

categories of consumers are fixed by State Governments/SEBs concerned under the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 wherever the State Electricity Regulatory Commissions have not been set up. The Central Government has no role to play in fixing the tariff for various categories of consumers in the states.

#### **Development of Oilfields by Private Companies**

1003. DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to award Oilfields for development to the private companies;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reasons for not developing the fields by the National Oil Companies themselves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Since 1992, Government has signed 17 contracts for development and production of discovered fields. Further, 12 discovered fields have been awarded for private participation.

(b) and (c) Some of the reasons for awarding of these fields for private participation are:—

- The marginal economics of the fields;
- Considerable investment required;
- To augment production;
- To tide over the resource crunch;
- To obtain state of art technology.

#### **Scheme for Dredging of Haldia Navigational Channel**

1004. SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Calcutta Port Trust has submitted to the Government a comprehensive scheme of capital dredging of Haldia Navigational Channel; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal is under consideration.

#### **Construction of By-Pass on NH-4**

1005. SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the By-pass of Akola on National Highway-4 has been finalised;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if so, the time by which it is likely to be commenced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to take up the construction of Akola by-pass on National Highway No. 6 in the Maharashtra State on B.O.T. (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis. The pre-qualification of the bidders has also been completed.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The work is likely to commence by June, 2000.

#### **Targeted Traffic Projection of Major Ports**

1006. SHRI R.S. GAVAI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the major ports achieved the targeted traffic projections for the period between April to December, 1998;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) and (b). The cargo traffic handled by Major Ports during April to December, 1998 fell short of the

proportionate target. However, some of the individual Ports like, Cochin, J.L. Nehru and Kandla, achieved the targeted traffic during this period. The details of cargo traffic handled by Major Ports during April-December, 1998 are as under:—

Port	Proportionate Target ('000 Tonnes)	Achievement ('000 Tonnes)	% Variation
Calcutta	7123	6202	-12.93
Haldia	15360	14454	-5.90
Paradip	9965	9704	-2.62
Visakhapatnam	27071	26893	-0.66
Madras	27367	26204	-4.25
Tuticorin	7654	7474	-2.35
Cochin	9137	9210	+0.80
New Mangalore	11173	10617	-4.98
Mormugao	13132	12025	-8.43
Bombay	25305	23252	-8.11
J.L. Nehru	7440	8547	+14.88
Kandla	29345	29699	+1.21
Total	190072	184281	-3.05

(c) The shortfall in achieving the targeted traffic by Major Ports during April-December, 1998 was mainly on account of the slow down of economy and resultant dip in exports particularly of Iron ore and general cargo followed by lower throughput of petroleum crude and products.

#### Foreign Equity In Road and Port Projects

1007. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT :  
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to allow hundred per cent of direct foreign investment in road and port projects; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central Government in January 1999 has approved a policy for permitting foreign equity participation upto 100% on the automatic basis both for road and port projects provided the total foreign equity in any such project does not exceed Rs. 1,500 crore.

[Translation]

#### Malnutrition in Children

1008. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :  
DR. CHINTA MOHAN :  
SHRIMATI MINATI SEN :  
DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA :

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

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the news-item captioned "Indians 64 per cent children underweight, says report" appearing in the *Pioneer* dated January 18, 1999;

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

(c) the assessment made by the Government in this regard;

(d) the reasons for the children being underweight and malnourished in the country; and

(e) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to take care of the underweight and malnourished children?