parties were shouting something, saying do not allow the big businessmen or the FDI for the retail market. But in my State, unfortunately, it is going on. I would request the hon. Minister to please take care of the retail market, which is directly involved in the agro-based industries and give protection. I want to tell my good friends that I have not said anything against anybody.

With these few words, I conclude.

**SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support Produce Cess Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2006.

It is correct that at present, the export of several agricultural products is subject to levy of cess under different enactment. The enactment, which are proposed to be repealed are: Agricultural Produce Cess Act, 1940; and Produce Cess Act, 1966, and they are under the purview of the Department of Agriculture. But the other enactment are also there. There is Coffee Act, 1942; there is Marine Product Export Development Authority Act, 1972; there is Agriculture and Process Food Products Export Cess Act, 1985; and there is Spices Cess Act; there is Tobacco Cess Act. So, all these enactment are there.

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\*Not recorded.

I do admit that these enactment are not under the ambit of the Department of Agriculture. These are to be taken care of by the Department of Commerce. But these are linked enactment. So, the Department of Commerce should come out with some repeals and amendments regarding these enactment.

Sir, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, it is mentioned that these subsidies impact adversely on the competitiveness of our export; continuance of a cess on agricultural produce will only make the export more expansive and uncompetitive.

Let me say something about our share in the world trade scenario. In the world trade scenario, it is seen that despite weak and agrarian economy, where agricultural sector provides employment to approximately 67 per cent of the population and contributes about 26 per cent to the GDP of the country, India has remained a marginal player in the world agricultural trade.

Currently, it has a share of less than one per cent of the world trade in agriculture. So, if this is the situation, how can we expect that we are going to earn competitiveness in the world trade? In regard to export cess and other things, they have already been brought out and the Minister is going to repeal this enactment. This is good.

But there is also another aspect. What about the domestic subsidies? Competitiveness in the world market does not depend on the repeal of this Cess Act on agricultural products alone. It depends on the subsidy provided in the domestic affairs also.

Under the World Trade Organisation's regime—I must say that this is because of WTO—our country has cut down its already meagre agricultural subsidy. On the other hand, the developed countries have increased support to their farmers and industry. This is the position. One study, namely 'Agricultural Subsidies: India vs. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Countries, shows that "India has reduced the subsidy level from five per cent of Gross Domestic Product in 1995 to 1.3 per cent currently. Others have hiked it from 38 per cent to 42 per cent." So, I think, the Minister for Agriculture himself should think over it. The Government should ponder over this matter.

In this context, I must thank our Commerce Minister, Mr. Kamal Nath because he fought like anything in the WTO Ministerial meeting. He fought for the interest of the country, for the interest of the developing countries and for the interest of the peasant community at large. But fighting at the WTO level is all right but it requires more subsidy to be provided in domestic affairs also.

Our agricultural subsidy is declining day by day. So, in case of earning competitiveness in the world trade, not only repealing these Acts is adequate but it is also required that more subsidy should be provided in agriculture. With these words, I support this Bill.

The hon. Minister is here, and I think the hon. Finance Minister is also present here. They should think over it and do something for the interest of the peasant community of our country.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Sir, I rise to support the Bill moved by the hon. Minister for Agriculture.

This is one of the very simple and sensible Bills that deserves the whole-hearted support of this august House because this Bill tries to abolish one of the irritants to the agriculturists of India in the form of an export cess. Therefore, this repealing Bill, Produce Cess Laws Bill, will have a number of advantages both to the domestic farmers and to others at large.

The basic objective of this Bill is to repeal two ancient Acts, namely Agricultural Produce Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966. You know, the impact or the effect of this repealing would be that it would provide a comparative advantage to the Indian farmers who are willing to export their products to foreign countries because a cess, like a duty, is a tax imposed whenever a commodity is exported.

17.00 hrs.

Whenever a cess is imposed, whether it is 0.5 per cent or 0.8 per cent, it would add to the cost of production, and it would add to the cost of exports. Further, when it is exported, the price of that particular product of other countries remains constant in the international market, it would add to the price of the domestic product. Let us assume that the price of fish in Rs. 100 in our country, and Rs. 100 outside. If a cess of Rs. 50 is imposed on it,

[Prof. M. Ramadass]

then the price of fish becomes Rs. 150, and our price for fish in the international market also becomes Rs. 150. On the other hand, the price of the same product—exported by other countries—remains at Rs. 100. This situation would result in our product not being sold outside. Therefore, this cess—however small or big it might be—will erode the spirit of competitiveness among the people who are exporting it. This would result in a sort of distortionary effect for the exported commodities. Therefore, this needs to be abolished. The abolition of this would give a comparative advantage to the people, and the spirit of competitiveness will also increase.

The hon. Member who spoke before me wanted to know this point. How is this measure going to derive competitiveness for the agricultural products when our entire agricultural exports constitute only one per cent of the total exports in the country? Actually, it is not a question of how small or how big the amount of export is, but it is a question of principle. The principle is that we are removing one of the taxes, which has been hampering the trade prospects and export prospects of India. This was happening at a time when we are trying to give a large amount of impetus to the growth of agriculture and agricultural exports to the foreign countries. Therefore, whatever we can give, it would add to the strength of the Indian farmers or add to the bargaining power of the farmers of our country in the international market. This is the chief advantage of doing it.

Secondly, it will be consistent with the agreement on agriculture, which India has signed under the WTO regime. We have become a part of the Uruguay Round of Negotiations and the various other negotiations, so that the global trade will open for free trade. A free trade regime is one where there are no distortions either on the supply side or on the demand side. This has become one of the bottlenecks, and by removing this, we are becoming one among the global partners of global agreements. This will also influence world trade to a very large extent.

Thirdly, the farmers in many of the countries are supported by subsidies. For example, in America, the Government—with all its cost advantages—is providing Green Box subsidies to its farmers, Blue Box subsidies

to its farmers, etc., but our level of subsidies is very low. As we are not in a position to give subsidy, we are reducing the cess aspect and the tax aspect of it from the cost side, and we are saving to that extent. For example, let us talk about a product like the marine fish. The fishing industry is ailing, and most of the industries in this sector are sick irrespective of the fact that they are capable of providing large amount of employment opportunities. The Marine Export Product Agency has reported that the fishermen are languishing on account of this cess. They are giving 0.8 per cent on the finished product, out of which 0.3 goes for MPDA and 0.4 goes for the agriculture produce. Once we remove this cess, then these fishermen will be protected, and they will be provided indirect incentive to export it to foreign countries.

Today, we are thinking of promoting horticulture crops. We are in the mode of diversification of agriculture from subsistence farming to commercial farming, and horticulture products, especially, vegetables give high foreign-exchange reserves. If any are encouraged, then we will be able to get more foreign exchange reserves, and export revenues. Therefore, this bill deserves to be appreciated from all these angles, and the Bill has to be supported by all.

I would like to place two points before the Minister as he is abolishing this cess. When the 1940 Act, came into force, the proceeds of this cess—imposed on the products—were supposed to go to the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) to meet its expenditure on research activities. Over the years, ICAR has been receiving this quantum of money directly, just as we have imposed an education cess, and the revenue goes for the development of educational activities in the country. Similarly, we had imposed this cess to promote the research activities in the ICAR. What will happen to the funds? Is the Government going to make a separate fund for ICAR?

Likewise, in the Act of 1966, it is stated that the proceeds would go towards improvement in marketing aspects. It should be made known how this is to be taken care of. Once these issues are addressed, the entire Bill could be supported by everyone and I also support it.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): I rise to support the Bill and also I congratulate the hon. Minister for having



come out with a very welcome step, which is long overdue. Why is it a welcome step? It is because, as has been mentioned by all the hon. Members here, this is not only a cess but it is a tax on exports.

On the one hand, we were giving incentives for exports and on the other, we are levying a tax on it. So, that anomaly is now being corrected. We have done the same thing in the case of cash crops and spices also, on the recommendations of the concerned Standing Committee. There was also a cess that was being collected to help Commodities Board which was looking after the products like cash crops and spices. That has been done away with now. This is a very welcome step. But at the same time, we have to think of one thing which has been pointed out here. This was mainly done to help ICAR to do research and development. That is an ongoing process and that is a must for agricultural sector which has to be taken care of.

I am sure the far-sighted leader like Shri Sharad Pawar will take care of the interests of the agricultural sector or the farming sector; he knows the importance of research and development especially in agriculture.

There are several other anomalies that are existing. In the case of pepper, the developmental responsibility is with the Agriculture Ministry whereas the marketing and exports are being looked after by the Commerce Ministry. That has to be taken care of. Now, there is nobody to look after pepper entirely—the Commerce Ministry always says that the developmental responsibility is with the Agriculture Ministry. On that account a lot has to be done because a lot of re-planting and rejuvenation has to be done as far as this particular crop is concerned.

I would request—taking this opportunity—the hon. Agriculture Minister that this particular anomaly has to be rectified and the responsibility has to be either entirely with the Agriculture Ministry or entirely with the Commerce Ministry. So, I once again congratulate the hon. Minister and I would request him to make sufficient provision of funds—now that the hon. Finance Minister is also here who is also very much concerned with the development of agriculture sector—for Indian Council of Agricultural Research for doing research and also for development and marketing of agricultural products.

**SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi):** Thank you, Sir.

I rise to support this Bill. This Bill is to repeal two Acts—Agricultural Produce Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966.

In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, it is stated that after repealing the Act of 1940, the proceeds will go to ICAR for R and D. Here, I would like to state that in my State of Orissa, the Central Rice Research Institute is in a bad shape and it has to be improved. Another branch of this Institute should be located in Western Orissa, because the Ministry is going to get additional financial provision now. So, the right place would be somewhere in KBK region, where the main crops are rice, oilseeds and pulses. We spend crores of rupees on importing oilseeds and pulses to provide to our consumers. Due to this, we lose a lot of foreign exchange.

The price of pulses has gone up. By repealing the second Act, you will be developing cashew and lac. Lac trade or lac industry has completely vanished. We had a lac industry in Orissa which was doing very good. The tree from where lac is extracted is known as Kusum tree. Today, because of heavy denudation of forests and deforestation this Kusum tree is slowly fading away. So, I request the Government to encourage Kusum tree plantation. For further promotion of lac industry, Kusum tree should be planted in a big way in the KBK areas.

Besides this, Orissa is a producer of cashew. The area of cashew plantation development has been completely neglected. In the horticulture mission that has been started now, I hope the Government will put in a lot of money in our part of KVK region for horticulture plantation.

This Bill was necessitated because in the law for levying cess there was no provision for granting exemption. Therefore, a legislation to this effect has to be piloted in the House and hence, the Government is repealing the Act. This is a welcome Act. It is like doing away export duty. I hope India comes into competitiveness with other big players in agriculture, the developed nations in agriculture, which are giving thousands and thousands of crores of Rupees as subsidy to their farmers against their agricultural produce. We have not been able to compete with them. In

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

all rounds of WTO talks we have failed to discuss an agreement on Agriculture. We have failed chronologically right from Uruguay round of talks till Hong Kong. I would not like to go into the details. It is the duty of any Government, be it NDA or the UPA Government, to provide relief to the farmers. As rightly pointed out by the Members, it can be done through domestic subsidy because domestic subsidy only could help and improve the economy of the farmers.

The other day I was hearing the hon. Finance Minister in the House on pricing policy. Between consumers and producers or the producers and consumers some kind of a balance has to be maintained. So, I would like to know from the Minister as to when he will come and strike the balance because today the Minimum Support Price for paddy has been raised by only Rs. 10 a quintal. Will Rs. 10 a quintal compensate the farmers or the paddy cultivators? It is impossible.

Now, we hear from news or magazines that contract farming is coming to our country. Please do not do that. If contract farming come into our country, all the small land holders will be begging in the streets and that will lead to starvation, migration and other poverty related problems. So, please do not bring contract farming into our country. This is my request to the Minister, through you, Sir.

There is nothing to oppose in the Bill because it is an encouraging Bill to see that farmers' economic conditions improve.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Bill brought by Shri Sharad Pawarji is a revolutionary one. Through this Bill, an effort has been made to frame an appropriate policy for imposition of custom duty on export. And the bottle-necks in the way of export have been done away with. This Bill can be quite beneficial for the farmers. The horticulture scheme has been finely implemented in Maharashtra. Help has been rendered to the farmers for promotion of horticulture in the state. When Shri Sharad Pawar was the Chief Minister

of Maharashtra, I was the Minister of Employment Guarantee Scheme there. During that regime we tried to help lakhs of farmers. The scheme relating to horticulture has been implemented very well in Maharashtra. Pomegranate is produced in abundance in my constituency Pandharpur, Solapur. Hafuz variety of mango, which is very sweet, is produced in Konkan area. Hon'ble Minister may be aware of its taste. The Government should evolve the ways so that mango, grapes and pomegranate producing farmers may get maximum benefit directly and large chunk of profit do not go to traders. It is good that our UPA Government is trying to ensure that the farmers get maximum benefit.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Sharad Pawarji is also a farmer and he understands the problems of farmers. That's why he has introduced the present bill. The Bill introduced by the present UPA Government is very good. We were expecting the previous NDA Government to bring a Bill of this nature but they did not make any effort during their six years stint. Our UPA Government is taking a revolutionary step for which I am grateful to Shri Sharad Pawarji. Supporting this Bill strongly on behalf of my party, I hope the Bill would benefit the farmers a lot.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not want to say much on this bill. I would like to extend thanks to the hon. Minister of Agriculture on my as well as my party's behalf. I understand that whenever we faced some crisis in agriculture, Shri Pawar had tried to resolve the crisis in Rajasthan with full honesty. It is true that the bill to repeal Bills of 1940 and 1966 should have been brought earlier, but I support the bill introduced by him. There are no two opinions about it that it will bring relief to the farmers. Therefore, I strongly support this Bill because customs duty has been reduced. Beside that, many other hon. Members have also expressed their views on these Bills. He himself has accepted that 67 per cent of benefit goes to farmers. Farmers earn their livelihood from it.

I would like to request the Government to bring other such Bills, if pending, in favour of farmers. Similarly, the hon. Minister should also try to bring other repeal bills, which may prove beneficial for the farmers. I would like to make two submissions before you about the matter you

are well aware of. Last time, Rajasthan faced the crisis of mustard crop. I had made a request to him in that regard. I had met him also. Our delegation also met him. I asked him to make arrangement for storage also. The Government tried to do it, but whole-hearted efforts were not made. The Government should try to remove that shortcoming. We had told you that the Rajasthan Government is procuring mustard but full payments have not been made. I have come to know from reliable sources that my sister Shrimati Vasundharaji, the Chief Minister of Rajasthan had a meeting with him. He has tried to retrieve the system. If he has tried to do it, I thank him. But consideration is needed in regard to storage facility. I understand that he is also a well-wisher of farmers. He must also see that the farmers may get remunerative prices.

I have a small complaint that the Government have purchased wheat from Austria, by paying higher prices and procured wheat from our farmers at the rate of Rs. 7.50 per kilogram. Had the wheat been purchased from farmers at the rate of Rs. 9 or 10 per kilogram, it would have proved beneficial for the Indian farmers. The Government have procured wheat from the black-listed Australian company. It is also a matter of debate. I understand that he should definitely give clarification in this regard, so that people may be able to know as to under what circumstances the Government tried to import wheat.

Therefore, I would like to say that the Government should bring bills beneficial for the farmers. I support this Bill. Alongwith it, Government should bring all such pending bills, so that repealing of bills may not be required repeatedly. We would thank him not once but many times as he brings such bills. If he so desires, I can extend my congratulations in advance. I do not want to say any other special thing, I support this bill. Though, other hon. Members and my colleague Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat also has made a mention of Andhra Pradesh and about India's being an agriculture-based economy and also about the pending bills. The Government should bring all such pending repeal bills.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you are my namesake, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Yes our names are similar.

[English]

**SHRI SUDHANGSHU SEAL (Calcutta-North West):**  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on this Bill.

Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate our hon. Minister for introducing these two repeal bills. This would definitely help crores of agriculturists in the country. The first thing that I would like to mention here is that the hon. Minister is well aware of the fact that when we started exporting vegetables and fruits we had been facing a great deal of difficulty owing to various factors. Important amongst them was that we did not have sufficient storage capacity. We need to have much more multipurpose cold storage throughout the country. Secondly, while exporting our produce, either by air or by ship, we come across a great deal of anomaly in airfreights. If we are really interested in giving a boost and encourage export of these agri products, then we would have to definitely take care of this problem as well.

Another point is that while exporting these perishable items by ship we face the problem of containers. We need to have refrigerated containers. It is a pity that even after 58 years of Independence we do not have our own refrigerated containers. We need to have them. We are presently meeting our requirements of these containers by importing from other countries. Whatever materials we export from the State of West Bengal to the global market, we import refrigerated containers from Germany. This results in escalation of costs. In order to make our goods cost-effective to be able to compete better with the other leading countries in the field we need to have our own refrigerated containers. Now, for example, we are exporting potatoes from West Bengal. Our global competitors in this field are countries like the United States of America, Australia and Holland. In this connection I would like to mention that we are grateful to the hon. Minister for Agriculture because for the first time the UPA Government has sanctioned transport assistance for export of potatoes. This incentive has enabled us to enter the global market. But even then the problem of having to import refrigerated containers still remains.

Sir, the basic purpose of repealing these two Bills is to give a boost and encourage the export of our agricultural produce. Our topographical condition is like this. Whatever

[Shri Sudhangshu Seal]

items we produce in our country that finds acceptance in the global market. Therefore, if the Government is really serious and interested about encouraging our growers and exporters, then they must sort out these problems. These are very much related with export of agricultural produce. I would like the hon. Minister to enlighten us on these points when he replies to the debate.

Sir, the hon. lady Member is not present in the House but she referred about the state of affairs in West Bengal. In this connection I would like to mention, it has already been mentioned by the hon. Minister that agriculture and industry should go hand in hand. It is not alone production of agricultural goods and finding a market for them would take our national forward. We need our industries also grow equally side by side. We need land for the purpose of setting up industries and our Government of West Bengal has taken the correct decision in this regard and we are very much hopeful that within a few years from now the State of West Bengal would regain its lost glory and march ahead of other States in the field of agriculture and industrial development.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on such an important bill. Not taking much time. I would like to tell few things to the hon. Minister. First of all, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Agriculture for presenting this bill in the House to abolish cess for the benefit of agriculture exporters and basically in the interest of farmers. The Standing Committee of Parliament had also recommended in its report that cess should be abolished. Therefore, I support this bill.

I would like to say two things. Agriculture has been an important occupation in our country. It has been a way of living, but during the last few years it has taken a competitive form, therefore the pattern of farming has also changed. This tendency has promoted commercial farming. It is a new concept and is an important step towards progress. Even today, 60-70 per cent people of our country depend on agriculture. Therefore it becomes all the more important for us to consider those issues which are related

to the agriculture. Therefore, a serious consideration must be given to such issues.

For sometime, the process of global business has been going in the entire world. Agriculture commodities, in particular have been promoted, but this global business process is also effecting agro products. A global meet in this regard was held recently. Though unanimity could not be evolved in this meeting, but an era of free trade system has begun. If we will promote our farmers in this system only then they would be able to compete with their agro-products with other countries in global trade, because in future there would be a lot of competition in agriculture products. There are ample opportunities for our farmers in global trade, because this sector is having a huge market. As we are progressing in this sector under SAFTA in Asia and there would be a large share of agro-products in trade between the Member countries. After that there are a lot of potential for the trade of our agricultural products to African subcontinent and other sub-continent. But it is very unfortunate that we are lacking in processing facilities in agriculture sector. Today, our farmers want to progress with the help of bio-technology. They also want to make experiments with new seeds and would like to develop products of international standard. In this regard, I would like to request the Minister of Agriculture, that alongwith abolishing cess for promoting export, he should also give assistance to food processing undertakings to promote it. In this regard, we find that China's experience in this sector is quite encouraging. Due to low cost and labour incentives, the farmers and food processing industry over there have progressed very well. In our country also, it requires promotion.

I hope that his special efforts would also promote export of processed agricultural products. With these efforts we will be able to enter new era and give a new direction to our farmers.

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are discussing the Bill meant for repealing the Agricultural Produce Cess Act, 1940 and Produce Cess Act, 1966, introduced by hon. Sharad Pwarji. It is a welcome effort by the hon. Minister of Agriculture as he has shown the courage to sort out the lacuna. Therefore, I am thankful to him.

The cess was imposed to ensure remunerative prices

for the produce of Indian farmers. The objective of the Bill, inter-alia included, ensuring adequate export of agri-produce.

I would like to add one more thing that the cold pasturisation process evolved with the help of atomic waste by our scientists should be made available at our all major ports for the benefit of 67 per cent agri-products produced in India by our farmers, as the process is highly low cost one. The items like sea-food, spices, agri-produce or fruits such as apple, pine-apple can be processed easily and sold which would fetch good prices, whereas, if these commodities are sold direct from the farmers it would fetch good price. Therefore, this process should be introduced at all the ports for the benefit of the farmers. This would benefit the farmers immensely, so said process is quite useful.

I am thankful to you for having given me as opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to each and every hon. Member, as all the hon. Members who have participated in the debate have supported this Bill. In fact, it is a Repeal Bill. Whatever decision has been taken in this Bill is just to encourage export because the cess under this Act is a tax on exports. In the present national and international context, tax on exports is bad economics.

In the international market, agriculture export is becoming very competitive day by day. The whole world knows as to what has happened in the recent discussion in the WTO meeting. India had to take a firm stand. I would like to congratulate my colleague, the Minister of Commerce as he fought for the cause of Indian agriculturists. As countries like the United States of America had taken a stand that they are not going to withdraw the subsidies, the Indian representative also had taken an extreme stand. We have not become a party to that decision. So, in the international market, there are countries which are giving substantial subsidies to their agricultural produce. Whereas in our country, these two Acts, the Agricultural Produce Cess Act 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966, have discouraged exports directly

or indirectly by levying tax on agricultural items. Which are those items? They are butter, milk products, etc.

Very few people know that today India is the largest producer of milk in the world. We produce highest quantity of milk in the whole world. But the milk producers are not getting proper price. One of the reasons for that is the insufficient infrastructure to process the milk and prepare the milk products in such a fashion which can compete in the international market. But there was a tax on butter. The second item was pulses. That includes wheat and rice. Take, for instance, rice.

India is a major exporter of rice. Our total export of rice last year was somewhat near to Rs. 6,000 crore. We would like to encourage basmati plantation and we would like to capture global market of the basmati because that will definitely give additional money to the farmers and that will improve our overall foreign exchange position. But because of this Bill, there was a tax.

Now, the third item is fish. The total export from India about the sea food is somewhat near to Rs. 8,000 crore. There was a provision to introduce taxes on the fish along with fruits, ghee, pulses, seeds, spices, vegetable, wheat flour, etc. So, these are the items where there was a provision to introduce taxes.

In fact, I would like to tell the House that during the last few years in most of the items we were not collecting taxes. Last year our total income because of this cess was Rs. 8 crore and 99 lakh. I am sure that even collection charges must be more than what exactly we have collected the amount. That is why, ultimately, we took the decision to let us abolish these taxes, repeal this Bill and get rid with this Bill, and encourage exports in the area of agriculture.

A number of issues were raised by some of our colleagues. Now, for instance, the money whatever the collection we were getting because of this cess, that entire money was sent to the Indian Council for Agriculture Research for Research. This total amount, as I said, last year's collection was Rs. 8 crore and 99 lakh. The hon. Minister of Finance is very much here. I am grateful to him that because of him, the budgetary provision for the Indian Council for Agriculture Research which was somewhat near to Rs. 850 crore, now it has gone up to

[Shri Sharad Pawar]

Rs. 1,200 crore. So, whatever precautions the Government has to take, were taken and I am sure that there will not be dearth of money for the research especially in the area of agriculture.

17.37 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Some other issues were raised and I do not know how they were concerned with this particular Bill. It is true that Ms. Mamata Banerjee has raised the point about food production. She has also raised the issue of what will be the overall situation in the food front in the next few years. She also suggested that we should study this aspect. In fact, we have gone in detail and it is true that there is a problem. Our own study shows that in the year 2012, probably, there will be substantial shortage of food in this country and yet in 2020 that shortfall might go to another 30 to 40 million tonnes. That is why, we had to take a number of decisions and we have started taking corrective decisions.

I am not worried about the rice production. There are a number of States which are taking a lot of initiatives in the area of rice. I have already disclosed some figures and some information to this august House. Till tow years back, our total procurement of rice was essentially from Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh. But during the last year, if you see the figures, the next to Punjab, the second State which has really come forward is Chhattisgarh and the third State which has come forward to provide rice in our national kitty is Orissa. Next is West Bengal, then Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. So, we have introduced the procurement in decentralised manner and I am really happy that many States are taking a lot of initiatives and they are coming forward to resolve the problem of rice. But the wheat situation is a little different because we can take wheat essentially in Punjab, Haryana and part of the Uttar Pradesh. It is not possible to take wheat crop in the entire Southern India or in the entire North-East or the eastern area. Or, it may not be possible to take it to the entire North-East or the Eastern areas. That is why, we have to see how we will be able to improve our wheat production. If we have to improve our wheat production, then we have to concentrate on

Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, parts of Maharashtra and Bihar. I am sure, we will be able to take corrective action. We will introduce some of the new schemes especially for these States. We will be able to resolve the problem of food security.

Another issue she, in fact, raised here is this. Shrimati Jayaben Thakkar also raised it regarding some research. I am aware about some research that has been developed by our Atomic Energy Commission about how to preserve food. What she was telling here will definitely be useful. I am myself going to collect more information about that. We will see how we can use whatever new technology has been developed by our Atomic Energy Commission.

Shri Bhargava has, as usual, raised the issue about sarson. In fact, sarson procurement was one of the serious issues raised by the farmers especially the Rajasthan farmers and by some sections in Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. I would just like to brief this House that two years back the total procurement of sarson in the entire country was worth Rs. 120 crore. In the last year, the UPA Government procured—just to protect the interests of the farmers—sarson worth Rs. 3000 crore. This year, probably we will cross Rs. 3200 crore. We are also facing a substantial loss but we are not bothered about that. We took the decision just to protect the interest of the farmers.

I am aware that some money is outstanding for the Rajasthan farmers. I had a detailed discussion with the hon. Chief Minister of Rajasthan. We are going to find some solution. I would like to give a clear-cut assurance to the House, especially to the farmers of Rajasthan that they need not worry about that. Practically, within a week or two, we will be able to resolve the entire issue. I do not want to take more time. The issue is limited.

There are some other Acts like the APEDA Cess Act, 1985; the Spices Cess Act, 1986; the Tobacco Cess Act, 1975; the MPEDA Act, 1972 and the Coffee Cess Act, 1942. Recently, the Union Cabinet has taken the decision to abolish cess on export of some agricultural products done through all these Acts. Therefore, there will not be any problem.

I am happy that those hon. Members who have

participated in the discussion on this Bill supported the Bill. Whatever types of distortions are there in the area of agricultural trade, marketing and export, we will try to correct them.

From that angle only, I am just moving this Bill.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Sir, I would compliment the hon. Minister for the steps taken in the field of agriculture, especially in respect of modernisation and also to help the farmers by taking the farmers to certain foreign countries. I think it is for the first time that farmers have been taken in a delegation to some foreign countries. That is a good step. I think this is the time when we have to adopt some of the modern technologies, which are being used in some of the countries. They can be transplanted to our country where we have the manpower and all the other facilities. By the use of the most modern technology, we can make best use of productivity; we can increase productivity.

Secondly, one more small aspect is there pertaining to my State of Kerala. The Government of Kerala has recommended and strongly made a recommendation with regard to two more districts to be included for the consideration when a package is announced. The hon. Finance Minister is also present here. I say this because a lot of suicides had taken place especially in the district of Idukki and also in the backward district of Allepy. These are the two districts which are to be considered while packages are going to be declared for farmers. Of course, Mr. Minister, you have done it for some other State. We are very happy. But this may be done with regard to the State of Kerala also where the farmers are in deep doldrums, especially in some of the districts where a lot of suicides had taken place. It is because of the laxity on the part of some people. The point is some reports came earlier. Proper reports were not given to the Ministry here.

The real problem is, some of the districts were not shown and the number of suicides was also not shown correctly. It is good that the Agriculture Minister has taken pains to collect the real statistics and we hope that these two districts—of course three districts have already been identified—which have been identified by the Government of Kerala after a new study and recommended to the Government of India would also be included for consideration to give special package of relief.

[Translation]

PROF RASA SINGH RAWAT: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Minister of Agriculture as he took up the issue of mustard of Rajasthan. But I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the import of palm oil from abroad as this import has badly affected mustard oil industry as the stock of mustard was not lifted from godowns by mustard oil export owners. Expellers known as Kolhu in Rajasthan, used for extracting oil from mustard, known as Kacchi Ghani, are lying idle. In view of it. I would like to submit that the import of palm oil should be banned so as to encourage export of mustard oil. More than hundred per cent duty should be imposed on its import so that import becomes costlier and indigenous oil becomes cheaper.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir the hon. Minister in his reply has stated that three states have been identified for promotion of rice production, including my state, Bihar. He further stated that the Government have evolved a new scheme, but, he did not elaborate upon the said new scheme. I would like to ask him what new scheme has been evolved to encourage the rice growers of Bihar so that they can produce more and contribute it to the national quota so that the shortage can also be overcome.

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Agriculture for having appointed NAFED as channelising agency for procurement of mustard in Rajasthan. There has been positive impact of import of vegetable oil through Sri Lanka in Rajasthan and the farmers have now started getting good price. But recently the newspapers have reported that companies operating in Sri Lanka having their own vested interests are mounting pressure on the Government for divesting NAFED of the work of agency and appoint some other agency in its place. I would urge the hon. Minister to put quantitative restrictions on import as we receive an unlimited quantity say approximately two and a half-lakh tonne, whereas, there are hardly 10 factories engaged in its manufacturing and 135-140 factories, out of 250 factories in India have been closed down. However, said decision of hon. Minister has again revived the factories. Therefore, my submission is that

[Dr. Karan Singh Yadav]

status-quo may be maintained in case of NAFED and it should remain a channalising agency also, but quantitative restrictions may be imposed.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The objective of the said repeal Bill was to abolish taxes being levied on agri-products. But the issues raised here have no relevance with the Bill. However, since the issues have been raised, therefore, I feel it as my duty to apprise the hon. Members about it. So far as import of vegetables oil from Nepal is concerned it has come to my notice that it is affecting India's vegetable oil industry. To find a way out, the domestic industry suggested to appoint NAFED a channelising agency for this purpose. In view of their suggestion the Government appointed NAFED as a channelising agency. Meanwhile, Sri Lankan had met me and wanted me to divest NAFED of the said job. But, the Government of India did not accept their request. The Government want to restrict the quantity being imported and it does not want to bring any change in it. However, we want to honour our agreement entered into with Sri Lanka, simultaneously we are not going to compromise with the interests of domestic industry and the farmers.

So far as suggestion of package for three districts of Kerala is concerned, their suggestion has been accepted. Further, two new districts have been added to it. We would act upon the first proposal and then we would consider about districts. I do not need to say anything more and I believe the hon. Members would support the Bill.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to repeal the Agricultural Produce Cess Act, 1940 and the Produce Cess Act, 1966, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House shall now taken up clause by clause consideration to the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 5 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clauses 2 to 5 were added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, The Enacting Formula and the long Title were added to the Bill.*

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, with your kind permission, may I suggest that Item No. 18, Government Securities Bill, be taken up tomorrow? We may take up Item No. 19 for some time immediately after Item No. 17 is over and then we may take up 'Zero Hour'. I know that a lot of hon. Members are not happy about 'Zero Hour' being taken quite late in the day, but I would request them to please cooperate.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Sir, Zero-hour is taken up at 10 o'clock on the night and it does not get any coverage at so late hours, even newspapers do not cover it. ... (Interruptions)

17.52 hrs.

**SPIRITUOUS PREPARATIONS (INTER-STATE TRADE AND COMMERCE) CONTROL (REPEAL) BILL, 2006**

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No. 17.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Sir, I beg to move:



"That the Bill to repeal the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control Act, 1955, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control Act 1955 was enacted with a view to making provisions for the imposition in the public interest of certain restrictions on inter-State trade and commerce in spirituous medicinal and other preparations. The Act also empowers the Central Government to specify a prohibition State in which or any part of which the consumption of alcoholic liquor may be prohibited by law and also to declare preparations containing alcohol to be a spirituous preparations within the maning of this Act.

The Central Government constituted a Commission on Review of Administrative Laws under the Chairmanship of Shri P.C. Jain on 8th May, 1988 with the objective of undertaking, *inter alia*, review of laws and regulations and for making recommendations for repeal/amendments of such laws and regulations.

The Commission, *inter alia*, recommended repeal of the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control Act, 1955.

At present, Gujarat is the only State having policy of prohibition. The Government of Gujarat has informed that they have made the Gujarat Spirituous Preparations Rules, 2005 under the Bombay Prohibition Act, 1949 and, therefore, the State Government have no objections to the repeal of this enactment.

Under the circumstances, the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control Act, 1955 has become obsolete and the Central Government considers it appropriate to repeal the Act.

Sir, since the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control (Repeal) Bill, 2006 has already been passed by Rajya Sabha, I therefore, beg to take leave to move the motion for consideration and that the Bill be passed.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to repeal the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control Act, 1955,

as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I strongly support the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control (Repeal) Bill move by the Minister of Agriculture, Shir Sharad Pawar. The Government constituted a commission on Review of Administrative Laws under the Chirmanship of Shri P.C. Jain with the objective of undertaking review of laws or regulations for making recommendations for repeal/amendments of such laws and regulations. The Commission recommended that the previous law has outlived its utility because Gujarat has made its own law. They have implemented Bombay State Act. Therefore, the present Act is no longer required there. That is why; the hon'ble Minister has moved the bill to repeal that Act. I support it, but through you, I would like to state that the prohibition policy incorporated in the Directive Principles of State under our constitution has been thrown to the wind. Mahatma Gandhi and other freedom fighters had set some ideals that the liquor would be banned in Independent India and it would not be allowed for sale openly. However, through advertisements, magazines, media and the way western culture is being publicised in the name of tourism, more and more people have started consuming liquor. Even those who were against it, have now started consuming it. It has become a status symbol in high societies.

Through you, Sir, I would like to request that though I am supporting this Repeal Bill but the Government should pay attention towards factual situation about implementation of prohibition policy and any new law if necessary, may be brought to check this tendency. Department of social welfare launches campaigns in this regard. Though hoardings about the harmful aspects of consuming liquor are installed but these are installed near the liquor shops, bear shops or cooperative only. What is all this? Through you, I would like to request the Government and to the followers of Mahatma Gandhi and the people who swear by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi to strictly implement the prohibition policy for realizing the dream of Mahatma Gandhi. It is good that the old act is being repealed. I support to repeal Bill.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRI (Sabarkantha): I am mentioning two-three points just to remind him.

[English]

Gujarat is the only state, which has in fact adhered to the prohibition policy. Most of the states in India do not want to remove this partly because there is a great temptation to earn more and more money for the exchequer.

17.58 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD *in the Chair*]

[Translation]

Through you, sir I would like to draw the attention of Shri Rasa Singh Rawatji to the fact that after sales tax, Rajasthan Government earns maximum income through liquor. About 7-8 years back, their income from this source was Rs. 700 crores but now I understand that it might be between Rs. 1500 crores to Rs. 2000 crores, just double the earlier income...*(Interruptions)*. Similar situation is there in Madhya Pradesh...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rasa Singh Rawatji please take your seat. I am not allowing you.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing except what Shri Mistry is saying will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)\**

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: I will support this bill if all the State Governments ban it completely. You may remember that agitations were launched for this purpose in the entire country and in Andhra Pradesh it has to be started again after putting a ban for two-three years.

18.00 hrs.

Excise on liquor is one of the most prime source of severne earnings for all other States except Gujarat. Gujarat has to bear many losses but today maximum collection of sales tax is in Gujarat, Next to Delhi, Gujarat is the only State where sales tax collection is the highest.

I support the reply given by Gujarat State that they have framed their own rules and no longer require the old Act. I associate myself with the sentiments of Rasa Singhji, however, I would like to urge upon him that all the State Governments irrespective of their party should take initiative to implement prohibition for the welfare of the people.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chall): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control (Repeal) Bill, 2006. As stated in the Bill, it has been moved to repeal the 1955 Act in this regard. It is true that all the medicines contain a little quantity of alcohol. The speed fuel used in motor vehicles also contains some quantity of spirit. Hence, alcohol is widely utilized in commercial and trade sector. For example, sugarcane and mahua is produced in Uttar Pradesh. Spirit is made from sugarcane and, it also contain alcohol. Menthol and Peppermint is manufactured in Uttar Pradesh. The spirit used in fuel is very useful. It increases the speed of the vehicle and it is pollution free also. Carbon does not emnate from it and it is eco-friendly also. This bill has lifted the ban on inter-state trade of liquor. Therefore, it is a praiseworthy Bill. Use of alcoholic substances in trade and commerce was banned earlier in some states like Gujarat. Now Gujarat has also agreed to lift this ban. Prohibition is still implemented in some states but I think it has remained only on papers. None of the states so far has implemented this policy in real sense. The way multi-nationals are coming and we are having all sorts of competitions in trade and commerce; this bill would facillitate progress and development.

Mr. Chairman Sir, I conclude while strongly supporting this Bill. This Bill has been passed in Rajya Sabha, therefore, it should be passed in Lok Sabha also.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control (Repeal) Bill, 2006 moved by hon'ble Minister. I would not like to repeat the technicalities explained by him in the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill. I would like to mention it clearly that it is right that the items being sold through the Department of Excise have become the major source of revenue for all the States in the country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is causing many harms. When Janta Party came to power for the first time and hon'ble Morarji Desai became the Prime Minister, it was his commitment to the people of the country that prohibition will be introduced and according to which prohibition was made in various States. Bihar was also one of them. However, many States including Uttar Pradesh did not do so. Despite all the efforts, liquor had been sold illegally in the country on a large scale and people continue to consume it. The large scale financial losses continued to occur due to this and the vision of late Shri Morarji Desai could not be realised.

Sir, I think the entire house share the sentiments of hon'ble Rasa Singh Rawat, but practically it is not being implemented. Several problems are arising out of non-implementation of prohibition and the tendency of people to consume liquor. Whatever the poor people earn through working whole day in the field and as road labourers, squander it in the same evening by consuming liquor and are not able to provide a square meal to their families. They are ruining their families. Poor people, mainly the safai karamchari waste their entire income on it. Therefore, I request the Government to ponder over it seriously as to how to stop the people from the tendency of consuming liquor.

Sir, prohibition should be there but it should not be done forcefully rather awareness should be created among the people in this regard. Such an environment should be created socially which could send the message to the drunkards that nothing is going to be achieved by consuming liquor except ruining of health and family. Drunkards misbehave with their wives and children and also get involved in various types of crimes. Every person has dual personality—one is gentle and other is devil. On consuming liquor the devil inside a man dominates him and get him involve in various crimes. Poor and dalit drunkards have been found involved in various types of crimes.

Sir, it is opined by everyone that prohibition should be policy based, however, we are not getting the desired success. It is causing a great harm. Many State Governments grant licenses to open liquor shops near schools and religious places like temple, mosque and

Gurudwara just to earn revenue. It causes an increase in the number of crimes and the number of drunkards also. I urge the Government to ponder over it seriously. We have not been able to achieve success so far to attain the basic concept of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi for the complete prohibition in the country. While honouring the basic sentiments of Father of the Nation, we should consider seriously to implement complete prohibition, in the country. It would be really a commendable step in the interest of the poor, dalits and entire country.

Sir, I would like that Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat should honour the sentiments of Mahatma Gandhi while naming him \* I fail to understand the justification when he talks about prohibition\*....And he is talking here about prohibition. It does not suit his personality. The leader of his party has written in his book that he escorted the terrorists to Kandhar\*....(Interruptions) Therefore, the Bill which hon'bel Minister has moved is irrelevant in present scenario. Therefore, I would like to request to take an effective step to save the poor from this evil. There is definitely a need to put a ban on it. Our concerted efforts are required for this purpose irrespective of our party line. ....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, you are getting annoyed. I am concluding...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not getting annoyed. Please cooperate with the Chair.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I always cooperate. I am concluding.

Sir, this evil cannot be checked till an awareness is created in the society that consuming liquor is not a good thing.

With these words, I conclude. I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (Jagatsinghpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am extremely grateful for giving me an opportunity to express my views on this subject.

Sir, prohibition is our dream. That was the dream of our Father of the Nation, and that is also the spirit of the Constitution. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Chairman that the noble object of the 1955 Act was to make provision for the imposition, in the public interest, of certain restrictions on inter-State trade and commerce in spirituous medicinal and other preparations. The Act empowered the Central Government to specify a prohibition State in which or any part of which the consumption of alcoholic liquor may be prohibited by law and also to declare any preparation containing alcohol to be a spirituous preparation within the meaning of this Act.

That is the object. I would like to highlight certain things to understand whether that object can be protected or not. Hon. Chairman, Sir, my apprehension is that this may lead to free flow of liquor. As you know, Orissa and some other States are dominated by Scheduled Caste people and they have got their own innovation to prepare Khandia and Mahua from Mahua flowers, which is good for their health. My apprehension is that this Indian-made liquor may have influence on their health and it may be injurious.

My second apprehension in this regard is, whether the interest of different small States can be protected or not. That is to be looked into. My third apprehension in this regard is that this will encourage liquor tragedies. As you know, now-a-days liquor tragedy has become a common phenomenon throughout the country. This is because of free flow of liquor.

We have to bring a check that this nexacious, injurious and spurious liquor should not flow in the market, For that we must be very conscious. As you know, we are in a civilised society. Though the dream of Gandhiji was for prohibition, but now we find that near school campuses and in all public places the liquor shops are opened as a result of which it has become a question mark whether we can make India a super power. It was said by 2020 India will be a super power in the world. In

these circumstances, I want to know whether that dream in going to be materialised or not. That should be looked into.

We find that in some States, as you know, instead of encouraging the farmers for producing paddy and other crops, they are being encouraged to cultivate the grapes for wines and this has become a common feature. To have a safe, modern India, I would like to appeal to the Government through you that when we are repealing this Act, that the objective of this 1955 Act is not to be frustrated. That should be looked into.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Spurious Preparations Control (Repeal) Bill which is being piloted by the hon. Minister of Agriculture is, in a way, good. But at the same time, alcohol is also a social evil at various stages. This Bill is completely abolishing the Act with a sense to encourage grape production and thereby producing Indian wines. As per the paper reports, the Indian wine is comparable to French wine, Canadian wine and the South African wine. It has got a big export potential which is there for Indian wine. It must be a welcome measure for that.

But the other thing which we have to consider is the social evil. The regulation of liquor laws and excise laws is usually done by the States. For example, late N.T. Rama Rao, when he was the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh imposed a ban on liquor in Andhra Pradesh. But there was a clamour among the tribals who were drinking toddy from the palm tree which was their natural habit, which was a natural fruit for them. So, they could brew their own liquor. That was allowed. Similarly, in Orissa also, in the tribal areas, they were first permitted to brew five litres of the local brew from the *mahua* flower which is found abundantly in the State of Orisa and a lot of liquor is being made from them. But with the inclusion of these private liquor vendors from other States, who are known basically as *bhattiwalas*, it has become worse. They come and dominate in those areas. Though this is a State subject, I have to bring it to the notice of the august House, the reason being that the Orissa Government also should be enlightened about the issue that these *bhattiwalas* go and create a rein of terror. They are mainly from Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. They should not impose their

liquor upon the tribals which is being done abundantly today. It is a fact that a lot of revenue comes from excise. But I would like to know how much does a State Government spend for anti-alcohol consumption. How many advertisements they issue? At how many places they do it for prohibition? How much publicity goes to that? It does not happen. The call by Gandhiji was that liquor is bad for human body.

It is especially so in our climatic conditions. It is a social evil. I hope, after the abolition of this Bill, its aim and objective of prohibition will not be affected. I commend the Gujarat Government for getting prohibition in the State by sacrificing so much of excise. Today, that is one of the most advanced States in the country, without liquor revenue also. That is one of the progressive economic States in the country, without excise revenue from the liquor and they are going ahead. So, there is no question of opposing the Bill.

My feeling is that after abolition of this Bill, there will be free flow of liquor which is a very dangerous for the poor people. This is one of the reasons why NREGP might fail. NREGP is an employment generation programme to employ one person from a PBL family in labour-intensive work in his village. But how much money does he take back to his family? If *bhattiwala* or liquor vendor is there, the money does not go to the family. It goes to that liquor vendor. So, these evils have to be properly checked and stricter laws should be brought by the State Governments, as advised by the Centre.

With these words, I thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava—not present.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we all support the Bill to repeal Spirituous Preparations Control Act, 1995 and we have a reason to support, it is a very good bill. They are referring to Mahatma Gandhi because of his opposition to drinking but they forget his principles when it comes to riots in Gujarat. Although, it is a fact that many people die due to drinking yet it is a source of livelihood for some, so we should also take that in consideration. It is correct that it

is poor and the middle class families which are getting most adversely affected due to drinking. It is prohibited in Gujarat but ironically, there are maximum number of alcoholics in the state. Similarly, there is ongoing prohibition in district Vardha of Maharashtra yet there is maximum number of alcoholics. If we wish to effectively bring in prohibition then there is a need to do it through social change. We shall have to make concerted efforts to ban it because making legislations alone would not help. I support this bill and we should all step forward to support it.

With these words I conclude.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Sir, with your permission I rise to support the Bill brought by the Hon'ble Minister. I would like to make two-three suggestions and say a few words in regard to the conditions prevailing in the country. One of our colleagues was referring to the physical characteristics of the people of Haryana and Punjab as to how robust and well built they used to be and also about the early morning diet ...(*Interruptions*) My point is that the habit of drinking has ruined the people. Today, the incidents of dacoity, theft and cheating have increased to a great extent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Many Members wish to make submission during 'Zero Hour'. Please conclude it fast.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: I would like to submit that it should be restricted to the maximum extent. If this habit is not checked the evils of the society will not be checked. Although the sale of liquor is a source of revenue for the State Governments, it has been more than offset by the increase in the health cost as drinking is causing various diseases including various lung related disorders among the people. If we look at villages we would find that more number of death is caused due to alcohol consumption as a result of which pension is to be given to their widows which increases the burden on the state exchequer. Earlier the wives of soldiers attaining martyrdom for the country used to become widows, now the alcoholic deaths are resulting in more number of widows in the country. This should be checked, it is a very serious issue. ...(*Interruptions*)

I support this Bill and would like to submit that we should promote the ideologies of our great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Minister has noted your suggestions.

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA (Janjgir): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak.

I welcome the Bill brought by Shri Sharad Pawarji. However, this country cannot be reformed through legislations. We shall make legislations however, unless it is accompanied by social change this country will not improve because the alcoholics need an excuse for drinking. If they do not consume spiruous liquor they will drink something else. An hon'ble Member was enumerating the different varieties of liquor. The manner in which advertisements on TV promoting liquor, are shown is certainly alluring for the people to take on drinking. The Gujarat Government has definitely. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): The Government of Gujarat has totally prohibited it.

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA: The women would favour total prohibition...*(Interruptions)*

The Government of Gujarat needs to be congratulated for the kind of political will it has shown. Other State Governments should follow suit since the revenue from liquor is fairly low and it is adversely affecting the lives of people particularly women. The drunkards beat their womenfolk. I believe that this would definitely help in checking this tendency and would be an appropriate example for empowerment of women.

I would also like to submit that if this kind of a ban is imposed not only on spiruous liquor but on all kinds of liquor, or fanny made from either Mahua or Cashew nut, we shall be able to save this country and make it a strong, powerful, prosperous nation devoid of all evils as envisaged by Gandhiji.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to all the hon'ble Members whob participated in this discussion since all the colleagues in the House have expressed their desire to extend their cooperation and support the Bill to repeal the Spiruous Preparations

Control Act, 1995. I was of the opinion that after bringing this motion in the House it would have been difficult for me to convince the Hon'ble Members who were in favour of prohibition. After hearing the discussion on the motion to repeal the Act I find that they have wholeheartedly welcomed the Bill. Besides, they also emphasized on the need for implementing the prohibition strongly. It is true that prohibition is a state subject and in this respect only the State is in a position to take any measure. A state like Gujarat has taken a very good measure in this regard which has been referred to by the Hon'ble Members here. When the State is empowered why should the Centre frame a separate legislation in this regard. All the states of the country barring a few have adopted a different policy in this regard which has led to different situation in the respective states of the country about which several Hon'ble Members have apprised the House. The States have been empowered to formulate law. Several States have framed laws in this regard and have enforced them too.

Given this situation a separate legislation was not required by the Government of India and in view of it this Motion of Repeal Bill was introduced in the House. And I am happy that all the Members have welcomed this bill.

All the sections have articulated their views in regard to drinking. Changes in the mindset in regard to wine are also being expressed. It is true that there was no more market prior to this. Now the scenario is changing. Certain states are trying to ban the country liquor. Today, several states have started the process of preparing quality liquor so that it may be covered by those who wish to drink. Today its impact is visible in market, hotels and restaurants also because country liquor is creating problems in many families reference of which has been made here. So if any thing is to be done in this regard there is need to take pragmatic approach.

It has been mentioned here that there is need to check the opening of liquor shops near temples and schools. The attempts are also being made by several States to impose ban on it. There is need to pay attention towards the quality of liquor to ensure that wherever permission is given to sell liquor, only good quality liquor is sold so that it may not affect he health of the people.

Some States pay attention in this regard. It is commendable thing that the hypocrisy regarding drinking is waning and the people have started openly talking about it. Steps have been taken in several States in this regard, however, there is great difference in the situation present in the State and the policy of the State Government.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the House is aware that I have held the responsibility of the Chief Ministership of the State on three four occasions. One day when I was reviewing all our budget proposals and income proposal the figures regarding the excise came before me. There was slight increase in the income from excise that was substantiated by the report as well. Out of curiosity when I started to look into it to know as to which district earns maximum revenue. There is Dadar-Nagar Haveli located along Maharashtra Gujarat border. It is a Union Territory. Officially maximum liquor is supplied there from Maharashtra. So the maximum revenue was received from that area. When I carefully examined the data regarding the total population of Dadar-Nagar Haveli and the quantity of liquor consumed in the region, it seemed that each person of that area has started consuming ten bottle of liquor every day. Thus, accordingly the number of bottles were supplied to that region. It seemed peculiar to me because the number of bottles consumed was much higher in proportion to the population. Now it is to be noted that Gujarat state is its neighbour. There is no need to mention more in this regard. The pragmatic approach was not adopted and that is why such situation arose. There is need to work with understanding in this regard. We will have to check the sale of low and substandard quality of liquor which is destroying the peace of the family and is adversely affecting the health of the people. Along with that we will also have to pay attention towards this area because such area will not enjoy social prestige. Whatever can be done to pay attention in this regard is required to be done by the State Governments. Just now, it has been stated especially by Shri B.K. Dev that liquor should not be openly advertised, however, there is need to do something regarding the quality of liquor. Today, I can speak in this regard. I remember that in the year 1978 when I was the chief Minister of Maharashtra, I had a senior colleague who always guided me has affection

for me. His name was Biju Patnayak. Whenever I had to consider over a major issue or prepare policy I used to discuss that with Biju Da and seek his suggestions. I remember that one day Morarji Bhai had called the meeting of all the Chief Ministers of States and in that meeting the Prime Minister addressed about the prohibition. Shri Biju Da rose to express his views in clear terms. He clearly stated that he would neither encourage and publicise the consumption of liquor nor would formulate policy to make it easily available to the people, however, along with that he would also not accept hypocrisy. Whatever is fact is fact. There is need to stop it, however, if efforts are made to check it completely, people will adopt some illegal means to acquire it. So we will have to ensure that spurious and harmful liquor is not supplied to the poor people of society and may not adversely affect their health. We will make efforts to create awareness in society for discouraging its consumption. I will certainly do this work in my state, however, along with that I would also not tell anyone that I did not touch it in my life. Biju Da had guts to accept it. Then it was very difficult to say like this. Today, Members are discussing this issue in the House which is indicative of change in attitude of the people and reforms.

I feel that the State Government will seriously pay attention towards taking necessary steps which is required to be taken in this regard. No step is required to be taken by the Government of India in this regard as it is state subject and when any of this comes under state list there is no need to formulate any separate law at the Union level which is not implemented. So, through this Bill proposal has been moved in the House to repeal this act. I am confident that the House will unanimously pass the Bill.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to repeal the Spirituous Preparations (Inter-State Trade and Commerce) Control Act, 1955, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now taken up clause-by-clause consideration to the Bill.

The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, The Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.*

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

18.41 hrs.

#### DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

**Report of Justice Mukherjee Commission of Inquiry regarding alleged disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose—Contd.**

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further discussion under Rule 193.

Shri Subrata Bose.

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE (Barasat): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy to have this opportunity to resume from where I stopped yesterday.

I would just recall that yesterday, I pointed out that how in spite of the various notings in the Government files, the then Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru continued to say in Parliament as well as in public that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose has died in air crash and that it should be accepted by the people of India. But in his private letters he wrote otherwise. He wrote that he had no proof of his death in the air crash and he also acknowledged that there was need for further inquiry. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): My request to you, Sir, on behalf of the Government is that after the conclusion of the speech of Shri Bose today, we take up 'Zero Hour', and then the debate would continue. We can fix some other day. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): I have a request to make. I think, this discussion will be continued in the next week also as many hon. Members would speak. I have to attend to the Cabinet meeting and there is only one subject in the Cabinet and that belongs to me. If you permit, I can leave and the Minister of State can be there. I will read all that the hon. Members speak from the record.

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: I will not certainly keep you away from your urgent work.

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: I said that this debate will continue. Shri Bose would conclude his speech today. Then, I would request that if any other Member wants to speak, then, it is up to the decision of the Chair to allow him. Then, the 'Zero Hour' will also continue. Remaining part of the debate would conclude next week. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

Special mention should be taken up after the speech of the hon'ble Member because many Members want to speak on this subject. So, this should be deferred for the next day. The discussion under Rule 193 will continue further.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The discussion under Rule 193 will continue further. The House is unanimous on it so the discussion on this subject will continue further. The hon'ble Member, Subrata Bose should continue his speech. The Minister of State for Home Affairs is present in the House. He will note it and will convey all the points to him.

[English]

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: As I was saying, I shall just go back once to the time of Pandit Nehru, just to give a startling revelation. I think, the hon. Members of the House



would be startled to hear this. This is a note of the Prime Minister's Secretariat. This bears the File No. 23(II)/56-57/PM, dated 2-12-1954 and the note is signed by Shri M.O. Mathai.

I quote from the note:

"A small amount of Rs. 200 and odd was received by the Ministry of External Affairs from our Embassy in Tokyo and along with the ashes and other remains of the late Shri Subhas Chandra Bose. This money is being kept with the External Affairs Ministry.

I have consulted the Prime Minister about this and he agrees that this amount might be transferred to INA Relief Fund. The Ministry might get in touch with the General Secretary of AICC, 7, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi and have this money transferred to the INA Fund. The receipt might be obtained for the Ministry's record."

That is about Rs. 200 and odd in cash. But what happened to the ashes and other remains of late Subhash Chandra Bose which had been received from the Embassy in Tokyo by the Ministry of External Affairs, that is, the then Prime Minister?

If the ashes had come to India, handed over to the Prime Minister and then what were kept in the Renkoji Temple, then what happened to the ashes which had come to India? What happened to the other remains of late Subhas Chandra Bose, which were also handed over to the Prime Minister? This is something we have never known before. So, the whole thing, as you can see, is just a myth created by the Government of India about the ashes. All the hon. Members will agree with me. I would like to receive—I am sure all the hon. Members will join me to receive—or to hear from the Government of India, a very direct and a positive answer on this point.

This move of the Congress government to bring the ashes and bury Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose continues, even after an interlude when the Congress came back to power. They were waiting for an opportunity to once again revive the proposal to bring the so-called ashes from the Renkoji Temple. What happened to the ashes in India, nobody knows; whose ashes in the Renkoji Temple, Justice Mukherjee has an answer. These are ashes of one Ichiro Okura.

So, they got that opportunity when the country was preparing to celebrate the Birth Centenary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, although in their heart of hearts, they did not want to. But the then Government felt that they had to do something. So, the Central Birth Centenary Celebration Committee was formed in 1994—Kumari Mamata Banerjee will correct me, if I am wrong—with the then Prime Minister Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao as the Chairman and the then Leader of the House Shri Pranab Mukherjee as the Deputy-Chairman. In the first meeting, the first agenda was to bring the ashes from the Renkoji Temple and building a memorial. In the Committee, other than Shri Narasimha Rao and Shri Pranab Mukherjee, there were other members. This Committee comprised of leaders of different political parties, two representatives of the family and other important personalities.

The record shows that when this agenda was taken up, there were some who boldly opposed it. I am certainly grateful to hon. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, he was then I think the Leader of Opposition. I am also grateful to hon. Kumari Mamata Banerjee who was the Member of that Committee. We also recall with gratitude late Shri Chitta Basu and Shri Samar Guha. All those Leaders raised their voices against this proposal. The Chairman and the Deputy-Chairman had no other alternative but to drop it.

I think, again I am very lucky to be in the House in which Kumari Mamata Banerjee is also there. She will correct me if I am wrong. No further meeting was held. Some programmes were arranged by the Government but this Committee was not consulted. This was the character of the Congress Government.

But the Congress was toppled once again. The NDA Government came in power. In the mean time there was a High Court order that there must be a further inquiry. The West Bengal State Legislative Assembly also requested the Government of India, by passing unanimous Resolution, that there should be a further inquiry. My Party, All India Forward Bloc, and the Members of the family also urged upon the Government to institute a proper inquiry.

I think I shall be failing in my duty if I once again do not offer my gratitude to the NDA Government of that time, particularly to the then hon. Prime Minister, Shri Vajpayee and the then hon. Minister of Home Affairs, Shri

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Advani and other partners and associates in that Government, that in 1999—I think on the 13th of May—the Government issued a Notification appointing justice M.K. Mukherjee as the Chairman of a one-man Commission of Inquiry and gave them very definite Terms of Reference. I shall also point out to you, Sir, that unlike the previous Committee of Inquiry and the Commission of Inquiry set up in 1956 and 1970 respectively by the Congress Government, this Government under the Prime Minister-ship of Shri Vajpayee decided that they will not appoint the Chairman of the Commission of their choice and a request was made to the hon. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India to recommend the name of a retired Supreme Court judge to be the Chairman of the Commission.

Justice Mukherjee's name was recommended by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. That is why, if I may say so, we got a judge as the Chairman of the Commission who was reputed to be a man of integrity, a man of intellect, a man of sincerity and a man who had perseverance and a lot of patience.

Above all he was a man who was honest. So, he started the inquiry with an open mind. Yesterday I said, perhaps the hon. Members would remember that I became a deponent before the Commission. I filed an affidavit. It is immaterial what I said in that affidavit but I also prayed in the affidavit that irrespective of my belief or the belief of others, I want the Commission to inquire into the alleged disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in August 1945 with an open mind. Let them judge all the evidences and the circumstances. Let them hear people of all opinions who have different opinions. In fact, in that affidavit I said that I shall accept whatever findings the Mukherjee Commission would give.

There was an allegation that he took too long a time—six and a half years. But perhaps the Government of India has forgotten that for one year, they could not find even a suitable accommodation to house the Commission of Inquiry. After one year, the West Bengal Government had to come to their rescue and the then Minister of Food of the State Government graciously vacated his own office so that the Commission could start its work. The Government of India never bothered. In Kolkata, they had

their office. The Commission wanted a liaison office in Delhi because they had to always be in touch with the Government of India. That was given after a lapse of two years. That was the cooperation extended from the beginning itself. If the Commission took six and a half years, actually five and a half years because one year was lost, it was due to the Government's non-cooperation and the Government's attitude of not being helpful. If the hon. Members have the time to go through Volumes 2A and 2B of the Report, they would find, it only contained a record of non-cooperation from the Government of India. It is a disgraceful and shameful thing. Yes, you can say that for five years the NDA Government was in power at that point of time. But it is a fact. As I praise them I also take them to task for not cooperating with the Commission of Inquiry which they themselves had set up.

The Commission wanted to go to Taiwan. I will give you a few examples because the hon. Members have read the report, I believe. After many months of persuasion, the Government of India came out with a suggestion that since we do not have any diplomatic relationship with Taiwan, you go to Taiwan but show that you had been elsewhere. Naturally, Justice Mukherjee would not agree. He said that you want me to tell an untruth. So, again after many months the Commission was granted permission to go to Taiwan, account for Taiwan visit and draw the money from the Government of India. In India, they took evidence from many persons. The number was more than hundred and they made four foreign visits.

**19.00 hrs.**

They first went to Japan, when to the United Kingdom, then to Taiwan and lastly to Russia.

When the Commission visited Japan, they went there with two purposes in mind. First, to visit the Renkoji temple where allegedly the ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose were kept. They went to inspect that. Hon. Members will be surprised to know that the whole programme of visit was drawn up by the Indian embassy in Tokyo. I also went there in my individual capacity on my own expenses. I had the right to go where the Commission went and attend the hearings of the Commission. We went to the Renkoji temple. The Commission wanted to take the evidence of the priest, but he refused to give any evidence. They said that they were prepared to talk to us but not on record.

Agreed. It is because if someone is not willing to give evidence, one cannot be forced.

We had the first meeting downstairs. In the upstairs there was a hall where the urn was kept containing the alleged ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. We went upstairs. Hon. Justice Mukherjee requested them to open the urn and wanted to see the contents. They suddenly looked at each other and after about ten minutes they came and told Justice Mukherjee that they were sorry about the fact that since there were no carpenters available, they could not open the urn. I thought it was made of wood covered by a glass case and with batons put on an ordinary wooden table and they were just screwed up. Justice Mukherjee humbly suggested that it could be opened with the help of a screwdriver. They refused the suggestion and said that in Japan there was nothing like that and only a carpenter was allowed to touch it and that we may have been able to open it, but we are not allowed to do so. We came back without seeing the contents. What was the reason given? That day was a national holiday in Japan and so the carpenters did not come for work. The Indian embassy knowing that it was a national holiday had fixed up the programme for the Commission to visit the Renkoji temple. So, the first purpose was lost.

Second, the Commission went to interview the doctor, whose name was Yoshimi, who had claimed to have treated Netaji Subhas Bose when he was brought to the hospital after sustaining very serious burn injuries in the air crash. He was asked as to whether he had treated Netaji Subhas Bose or not. His reply was 'no'. He did not know whom he treated as he had never seen Chandra Bose. They referred to him as 'Chandra Bose' in Japan. He had never even seen his photograph. He said that a person was brought badly burnt and that he did not know if that was Chandra Bose. He was only told by a Japanese military officer that he was the great Indian leader Chandra Bose. This man gave the name as Nakamura. We subsequently found that this man, namely, Nakamura gave evidence before the Shah Nawaz Committee and he was no more alive when the Mukherjee Commission was constituted. But when Nakamura was interrogated by the Shah Nawaz Committee as to whether he recognised Chandra Bose or not, his reply was 'no' and that Dr. Yoshimi told him that he was Chandra Bose.

About other witnesses who appeared before the Shah Nawaz Committee, I had said yesterday and that has gone on record.

Secondly, there is a very interesting document in the Government of India's file. But, before that, I must tell you that Dr. Yoshimi said that he died on 18th August. When he was preparing to write the death certificate, he was told by Nakamura to give the name as Ichiro Okura because they want to keep it as a secret. But mind you, after five days, they were announcing the death of Subhas Chandra Bose. It was a military hospital and he had to obey the orders there. They asked him whether he will sign a false certificate. He said he will sign a false certificate. I also signed the cremation certificate. In their country, there has to be a separate cremation certificate alongwith the death certificate requesting the crematorium for the last rites. That was also given in the name of Ichiro Okura. Then that interesting document which Justice Mukherjee found that in one of the files of the Government of India was taken out. Justice Mukherjee asked Dr. Yoshimi, "Did you on any day issue a death certificate in the name of Subhas Chandra Bose?" He said, "No. How could I? I issued that certificate in the name of Ichiro Okura." And that was meant to be Subhas Chandra Bose's certificate. He took it out and showed that that was the death certificate issued by Dr. Yoshimi in 1988 in the name of Subhas Chandra Bose. It was 43 years after the so-called death of Bose. When he showed the certificate, he got nonplussed. He said that he had forgotten. He said, "Under what circumstances did you issue a certificate after 43 years and this time in the name of Subhas Chandra Bose?" He said that one Indian and one Japanese came to him and asked him to give a certificate as the Government of India wants it to facilitate taking out the ashes back to India. He asked, "Who was the Indian?" He said, "I have forgotten." He asked, "Who was the Japanese?" He replied, "I have forgotten the name." Then he started weeping requesting Justice Mukherjee to kindly not to report it to the Japanese Medical Council because his licence will be cancelled. Justice Mukherjee said that he had come to make an inquiry on behalf of the Government of India, he has to give a report to them and he has got nothing to do with the Japanese Government or the Japanese Medical Council. He asked, "Tell me, was it fair on your part to

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issue to death certificate after 43 years?" He said, "No." After all, death certificate has to be issued within a reasonable time of the death of the person and 43 years, by no means, can be considered as a reasonable period. So, that effort was continued to bring the ashes. Possibly, if leaders like Mamata Banerjee had agreed at the meeting of the first Birth Centenary celebrations to get the ashes, this certificate would have been the proof of the death of Subhas Chandra Bose as far as Government of India was concerned. This is how things were going on.

So, we came back and then there was a visit to UK. The United Kingdom Government said that we can go to the Public Records Office and there, we can get all the documents. We collected copies of whatever documents were released and what we really thought was related to the subject like the one I mentioned. That copy of the letter of the British High Commission in Delhi, which certified that the Report of the Taiwan Government in 1956 was handed over to the Government, which was destroyed. The UK Government, whatever it does, want to do it openly. They said, "We have it".

**KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South):** The Government destroyed this letter. I have with me a copy.

**SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:** She will talk and she will help. I hope she will talk.

Then they told that they have information about Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death. But, they said, "They are classified and we shall open it after 2020". Seventy-five years after the event of his death or his escape. It is because, they said, there is an Official Secrets Act in the UK. So, there are facts. Still facts and information are available in the UK.

In this context, I would also say, that like the UK Government, the Government of India also withheld two files on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose from the Commission of Inquiry. In our country also there is an Official Secrets Act and the Government took advantage of it. Due to a judgement of the Supreme Court of India, the Government had to give reasons to the Commission

as to why they want to keep it as a secret. I shall quote verbatim the reasons given by the Government of India to Justice Mukherjee for keeping these two files as classified and secret. I have read it so many times that I think I have it fully in my memory. I shall quote:

"Information contained in these files, if disclosed, will affect relations with friendly countries."

I repeat, this is what the Government gave as reason:

"Information contained in these files, if disclosed, will affect relations with friendly countries."

Shall I be wrong to assume that some friendly countries—I do not know which—did some unfriendly act as far as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is concerned and if that is disclosed now, that will affect the relations with those friendly countries because people of India will rise against them? Let the Government explain as to what they mean by this. They cannot reveal the information about Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose because it will affect relations with some friendly countries. Our national hero is not important, but relations with friendly countries is more important. That is a heinous and shameful attitude of the Government of India.

Now, I go back to the most important visit to Taiwan. Justice Khosla had gone there. I had mentioned it yesterday. He had not met the Government officials. Here I must say that there is an unofficial trade organisation, called the Indo-Taiwan Trade Association in Taiwan. They had been unofficially requested by the Government of India to help the Commission and they did it. The Commission was given audience by the Ministry of External Affairs of the Taiwan Government; the Ministry of Health of the Taiwan Government; and the Ministry of Internal Security or the Home Ministry of the Taiwan Government.

They told Justice Mukherjee unequivocally that they were absolutely sure and certain that there was no air accident in the whole State of Taiwan on the 18th August, 1945. He says that we have our records. I will tell you that there was an air accident in September, 1945. We will give you the record. It was an American plane carrying the American prisoners of war. We have the list of

passengers who died and who were injured. But that also did not happen in Taihoku Airport, it happened in Southern Taiwan. Justice Mukherjee went to the crematorium. They said, no, this crematorium was built much later and in 1945 this was not the crematorium. But there is an old crematorium which still exists. It is not used as a crematorium, but it is today used as the Office of all Crematoriums and all records are there. You can go there and try to find out if records of 1945 are available. Justice Mukherjee went there. They said, 'yes, we have full records. But you are asking for records of 59 years ago. So, you will have to give us time and you will get this record within one month.' Justice Mukherjee asked them to please let him know whether Subhas Chandra Bose or Ichiro Okura was cremated between 15th August and 25th August, 1945 and also whether Lt. General Shidei of Japanese Army, a very high ranking official was also a passenger in that plane. General Shidei was reported to have died in that accident and the Chief Pilot, whose name I forget now, I think, I have seen the report, the pilot also has reported to have died and, therefore, Justice Mukherjee asked them to let him know whether these two persons were cremated. Crematorium kept its words and within three weeks, the record in Chinese language with certified English translation came to Justice Mukherjee. He found that Ichiro Okura was cremated on 22nd August, but his death was not on 18th but on 19th August, 1945. Lt. Gen. Shidei name was not there and the Chief Pilot's name was also not there. Those dead bodies vanished. He also found out that Ichiro Okura was a patient in that hospital. He died on the 19th August due to heart attack. A dead body was required to bury or cremate Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Without a dead body how could they tell whether he died and cremated? So, Ichiro Okura's dead body was used. He died on the 19th August. According to Japanese customs, the cremation takes place on the third day. So, it took place on the 22nd August. Habibur Rehman had given the date as 20th August. So on 22nd August, Ichiro Okura was cremated. In the Japanese customs unlike our Indian customs bones are kept. That is why, some bones are supposed to be there. That is why, Justice Mukherjee has concluded. There are other things in the Report but I will not go into that. Ichiro Okura's ash and bones are there. I think, the Government will come up with that question. I anticipate it.

Why did justice Mukherjee not arrange for the DNA test of whatever is there, whether it is Ichiro Okura's remains or whatever it is. After all, it is for the DNA test. Justice Mukherjee was not averse to it. He told us during the hearing: "I would like to take full advantage of the scientific advancement." He asked the Hyderabad Institute. At that time, the Hyderabad Institute said that it did not have the equipment to conduct the DNA test. Justice Mukherjee requested them for names of the Japanese or foreign experts. They gave the names; recommended the names of the German expert and a Japanese expert. Justice Mukherjee referred to them saying; "Certain remains are there. They were cremated in 1945. Would you conduct a DNA test to find out to which family he belonged?" No one can identify a person. Both the German and the Japanese experts said "no" to it. It is no use or not even worth a try because when a dead body is exposed to heat generated in a furnace—do not talk about the ashes because ashes have no quality—even bones, once they are charred—qualities required for conducting the DNA test—do not remain anywhere. After a lot of persuasion, the Japanese Government agreed. It said: "We shall ask the temple authorities if they would give it just to show it to the Japanese expert." He was already in Tokya. The temple authorities said: "No. Our religious custom forbids handing over of the last remains to any human being." Subsequently they have agreed after Justice Mukherjee Commission closed its hearing. The Japanese expert had said; "No. You are forcing me. But I know that nothing can be found from that."

Now, I refer to pages 22 to 31, Volume-I of the Report. Since the book is there, I would not like to waste the time of the House. The subject is regarding DNA test of that. He explained that he tried his best but nothing could be done in the matter. He was ready although the experts said nothing would be found. That is why, he has concluded that although the DNA Test was not done, he was completely satisfied that it was not Subhas Chandra Bose who died in an air crash because the air crash did not happen taking into view the Japanese doctor's evidence but he said that still he would conclude and come to this finding. I would just read the last sentence on Page 107 of the Report. I quote from the Report.

[Shri Subrata Bose]

"Considered in that backdrop, the inability of the Commission to subject the mortal remains to DNA test in the circumstances beyond its control has not stood in the way of recording its conclusive finding in that regard—a finding arrived at on the basis of robust circumstantial evidence on record."

He has given it. One can study it. I think the concluding part of Justice Mukherjee's Report is there from pages 100 to 107. I hope the Government would also definitely have studied it. They have nothing to say. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Bose, how much time would you take?

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: I will conclude. I have nothing more to say. I have taken enough time.

Sir, there is one thing. I did not want to mention that. But while intervening when I was speaking last evening, the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs referred to the differences within the family. You and the hon. Members may remember, Sir, that when I started talking I said; "Yes, I happen to be a member of the family, but that does not give me the sole right to represent Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose." He belongs to the nation and he belongs to the people of India. Today I am speaking here because I also again fortunately happen to be a Member of Parliament. But since he had mentioned that and I know that that will be a point which will be taken by him again, I have to mention this although I did not like to do so.

He was referring to Shrimati Krishna Bose, a former Member of this House. She wrote to the Government of India apart from making public her views. She wanted that irrespective of the Report the ashes should be brought. I would only like to inform the hon. Members that because Justice Mukherjee had a very open mind, he had requested both Shrimati Krishna Bose and her husband late Dr. Sisir Bose to appear before the Commission and tell what they know and what they believe. So, the Commission wanted to hear all that.

Late Dr. Sisir Bose wrote to the Commission and said: "I have no facts or information on this matter. So I would like to be excused because I cannot be of any use

to the Commission". Then, naturally the Commission said that he had written that he has no facts.

When Shrimati Krishna Bose was invited, she also wrote back and said: "I have no facts or information on Subhas Chandra Bose's death. I was a mere child then in 1945 when he is supposed to have met his end, but I believe that he died in the air crash and the ashes are there because my husband late Dr. Sisir Bose believed that. So, she has no information or facts which she has said which is on record. The Government of India can find it in the records of Justice Mukherjee Commission which are all now in the custody of the Government. Therefore, her opinion today is not worthy of any consideration.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: But this is not a family matter.

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Sir, as I said, I am not saying the House will all agree with me when I say that he did not die in air crash or I agree with the findings of the Mukherjee Commission. It is for the House to decide and give its sense of views to the Government and then it is for the Government to consider that. But I thought I should mention that and so I did that.

So, I end by making certain accusations. First of all, I accuse the Government of India of deliberate suppression of facts and information from 1947 onwards till today.

Sir, I accuse the Government for destruction of files and for making files missing which contained relevant information, material information on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his disappearance or, as the Government contends, his so-called death.

I accuse the Government of continued non-cooperation with the Commission of Inquiry headed by Justice Mukherjee.

The Government stands accused not by me, not only in the docks of a court of law, but I think, it stands accused in the court of the people of India.

I demand that the Government withdraw the Action Taken Report, which they have submitted. I demand that the Government of India accepts the findings of the Justice Mukherjee Commission of Inquiry. This will be the

chance for the Government to amend itself, and amend the wilful misconduct of the Government over 59 years. I demand that the Government of India should inform immediately to the Government of Japan that it is not concerned with the so-called ashes kept in the Renkoji Temple in Japan. I also demand that the Government of India immediately withdraws the financial assistance which they are giving to the Japanese Temple authorities for maintenance of Renkoji Temple.

Here also, I just mention how the Government has been playing sly in the matter. The Renkoji Temple evidently sought for assistance saying 'that we are keeping Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's ashes for you, so you should financially assist us, Temple does not have the money'. Our Finance objected to it saying 'that Netaji's death is in doubt. Whose ashes are these?' They are in doubt. How can you give money? But you can give under general head, that is, Discretionary Financial Head, which the Ambassador has. Pay the money as if you are just donating to a Temple. That is how they are paying the money. Officially, they cannot acknowledge that it is the ashes of Netaji.

The files say otherwise. So, let that be withdrawn. Let the Government now take the right stand which the people of India expect of them. Whatever mistakes they have done over the years, I think, people of India are always gracious to condone and forgive. But if the Government does not act, I think, the people of India will not forgive them for showing disrespect to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and for spreading false things, false news about Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. I have done.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, this will be an opportunity to us to get some information from the hon. Member and it will help us to come to correct conclusions.

He referred to the statement made by the former Prime Minister Morarji Desai saying that he did not believe in the findings given by the Committee and the Commission. Was it possible for the Mukherjee Commission to refer to any document to which the reference was made by Morarji Desai and if no references to any document or any file was available and if it was not made available, which document could have been given by the Government?

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Sir, the hon. Minister of Home Affairs has raised a very important point. But is it the duty of Justice Mukherjee Commission to find out or is it the duty of the Government of India to find out how the Prime Minister made a statement in the House?

Sir, I will tell you. This was reported in the proceedings of the Parliament and this has been read out also. The Prime Minister, Morarji Desai was clear. He said that a new information had come to light which caused more serious doubts on the air crash story. I would like to say with my little experience in the State Assembly and in the Parliament; I do not have the experience like the hon. Home Minister or like many hon. Members present here. When the Prime Minister makes a statement, has he to refer to a file? I think, it is customary that when you are answering a Starred Question, there should be back up papers. The hon. Prime Minister does not speak without backup papers; no hon. Minister speaks without backup papers. Justice Mukherjee Commission requested the Government of India to give it back up papers on the basis of which the Prime Minister made the statement. It was hunted. Firstly, it was referred to the Ministry of External Affairs, I do not know why. Then it was referred to the Home Ministry, and then to PMO. It is for the House to believe or not; ultimately, PMO said: "There are no back up papers; the Prime Minister must have been speaking out of his mind." This was the reply that the Justice Mukherjee Commission got from PMO. I am told that Justice Mukherjee thought that PMO does not destroy the papers. Is the Prime Minister replying to a Starred Question without back up papers believable? You can say you have destroyed many files; you have had many files missing. But to allude that the Prime Minister was saying something from his own mind, I think, it is an insult to the Office of the Prime Minister if not the greatest insult to Shri Morarji Desai, who became the Prime Minister of India. I have nothing more to add. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Many hon'ble Members are waiting for the Special Mention.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Let me respond to the points raised by the hon. Minister here. I have got only two points to make. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The clarification will be given in this regard when the Minister will reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Today, the Hon'ble Minister is not making reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was his point of information, presently reply is not being given.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pandaji, you are a senior Member.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Just one minute. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will not allow a new type of debate.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House agrees the present discussion will be taken up further.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will take up Special Mentions.

Shri Alemao Churchill. Please be brief.

\*Not recorded.

SHRI ALEMAO CHURCHILL (Marmugao): Chairman Sir, the hon. Supreme Court has banned the fishing by trawlers and canoes from 10-6-2006 to 15-8-2006 along the coastal belt. But, surprisingly, in Mulpi and Karwar, big trawlers and canoes with zero mesh pursenett are plying. Also, in Goa, big mechanized canoes with zero mesh pursenett are plying.

I would request that the Government may please take immediate necessary steps to stop this fishing against the ban of the Apex Court. Actually, the fishing community which is observing the ban is suffering.

[Translation]

SHRI HEMMAL MURMU (Rajmahal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the operation of rail/express and passenger trains passing through Pakur railway station between Rampur Haat, West Bengal and Barhawa railway division has stopped since 11-07-2006 and it is on account of this that lakhs of people of this area are left cut off from the various parts of this country. These are the reasons that the people of that area are doing agitation there. The railway traffic have got affected due to the damage of the bridge falling between Rampur Haat and Satia. The most important thing is that the Vananchal Express the only express train that connect the capital of Jharkhand state Ranchi is not operating and it is on account of that the people are facing difficulties.

I would like to request the Government that it should start operation of trains on this railway division at the earliest.

[English]

SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPIPARAI (Sivakasi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, in Malaysia, an automobile spares manufacturing company recruited 68 Indians. Out of whom, 31 are Tamilians and the rest are from West Bengal. They were recruited under an agreement that they would get 600 Singapore dollars a month but the company paid only 320 dollars a month since recruitment. When they demanded, the company made a complaint to police and all these people were put behind the bars. The West Bengal Government took steps to bring back the 37 Bengalis from Malaysia but the 31 Tamilians, who are fighting for their cause, are suffering even without food.



I would urge upon the Government to take necessary steps to ensure that they get all their arrears from the company as per the agreement, and also ensure their safe come back to their motherland.

[Translation]

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this issue is related to the railways. The credit of introducing catering in Indian Railways in the year 1955 goes to Late Lal Bahadur Shastri and a new system was set up in the form of commission vendors wherein railway used to provide ration, oil, salt, and vegetables etc. They used to provide 'Poori-Aloo' to general passengers at cheaper rates. Till very late, this system was in vogue but railway had not evolved any clear-cut policy in that regard, and by this time commission vendors have attained the age of 65-75 years. The Ministry of Railways has stopped ration supply to them in the name of compulsory retirement and they are being retired. In the absence of any clear-cut policy in regard to service terms and conditions, they are being retired without providing service benefits, which is absolutely wrong. If retirement is compulsory, then one of dependent of every vendor should be given permission for vending with immediate effect and one dependent of deceased vendors should also be provided permission for vending. On the other hand, daily complaints against Railway Catering and Canteen Corporation are being received, that pooris served in coaches are not being prepared hygienically Newspapers are reporting its. ...*(Interruptions)*

I demand that if Railways is giving retirement to commission vendors, they should be given service benefits at par other employees if they are being retired without service benefits, then at least one dependent of every commission vendor should be given permission for commission vending and same should be done for the dependents of the deceased vendors.

[English]

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri): Sir, in Nineties of the last Century, the hon. High Court of Calcutta had agreed to establish a Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri to ensure timely disposal of cases within the financial means of the poor people of North Bengal.

Recently, I was informed by the hon. Minister of Law vide his letter dated 20th June, 2006 that the Cabinet has approved the proposal for setting up of the Circuit Bench of the Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri by an Executive Order of the President. I was also assured by the hon. Minister that the Presidential Order in this regard would be issued shortly.

Sir, people of the entire North Bengal are waiting anxiously for ceremonial opening of the Circuit Bench of the Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government to expedite the case without any further delay.

[Translation]

\*SHRI P. MOHAN (Madurai): Chennai Airport is sought to be expanded and for this purpose there was a proposal till September last to acquire lands that remained mostly as vacant pieces of land. About 1457 acres of land were announced to be handed over by the then Government in Tamil Nadu. There came a new proposal in December last according to which a new area with lands that come under Anakaputhur, Polichalur, Pammal, Panchayat Unions. The area that come under the new proposal has got more of residential area with 4629 houses, 9 overhead tanks (public water tanks), 8 Government buildings, 5 manufacturing companies, 23 temples, 2 churches. About 25,000 people live in this area for hundreds of years.

We all welcome the proposal of the Government to expand Chennai Airport, but at the same time we should not be found disturbing and disrupting the lives of about 25,000 of people who live there for long number of years. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to go in for the earlier proposal in which only open lands were sought to be acquired. Or else an International Airport can be constructed beyond Sriperumbudur in the outskirts of Chennai which has got vast open stretch of land. Instead of shattering the lives and dreams of thousands of people, the Government may go in for open vast land for the expansion of Chennai Airport.

\*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[English]

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMI (Sriperumbudur): Sir, on behalf of the DMK party, I also associate myself with what Mr. Mohan has submitted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right your name could be associated.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR DUBEY (Dhanbad). Mr. Chairman, Sir, while drawing the attention of the Government towards Jharia in Dhanbad, the Coal Capital of India, I wanted like to say that coal mines in the vicinity of Jharia city are likely to face the incidents of catching fire and blasts due to gas. Last year the Ministry of Coal had given assurance in this House that no such danger was looming large over that historical city and Ministry of Coal was taking necessary steps to safeguard the city from the said danger, but Indian Coking Coal Limited has not taken any initiative in this direction.

Last week, due to land caving in fire prone areas like Suarataud, Boka hill/Imam hill, Kukur Topa, Ram Nagar, Lohar patti etc. near Jharia city, the life and property of one thousand families have been endangered. Along with, the danger has also emerged over adjacent Raja Shiv Prasad college, which is a only college coal region, where water reservoirs which supplies water in coal region is also located.

I would like to know from the Government, as to what measures are being taken to evacuate and rehabilitate those one thousand families to some other safer places and to control the fire over there, so that safety of Jharia city may be maintained. This is a very important issue.

[English]

DR. K. DHANARAJU (Tindivanam): Sir, with heavy heart and sorrow, I make this special mention that very recently, 16 Indians especially from Tamil Nadu had lost their lives in Bahrain in a fire accident at their labour camp site. It is a very sad and disturbing news for Tamil Nadu. Out of those 16 persons, eight were from my district Villupuram and others were from the neighbouring districts Cuddalore and Perambalur. All the bodies were brought

back and handed over to the bereaved families. I thank for the action taken by the Government after this tragedy.

After hearing the stories told by the families, it is really painful to note that how they had gone; why they had gone; what for they had gone; and through whom they had gone.

There exist fake agencies in India, they have some tie up with foreign agencies and they export the manpower without proper intimation to the Government. They lure the poor uneducated village people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your demand?

DR. K. DHANARAJU: Therefore, I urge upon the Government to set up governing mechanisms to see that how these agencies are acting and how they are sending the persons to foreign countries in order to avoid all these things and put a full stop to this kind of tragedies in India. I want the Overseas Indian Affairs Ministry to take immediate action.

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur): Sir, I would like to congratulate the UPA Government under the able leadership of our beloved Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and Madam Sonai Gandhiji for extending the cease-fire with the NSCN(IM) for another one year with effect from this month. We welcome it. We are hopeful that this vexed Naga problem would certainly find a lasting solution for the Nagas without disturbing the territorial boundaries of the neighbouring States. This, in my humble opinion, is the commitment of the UPA Government in its National Common Minimum Programme. There is no reason why the Naga imbroglio should defy a solution forever.

In the meantime, I would like to remind the Union Government that my State, Manipur got merged into the Union of India on October 15, 1949 with a clearly defined territorial boundary. The wish of the people of Manipur is that the Manipur map of 1949 should always be protected and properly maintained by the Union Government and that there shall be no compromise on the territorial integrity of Manipur. This is the pride of the erstwhile nation, Manipur.

Once again, may I very humbly state that we are always for peaceful solution of all issues? Finally, I urge

upon the Union Government to find a lasting and amicable solution to the Naga problem at the earliest but it should never be at the cost of the boundaries of the other neighbouring States.

**SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI (Dharwad North):** Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the flood situation in Karnataka. This year is a good monsoon year but at the same time, in the northern part of Karnataka, the districts of Belgaum, Bijapur, Bidar, Gulbarga and Bagalkot are affected by severe flood. The situation has gone from bad to worse because of the release of 2.5 lakhs cusecs of water from Koina dam from Maharashtra. The water level in the Almatti dam is also increasing. About 25 low lying area bridges have already been submerged in Belgaum district and many villages in the remaining taluks. More than 100 villages have been affected in Gulbarga and Raichur districts.

The Government of Karnataka has already swung into action but still a lot of things have to be done. The increase in the rains in Maharashtra and other border districts is likely to cause further havoc in the riparian areas of Karnataka. In such a situation, discharging of excess water from Koina dam has also raised the question of proper management of the total water resources in the country.

Sir, in this context I would like to say that even last year when such a flood situation had arisen, the then Karnataka Government had made a demand to shift these 100 villages, once and for all, from these districts to a nearby place, and for that they had demanded Rs. 300 crore but still the file is pending.

There is going to be a greater havoc because the rain is still continuing. I urge the Government of India to call for a meeting of the officers of Maharashtra and Karnataka together and take precautionary measures so that further damages can be avoided.

I also urge the Government to release Rs. 300 crore to permanently shift the villages.

*[Translation]*

**SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun):** Sir, there is single rail line from Jhansi to Kanpur under North-Central Railway. This railway line covers distance of

around 200 kilometres. Trains take at least six hours to cover this distance of 200 kilometres. Trains like Pushpak Express which travels from Lucknow to Mumbai takes at least seven hours between Kanpur and Jhansi. The passengers boarding from Urai, generally make reservation either from Kanpur or Jhansi. Due to single line, trains often get late, and the passengers who travel to Jhansi or Kanpur to get their next train, miss their trains from said stations. They do not get any benefit of reservation and it goes in vain. Through you, I would like to demand from the hon'ble Minister of Railways that the work of doubling and electrification of this single line should be carried out, so that the passengers of this area may get trains on time.

**SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL (Tonk):** Mr. Chairman, sir, Tonk district headquarter is located in my parliamentary constituency. Tonk district is very backward district in comparison to other districts of Rajasthan, and is Scheduled Caste/Tribe and minority dominated area. Though there are many reasons for backwardness of Tonk. But the main reason is that district centre, Tonk Nagar of this district is not having rail connectivity. Tonk district is gradually emerging as an industrial city. Carpet, chilly and edible oil industries are fast developing industries here. In view of development of Tonk district, the rail connectivity is very important.

The demand for providing rail connectivity to district Tonk is a long pending one. Before laying of Jaipur-Swaimadhopur broad gauge line the Ministry of Railways had also conducted survey in 1990 and 1991, but at that time due to high cost involved for the conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge and paucity of funds this project was left pending. Though the broad gauge line on Jaipur-Sawaimadhopur route has been laid, but this line has not been extended upto Tonk. At present, Jaipur-Swaimadhopur broad gauge line is just 15-16 kilometre far away from Israda-Sirs station point of Tonk Headquarter. The district headquarter would be easily connected.

In the ongoing survey of Ajmer-Kota, there is a proposal of construction of new line of Devli-Tonk rail link, which can be linked with Tonk by giving a little turn.

Tonk has a computerised reservation centre of railways, the passengers of this district are taking full

[Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma]

benefit of it and railway is generating income from it. But this centre is opened for three hours only from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Four things are essential for increasing its income and passenger amenities:—(1) The centers timings should be increased, it should remain open from 8 am to 8 pm, so that passengers may be able to take the benefit of 'Tatkal' reservation facility (2) Local inquiry should be started in the Reservation Centre. (3) A.C. should be installed for the safety of equipments and (4) Massive campaign of this centre should be launched.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the Hon'ble Member.

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, democracy has been restored in Nepal after a long struggle and seven political parties have formed the Government under the leadership of Shri Girija Prasad Koirala. The Government of India has given its vital contribution in this process and has also given assistance to Nepal to the tune of Rs. 1000 crore. Unfortunately, there is no Maoists representation in this Government. Although they have declared 'ceasefire' over there for three months, they have given ultimatum to the Indian traders residing there to leave Nepal, within 24 hours or also face attacks. The Indian traders residing there have repeatedly contacted the Indian Ambassador Mr. Mukherjee regarding this problem who subsequently spoke to our Ministry of Home Affairs but the Government of India has not taken any effective initiative in this regard. I would like to urge upon the Government to take urgent measures to check the deteriorating situation for the safety of the Indians residing there.

[English]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Sir, I want to associate myself with the hon. Member on this issue.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also associate with the hon'ble Member on this issue.

20.00 hrs.

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR (Chandrapur): Mr.

Chairman, a new project was proposed to be launched in the WCL unit of Coal-India and allotment of a village land for coal mine was proposed. Moreover, even before the completion of the necessary procedure, in regard to this allotment, the Coal India officers, in connivance with more than 50 police officers and more than 100 state policemen encroached upon that land. This village has 129 houses. 29 people were held captive at the police station. Bulldozers were run on 250 acres of land of the people and atrocities were perpetrated on these people by the Coal India. The villagers went on fast for two days against this gesture of Coal India. When we spoke to the Coal India they told us that they would provide employment to the villagers, I would urge upon the Government that these people should be given employment in the Coal-India itself besides due compensation should be given to these people from the loss of cultivable land.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to the problem pervading in all the corners of the country. People throughout the country are becoming addicts of hemp, charas, opium. Brown sugar, country made liquor and imported liquor, which is spreading unrest in the country. These addicts create trouble in their families by beating up their wives, their families are ruining and they are not able to provide food to their children and are not able to afford medical treatment for their members of family. They are falling for terrorist activities to fulfill their appetite for drugs, Government land is being encroached upon, murders are taking place and the entire country is falling in the trap of terrorism, people are being driven towards terrorism and naxalism. The situation is deteriorating in villages. I would urge upon the Government to launch de-addiction campaigns to improve the situation so that these people could be brought to the mainstream. The National labour plan should be implemented across the country. The Government provides Rs. one and a half lakh for getting five such people registered which is not to be returned so that the condition of the poor could be ameliorated. Employment should be provided to such people. The people who have been deaddicted should be brought to the mainstream.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Dr. Karan Singh Yadav, you may please start your submission.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: The Government should launch a campaign.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Karan Singh Yadva.

[English]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House and, through you, of the Minister of Industries and Commerce towards the problem faced by the local Indian *vanaspati* industry. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: The Government should provide loan to the people who have been de-addicted. If the Government would run de-addiction campaign in the entire country, I would resign from my office and extend my co-operation to the Government to bring these people to the main stream\*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your statement is not going on record. Dr. Karan Singh Yadav, you may continue.

[English]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House and, through you, of the Minister of Industries and Commerce towards the problem faced by the local Indian *vanaspati* industry as well as the oilseed producing farming of the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mohaleji your statement is not given on record. This is not fair. You should co-operate with the Chair. Please sit down.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: \*...

[English]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV: I would like to draw the attention of the Commerce Minister on the problems our Indian *Vanaspati* Industry and the Oilseed producing farmers are facing in this country. This is because of the Free Trade Agreement which the previous Government

signed with Sri Lanka. *Vanaspatti* is being imported in huge quantities and, that is why, the farmers who are producing oilseeds, like mustard, are facing problems because nobody is there to purchase their produce.

Therefore, I would request the Government to restrict and fix the quota of this import. Recently, they canalised this import through NAFED, which should be continued. There is a strong lobby which is now lobbying for removing NAFED as a canalising agency. My request is that NAFED should be kept as a canalising agency, and the quota should be restricted so that the Indian *Vanaspati* Industry and the Indian oilseed-growing farmers can thrive in this country.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Bhargavaji has done P.H.D.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Sir, I am not even B.A. What to talk of P.H.D.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt you talk about yourself.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Sir, I feel privileged to save the matter regarding my neighbour. Out of a total of 600 districts of India 200 districts have been covered under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. Out of which only 6 districts out of total 32 districts of Rajasthan have been covered. Rajasthan is a densely populated state with 29.8 per cent population of Scheduled castes/Scheduled tribes. The per capita income of the state is very low and the agriculture depends on rain. Rajasthan gets only one per cent of water available in the entire country. It shares its border with Pakistan.

Without making any comparison with other States I would say that only six districts of Rajasthan namely Banswara, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Sirohi, Jhalawar, Karoli have been identified. None of the districts falls in the desert. Such districts have been identified. It was imperative to identify the desert areas. Unemployment is a serious problem in these desert areas.

Entire Rajasthan should be covered under the Rajasthan Scheme since the State is not being disbursed

\*Not recorded.

[Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava]

any funds under the Gadgil formula despite having peculiar situation. Rajasthan should also be given more funds on the lines of North-Eastern States, Jammu-Kashmir, Sikkim and Uttaranchal. It should also enjoy special category status.

I urge upon the Union Government to give due consideration to the implementation of this scheme and the proposal forwarded by hon'ble Shri Kailash Meghwal in regard to the Diggipur visit should be given due consideration and a railway line should be laid there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You were already associated with him.

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL (Tonk): Sir, I also wish to associate myself with the issue raised by Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava and all the desert districts should be covered under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kailash Meghwal to be associated with the issue raised by Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava.

[English]

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the problem of 'Marathi' community in Kerala. This community was included in the list of STs from 1952. It was, in fact, in Karnataka and Kerala States where this community was included in this list. Without proper verification and assessment, the earlier Government has excluded them from the STs list by an amendment in the Parliament. Knowing this, the Kerala representatives and the SC/ST Commission of Kerala has strongly demanded the Central Government to include them in the list. The Minorities Commission also visited the place and they strong recommended for the inclusion of this community in the list. They have been getting all the benefits given to STs, but now the students of this community, farmers and others were all denied the benefits which they had been enjoying earlier.

So, I would like to request the Government to take up this issue and come forward with an amendment.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Chairman Sir, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India had provided Rs. 3 crore 20 lac for organizing 'Health Awareness Fairs' in Bihar in the last financial year. The Ministry had directed to organize 'Health Awareness Fair' in each Parliamentary Constituency at the expense of Rs. 8 lac so that the poor may be benefited. It's a good scheme and such schemes are helpful for spreading health awareness in rural areas. I was given Rs. 8 lac for my Parliamentary Constituency under the scheme. I am sorry to say Rs. 8 lacs have not been spent in my Parliamentary Constituency despite many efforts. It's a serious matter. This amount had to be spent after taking decision at D.M. level meeting so that the poor might be benefited but nothing happened despite several attempts. Such fairs have been organised in past also but money earmarked for the purpose has not been spent. The purpose for which the said amount was sanctioned, has been defeated. It's a serious matter. you should intervene immediately. The amount could not be spent in other Parliamentary constituencies also in Bihar. Arrangements should be made to spend that amount for benefiting the poor and organizing health fairs. The amount was given by the Government of India. 11 months have passed but the amount has not been spent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have put your point. It's a serious matter. You have drawn the attention of the Government hon. Health Minister is not present here.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I want your protection. Hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is sitting here. He should at least take note of it. The Government should intervene in it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Government have taken note of it.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: You should give direction so that money is spent because there is no question of allocation of money... (Interruptions) The Government there is not favorable to us. No body listens us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can not compel but the government have taken note of it.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I am requesting

...(Interruptions) what is the purpose of this House and what purpose we have been elected?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You take your seat. There are other Members who have to speak.

[English]

SHRI MANI CHARENAMEI (Outer Manipur): Sir, on 6th May, 2006, twenty-one innocent villagers belonging to Zomi community of Churachandpur District of Manipur were arrested by the Myanmar army and held captive in Myanmar till today. Areas in Manipur and Myanmar on either side of the border are inhabited by the people belonging to the same Zomi community. Local tribal people living in the border areas used to cross over to either sides of the border in search of their livelihood without any disturbances from any quarter as they used to return to their respective homes on daily basis.

Sir, the arrested people are innocent villagers of Churachandpur district and they are languishing in the Myanmar jail where the treatment of the jail inmates is reported to be very cruel. It is reported that Myanmar jail does not serve food to the inmates and the inmates have to arrange food for themselves which is practically impossible.

Sir, I have appraised both the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of External Affairs about this matter in writing on 26th June, 2006. However, no positive action has resulted so far.

I, therefore, urge upon this august House to impress upon the hon. Minister for External Affairs and the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to take up the matter with the Myanmar Government for immediate release of the 21 innocent people on humanitarian grounds.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Mr. Chairman Sir, through you, I want to draw the attention of the Union Government towards the 50 year old demand of including Banjara Community of Uttar Pradesh in the list of Scheduled Castes. Article 342 stipulates the procedure to include a community from any state in the list of Scheduled tribes and it requires the concerned state

to make the recommendation in this regard. After that RGI and the Commission should recommend and then the Union Government includes the community in the list. The Government of Uttar Pradesh had forwarded its recommendation along with survey in 1991. But RGI kept it pending for 12 years and returned it back in 2003 saying that survey was not complete and asked to send it again after conducting the survey properly. Banjaras of Uttar Pradesh have been living in Jhuggis in difficulties for the last 50 years. But there is no one to take care of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You demand from the Government.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: I want to know whether their inclusion in the list of SC would be considered after 50 years. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has been keeping the report on backburner for the last three years and is not taking any decision. If they do not want, better they say no but at least they should send their recommendation. I think that the Government of India should formulate a procedure. These people are demanding to include their community in the list of SCs and STs. But the Government is not including them. This is a great injustice towards them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have said your bit. Now please take your seat.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: I demand from you to issue a direction to fix a time frame for arriving at a decision. They should at least communicate their decision in yes or no.

They have been demanding for the last 50 years but the Government is not paying attention. There are many other communities apart from Banjaras in Uttar Pradesh. ... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your speech has been recorded.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing is going on record except the speech of Shrimati Karuna Shukla.

... (Interruptions)\*

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\*Not recorded.

[Translation]

**SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA (Janjgir):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I want to draw the attention of the Union Government to the problems created due to crack in Rakhar dam of NTPC in village Dhanras of Koraba district of my area. Cracks have developed in Rakhar dam of NTPC in village Dhanvas of Koraba district. This dam is built on 1481 acres of land. A villager named Jagdish Devangan died and many buffaloes and goats got killed. I visited the place. No arrangement has been made by NTPC officials for village Dhanot which has population of 150 and other affected villages of nearby area. There is leakage of water from the dam which is affecting rivers and ponds. As a result of this villagers are forced to drink polluted water. Sir, through you I draw the attention of the Government towards the fact that NTPC has done nothing for the villagers. It is my demand to take immediate steps to provide electricity, water and houses to the people of that area provide adequate compensation to the family of the person who lost his life. Adequate compensation should be paid to those who have lost lives and property

[English]

**SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch):** Sir, I would like to invite the attention of the Government of India to a very serious situation that arose in Gujarat due to devastating heavy rain. The recent heavy rains in Gujarat and more particularly in southern parts of Gujarat and middle part of Gujarat have played havoc and caused loss to moveable and immovable properties worth crores of rupees. Worst affected persons are poor people and farmers, who have lost their valuable seeds and labour put in for cultivation of their fields prior to monsoon and also residential places. Agricultural lands of farmers have suffered loss due to erosion. This devastating heavy rain until now has claimed more than 44 human lives.

Last year, this region also has suffered losses. The Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority has done commendable work but for compensating the losses caused to the people and more particularly to middle class and poor persons. I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to send a special team to assess the losses caused due to heavy rains in Gujarat and provide necessary immediate relief. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

**PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, ACAER had given a detailed report in the beginning of this year regarding irregularities, misuse and black-marketing of kerosene oil at fair price shops under Public Distribution System in the country. ASSOCHAM, the Industry's Chamber has also issued a report according to which one third of the kerosene oil distributed under Public Distribution System is being black-marketed. As a result, the Government have to suffer a loss of Rs. 11,700 crore. The Government provides Rs. 15,000 crore as subsidy to sell the kerosene at fair price, a part of which is borne out of the budget, while the remaining part is borne by several companies. As per reports, 38.6 per cent of allocated kerosene is mixed in diesel and petrol, 18.1 per cent is used for domestic purposes, 17.9 per cent is used for adulteration while 2.6 per cent is given to the people without ration card. The most important role in this regard is played by the owners of the fair price shops. And it is almost impossible to check this malpractice without the concerted efforts of the concerned Ministries of Finance, Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Public Distribution System. The Government may feel relieved if kerosene reached the targeted groups. These are the figures of the 1970s and the consumption of the kerosene was 32.8 lac tonnes in the first half of 1970s. This consumption increased up to 94 lac tonnes during 2004-2005 and the consumption of the cooking gas has increased 60 times from 1.8 lac tonnes to 102 lac tonnes. While, with the increasing demand of cooking gas, demand of kerosene should come down but the situation is just the opposite. 11,000 tonnes of kerosene is being used. I, therefore, request the Government to take immediate action on that report to check blackmarketing of the kerosene and its adulteration in petroleum and diesel and to take stringent action to make kerosene available to the targeted groups.

[English]

**SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR (Dharwad South):** Thank you very much for giving me an opportunity. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Home Minister of this Union Government to the implementation of the Mahajan Commission Report.



Recently, an all party delegation of Maharashtra, led by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh submitted a memorandum to the hon. Prime Minister demanding inclusion of Belgaum district, 865 villages and six cities of Belgaum, Karwar, Nippani, Khanpur, Bidar and Balki, in the State of Maharashtra. This act of Maharashtra Government has created an alarming situation in Belgaum and other parts of Karnataka.

After the unification of Karnataka in 1957, four Kannada speaking districts of old Bombay State were amalgamated in Maharashtra. Now, four districts have become seven districts. Since then, the Maharashtra Government and the vested interests of Marathi-speaking political leaders have been creating this border issue every year.

I would like to state here that Belgaum is an educational and commercial capital of North Karnataka. Enormous development has already taken place. Maharashtra Government is instigating the parochial and divisive sentiments for ulterior political motives. They have even gone to the extent of approaching the hon. Supreme Court to find a judicial solution to political problem. This act of Maharashtra has created insecurity and fear in the minds of 30 lakh Kannadigas living in Mumbai city. The State of Karnataka has filed objections to the Supreme Court stating that the Supreme Court has no jurisdiction in respect of border dispute since Articles 2, 3 and 4 give of the Constitution of India give paramount power to the Parliament in this regard. Therefore, I would like to request the Government of India to warn the Maharashtra Government not to indulge in petty politics for their political survival.

According to the Mahajan Commission Report, Belgaum district is an integral part of Karnataka. There is no point in raking up this sensitive issue year after year. I would also request the Government of India to amalgamate Kasargod and Manjeshwara, which are Kannada speaking areas of Kerala, to the State of Karnataka as per the Mahajan Commission Report.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): Sir, we object to it. We do not agree with him as far as his remarks about Kerala are concerned. Kasergode is part and parcel of Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The irrelevant portions will not be the part of the proceedings.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, four lane expressway of national highway from Kashmir to Kanyakumari is being upgraded. Survey for the same has been started in my parliamentary constituency. The survey team has started marking the area. All the people of the area including Malthaun, Barodia, Rajvans, Baandari, Mehar, Gaurjhamar and Surkhi etc. and villages and towns who are financially vulnerable and whose houses and shops are coming in the way are frightened. They are afraid of losing their houses and shops which they have erected with their hard earned money and now they will on the streets. And then, they will have to start from zero because the amount given as compensation is meagre. I, therefore, request the Government that keeping in view the problems of the poor, bypass expressways should be constructed in the villages and towns as well on the lines of express highways being constructed in the cities via bypass.

*[English]*

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): In our country, Parent Teacher Associations form an itegral part of the functioning of the schools. In school, functions of PTA are manifold. PTA will make parents participate in communication with teachers and other school staff and share concerns regarding their wards academic, social and behavioral progress. Parents can be encouraged to participate and receive assistance in participating effectively in governance and educational decision-making. Parents can volunteer time, skills or resources when needed and wherever possible in schools. They can take part in school and community programmes that empower parents to participate in education process. PTA can hold their children responsible for work, attendance and behaviour which is expected by the school and to teach respect for the person, property, safety and right of others.

In spite of all these, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, New Delhi had dismantled the PTA in KV schools all over the country in 2002. Even after repeated representations

[Dr. K.S. Manoj]

from various corners, till now it is not reconstituted. Also sir, Kendriya Vidyalayas CBSE text Books are not at all available in Kerala. At the same time, those books have been sold in North India well before opening of schools. NCERT is showing step-motherly attitude towards the students of Kendriya Vidyalayas and CBSE schools in Kerala. Schools re-opened this year in April, 2006 and almost one term is nearly over.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your demand?

DR. K.S. MANOJ: So, I request the hon. Minister of Human Resource Development to take immediate steps to reconstitute Parent Teachers Association in KV schools all over India so that participation of parents in educational activities of schools can be ensured and also to make available the CBSE text books of KV schools in Kerala.

[Translation]

SHRI SHISHUPAL PATLE (Bhandara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Chickengunia disease is orsuming spedemic proportions in Bhandara and Gondia districts of Maharashtra. It was discussed in detail last week in the House but it is rapidly spreading in the said districts during the last three months. Villages after villages have come into its grip. The District hospital and primary health centres have no place vacant to admit the affected people. People over there are falling ill in such a large number. The number of deaths are increasing day by day for want of doctors, medicines and adequate medical facilities. The number of death toll has crossed the hundred mark. It is more than 300 in Vidharbha as well.

Sir, through you I request the Government that more medicines should be made available to the poor people in the rural areas where they have to sell their jewellery

and utensils for seeking private treatment due to shortage of medicines and doctors in the government hospitals. The filling of vacancies in the District Hospitals and Health Centres should be expedited. The Government should provide mosquito nets to the poor people to protect them from mosquito borne diseases. Thank you.

SHRI NIHAL CHAND (Shriganganagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, my Lok Sabha Constituency Shriganganagar (Rajasthan) falls near the international (Indo-Pak) border. Fencing was done on Indo-Pak border in 1991 in the border areas of Rajasthan which covered 1½ acres of land of the farmers. The length of the fence in whole of Rajasthan is 1070 kms. The farmers can not cultivate and irrigate their farm land because of the fencing. They can not enter the area. They can not sow their crops. The farmers living in border area of Rajasthan are in distress due to this.

Sir, through you I request the government that farmers of Rajasthan affected by 1070 long fence should be compensated in the same way as the Government have compensated the fence affected farmers living in border areas of Punjab after preparing an estimate of the same. Thank you.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The house stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow, the 4th August, 2006 at 11.00 A.M.

20.33 hrs.

*The Lik Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the clock on Friday, August 4, 2006/Sravana 13, 1928 (Saka).*

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