

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Fifth Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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(Vol. XII contains Nos. 11 to 20)

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, August 11, 2005/Sravana 20, 1927 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Mohd. Shahid—Q. No. 261.

[Translation]

Losses to Oil PSUs

*261. MOHD. SHAHID:
SHRI SWADESH CHAKRABORTTY:

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

- (a) whether the oil PSUs are suffering losses even after the recent hike in oil prices;
- (b) if so, the details thereof before and after price hike;
- (c) whether the huge losses suffered by oil PSUs are on account of faulty duty structure;
- (d) if so, whether the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has initiated any dialogue with the Ministry of Finance to check further hike in oil prices;
- (e) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (f) if not, the other steps taken by the Government to maintain the present level of diesel and petrol prices?

[English]

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

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Amongst the Oil Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) such as Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Hindustan

Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and IBP Company Limited have registered losses during the first quarter of the current year. The comparative figures showing profit/(loss) after tax for the OMCs, net of contribution by the upstream PSUs, during 2004-05 and the first quarter of the current year *vis-a-vis* that of last year as under:

(Rs. Crore)

Companies	Profit after Tax (As per Published Figures)		
	2004-05	Apr-Jun 04	Apr-Jun 05
IOCL	4891	1472	(-)54
HPCL	1277	247	(-)508
BPCL	966	147	(-)431
IBP Co.	59	(-)9	(-)234
Total	7193	1857	(-)1227
Contribution by upstream PSUs in the above	5948	1156	3257

As per preliminary estimates, even after the recent hike in the prices of Motor Spirit (MS) of High Speed Diesel (HSD) effective 20th/21st June 2005, the Public Sector OMCs have incurred a total cash loss (without considering contribution by the upstream PSUs) of Rs. 1,516 crore in July, 2005 (IOCL-Rs. 564 crore, HPCL-Rs. 343 crore, BPCL-Rs. 425 crore, IBP-Rs. 184 crore).

(c) to (f) The substantial and increasing losses suffered by the OMCs are on account of the continued and widening mismatch between domestic retail prices of petrol, diesel, PDS kerosene and domestic LPG, on the one hand, and international oil prices which have been relentlessly on the rise in 2005, on the other. The price of PDS kerosene has remained unchanged since April 2002, while only marginal increases have been made in case of domestic LPG, the last being in November 2004. The comparative figures showing the international prices and the domestic prices of crude and sensitive petroleum products are as under:

Trend in International Prices

Period	Indian Basket Crude (\$/bbl)	Petrol (\$/bbl)	Diesel (\$/bbl)	Kerosene (\$/bbl)	LPG (\$/MT)
March 2002	23.31	26.43	23.27	23.65	194.00
2002-03	26.66	30.15	28.93	29.33	280.40
2003-04	27.96	35.03	30.48	31.19	278.45
2004-05	39.22	49.01	46.91	49.50	368.52
2005-06 (Apr-Jul' 05)	51.08	58.85	62.58	66.21	408.30
8th Aug. 2005	58.83	70.70	66.49	69.71	403.60
% Increase (8.8.2005 over Mar' 02)	152.4%	167.5%	185.73%	194.75%	108.04%

Trend in Domestic Prices

Period	Petrol Rs/Litre	Diesel Rs/Litre	Kerosene Rs/Litre	LPG Rs/Cyl.
As on 31st March 2002	26.54	16.59	8.98	240.45
As on 8th Aug. 2005	40.49	28.45	9.05	294.75
% Increase (8th Aug. 2005 over Mar' 02)	52.6%	71.5%	0.8%	22.6%

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas has recommended restructuring of taxes/duties on petroleum products keeping the interests of the consumer in mind. The recommendations of the Standing Committee were examined in detail in consultation with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and other authorities concerned. The revision of prices by the Cabinet and the changes by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in customs and excise duties, including structural changes, on crude oil and petroleum products have been effected on the principle of equitable burden sharing and striking a proper balance among the three principal stakeholders, namely, the Government, the oil companies and the consumers. However, the relentless increase in international prices has put an unduly large burden on the oil marketing companies threatening to make them sick. The Government is continuously monitoring the price situation with a view to taking appropriate remedial measures.

[Translation]

MOHD. SHAHID: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through my original question, I wanted to know whether his Ministry propose to further hike the oil prices under the present circumstances? Through you and this House, I would like to inform the hon. Minister that there is a class of people in this country who have been facing a lot of difficulties due to the price hike. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards this fact that this situation is not only prevailing in my State, but in other States also. It is being reported in the newspapers that the country is facing severe power crisis. The people are compelled to use diesel to run their business. Many industries in my constituency are lying closed, because people can not afford the expenses being incurred on purchase of diesel. They are unable to run their business by generator due to which lakhs of people are on the verge of unemployment. There is another class.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please put up the question you want to ask.

...(Interruptions)

MOHD. SHAHID: I would like to ask the steps being taken by the Government to check further hike in oil prices. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You may please sit down. Ask next question afterwards.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon. Member should read the last line of the reply. I have got an English version of the reply; therefore, I am reading the out in English. It states:

[English]

"Government is continuously monitoring the price situation with a view to taking appropriate remedial measures."

[Translation]

Therefore, I think this allegation is wrong that I have not given reply to any point. There is no need to draw my attention towards this fact because Government is continuously monitoring the oil price situation and we are making efforts in this regard. The hon'ble Member has asked about diesel. In regard to diesel, I would like to apprise the House that between May 1996 and May 2004, when we came to power, the price of crude oil rose by 18 dollars and the price of diesel was revised 34 times during that period. In last one year, the price of diesel was raised by 18 dollars. I am not taking into account last few days, because the price of diesel has risen further, but when price of diesel was increased by 18 dollars, revision in prices was made only 6 times during the said period. We have reduced custom and excise duty on diesel. Whenever any further change in oil prices would be required, I would like to have cooperation from State Governments also because sales tax is imposed by the State Government. No change has been made in any quarter for the last 13-14 months. We are trying our best to ensure that the consumer is not burdened. On one side the Government have suffered loss of Rs. 4000 crore during the last financial year and on other, the under recoveries of oil PSUs have reached Rs. 20,000 crore during last year and if no measures are taken during current year to check it this figure may reach Rs. 40,000

crore. Under the present circumstances, the consumer will also have to share the burden. If industries are lying closed due to lack of power supply, do not put its blame on the Government. The State Government should be asked to state the reasons for non-availability of power there. If any question in this regard is related to the Union Government, that question should be addressed to the Minister of Power. We have kept the diesel price under control in view of transport sector, as it affects the overall price index. Last time also, we increased the price of diesel by two rupees in the month of June, though it should have been increased by Rs. 4 in line with the international prices, but we have kept its prices low.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the hon'ble Minister gives such long replies, then only one question would be taken up during the entire question hour.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will control. But I cannot regulate the hon. Minister except to stress on the importance of the question and the answer and brevity also. This is without any reflection on anybody.

[Translation]

MOHD. SHAHID: The hon'ble Minister told that the Government is continuously making efforts to check the oil prices, still, the oil prices have increased 6 times between 2004 and 21.6.2005. The hon'ble Minister has already told that the State Governments are responsible for it, because they levy tax. We are the elected representatives of the people. The hon'ble Minister has passed the responsibility of power crisis on the State Governments. If the people of our constituency are facing the problem including closure of their industries where else this matter can be raised if not in this House?

MR. SPEAKER: This is not appropriate. Here only those subjects could be raised that are related to the Union Government.

...(Interruptions)

MOHD. SHAHID: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have raised the issue of price of diesel. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to ask any other question, please ask. Do not give speech.

MOHD. SHAHID: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my second question is that reports are being received to the effect that some private oil companies are managing to sell their oil through our Government petrol pumps. This is a very serious matter because as a result of it Govt. Companies are suffering huge losses. It is happening continuously. As per my information, petrol pumps. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You may please send the information available with you.

MOHD. SHAHID. I have got confirmed information that private oil companies send their tankers at night and sell petrol at two rupees cheaper than the Government price, due to which our oil Companies are incurring heavy losses. ...*(Interruptions)* I would like to mention one more thing that the people belonging to middle class earning a monthly salary from Rs. 3000 to 5000 who used Sector as means of transport has now discontinued the use of Scooter and instead they are using cycles. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Speak all these things during debate on budget.

MOHD. SHAHID: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very serious issue. I would like to know about the steps being taken by the Government in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I hope, you will consider his views.

[Translation]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: If the hon'ble Member submits the details of allegation levelled by him the inquiry would be conducted and I hope that Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra would be happy with this reply. ...*(Interruptions)* I have given my clarification which levelled against me has been boomeranged on to him. This is his shortcoming that he does not want to get his shortcoming exposed in front of us.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I want this good humour and good relationship in this House.

SHRI SWADESH CHAKRABORTTY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister, in his written reply, has stated that the

Government is continuously monitoring the price situation. In his oral answer he has said that the present deficit is to the tune Rs. 20,000 crore and it is likely to go up to Rs. 40,000 crore. It is a clear indication that the Government is contemplating a hike in the price of petrol, diesel etc. In the recent hike in the prices of petrol, for a hike of Rs. 2.50 per litre of petrol, the excise component was Rs. 2.20.

In the case of diesel where the price hike was Rs. 2, the excise component was Rs. 1.06. I want to know whether the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is contemplating to give any relief to the Indian citizens by not bringing any increase in the excise duty and bringing back the APM system so that there is transparency in price fixation.

Sir, part 'B' of my supplementary is...

MR. SPEAKER: There is no part 'B'. You know that I do not allow part 'B' of the supplementary.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, may I assure the hon. Member that, as is the custom with the UPA Government, we would not dare to even think of raising the prices without consulting the leaders of his Party and other parties that are supporting us or the Parties which are allies in our Government.

With respect of excise duties on petrol and diesel, the hon. Finance Minister has stated in his Budget speech that his attempt was to make this revenue neutral. Since there was a clear slash of customs duty on several products as well as reduction in excise duties on sensitive products like kerosene and diesel, to keep it revenue neutral, it was necessary to make appropriate adjustments in petrol and diesel. But we are looking into, given the rise in international prices that has taken place during the first quarter of this year and in August, whether there is some scope of a feeling that the total revenue which is coming into the Government is more than what is budgeted for in which case there might be some scope for readjustment of these duties. But this question is really to be addressed to the hon. Finance Minister. We, as much as the hon. Member, are victims of his decision.

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, part of the loss is to the PSUs. It has been attributed to the distribution of kerosene through the PDS and the brunt of it is totally borne by the PSUs and private producers like the RIL and ESSAR have been exporting their entire production.

I would like to seek a clarification from the hon. Minister on whether the Government would consider to put an embargo on kerosene export to reduce the burden on the public sector undertakings.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, the requirements of the public sector marketing companies for kerosene are required to be met in full by the refineries. There was export of jet kerosene by certain private parties and we were considering the possibility of asking them under the Essential Commodities Act or the export-import rules to curtail their export of jet kerosene until our requirements are met. But instead of resorting to a drastic action of this kind, we have asked the OMCs to negotiate with the stand-alone refineries and find a solution to this problem. It does appear that a solution is in the offing and equally considerable trade discounts are being given by the stand-alone refineries to our OMCs which while not constituting a contribution to the subsidy as such do have the effect of mitigating the burden that is borne by the OMCs.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to ask a specific question from the hon'ble Minister in regard to his reply. Ethanol is being scientifically produced in the country. The hon'ble Minister is presently smiling but later on he will give a bitter reply. Earlier, he talked about Jall and Churchill. During the NDA regime, consensus was arrived in principle at for mixing and blending of ethanol in nine States. Whether it is a fact that UPA Government have given some relaxation in it and that the Minister has said that ethanol can be mixed subject to availability only. Whether the Government propose to implement policy all over the country for blending ethanol in petrol in view of rising price of crude oil in the international market.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, I was smiling because I have already replied this question at least ten times. I have told earlier also that entire thing is not accomplished by merely publishing it in Gazette notification. In the first year itself when this notification was released, it was enforced. Otherwise, during the last two years of NDA regime they violated their own notification. I have clarified that we will not run our Government in violation of our own rules and regulations. So I submitted that it will be mandatory only when those conditions are fulfilled which resulted in violation of the notification. After making such statement I initiated discussion with Indian Sugar Mills Association that was

not done by the previous Government. It was ignored by the NDA. Now we have entered into that agreement on the basis of which I can assure the House that our Government will not sit idle after giving assurance, rather, it will act as well.

[English]

We are the Government that works.

[Translation]

I have assured that ethanol will be blended with petrol. If the availability of ethanol is more, its share of blending will be increased. I would like to submit to the hon'ble Member that they should not forget that

[English]

ethanol is a residual product and we in the oil sector are the residual consumers.

[Translation]

First of all people should put a restrain on their habit of drinking as a major part of ethanol produced is used by the liquor industry and only the remaining quantity is made available for petroleum sector. So, we need assurance that the major part of ethanol will not be used by the liquor industry. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister meant consumption of liquor in the country.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: I do not think Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra has ever enjoyed the joys of whisky. I am a Foreign Service officer. So, I take the blame on myself. The problem is with regard to consumption of alcohol for industrial purposes and other purposes in the country as a whole. I think ethanol should be used first by the oil industry and only after that by the alcohol industry. Cheers!

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: I have also given notice and my name is there in the list.

MR. SPEAKER: I have seen it. Your name is there in the list along with four other Members.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Then how did you forget me. I had supported you. Is it on account of this that my name has been forgotten?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: One hon. Member was from the Bahujan Samaj Party, and the second hon. Member was from the CPI(M).

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I had no role in it. It is decided by ballot. Thereafter, one Member from the Congress Party and one Member from the BJP were called. Thus there were four Members. It is alright. You please wait and keep on drawing attention by raising hand, sooner or later you will certainly get opportunity.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: What about me?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is very unfair. Your leader was there. Nobody opposed it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Have the rules changed?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes. I do not need your consent. You please sit down.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: How it happens?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing else will be recorded except Shri Gudhe's supplementary question.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Ram Kripal ji, there is a method to ask question.

[English]

You cannot question my decision. Speaker's ruling has to be accepted whether you like it or not.

[English]

Passenger and Cargo Traffic at Airports

*262. SHRI ANANT GUDHE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the airports in the country are underutilised;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the actual passenger and cargo traffic handled by each airport during each of the last three years; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by Government for optimum utilisation of these airports?

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) and (b) Airport infrastructure is continuously upgraded keeping in view the future traffic demand. As building/upgrading airport infrastructure is a time-taking process, some excess capacity in airport is generally inbuilt as the desirable object is to meet the increasing traffic demand before the next stage of expansion/addition of the capacity. The high growth in traffic in recent years have, infact, created conditions of inadequate capacity at some airports. Several airports in the country are not optimally utilised due to number of factors such as insufficient traffic etc.

(c) Total passenger and cargo traffic handled at top 45 airports (handling 99% of the total traffic) during each of the last three years from 2002-03 to 2004-05 is given at enclosed Annexure.

(d) Utilisation of airports depend on endogenous as well as exogenous factors. Efforts have been made to encourage small and regional airlines to operate to smaller

airports so that their utilization increases. Concessions/reductions in airport charges have also been made to encourage these operations.

Annexure

Details of actual Passenger and Cargo Traffic (in metric tonnes) handled by each airport during the last three years

Sl.No.	Airport	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03	
		Passenger	Cargo	Passenger	Cargo	Passenger	Cargo
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Mumbai	15865777	402715	13284445	326477	12260284	307605
2.	Delhi	12782979	344501	10394164	295807	9096548	276042
3.	Chennai	5633926	185870	455821	154123	4161346	136660
4.	Bangalore	4113383	112374	3181248	91489	2764283	83028
5.	Kolkata	3494564	69628	3090853	62272	2826794	58260
6.	Hyderabad	2845029	34007	2211766	27753	1910189	20728
7.	Cochin	1596126	22175	1332601	15961	1010286	10802
8.	Ahmedabad	1289747	16692	976687	13153	818018	10696
9.	Goa	1265410	4856	987661	3486	839918	3474
10.	Trivandrum	1160151	23655	1073582	26280	1014287	25362
11.	Calicut	827861	10589	655597	7600	629561	7787
12.	Pune	600949	8791	466295	7379	410136	5326
13.	Guwahati	598932	4310	541233	4376	508719	4749
14.	Lucknow	453345	2588	384393	2107	318656	2202
15.	Coimbatore	391175	4685	279324	4615	258964	3464
16.	Srinagar	389493	2172	264335	1679	229915	1413
17.	Jaipur	380251	1771	299824	1429	289934	1326
18.	Vadodara	361894	3265	312447	2079	361302	1826
19.	Amritsar	347911	1312	225292	1126	178037	392
20.	Nagpur	277830	2780	230806	2099	229205	1445
21.	Indore	269625	2925	226915	2031	195072	1461

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
22.	Mangalore	268424	233	225990	188	199723	243
23.	Jammu	262316	944	216769	675	174572	588
24.	Varanasi	253011	627	200152	660	151384	553
25.	Agartala	230328	2868	209600	2017	206991	2344
26.	Udaipur	217018	2	179358	9	153678	24
27.	Bhubaneswar	205230	945	174956	696	136044	627
28.	Visakhapatnam	200036	670	155113	685	155771	804
29.	Port Blair	193785	1736	194333	1363	160444	1099
30.	Patna	176234	1035	159683	1184	162800	1187
31.	Bagdogra	172619	420	147545	355	130128	400
32.	Trichurapalli	167991	332	122397	199	94057	256
33.	Madurai	158424	429	123161	405	99872	271
34.	Rajkot	158172	1031	126615	737	121553	609
35.	Leh	141000	827	133165	790	111128	779
36.	Juhu	134821	395	130108	409	218144	475
37.	Aurangabad	133199	1064	110383	880	104912	813
38.	Imphal	129103	1517	123960	1167	127525	834
39.	Bhopal	127510	323	113675	251	87784	251
40.	Chandigarh	105846	440	76053	180	50064	98
41.	Jodhpur	104609	74	91107	90	76404	109
42.	Dibrugarh	95678	503	78387	490	82179	545
43.	Raipur	95257	865	75948	485	55058	333
44.	Silchar	90509	247	86860	284	77558	407
35.	Ranchi	79698	237	66955	200	68838	203

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: There are certain airports in the country where a large quantum of cargo and passenger traffic is handled. In his reply, hon. Minister has provided figures of 45 airports. Most of the airports in the country are such where there is movement of only

two-four flights but entire staff is required for duty. As a result operational cost goes up very high and consequently air fares also go up. It deprives a common man from travelling by air. Hon. Minister hails from district Nagpur, Maharashtra. He has told that the Government proposes to make Nagpur Cargo and International Airport operational. I would like to know from hon. Minister the

number of such airports in the country where the Government propose to start Cargo and international air service on the lines of Nagpur Airport and also by when Nagpur Airport is likely to be made operational.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question has several aspects and I would try my best to answer each of the aspect. He has told that there are several airports in the country where air service is limited to only one or very few flights and that makes operational cost and air fares very high. I can say with confidence that last 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ year have witnessed one sort of revolution in the field of air-service and one can not deny it. The passengers, who may not even dreamt of travelling by air are now availing this facility. Further, I would like to say that we need some time to meet the expectations of the people. I would also like to add that the number of air service provider companies and also that of passengers have increased more than 25 percent during last one year and many new companies have introduced air services in our country. The cities which did not have any connectivity through air services have been covered by the air companies within their network. We are not satisfied with the existing air passenger traffic and we have been making continuous efforts to increase it further.

He made a mention of Nagpur. It is a big city in Central India and I hail from it. I would like Nagpur to develop by leaps and bounds and I have been looking forward to it groving into an hub of international cargo in future. Central Government, in collaboration with the State Government of Maharashtra propose to develop a multi-model international Cargo and passenger hub at Nagpur. The Government are committed to declare Nagpur airport an international airport. Movement of passengers and cargo for international destination is likely to begin very soon from Nagpur.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please be brief to the question. You see, supplementary cannot be on anything under the sun. Any and every issue cannot come under supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: Hon. Minister, in his reply, has stated that cargo and passengers traffic has increased by 25 percent during last year. But if we look at the figures presented by him, we hardly find an increase of more than 4-5 percent and that too at a few places. The

increase is in sync with the stated figures. For example, in Bombay, it has increased to one crore 56 lakh from one crore 32 lakh. In many a states the airports such as Amravati, Nanded and Akola in Maharashtra are owned either by the State Governments or the Government companies. I would like to ask whether the Government propose to start air services from these airports. In spite of availability of passengers, the Government has not been able to start air service from these airports because of financial constraints. I would like to ask hon. Minister as to what steps the Government propose to take to ask airport authority to take over the airports of State Governments so that the passengers could be provided all the facilities.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Member has asked quite comprehensive and important question. I want to say that there are approximately 400 airports in the country. These are either under the control of State Governments or Airport Authority or under the Ministry of Defence. On several occasion, the House, through several of its Members have acknowledged that air-service is gaining more importance these days, though it was not the case earlier. Therefore, each hon. Member desires his constituency to be covered by air-service. Therefore, I would request every Member that since we come from different States so our States should come forward in this regard. Almost 60 airports of International Airports Authority are operational in India and State Governments have taken initiative with regard to remaining airports. For example, the airport at Kolhapur in Maharashtra is under MIDC. MIDC made it of a very good standard and regular passengers' service has already started from there. If each hon. Member, as we hail from various States, had made efforts and taken up the matter with respective State Governments, then I am sure the unutilized or underutilized airports would have become fully operational. The way, the Government liberalized air-services and introduced more number of services. I am sure; we can start air-service even from smaller cities. Therefore, I expect each hon. Member to persuade his respective State Government to render help in this regard. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

[English]

Hon. Member, this habit has to be given up.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please understand the agony of the Chair. I have 24 or 25 hon. Members

by this time who want to put supplementaries. If I do not allow anyone, you are only imputing motives to the Chair.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Listen if you want to talk, go out and talk.

Please listen, it will be useful for you also. Therefore, we are trying to regulate it with the consent of all the parties.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: It is a very big country.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want only one question to be taken up in a day.

[English]

They have taken the trouble of putting Questions. I do not want to enter into any controversy with you. What I am submitting is that kindly give a notice for Half-an-Hour Discussion. This is a matter which seems to be very much agitating the hon. Members. I will allow a Half-an-Hour Discussion on this subject.

Now, Shri Arun Kumar Vundavalli to put a supplementary.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, I have given notice of a Calling Attention.

MR. SPEAKER: I shall look into it. I believe that Half-an-Hour Discussion will be much more acceptable to you all.

SHRI ARUN KUMAR VUNDAVALLI: Namaskaram. I want to put a question to the hon. Minister, through you, Sir. There was an Airport, which was working till 1988 in Rajahmundry in East Godavari District which is my home constituency. From 1988 onwards, it is not being used. The runway and everything is perfect. But, somehow, it is not being used. Recently, there was a newspaper item saying that about Rs. 2 lakh crore worth of gas is found in the Krishna-Godavari Basin.

Rajahmundry is the headquarters for that. With having so much of industrial development, I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will treat Rajahmundry Airport as a priority item and bring the Airport to usage.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: You admitted that Rajahmundry was operational till 1988 but unfortunately after that, the Indian Airlines did not have the smaller type of aircraft which resulted in closure of operations there. However, I am sure, as he has mentioned, Rajahmundry is a very important place in the future of our oil and other business and it is an important town. We will definitely ask the Airlines, who would be interested in operating to Rajahmundry, and we will try to give them the fullest support.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY KRISHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bodhgaya is a tourist centre of international level and it is a very important place for the followers of Buddhism. I would like to ask hon. Member as to what action plan the Government have evolved for development of Bodhgaya airport.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This has all become constituency matter.

SHRI VIJAY KRISHAN: What is the scheme for expansion of Patna airport?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: It does not relate to this.

MR. SPEAKER: This is the problem.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: However, I can assure the hon. Member that, of course, Bodhgaya needs an operational airport.

MR. SPEAKER: All suggestions will be seriously looked into.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: I would like to ask the concerned Minister as to what actions have been taken so far to get up minimum one airport within our sweet land, Bodoland area.

MR. SPEAKER: You have asked that question.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: Since long years back I have been asking to set up a separate airport at Kokrajhar but unfortunately nothing tangible has been done so far in this regard. It is a great discrimination against the people of Bodoland area.

MR. SPEAKER: You have put your question. These comments are not necessary.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I cannot answer this question just offhand but I would like to meet the hon. Member and understand his concern and I will try to understand and try to find the solution. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: Sir, time and again, he keeps on assuring only but nothing has been done so far.

MR. SPEAKER: He has invited you. He will invite you to tea or dinner, I do not know.

[*Translation*]

Exploration of Oil Resources

*263. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:
SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government has explored some new oil reserves in the country;

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1.	Gujarat	ONGC	Wamaj	Oil
2.	Rajasthan	Caim Energy	NC (Shakti)	Oil
3.	Rajasthan	Caim Energy	NV (Bhagyam)	Oil
4.	Gujarat	GSPC	PK#2	Oil
5.	Assam	ONGC	Tiphuk	Oil & Gas
6.	West Coast	ONGC	D-33	Oil & Gas
7.	Assam	OIL	North Tinali	Oil & Gas
8.	Assam	OIL	West Zaloni	Oil & Gas
9.	Assam	OIL	Samdang	Oil & Gas

These discoveries are under appraisal/assessment.

Details of discoveries/established reserves of oil as well as natural gas made from April, 2002 to July, 2005 are detailed in the Annexure.

It may be noted that after a discovery is made, it is appraised to establish its commerciality on the basis of reserves and, later, techno-economic feasibility. Once commerciality is established, a development and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the oil extraction work at these places is likely to be started;

(c) the extent to which the extraction of oil from the newly found oil reserves will help in meeting the domestic requirements;

(d) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to ensure oil security of the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

Statement

(a) and (b) A total of 4 oil discoveries and 5 discoveries of oil along with natural gas have been made during the year 2004-05. Details of these discoveries are given below:

production plan is prepared to exploit the oil and gas reserves. Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) signed by the Government prescribe a time frame for each of these activities/steps.

From the oil discoveries made in the Rajasthan block operated by Cairn Energy India Pty. Ltd., oil production

is expected to commence during the year 2007-08 and may peak at 6 Million Metric Tonnes per Annum.

From the gas discoveries made in the Krishna Godavari deepwater block operated by Reliance Industries Limited, gas production is expected to commence during the year 2008-09 with a plateau production rate of 40 Million Standard Cubic Metre per Day (MMSCMD).

(c) Any increase in domestic oil and gas production helps in reducing the import dependence of the country to that extent.

(d) and (e) In order to enhance the oil security of the country, the Government has adopted a multi-pronged strategy as under;

- (i) Accelerate domestic oil and gas production through awarding acreages under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), blocks given to ONGC/OIL on nomination basis and exploration under pre-NELP blocks.
- (ii) Aggressively pursue acquisition of equity oil and gas in foreign countries.
- (iii) Create strategic crude oil storage.
- (iv) Explore alternative sources of hydrocarbons such as Coal Bed Methane (CBM) and gas hydrates.
- (v) Encourage conservation of oil by improving efficiencies and technologies.

Annexure

Discoveries made by ONGC, OIL and Pvt/JV companies in 2002-03

ONGC (6 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	Chinnewala Tibba (Rajasthan)	Gas
2.	GS-49 (KG Offshore)	Gas
3.	GS-KW (KG Offshore)	Oil & Gas
4.	Banmali (Assam)	Oil
5.	Laipling gaon (Assam)	Oil
6.	Vasai West (Mumbai Offshore)	Oil & Gas

OIL (5 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	Matimekhana (Assam)	Oil & Gas
2.	East Deohal (Assam)	Oil & Gas
3.	North Dikom (Assam)	Oil & Gas
4.	Matimekhana-II (Assam)	Oil & Gas
5.	Baghjan (Assam)	Gas

Pvt./JV companies (7 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Rajasthan (RJ-ON-90/1)	Calm	Rageshwari	Oil

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Eastern Offshore	RIL	Dhirubhai-1	Gas
3.	(KG-DWN-98/3)		Dhirubhai-2	Gas
4.			Dhirubhai-3	Gas
5.			Dhirubhai-4	Gas
6.	Gujarat	Niko	Bhima-1	Gas
7.	(CB-ONN-2000/2)		NS	Gas

Discoveries made by ONGC, OIL and Pvt/JV companies in 2003-04

ONGC (6 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	G-4 (KG Offshore)	Gas
2.	Sonamura (Tripura)	Gas
3.	NMT (Mumbai Offshore)	Gas
4.	Sitarampuram (Andhra Pradesh)	Oil & Gas
5.	Degam (Gujarat)	Oil
6.	East Lakhbari (Assam)	Oil & Gas

OIL (3 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	Mechaki-1 (Assam)	Oil & Gas
2.	North Chandmari (Assam)	Oil & Gas
3.	East Rajali (Assam)	Oil & Gas

Pvt/JV companies (7 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1.	Rajasthan	Cairn	Mangla	Oil
2.	(RJ-ON-90/1)		Greater Rageshwari	Oil
3.			(GR-F)	
4.			Kameshwari	Oil
			NA (Aishwarya)	Oil
5.	Western Offshore (CB-OS-2)	Cairn	CBX Structure	Gas
6.	Eastern Offshore	RIL	Dhirubhai-5	Gas
7.	(KG-DWN-98/3)		Dhirubhai-6	Gas

*Discoveries made by ONGC, OIL and Pvt./JV companies in 2004-05***ONGC (4 discoveries)**

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	Tiphuk (Assam)	Oil & Gas
2.	Wamaj (Gujarat)	Oil
3.	D-33 (West Coast Offshore)	Oil & Gas
4.	Vashishta (East Coast Offshore)	Gas

OIL (3 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	North Tinali (Assam)	Oil & Gas
2.	West Zaloni (Assam)	Oil & Gas
3.	Samdang (Assam)	Oil & Gas

Pvt./JV companies (10 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1.	Rajasthan	Caim	NC (Shakti)	Oil
2.	(RJ-ON-90/1)		NV (Bhagyam)	Oil
3.	Gujarat (CB-ONN-2000/1)	GSPC	PK#2	Oil
4.	Eastern	RIL	Dhirubhai-7	Gas
5.	Offshore		Dhirubhai-8	Gas
6.	(KG-DWN-98/3)		Dhirubhai-16	Gas
7.	Eastern		Dhirubhai-9	Gas
8.	Offshore		Dhirubhai-10	Gas
9.	(NEC-OSN-97/1)		Dhirubhai-11	Gas
10.			Dhirubhai-15	Gas

*Discoveries made by ONGC, OIL and Pvt./JV companies in 2005-06 (April-July, 2005)***ONGC: No discovery****OIL (1 discovery)**

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	North Moran (Assam)	Oil & Gas

Pvt./JV companies (7 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1.	Eastern Offshore	RIL	Dhirubhai-18	Gas
2.	(KG-DWN-98/3)		Dhirubhai-19	Gas
3.	Eastern Offshore		Dhirubhai-20	Gas
4.	CEC-OSN-97/1)		Dhirubhai-21	Gas
5.	Eastern Offshore (KG-OSN-2001/3)	GSPC	KG#8	Gas
6.	Gujarat (CB-ON/3)	Essar Oil Ltd.	ESU#1	Oil/Gas
7.	Rajasthan (RJ-ON-90/1)	Cairn	NI#2	Oil

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: Hon. Mr. Speaker, the Oil producing capacity of Mumbai High which is the main Oil producing zone of the country is reducing gradually whereas there has been a constant increase in the consumption of oil in the country. In view of this decrease in oil production capacity what steps are being taken by the Government to meet the shortage and whether the estimated quantum of oil and gas in the newly identified reservoirs of oil and gas by the Government is similar to that of the Mumbai High? Further what is going to be the percentage share of the domestic consumption and that of the export of the oil and gas reserves explored by the oil companies?

MR. SPEAKER: You have two questions.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, the oil and gas reserves are the gift of nature. Their exhaustive use is liable to cause their depletion. Still with the help of certain new technologies like IOR—Improved Oil Recovery and EOR—Enhanced Oil Recovery we are trying to check the level of decreasing production. Simultaneously, we are exploring the high seas for oil and gas reserves. I hope, through this we shall be able to maintain the level of production in near future and simultaneously carry out new exploration. As far as import export are concerned, the domestic production of oil and gas is cent percent for domestic consumption.

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: Mr. Speaker, whether Vision-2025 was conceptualised during the regime of the previous NDA Government. I would like to know as to

what is Vision-2025? Whether the Government are taking steps to implement the same?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, despite the change in the regime we have been following the guidelines mentioned in Vision 2025 as for evaluating our targets and to closely track whether everything is going in accordance with the targets fixed two-four years back as at times, it becomes difficult to keep pace with the time frame fixed in regard to achieving our set targets which gives rise to the need of revive. Simultaneously, I feel that four-five years have passed now we should review it and should bring the required changes.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Hon. Mr. Speaker, merely 35 per cent of our total domestic requirement of oil is met by our domestic production. Hon. Minister in a written reply has stated that efforts are going on to increase it by making oil exploration bids in several countries through various Indian companies. OPEC countries have been revising the prices of oil, every fortnight or every month. The prices are likely to reach 100 \$ per barrel in future. I would like to know by when the domestic production of oil is likely to be increased through the agreements with various countries and also the extent to which the oil production is likely to be increased?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as of now share of domestic production is no more 35 per cent of our oil consumption and I regretfully admit that it has now come down to 24 per cent. The Vision 2025,

*Discoveries made by ONGC, OIL and Pvt./JV companies in 2004-05***ONGC (4 discoveries)**

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	Tiphuk (Assam)	Oil & Gas
2.	Wamaj (Gujarat)	Oil
3.	D-33 (West Coast Offshore)	Oil & Gas
4.	Vashishta (East Coast Offshore)	Gas

OIL (3 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	North Tinali (Assam)	Oil & Gas
2.	West Zaloni (Assam)	Oil & Gas
3.	Samdang (Assam)	Oil & Gas

Pvt./JV companies (10 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1.	Rajasthan	Calm	NC (Shakti)	Oil
2.	(RJ-ON-90/1)		NV (Bhagyam)	Oil
3.	Gujarat (CB-ONN-2000/1)	GSPC	PK#2	Oil
4.	Eastern	RIL	Dhirubhai-7	Gas
5.	Offshore		Dhirubhai-8	Gas
6.	(KG-DWN-98/3)		Dhirubhai-16	Gas
7.	Eastern		Dhirubhai-9	Gas
8.	Offshore		Dhirubhai-10	Gas
9.	(NEC-OSN-97/1)		Dhirubhai-11	Gas
10.			Dhirubhai-15	Gas

*Discoveries made by ONGC, OIL and Pvt./JV companies in 2005-06 (April-July, 2005)***ONGC: No discovery****OIL (1 discovery)**

Sl.No.	Name of the discovery	Type
1.	North Moran (Assam)	Oil & Gas

Pvt./JV companies (7 discoveries)

Sl.No.	Area/State	Operator	Name of Discovery	Type
1.	Eastern Offshore	RIL	Dhirubhai-18	Gas
2.	(KG-DWN-98/3)		Dhirubhai-19	Gas
3.	Eastern Offshore		Dhirubhai-20	Gas
4.	CEC-OSN-97/1)		Dhirubhai-21	Gas
5.	Eastern Offshore (KG-OSN-2001/3)	GSPC	KG#8	Gas
6.	Gujarat (CB-ON/3)	Essar Oil Ltd.	ESU#1	Oil/Gas
7.	Rajasthan (RJ-ON-90/1)	Cairn	NI#2	Oil

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: Hon. Mr. Speaker, the Oil producing capacity of Mumbai High which is the main Oil producing zone of the country is reducing gradually whereas there has been a constant increase in the consumption of oil in the country. In view of this decrease in oil production capacity what steps are being taken by the Government to meet the shortage and whether the estimated quantum of oil and gas in the newly identified reservoirs of oil and gas by the Government is similar to that of the Mumbai High? Further what is going to be the percentage share of the domestic consumption and that of the export of the oil and gas reserves explored by the oil companies?

MR. SPEAKER: You have two questions.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, the oil and gas reserves are the gift of nature. Their exhaustive use is liable to cause their depletion. Still with the help of certain new technologies like IOR—Improved Oil Recovery and EOR—Enhanced Oil Recovery we are trying to check the level of decreasing production. Simultaneously, we are exploring the high seas for oil and gas reserves. I hope, through this we shall be able to maintain the level of production in near future and simultaneously carry out new exploration. As far as import export are concerned, the domestic production of oil and gas is cent percent for domestic consumption.

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: Mr. Speaker, whether Vision-2025 was conceptualised during the regime of the previous NDA Government. I would like to know as to

what is Vision-2025? Whether the Government are taking steps to implement the same?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, despite the change in the regime we have been following the guidelines mentioned in Vision 2025 as for evaluating our targets and to closely track whether everything is going in accordance with the targets fixed two-four years back as at times, it becomes difficult to keep pace with the time frame fixed in regard to achieving our set targets which gives rise to the need of revive. Simultaneously, I feel that four-five years have passed now we should review it and should bring the required changes.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Hon. Mr. Speaker, merely 35 per cent of our total domestic requirement of oil is met by our domestic production. Hon. Minister in a written reply has stated that efforts are going on to increase it by making oil exploration bids in several countries through various Indian companies. OPEC countries have been revising the prices of oil, every fortnight or every month. The prices are likely to reach 100 \$ per barrel in future. I would like to know by when the domestic production of oil is likely to be increased through the agreements with various countries and also the extent to which the oil production is likely to be increased?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as of now share of domestic production is no more 35 per cent of our oil consumption and I regretfully admit that it has now come down to 24 per cent. The Vision 2025,

the mention about which was made short while ago, also points out that by 2025 the domestic oil production will be able to meet only 15 per cent of our oil demand and 85 per cent of oil will have to be imported. But we should always remember, that the increase in demand is attributable to high rate of economic growth. India and China are two countries where the demand of oil and gas is rapidly increasing. We are trying our level best to increase the domestic production to the maximum and that is why we have made a lot of progress in this regard. As the House would be aware of that several heavy oil and gas reserves have been identified. Oil reserves have also been found near Barmer in the desert of Rajasthan. Oil reserves are likely to be found in Gulf of Cambay. Concentrating fully on domestic production and knowing well that there will be a need to import, we should enter into an agreement with the foreign countries to explore oil and gas abroad and then it should be properly utilized. We have been quite successful and efforts are ongoing. We have approached approximately 52 such countries and we have signed an agreement with approximately 15 countries. I hope that we will tread ahead in the path of development by signing more agreements in near future. I would like to assure the Hon. Member in regard to conservation of energy that we have never accorded lesser priority to this issue. I think the efforts of this Government in this direction have been unprecedented. We will definitely be successful.

[English]

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: Sir, I believe, the hon. Minister must be knowing that there is a long standing claim from the engineers and technologists of ONGC that a huge oil bar on-shore is present near Sunderbans.

They claim it to be even more than 100 kilometres long. They claimed that proper technological investigation was not being carried out. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you, whether a special arrangement or priority arrangement for the investigation—it is because it is huge, and claim is for long—is being made. If so, by which time the exploration or the confirmation can be made?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: All geology connected with hydrocarbons is in a grey area intellectually, and different views can be held. I do not think the ONGC establishment accords exactly the same priority to the Sunderbans onland area as perhaps some engineers might do. But, I am happy to say that ONGC have

stationed a rig now just off the Sunderbans in the offshore area. NEC 26, which is with the Russians, we just arranged for a rig to arrive there for work to be done. I hope to have good news to give to the House with regard to the Sunderbans offshore area. I would imagine that if we do in fact succeed in finding oil and gas there—given that the Sunderbans absolutely abuts the Bay of Bengal, and it is also an area full of waterways—it would be well worth looking at it again. In deference to the hon. Member's wishes, I would certainly ask ONGC to once again look at the priority that they have accorded thus far to the Sunderbans onland area.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Hon. Minister has stated in his reply that oil reserves have been found at 31 places in the country. I would like to know it categorically from the Minister as to the total quantum of oil being produced from these reserves. I have been listening it for the last four years that Rs. 8500 crore have been spent in the Mumbai North High Gas to increase the production of oil in the Mumbai Oil Field. I would like to know it from the hon. Minister that what is the extent of increase in the oil production and if there has been an increase then why the prices of oil are not? My second question is. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: No second question please.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, this question is related to the safety of sule surface reservoir management and sule surface condition reservoir. The Government does not have any policy in regard to safety of the reservoir. I would like to know it from the Minister that why this policy has not been formulated so far? Mr. Speaker, Hon. Minister does not seem to be attentive.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister is fully attentive, please be brief.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon. Member has already asked three questions and is now putting fourth question.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, you answer for the first one.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, there has been a loss to the tune of Rs. 8100 crore in Mumbai High Gas. Everyday we are incurring loss of Rs. 270 crore.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister may answer the first one.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: One cannot buy crude oil in the ordinary bazaar. You have to be a refiner to be able to purchase it. I assure the hon. Member that every single drop of oil produced in this country is being picked up by our oil refineries, and that constitutes approximately 24 per cent of their consumption. They have to import 76 per cent of crude oil. The prices of crude oil were at one stage administered. This was changed by the previous Government of which the hon. Member's Party was a member. So, instead of directing the question to me as to why we have dismantled the APM, perhaps he could direct this question to his own Party. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded. Shri Rawale, you are so cooperative a Member.

...(*Interruptions*)*

MR. SPEAKER: Q. 264, Shri Chandra Bhushan Singh.

[*English*]

Track Renewal

*264. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
DR. K. DHANARAJU:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of Railway track as on date;

(b) the life of the Railway track and the time after which the Railway track has to be renewed alongwith the expenditure incurred annually on track-renewal;

(c) the present system of renewal of track in Indian Railways;

(d) whether it is a fact that the Railway track can be used longer by grinding and polishing it instead of renewing the same thereby saving Government funds to a great extent;

(e) if so, the reasons for not doing grinding and polishing of the same by the Government; and

*Not recorded.

(f) the steps taken by Government for proper renewal/replacement of track?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The total length of Railway lines, as on 31.3.2004 (latest available), is as under.

Description	Length in Kms
Route kms.	63,221
Running Track kms.	83,859
Total track kms. (including yard lines and sidings)	1,08,486

(b) Track renewals are carried out either as a whole track or as components of sleeper renewal or rail renewal etc. as and when they become due for renewal on age-cum-condition basis. Condition of various track components gets deteriorated depending on its utilization (fatigue life), climatic conditions, wear and tear and specification of material and its quality etc. The track components when become unsuitable to fulfil its desired functions, its planned for renewal.

Track renewals carried out in last three years and expenditure incurred thereon is as under:

Year	Progress (Track km)	Gross Expenditure (Rs. in crore)
2002-03	4776	3297.71
2003-04	4986	3484.39
2004-05	5566	4127.14 (Provisional)

(c) Every year Zonal Railways proposes Track Renewal works, based on age-cum-condition criteria specified in Indian Railway Permanent Way Manual. This could be either of rail renewal (TRR), sleeper renewal (TSR) or Complete Track Renewal (CTR) depending upon the necessity. These identified Track Renewal Works are sanctioned by Parliament as part of Railway Budget. Execution of these works however depends on availability of Funds.

(d) Rail grinding can lead to postponement of rail renewals, where renewal is planned due to excessive rail wear especially in sharp curves in ghat sections and failure of rails due to Rolling Contact Fatigue (RCF) developing due to surface cracks on rail head. RCF defects develops predominantly on routes carrying heavy axle wagons and having higher Ultimate Tensile Strength (UTS) rails.

Polishing of rails as a track maintenance activity is not yet known to Indian Railways.

(e) This technology is recent and on Indian Railways (IR) one grinding machine was purchased in 1990 from Messrs Lorem, USA at an approximate cost of US \$ 1.4 million, for gaining experience. The machine was used for re-profiling the wornout rails. The machine was having very low output and maintenance problem and therefore resultant benefit could not be concluded.

The cost benefit study of adopting rail grinding especially for RCF is yet to be established on IR.

(f) A Special Railway Safety Fund was created in the year 2001-02 to wipe-out the arrears in replacement of safety related items including track. Track Renewals due as on 01.04.01 to the extent of 16538 kms have been sanctioned under this fund. These track renewal works are planned to be completed by 31.03.07. Track becoming due for renewal after 01.04.01 are being renewed under Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF).

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the department of Railways renews its tracks as per the requirement. There is a rail track between Shikohabad and Farrukhabad of which CTR is being conducted. Both the rail lines and sleepers of the said line are being replaced. Through you, I would like to know from the Government whether the old used rail lines are used for side tracks or alternative tracks or new rail lines are used for such purpose as such side tracks are considered less essential by the Ministry of Railways.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the track renewal depends on age-cum-condition basis. The one track which has been mentioned by the hon. Member, I do not have the details but then I will assure him that we always take into

consideration safety as a prime objective. We do not use such rails which are not useable from the point of view of safety.

We have a programme of track renewal. The manual now envisages the safety of the rail. For the purpose of renewal, intensity of its usage with reference to the gross million tonne, wear and tear, frequency of the failures, etc. are taken into account. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. This is not the way to conduct. Let him complete.

SHRI R. VELU: The very pointed question, whether we use the rails which are used elsewhere, is not a correct question in the sense that we use only such rails which are useable from the safety point of view.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: In reply to my question, the hon'ble Minister said that old rail lines are replaced which are not fit from the safety point of view. I would like to know from the Minister as to why is that safety outlook ignored when the same replaced rail lines are used for laying the side tracks. Are the old replaced lines which are being reused in the side tracks are fit from the safety point of view? It simply means that the railway tracks where lines are replaced by new one are used by different set of persons or VIPs and the side tracks where such old, used, removed lines are used by the labourers or poor farmers. I would like to know as to why such replaced lines are used for laying side tracks.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He wants to know whether you use the rejected rail.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I have an answer. In fact, we use second-hand rails fairly in passenger routes where the intensity is not much more and heavy load is not there. In those areas also, after verifying its usage only we are using it.

The kind of concern expressed by the Member is well taken and we are here to safeguard the interests of the Railways as well as the people who use them.

DR. K. DHANARAJU: Sir, from the answer it has been accepted that polishing of rails as a track

maintenance activity is not yet known to the Indian Railways. In the 50 years of the Railway history—Indian Railways are one of the largest rail networks in the world—it has not had any worthwhile experience in rail grinding technology. What I want to ask is regarding the track renewal, that is maintenance. Polishing of the surface is very important. So far, we have not developed any technology in this regard. I would like to know from the Minister whether we are going to adopt the old technology or the new technology when we do not have any knowledge. What is RDSO doing? I want a clear answer from the Minister whether we are going to use the new technology or the very old technology.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, we have tried this rail grinding machine on an experimental basis by ordering one in the year 1990 and putting it into use. The rail grinding machine takes care of two aspects.

One thing is to remove the corrugation and also the fractures that develop on account of the intensity of the usage. There is no denying the fact that we have to necessarily adopt new technology. These machines, which are used, are found to be not up to the capacity utilisation. They are fraught with some difficulties in procuring critical spare parts as well as technicians for the purpose of operation. So, a high level committee has gone into this question. It has now recommended a larger version of 72-stone machine and we are going to float tender and buy it.

The pointed question is this. Why are we not adopting it after 153 years? We are also adopting it. The hon. Member is well aware that we are also equally anxious to adopt modern technique. That is why are going to have one new grinding machine. Polishing is not at all given to the Indian Railways. On the other hand, we have been doing a constant monitoring, checking, inspection, etc. Wherever it has to be replaced or changed or wherever complete restructuring, etc., can be done, we are adopting those things. So, the suggestion of the hon. Member will be examined. However, regarding the larger version of the grinding machine to be put to good use, we would examine if there is anything to be done on the policy side.

[Translation]

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in part (b) of the question, it has been asked as to what is the life span of railway track however in reply to this

question the hon'ble Minister did not tell us about the life span of a railway track line. He, however, informed that lines are replaced keeping in view the life and the condition of the tracks. Through you, I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister as to what is the life of a rail track and the period fixed for the inspection of the tracks, that is after how much interval the inspections of rail tracks are conducted and what is level of the officers who conduct the inspection. The hon'ble Member who has asked the question feels that once the life of a track is expired, it is replaced and the replaced tracks are used elsewhere. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not repeat.

What is the age of a track? Whether old track are used or not?

SHRI R. VELU: There is no fixed life span for the rail. It depends on how we put the rail into use. That is why, I told about the gross million tonnes of usage. I will give an example. We have the heavy UTS.

MR. SPEAKER: It depends on the nature of use. That is all right, you do not have to give all the examples.

Have you used useless tracks? You say 'yes' or 'no'.

SHRI R. VELU: No, we have not used.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil—Absent.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, these days railway tracks are being laid in our State and some maintenance works are also being carried out. Through you, I would like to submit that the hon'ble Minister had announced to set up a new factory at Kathua, Udampur for manufacturing the cement sleepers which are used for laying rails lines however, that factory has not yet been set up. A lot of money is being spent on it and sleepers are being transported here from other places. I would like to know as to what is the reaction of this Government in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He is asking about cement sleeper.

SHRI R. VELU: Already we have got with the Railways in India about 76 sleeper manufacturing units. In fact, with the advent of organizing seven more zones in the country, we are organizing new units wherever the new zones are created.

In the 76 sleeper manufacturing units in our country, our production capacity is of one crore sleepers.
...*(Interruption)*

MR. SPEAKER: Tell him about Udhampur.

SHRI R. VELU: I am telling.

The hon. Member mentioned about the additional cost involved on account of transporting sleepers from other centres to Jammu and Kashmir. If necessary and if it is called for, we would examine the question of setting up a manufacturing unit in Jammu and Kashmir.

MR. SPEAKER: It is important to have both relevance and brevity.

Q. No. 265, Shri Pankaj Chowdhary—not present.

Rehabilitation of Ex-Servicemen

*266. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:
SHRI SURESH CHANDEL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of ex-servicemen in the country as on date, State-wise;

(b) the details of rehabilitation schemes for ex-servicemen being implemented at present;

(c) whether the Government proposes to launch any new scheme for the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any housing scheme is being launched for them; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

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

Statement

State-wise number of ex-servicemen in the country is given in the enclosed Annexure.

The following schemes for the welfare, rehabilitation and resettlement of ex-servicemen are being implemented:-

I. Re-employment:

(i) **Reservations in jobs:** The Central and State Governments are providing a number of concessions to ex-servicemen for the re-employment in Central/State Government posts. These include reservation of posts/relaxation in age and educational qualifications, exemption from payment of application/examination fees, priority employment to disabled ex-servicemen. 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 Nationalised Banks provide 14.5% reservation in Group C and 24.5% in Group D posts available with them. 10% posts of Assistant Commandants in Central Para Military Forces are also reserved for ex-servicemen. 100% posts are reserved for ex-servicemen in Defence Security Corps. In addition, many State Governments are providing reservation to ex-servicemen in the State Government jobs.

(ii) **Security Agencies:** The Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) registers/sponsors security agencies for providing security guards to various Public Sector Undertakings and industries in private sector. The Scheme, besides offering employment opportunities to ex-servicemen, also provide self-employment to retired defence officers.

II. Self-employment:

(i) **Loan Assistance Schemes:** Government has formulated several schemes for encouraging and giving financial support by way of loans to ex-servicemen entrepreneurs intending to set up small and medium industries. Important self employment schemes are Self Employment for Ex-Servicemen II (SEMEX-II), National Equity Fund (NEF) Scheme and SEMEX-III.

(ii) **Ex-Servicemen Coal Transportation Scheme:** Directorate General Resettlement (DGR) sponsors Ex-Servicemen Coal Transport Companies for the execution of loading and transportation of coal in various coal

subsidiaries of Coal India Limited. The unemployed retired officers registered with DGR are selected to form ex-servicemen Coal Transport Companies and are sponsored to respective coal subsidiaries for five years, extendable by another four years.

(iii) Coal Tipper Scheme: The widows of defence personnel who died while in service due to causes attributable to military service can be sponsored by DGR for attaching one tipper truck in their name with an Ex-Servicemen Coal Transport Company. The eligible widows have to deposit Rs. 85,000/- with any one of the nominated companies towards margin money, loan processing, insurance, road tax etc. for the tipper to be acquired. The coal transport company is responsible for processing, running and maintenance costs of the tipper. The widow is paid Rs. 3,000/- per month for five years and thereafter, the initial deposit amount of Rs. 85,000/- is repaid to the widow.

(iv) Allotment of Oil Product Agencies Under Defence Category: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has reserved eight percent of the Oil Product Agencies, *i.e.* LPG dealership, petrol pumps, kerosene distributorship etc. in the marketing plan for widows and dependents of those who died in war/peace with death attributable to military service and disabled soldiers with disability of 20 percent and above attributable to military service.

(v) Management of CNG Stations in National Capital Region: The scheme for management of CNG stations belonging to Indraprastha Gas Ltd. was launched as a pilot project in July 2001. The scheme has been extended to retired officers.

(vi) Allotment of Army Surplus Vehicles: Ex-Servicemen/widows of Defence personnel who died while in service are eligible to apply for allotment of Army surplus/phased out vehicles. Ex-servicemen can apply to Zila/Rajya Sainik Boards for registration and onward transmission to Army Headquarters for allotment on the basis of depot wise seniority maintained by them.

(vii) Allotment of Mother Dairy Milk and Fruit & Vegetable Shops in and around Delhi: Junior Commissioned Officers/Other Ranks are allotted Mother Dairy Milk Shops and Fruit & Vegetable shops in National Capital Region.

III. Training:

Training for both ex-servicemen and retiring service personnel is one of the major tasks involved in the rehabilitation and resettlement. The emphasis of the programmes run by DGR has been on organising employment/self-employment oriented training so as to provide viable options to such trainees for commencing second career after retirement. These training programmes include courses on management, technology, imparting of technical skills, and knowledge about agro based industry etc.

No new scheme is being launched presently.

There is no exclusive housing scheme for ex-servicemen either in vogue or under consideration of the Government. However, Army Welfare Housing Organisation (AWHO), a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 builds dwelling units on no-profit no-loss basis for the serving/retired army personnel and their widows through self-financing scheme.

Annexure

State-wise population of ex-servicemen in the country as on 30.06.2005

Sl.No.	Name of State	Population
1	2	3
1.	Punjab	255952
2.	Uttar Pradesh	227245
3.	Haryana	203673
4.	Maharashtra	160587
5.	Rajasthan	132312
6.	Tamil Nadu	116483
7.	Uttaranchal	116306
8.	Kerala	146259
9.	Himachal Pradesh	92871
10.	Andhra Pradesh	68028
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	62222
12.	Karnataka	58798

1	2	3
13.	Bihar	62056
14.	West Bengal	53240
15.	Delhi	34343
16.	Madhya Pradesh	34260
17.	Assam	26755
18.	Orissa	23593
19.	Gujarat	18660
20.	Jharkhand	16711
21.	Chandigarh	7700
22.	Mizoram	4424
23.	Manipur	5435
24.	Chhattisgarh	4103
25.	Nagaland	2374
26.	Meghalaya	2079
27.	Tripura	2001
28.	Goa	1877
29.	Pondicherry	1431
30.	Sikkim	1153
31.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	597
32.	Aruanchal Pradesh	284
Total		1943812

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister of Defence, as the Question relates to rehabilitation of ex-servicemen, whether the Union Government is going to revive the ECHS, which is the Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme. Recently, there has been a cutback in the ECHS. So, is the Government going to help ex-servicemen and their families by reviving this Scheme so that their health needs are met at local hospitals or referral hospitals?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: This is a suggestion which could be examined. I can inform the hon. Member that apart from the 227 clinics which we are going to

have, a large number of institutions and hospitals have been recognised. They must have some standards so that the facilities are available for the treatment of ex-servicemen.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Sir, the hon. Minister of Defence, in his answer, has stated that there is no exclusive housing scheme for ex-servicemen. I must mention through you that our ex-servicemen are fighting for our country at the boundaries of our nation. So, we must create a special housing scheme. I know, we have a housing scheme through the Army Welfare Housing Organisation but many more public-private partnership initiatives are required to have housing schemes for the large number of ex-servicemen in the whole of India.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: First of all, I do not have the time; otherwise, I could have given all the details. Most of the States are providing some reservations for house sites, flats and constructed houses spanning from two per cent to ten per cent. In addition to that, the welfare societies are also constructing certain number of houses for them. Most respectfully, I would submit that for the ex-servicemen, it would not be possible for all of them to live in a clustered housing society. So, the other types of facilities which are required to help them to rehabilitate themselves would be more appropriate.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH CHANDEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the previous Government had launched poly clinics scheme for ex-servicemen, however, even today the required infrastructures could not be developed at many places and it is on account of this that the complaints are coming from several places. The similar is the situation in my parliamentary constituency, Hamirpur. Till now the basic infrastructure is not available there. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister of Defence whether the Government propose to provide basic infrastructure to these institutions within stipulated time frame.

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: As I mentioned in reply to the earlier question, the proposal is to set up 227 polyclinics. Some of them have been established. In respect of this particular case, which the hon. Member has raised, I would look into the particular situation. I hope, before the end of the next year, we would be able to complete the entire project.

MR. SPEAKER: Next, Shri K.S. Rao. You should be very brief because I want to give an opportunity to Maj. Gen. B.C. Khanduri.

SHRI K.S. RAO: Sir, discipline, hard work and integrity are part of the qualities of ex-servicemen. I wish to know whether the hon. Minister of Defence would ensure that the toll collected in the National Highways would be given exclusively to the ex-servicemen so that the funds come directly to the Government instead of going to the private parties.

12.00 hrs.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: It will depend on the State Governments. This revenue goes to them. I will be too glad to have it if they give it to me.

[Translation]

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has provided reservation to the ex-servicemen. I would like to know whether the Government are aware that such vacancies in the Central and the State Governments are not filled up by reserved category candidates and then the vacancies are transferred to other category candidates. If so, whether the Government propose to take action in this regard so that such vacancies in the Central Government may be filled up by the reserved category candidates and whether the Government propose to make such request to the State Governments as well.

[English]

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: The problem is genuine as the hon. Member mentioned, who also served in the Indian Army as Major General. This problem has arisen mainly because of the total restriction for reservations, which we are having, which is now 49.5 per cent including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes. There is a Supreme Court judgement that you cannot go beyond 50 per cent. Therefore, the job reservation of ten per cent is there in the Central Government for ex-servicemen. Many of the State Governments have also done it. Now, fourteen and a half per cent is there in the Central PSUs and ten per cent is there in the security agencies. But this moves horizontally, it cannot move vertically. That is why, the desired impact is not there. We have taken it up with the State Governments. We are also exploring the possibilities

of how to obviate the difficulties. But frankly speaking, we have not been able to give the desired benefit which we wanted to have through the in-service reservations.

I would like to correct one answer that 227 polyclinics will be completed by March, 2006.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION NO. 1

12.01 hrs.

Supply of Oil to Army

1. SHRI GANESH SINGH:
MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI:
SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:

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

(a) whether the Army has busted a scam regarding supply of oil by Indian Oil Corporation in the Ladakh region;

(b) if so, whether the IOC's authorized agents were supplying tankers filled with water instead of oil to the Indian Army in Ladakh region;

(c) if so, whether the quality and quantity of oil is checked by IOC before supplying the same to the Indian Army;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government has ordered an inquiry into the matter;

(f) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(g) the action taken by the Government against the officials/persons found guilty?

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

Statement

(a) The Commanding Officer, Field Petroleum Depot, Indian Army, Leh vide his letter dated 16.07.2005 informed IOC's Ambala Terminal that 7 Tanks Trucks loaded with HSD Ex-Ambala Terminal on 11.07.2005 were found to be carrying water.

(b) to (d) IOC supplies oil directly to the Indian Army in the Ladakh region through Tank Trucks engaged through a public tender procedure for carrying petroleum products from Ambala to Leh for advance winter-stocking. The quality and quantity of oil is checked by IOC before supplying to all customers, including Indian Army, in accordance with standard procedures formulated by the oil industry which stipulate checking of quality and quantity for all Tank Trucks before the trucks leave the loading point.

(e) to (g) This Ministry has asked IOCL to get an immediate enquiry conducted into the matter through their Chief Vigilance Officer. Suitable necessary action will be taken after the matter has been inquired into.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Hon. Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask a Startling question from hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. We used to hear the cases of adulterating in oil but now the case of adulterating oil in water has come to light.

Sir, the petrol from Ambala terminal of Indian Oil Corporation is supplied to the most sensitive areas of the country where our army jawans are deployed such as difficult terrains like Siachen. On 16th July seven tankers of petrol, filled with water were sized by an army commandant. How serious this issue is that now the petroleum products being supplied to the Army are also adulterated and no one know since when has this been happening. The written reply of the hon. Minister is extremely disappointing. It appears he has taken such a serious incident so lightly. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is a matter of comment, not a matter of information.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Sir, I am coming to that, I am asking a question only. Hon. Minister taking the matter

very lightly has stated in his reply that inquiry is being held by a vigilance officer of the 'Indian Oil Corporation'. I would like to know that even after elapsing of more than a month, the outcome of the inquiry has not been received so far. Whether efforts are being made to save guilty or no inquiry is being held deliberately?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He wants to know whether you are trying to save somebody who is guilty.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: It is completely misplaced to suggest that we have not been taking immediate action in the matter. I share the hon. Member's deep concern that our brave *jawans*, who are fighting in areas as close to, as dangerous and difficult as *Siachen*, are having to suffer any kind of disability on account of anybody's action.

The key question that he asked was since when has this been happening. I do not know either. It is precisely this point that needs to be looked at because it is not a question of adulterating oil with water, it is a question of replacing the petrol and diesel, that was being supplied, by water being put into the tanks. Now, all supplies leave a particular point and arrive at the other point where they are received. It would appear that this is the first instance that has been fully detected of these trucks having been filled with water and the petrol and diesel having been siphoned off before.

There were two teams of the vigilance of IOC who, at our instance, immediately proceeded to Leh and to Ambala. There is also a team from corporate headquarters that has gone and contacted everybody concerned. We do have the preliminary reports from them about the nature of the investigation. At the same time, the hon. Raksha Mantri has announced in response of Defence authorities into what may have happened at that end of this very unfortunate incident. The cases have also been lodged with the Police. So, the local Police are also investigating the matter. If the hon. Speaker would like me to explain the information that we have received till now, I am prepared to do it although that was not asked for here.

MR. SPEAKER: No. Shri Ganesh Singh, you put the second supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Hon. Mr. Speaker, hon. Minister stated that he does not know since when has this been happening. I would like to tell the hon. Minister that similar case was detected even in the year 1996 and a case of involvement of two army officers had come to light. No action has been taken in that case so far. Whether such a serious matter will be settled on the basis of only a departmental inquiry? Whether C.B.I. enquiry should not be instituted in this matter. Whether the petroleum products being supplied to the army will be adulterated and water in place of petrol will be supplied? I agree that the incident of adulteration is not only confined to the incident like the supply of adulterated oil to the army, rather these cases of adulteration is a countrywide and regular phenomenon.

MR. SPEAKER: Let us concentrate on the question.

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Can Ministry of Petroleum shirk from its responsibility of putting a check on this practice? Is it not the duty of the Ministry to ensure the formulation of stringent laws to check the malpractice and to get a C.B.I. inquiry conducted of such incidents?

MR. SPEAKER: Let the hon. Minister Reply.

[English]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, I have been assured by our internal vigilance authorities who are deeply involved in attempting to find out what happened and so on. Their final report will be with us within a few days. I would rather receive that report immediately and try to take action based on that. If at that stage it appears that a CBI inquiry would substantially add to the information we internally received, I would have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending this to the appropriate authorities.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Thank you, Sir.

The reply that has been given conveys three things. First is that the lapse is reported by the Army on 16th July, 2005. Secondly, from the actions that have been taken, it appears that the lapse has taken place at the IOC end because you have said that directly it is handed over to the Army and also the quality and quantity are checked by the IOC end. So, it appears from this thing

that at the moment it is known that the lapse is at the IOC end. The third thing is that the IOC itself is carrying out the investigation.

The other thing that I want to bring to your kind notice which is causing me concern is this. The hon. Minister must be aware of the newspaper reports. The hon. Raksha Mantri is here. He must be aware of these reports. Some very unpleasant comments have been passed about the Army. I am not referring to the newspapers. I am only saying what is written there. It says, for example, that: "It is happening with the unholy nexus of transporters, middlemen and senior Army officers". Another newspaper says: "Army officers are getting Rs. 15 per litre of diesel."

MR. SPEAKER: You can say that without referring to them.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Sir, this is my note.

MR. SPEAKER: You can mention that.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: At one place it says that the J&K transporters have openly alleged that the Army is involved. At another place it says that the investigation so far leads to the involvement of the Army. It is in this context that when I had put this question for short notice,—because two Ministries are allegedly involved—I had referred this question to the hon. Prime Minister. But it was transferred to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, for whatever reason.

In this background I want to ask two things. First of all, if the lapse apparently seems to be at the IOC end, why are you getting the same thing being enquired into by the vigilance officers of the IOC who themselves are supposed to be responsible to see that this does not occur?

MR. SPEAKER: You mentioned this.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: I think it would have been at least in the Ministry level, you should have had this enquiry done and not given it to them.

The second thing that I would request the hon. Minister is that he may kindly convey to the hon. Raksha Mantri or to the hon. Prime Minister that some sort of a press release must go from the Government contradicting this sort of adverse publicity against the Army.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is neither responsible for the report on the basis of which these comments are made nor does it agree with them. What we now need to get is an investigation report and it is precisely to look into such instances that the vigilance exists within IOC, separate from the management of the enterprise.

As I have already mentioned, the minute I have the fact, we will act on that for example, the forensic report about what was the material taken out of the seized trucks is yet to be received. I cannot jump to conclusions and I do not think the hon. Member jumped to conclusions when he was a Minister either. We will get the information. We will get the facts. We will ensure that nobody is wrongly indicted in the matter. We will get it inquired by the CBI, if required at that stage. I have already said that. The Army authorities have already set up a Court of Inquiry to establish what is happening at that end and that would be in addition to whatever the Police are able to unearth. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Vigilance is another organisation.

...*(Interruptions)*

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: You are going to base all your recommendations on that report. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: As soon as we get the final report, we will act on that and that could include a CBI inquiry. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VIRCHANDRA PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, it is a very. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, I have not called out your name.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this scam is not first of its kind. The hon. Member has asked a question about such a scam which had taken place in 1996 also. The Minister has not replied to his question. This is a nexus between the IOC officials, the transporters and the Army officers. So, it is a fit case to be referred to the CBI.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said this.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, this case is not first of its kind. It is an ongoing case. The paper has detected it and nobody else has detected it. The higher Army officers have reported that this case was ongoing and this is not the first of its kind.

MR. SPEAKER: He has answered it.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: The Minister has also not cleared whether it started at Ambala, the starting point or at Leh, the last point.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a matter of inquiry. Let it be inquired into.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: First, they should inquire when the transporter was detected and the material was seized, what action had been taken by the IOC in 1996. The scam was detected in 1996. Seventeen vessels were seized in 1996.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: In 1996 took place a well-known case of such pilferage. In 1996, my party lost the elections. For eight years thereafter, there have been other authorities in power. We have taken a large number of systemic measures. So, the question. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, I am sorry. You have to allow me to reply.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: But the Ministry was there. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are a senior member. You are a responsible Member.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: And a disciplined Army Officer. Are you a disciplined Army officer? Please take your seat as a disciplined Army Officer and as a competent former Minister. I will then reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, through you, I wish to address Shri Tripathy to assure him that there were systemic changes with regard to security that were introduced after 1996. There has been a clear lapse in those security arrangements. We are looking into the facts of the matter. As soon as we have the basic fact on which we could proceed further, we could undertake a CBI inquiry as also other steps that may need to be taken in anticipation of whatever is the outcome of a CBI inquiry. I can assure him that my Government will act much faster in this matter than his Government did from 1996 to 2004.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, through you, I would like to tell the hon. Minister that besides the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, this question is related to the Ministry of Defence, with the National Security. Similar case has also been reported in the newspapers dated 22 July that water in place of oil is being supplied and I saw it myself on a news channel that people were selling oil from the tankers supplied to the army. Entire country has witnessed it. Oil is being sold from the incident of 22 July and till date. I would like to know from the hon. Minister categorically what steps are likely to be taken by his Ministry as well as the Ministry of Defence on the incident of pilferage of oil and the supply of water in place of oil.

[English]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, we have got very-very strong security measures for sending these trucks. The lapses, as and when, come to our attention are checked to see what additional systemic steps can be taken to check this practice. As for individuals who are caught in this exercise, they are proceeded against in this case also.

I have been told about this news channel programme that was being aired yesterday. We will certainly look very-very sharply into all that is happening. ...*(Interruptions)* But it is clear from all that happened yesterday that this activity is taking place on the route. ...*(Interruptions)*

It is not taking place either at the Indian Oil Corporation terminal at one end or at the army reception points at the other end. Since this information has come to our notice, we will certainly take all action that we can in order to improve matters systematically.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Delivery of Goods

*265. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received complaints to the effect that goods sent through railways are delivered late to the designated persons and they get less quantity of materials than actually transported;

(b) if so, the number of cases brought to the notice of the Railways during the last three years, Zone-wise;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in such cases;

(d) if so, the results thereof and the action taken against the persons found guilty; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for delivery of goods in time and in proper quantity to the concerned parties?

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

(b) (1) The number of complaints received on account of non receipt of consignment by the Railways during the last three years, zone-wise are as under:—

Railways	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
1	2	3	4
Central	4782	5711	4542
Eastern	11033	5309	4174
Northern	3210	2440	1830
North Eastern	1850	1979	1521

1	2	3	4
Northeast Frontier	6055	6657	4710
Southern	2964	3233	1749
South Central	863	275	128
South Eastern	17059	7673	3623
Western	3597	4152	1826
East Central	8	21	70
East Coast	—	156	192
North Central	—	1690	1550
North Western	465	972	585
South East Central	—	16	38
South Western	—	271	302
West Central	—	642	490
Total complaints received	51886	41197	27330
Total no. of cases in which consignment traced and delivered to consignee	34887	32494	24338
Percentage of complaints redressed	67.23%	78.87%	89.05%

(2) The year-wise position of number of cases in which claim has been settled is as under:—

Year	No. of cases settled on account of shortage
2002-03	24895
2003-04	.. 771
2004-05	23111

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Every complaint received is thoroughly investigated. In most of the cases consignments have been traced and delivered to the designated persons. In remaining cases claims have been settled and defaulting staff taken up under Disciplinary and Appeal Rules. During the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05, 1114, 1159

and 1181 Railway employees respectively were taken up under Disciplinary and Appeal rules. In cases of loss and theft of booked consignments 1214, 1313 and 1374 outsiders were also arrested during the calendar years 2002, 2003 and 2004 respectively.

(e) The following steps have been taken for delivery of goods in time and in booked quantity to the concerned parties:—

- (i) Monitoring of trains is done through 'Freight Operations Information System' which has reduced the transit time.
- (ii) Bottlenecks of Railway system are removed by doubling of lines or improvement of signaling system.
- (iii) The detentions at yards have been reduced considerably.
- (iv) Railways have improved its wagon turn round which clearly indicate faster and quicker movement of goods trains. The wagon turn round which was 7.47 days during 2000-01 has reduced to 6.72 days in 2003-04.
- (v) Opening of Not Received Cells on Zonal Railways and Divisional Headquarters to trace wagons/consignments which have not reached destination within reasonable transit time.
- (vi) Escorting of goods trains by Railway Protection Force and armed personnel.
- (vii) Proper marking and labeling of parcels to avoid their loss/over carriage.
- (viii) Use of metal tape on wagons to avoid mis-dispatches and prevent them from becoming unconnected is being introduced.
- (ix) Periodical claims prevention checks at Parcel and Goods offices to prevent claims.

[English]

Import of Crude Oil

*267. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

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

(a) whether the import of crude oil has increased to fulfill the demand of oil refineries in the country during the last few years;

(b) if so, the quantity of crude oil imported during each of the last three years and likely to be imported during 2005-06;

(c) the details of the foreign exchange spent during the said period for import of crude oil;

(d) the details of the foreign exchange earned by the refineries from export of petroleum products; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to augment foreign exchange earnings through export of petroleum products?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The quantity of crude oil imported during the last three years along with foreign exchange spent thereon is as under:—

Year	Quantity in (TMT) (Thousand Metric Tonnes)	Value (Rs. crore)
2002-03	81,989	76,195
2003-04	90,434	82,528
2004-05 (Provisional)	95,857	1,16,806
2005-06 (Estimated)	98,264	1,72,326*

*Considering crude prices at US dollar 55 per barrel and exchange rate of Rs. 43.50 per US dollar.

(d) The details of foreign exchange earned from export of petroleum products during this period is as under:—

Year	Quantity in (TMT)	Value (Rs. crore)
2002-03	10,289	10,868
2003-04	14,620	16,781
2004-05 (Provisional)	17,527	28,372

(e) In view of high export earnings potential of petroleum products, Indian Oil Corporation Limited have been asked to prepare a detailed feasibility study on making India an investment destination for refineries, in particular export-oriented refineries, aimed at promoting India as the refining hub of South Asia/South East Asia. The improvement in the quality of auto fuels as per the road map provided in the Auto Fuel Policy would also be conducive to increased export earnings for the country.

Signalling System

*268. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the over-aged signalling system is one of the major factors responsible for rail accidents;

(b) if so, the efforts made by the Railways to reduce accidents on account of the over-aged signalling system;

(c) the number of Stations where modern signalling system has been provided so far/proposed to be provided, zone-wise;

(d) the total expenditure incurred by the Railways on replacement of old signalling system by the modern system during each of the last three years; and

(e) the time by which the work on replacement of signalling system is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Overaged signalling system is not a major factor responsible for rail accidents. During the last five years from 2000-01 to 2004-05, out of 1798 consequential train accidents that took place on Indian Railways, 21 (1.17%) have been attributed to failure of Signalling & Telecommunication equipment and staff.

(b) Safety is the prime concern of Indian Railways and adoption of new measures to improve safety is a continuous process. The measures being taken by Indian Railways to minimize incidence of accidents include adoption of suitable modern technologies for interlocking and signalling system, modernization of maintenance practices, replacement of over aged assets, upgradation of training aids and checks on observance of safety precautions.

(c) Number of stations where Modern Signalling System has been provided so far/proposed to be provided is as given below:-

Status of provision of modern signalling systems on Broad Gauge

Railway	No. of stations provided with modern signalling upto March 2005	Work in progress
Central Railway	245	85
Eastern Railway	134	170
Northern Railway	207	294
North Eastern Railway	121	12
Northeast Frontier Railway	172	16
Southern Railway	303	51
South Central Railway	412	30
South Eastern Railway	120	110
Western Railway	286	32
East Central Railway	184	127
East Coast Railway	89	102
North Central Railway	62	125
North Western Railway	103	7
South East Central Railway	66	62
South Western Railway	175	74
West Central Railway	118	59
Indian Railways	2797	1356

In addition, 91 stations have been provided with modern Signalling from April to July, 2005.

(d) The following table shows the expenditure (net) incurred on 'Signalling & Telecommunication Works' for replacement of overaged signalling and telecommunication installations under Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF) for current arisings and Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF) for old overaged installations during the last three years:—

(Rs. in crores)

Year	DRF	SRSF	Total
2002-03	75.82	352.87	428.69
2003-04	67.54	494.13	561.67
2004-05 (Provisional)	92.76	563.27	656.03
Total	236.12	1410.27	1646.39

(e) Sanctioned works of replacement of signalling system as on 1.4.2005 are likely to be completed by March, 2009.

Extravagant Expenditure by Oil PSUs

*289. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

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

(a) whether instances of extravagant expenditure incurred by the public sector oil companies have come to the notice of the Government;

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

(c) whether the Government has issued any instructions to the oil PSUs to cut down unnecessary expenditure;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by oil PSUs for curtailment in expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Government have asked Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), including oil PSUs, to curb extravagance and exercise restraint in expenditure.

(b) No specific instance of extravagant expenditure by public sector oil companies has been pinpointed; the instructions relate generally to expenditure by PSUs.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir, as detailed above.

(e) While taking steps in accordance with guidelines to restrict foreign travel, reduce the foreign travel allowance by 25%, economise on organizing conferences/seminars/workshops, and work towards redeploying existing manpower to new positions, expenditure on advertisements is also being curtailed.

New Catering Policy

*270. SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has introduced New Catering Policy, 2005 in Railways;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) whether the Government has incorporated various demands of the Catering Associations in the New Catering Policy, 2005;

(d) if so, the details of the demands made by Catering Associations and out of them which were accepted and included in the said policy;

(e) whether some representatives of the public had raised objections against some provisions of the new policy which adversely affected the existing small tea stall vendors at various Railway stations; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Catering Policy, 2005 has been introduced with effect from 16.03.2005. The salient features of the Catering Policy, 2005 are as under:—

- Major and small catering units defined clearly.
- Licences at small stations *i.e.* 'D', 'E' & 'F' category stations, which are very large in numbers (nearly 7100 stations), will continue to perform as they are subject to satisfactory performance. New licences would be awarded by calling applications through Press notifications. These licences will be renewable every 5 years subject to satisfactory performance.

- All licences at 'A', 'B' & 'C' category stations in reserved category will continue to perform as they are subject to satisfactory performance. Licences at new locations will be awarded by calling for applications. These licences will be renewed every 3 years subject to satisfactory performance.
- Transparent two packet open tendering system on competitive bidding basis will be followed for award of static units at 'A', 'B' & 'C' category stations for unreserved categories.
- Transparent two packet open tendering system on competitive bidding basis will also be followed for award of mobile catering units and major static units.
- Existing licensees will be permitted to participate in tenders against existing licences presently held by them irrespective of financial turnover criteria.
- No departmental catering unit will be opened in future. Henceforth all catering units will be awarded to licensees.
- Reservation of 49.5% for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Minorities at 'D', 'E' & 'F' category stations, which are large in number (approximately 7,100) and form 88% of the total railway stations over the Indian Railways. 10% reservation will be for freedom fighter and women including war widows and widows of railway employees and 2% reservation for physically & mentally handicapped within the 50.5% of general category and 49.5% of reserved categories in allotment of catering units at 'D', 'E' & 'F' category stations.
- Reservation of 25% for reserved categories in award of small catering units at 'A', 'B' & 'C' category stations.
- A ceiling of 15% within each type of major units and overall ceiling of 10% in overall major catering units in holding by a particular licensee.
- There will be no renewal after expiry of the contract of those units which are awarded through open tender system.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Main demands of the various catering associations were as under:-

1. Existing licencees should be given further renewal/extension of the existing licences.
2. Financial criteria for participating in tender should be relaxed and existing licencees should be exempted from it.

Demands accepted by the Government:-

1. Ministry of Railways was incorporated in the Catering Policy 2005, the provision of renewal/extension of all existing licences at 'D', 'E' & 'F' category stations and reserved category small unit licences at 'A', 'B' & 'C' category stations.
2. Ministry of Railways has also incorporated in the catering policy 2005, the provision of relaxation of eligibility criteria of financial turnover for the existing licencee in the tenders against existing licences for the respective units held by them. Financial turnover criteria were lowered in case of tenders for good plazas at smaller stations.

(e) and (f) Representatives of public have represented to the Government against non-renewal of static units at all stations in the country.

Major part of concern of the representatives of public has already been taken care of in the New Catering Policy. At all 'D', 'E' & 'F' category stations which form the majority of stations in Indian Railways as well as reserved categories of stalls at 'A', 'B' & 'C' category

stations are as per New Catering Policy to continue as they are subject to satisfactory performance.

Those static unit licences in non-reserved categories at 'A', 'B' & 'C' category stations which were to undergo a two packet competitive open tender process after expiry of their term so as to realize higher revenues for the Railways which Railways have proposed to redeploy back in improvement of catering services have been temporarily pending upto October 31, 2005.

[Translation]

Rail-Side Warehouse Complexes

*271. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI:
SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal for construction of rail-side warehouse complexes;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have identified the locations for the purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the funds earmarked for these complexes; and

(e) the time by which these are likely to be constructed?

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

(c) List of 22 proposed locations for development of Rail-side warehouse complexes by Central Warehousing Corporation are:

Central Railway : Kalamboli, Pune, Nasik	(3)
East Coast Railway : Sambalpur	(1)
Northern Railway : Shakurbasti, Holambi Kalan, Ambala, Rohtak	(4)
Northeast Frontier Railway : New Guwahati, Changsari	(2)
Southern Railway : Rayapuram, Kottayam, Kannur, Kozhikode (Calicut)	(4)
South Eastern Railway : Hatia	(1)
South Western Railway : Hubli, Hassan, Mandya, Hosur, Dharmapuri	(5)
Western Railway : Rajkot	(1)
West Central Railway : Gangapur City	(1)
Total	22

(The list is provisional)

In addition to above railways have also come out with a scheme for development of integrated rail-side warehousing facilities with public-private partnership, whereby private entrepreneurs are permitted to develop state-of-the-art warehouses with modern loading-unloading and customer facilities on railway land on revenue sharing basis. It will provide a single window service to the customers for providing value added service of forwarding, handling, warehousing and road bridging.

(d) No funds have been allocated for this purpose as the entire expenditure is to be borne by Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) or by private parties who undertake development of these warehouse complexes.

(e) No definite time frame can be laid down for the above since it depends on CWC as also on private parties who would be making the investment.

Marketing Share of Oil PSUs

*272. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether the oil PSUs have lost their market share upto 9.5 per cent in sale of petroleum products due to the entry of private companies;

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

(c) the strategy chalked out by the Government to increase the marketing share of oil PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Government have granted rights for marketing of transportation fuels to new companies including private oil companies in terms of the Government Resolution of the 8th March, 2002. This is to facilitate competition in the marketing of these products with a view to benefitting consumers. The authorized private oil companies have started commissioning retail outlets (ROs). Sales at these ROs are largely carved out of the sales of existing outlets of PSU oil marketing companies (OMCs). As per provisional figures, private oil companies have secured a 6.7% share in retail sales of petrol and diesel in the first quarter of

2005-06 (April to June 2005), the remaining 93.3% continuing with the public sector.

(c) In view of evolving market conditions, OMCs keep their marketing strategy under continuous review. Steps taken or being taken by them include automation of ROs to enhance the perception of quality and quantity assurance among customers; setting up low cost ROs in interior rural markets; introduction of branded fuels and loyalty-based card programmes; strengthening highway retail outlets with added fuel and non-fuel activities, etc.

[English]

Hive off ATC

*273. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for divestment of a part of the Government stake in the Airports Authority of India as reported in the *Times of India* dated July 20, 2005;

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

(c) whether Air Traffic Control is proposed to be hived off into a separate subsidiary;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is also any proposal to increase the Traffic Controllers in view of the increasing congestion in the skies; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Government's share in Airports Authority of India is not being divested.

(c) and (d) The draft Civil Aviation Policy which inter-alia proposes to cover the policy on Air Traffic Management is to be finalised through inter-ministerial consultations.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. Due to the increase in the Air Traffic, 229 posts in the Aerodrome Discipline have been

created on 21.06.2005. It is also proposed to induct more Air Traffic Controllers to meet the shortage. 70 Air Traffic Controllers have been recruited and undergoing training. Steps to fill up 106 more Air Traffic Controllers are in progress.

Safety Measures on Air Traffic Movements

*274. SHRI D.P. SAROJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any regulatory checks on private airlines to ensure safe civil aviation in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have adopted flight safety standard rules of European Joint Aviation Authority despite objections raised by Indian Aircraft Maintenance Engineers; and

(d) if so, the details and the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as the regulator of Air Safety in Civil Aviation operations lays down the standards for Air Safety which are uniformly mandatory to all air operators and their employees. DGCA ensures, on a continuous basis, strict compliance of safety norms by all air operators, including private operators by way of safety audits. Besides, spot checks on maintenance activities are also carried out by the DGCA. DGCA also keeps updating the Civil Aviation Requirements Circulars to strengthen aviation safety aspect.

(c) and (d) Government has adopted flight safety standards through new Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) which are in conformity with ICAO Standards and International best practices. These standards have been formulated after due consideration to the views and comments expressed by all agencies concerned in response to their drafts displayed on the DGCA website.

FDI in Civil Aviation Sector

*275. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCIINDIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has recommended that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy in regard to civil aviation sector be reviewed allowing greater access to foreign carriers in domestic Indian skies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission has in Mid-term appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) stated that foreign airlines are still debarred from equity participation in domestic air transport operations. There is a case for reviewing this policy as operation of airlines requires expertise as much as it does capital.

(c) The Government is at present not in favour of direct or indirect equity participation by Foreign airlines in air transport sector (domestic airlines).

Problems of Gulf Passengers

*276. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN:
SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of problems being faced by the gulf passengers travelling in Air India Express;

(b) if so, the nature of problems being faced by them;

(c) whether the Government has received any request/suggestions from the Government of Kerala in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken/proposed to be taken to solve the problems of gulf passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Due to non-availability of operating crew, Air India Express had to curtail operations in July-August, 2005 on some Gulf routes from Mumbai and Delhi. However, operations on Kerala-Gulf route remained unaffected.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Government of Kerala has requested for deployment of sufficient number of aircraft on the Gulf-Kerala sector.

(e) There is generally a very high demand for seats in the months of August/September on this sector. However, capacity induction on Gulf operations has been significantly increased this year by a number of airlines including Indian Airlines and foreign carriers to cater to this additional demand.

Occupancy Pattern in Trains

*277. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are re-allocating coaches from trains with low occupancy to those having high waiting lists;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith growth in passenger earnings to be made therefrom;

(c) whether Zonal Railways have been empowered to take decisions in this regard by studying the occupancy pattern of different trains operating under them;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the new procedure for allocating coaches based on occupancy pattern has improved the financial position of Railways; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a), (b) and (e) and (f) With a view to achieve optimum utilisation of available accommodation and to maximize the passenger earnings therefrom, a Passenger Profile Management (PPM) project has been launched on Indian Railways. This would be done by critically analysing the trend of occupation and earnings of different trains and taking various corrective action including adjustment of coaches from low occupancy trains to those having good patronization and long waiting list.

As the project is in its initial stage of implementation, its full impact on financial position cannot be quantified. However, the passenger earnings have shown an

encouraging growth of approximately 11.36% during the first three months, April to June, of the current financial year, as compared to the same period of last year.

(c) and (d) Zonal Railways are empowered to review the occupation and take necessary action wherever operationally feasible including modification of the composition of trains.

Airing of DD Programmes through Internet

*278. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prasar Bharati is aware that Semi Conductors Limited (SCL) has developed a technology for sending broadcasting signals to television through internet to enable the people to view D.D. programmes clearly;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Prasar Bharati to implement the said technology?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati is aware of video streaming technology, which enables webcasting (distribution) of TV signals through Internet. However, the quality of signals received through internet is far inferior to the signals received through terrestrial, cable or Direct-to-Home (DTH) modes, due to limitation of inadequate last mile bandwidth. Recent introduction of broadband technology has improved the quality of video signals distributed through Internet substantially.

A special decoder (set top box) is required for reception of TV signals distributed through Internet on normal TV Sets. M/s Semi Conductors Limited (SCL) have intimated the Prasar Bharati that they have not yet fully developed the aforesaid decoder.

M/s SCL have, however, made preliminary inquiries from Prasar Bharati which, in turn, has expressed interest in the project to take Doordarshan (DD) channels through internet to various countries. Further, Programmes of "DD News channel" are available through Internet and can be viewed by accessing Doordarshan's website "www.ddinews.com".

Growth In Cargo Traffic of I.A.

*279. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:
SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the growth rate of cargo traffic of Indian Airlines during each of the last three years and the expected traffic during the current year;

(b) whether the Indian Airlines proposes to convert some of its aircraft into freighters;

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

(d) the steps taken by the Government to further boost the cargo traffic in order to improve the revenue of Indian Airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The details of growth rate of cargo traffic of Indian Airlines Limited during the last three years and the expected cargo traffic during the current year are as under:-

Year	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06 (Estimated)
Growth Rate	12.5%	6%	15%	15% (Approximately)

(b) and (c) Indian Airlines Limited has plans to commence its own retail courier and freighter services, on hub and spoke pattern with Nagpur as a hub, to tap the express market. For the purpose, initially five Boeing 737 aircraft are proposed to be considered for conversion into freighter aircraft.

(d) Indian Airlines has launched aggressive marketing schemes and is taking measures like cargo computerization with track and trace facility on the net, having its own cargo website on the net, flexible pricing, focusing on direct sales to shippers and corporates, entering into pro-rata agreements with various airlines to increase cargo carriage etc. to improve the cargo tonnage/revenue further.

[Translation]

Fake SC/ST Certificates

*280. SHRI RAMADAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of complaints received by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes during the last three years regarding production of fake Scheduled Caste certificates to get employment and other benefits, State-wise;

(b) whether the Commission has conducted any enquiry into these complaints; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) In the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the successor, National Commission for Scheduled Castes (with effect from 24.2.2004), the State-wise number of complaints received in the Headquarters during the last three years, are mentioned below:—

State/Union Territory	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	02	—	—
Assam	01	02	—
Bihar	02	—	02
Chhattisgarh	—	01	—
Delhi	03	04	03
Gujarat	—	01	—
Haryana	01	—	—

1.	2	3	4
Karnataka	02	—	01
Kerala	01	—	—
Madhya Pradesh	—	01	04
Maharashtra	—	01	04
Punjab	—	—	01
Rajasthan	01	—	—
Tamil Nadu	05	—	03
Uttar Pradesh	07	02	01
West Bengal	—	—	01
Total number of complaints	25	12	16

(b) No. Sir. As per procedure, they have been forwarded to the respective competent authorities for verification.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Nanded Railway Division

2726. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Union Government for attachment of Nanded Railway Division with Central Railway with its headquarter at Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Union Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A request has been received from the Government of Maharashtra.

(c) While going in for issue of Notification for operationalisation of new Zones & Divisions, it was

decided to retain proposed Nanded Division on South Central Railway instead of Central Railway. This was done keeping in view the geographical contiguity of the Divisions forming a Zone; smooth movement of traffic operationally; to provide better control and improve efficiency of the system. Further, the decision to place a particular Division under a specific Zone is taken purely on operational/administrative requirements and not on regional considerations.

Allocation of Funds under SCP

2727. SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPIPARAI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that most of the States are not following the guidelines laid down for allocating funds under Special Component Plan (SCP) in proportion to their SC population;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Under the strategy evolved by Planning Commission, State

Governments/UT Administrations and the Central Ministries are required to formulate and implement Special Component Plan (SCP) for ensuring rapid socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes by earmarking Plan funds in proportion to the percentage of SC population in the respective States/UTs.

8 States namely, Assam, Haryana, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Pondicherry allocated funds under Special Component Plan in proportion to their Scheduled Castes Population in the last two years.

(c) A Central Tripartite Committee under the Chairmanship of Member, Planning Commission had been constituted in 1999, which reviews the Special Component Plan (SCP) periodically. Further, Planning Commission has been issuing directions to the State Governments to allocate adequate funds at the State level under SCP.

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment also monitors the implementation of SCP by States at regular intervals.

[Translation]

Non-Incorporation of Changes in Computer Reservation System

2728. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that tickets for those stations were also issued which ceased to be covered due to change in route w.e.f. July 1, 2005 as a result of non-incorporation of such changes in computer reservation system timely;

(b) if so, the details of such tickets issued and cancelled;

(c) the level at which this mistake took place;

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to avoid recurrence of such mistakes;

(e) the details of the such passenger trains traversing Kota Division, the routes of which have been changed w.e.f. July 1, 2005; and

(f) the details of the tickets issued by such mistake at Kota Railway Reservation Centre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Total 466 tickets were issued out of which 206 tickets were cancelled.

(c) Such changes in route and timing of trains are routinely done at the time of issue of new time table. The affected passengers were informed suitably through station announcement, print and electronic media. As such the change in route was within the normal practice.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Details of such passenger trains traversing Kota Division are given in statement.

(f) Total 177 such tickets were issued from Kota reservation centre.

Statement

List of the trains traversing Kota division affected due to change of route

Sl.No.	Train Number	Train Name
1.	2307	Howrah Jodhpur Superfast Express
2.	2308	Howrah Jodhpur Superfast Express
3.	2315	Sealdah Ajmer Ananya Express
4.	2316	Sealdah Ajmer Ananya Express
5.	2395	Rajendra Nagar Ajmer Ziyarat Express
6.	2396	Rajendra Nagar Ajmer Ziyarat Express
7.	2985	Sealdah Jaipur Superfast Express
8.	2986	Sealdah Jaipur Superfast Express
9.	5269	Muzaffarpur Ahmedabad Jansadharan Express
10.	5270	Muzaffarpur Ahmedabad Jansadharan Express
11.	5631	Jodhpur Guwahati Express
12.	5632	Jodhpur Guwahati Express

Production of Salt

2729. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether nearly 90 Sq. Km. area of the Sambhar Lake in Nagpur district of Rajasthan has been given on lease to the Sambhar Salt Limited for the production of salt;

(b) if so, whether the Sambhar Salt Limited is producing salt only on one tenth area of 90 Sq. Km. area taken on lease and in the rest of the area people are illegally producing salt;

(c) if so, the facts thereof;

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

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against the erring officials/persons; and

(f) the steps taken to check illegal production of salt?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Sambhar Salts Limited is having a total area of 90 Sq. miles of which 80 sq. miles of lake is the source of raw material *i.e.* brine, another 10 sq. miles is used for the purpose of considering of brine and for discarding residual brine. 9 sq. mile area is used for production of salt. Company is using and developing 6.86 sq. mile area for its activities. Balance area of approximately 6620 bigha (equivalent to 4.14 sq. mile) have been shown by the Government of Rajasthan in the name of Revenue Department of State Government. Out of this approximately 2600 bigha of land has been allotted to various private salt producers by Government of Rajasthan despite objections by the company.

(d) to (f) A number of meetings have already taken place at Delhi and Jaipur to resolve the dispute of land between SSL and Government of Rajasthan, however a final solution in this regard is yet to be arrived at.

[English]

Libraries in Rural Areas

2730. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is contemplating to set up libraries in the rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of libraries proposed to be set up during 2005-06, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Since "Libraries" is essentially a State subject under Schedule 7 of the Constitution of the India, the responsibility of setting up libraries in rural areas rests with State Governments. The Union Government, however, provides assistance for refurbishing libraries by supply of books, furniture, equipments, for renovation and extension of building, through different schemes of Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata. During the last thirty three years, the Foundation, has assisted more than 30,000 town and rural libraries.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Urdu Channel

2731. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to launch an Urdu channel;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be started; and

(c) the total allocation made by the Government for this channel?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati, a statutory autonomous corporation has informed that they have decided to launch an Urdu Channel in January, 2006. Budgetary allocation for this channel is being worked out.

Vacant Posts at Board Level in PSUs

2732. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the vacancies at Board level posts in the Public Sector Undertakings as on date; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) As per available information, 30 posts of Chief Executives and 65 posts of functional Directors were vacant in various PSEs as on 30.6.2005 out of a total of 210 posts of Chief Executives and 460 posts of functional Directors. Apart from it, 3 posts of Chief Executives and 26 posts of functional Directors were kept in abeyance due to various reasons like restructuring of the PSE, sickness of the PSE, etc.

(b) Filling up of the Board level posts is a continuous process. The Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) has made selection for 21 posts of chief executives and 40 posts of functional directors. The Government is constantly monitoring the vacancy position at different levels, namely, Administrative Ministry, PESB, etc. and a time schedule has been prescribed for completing various stages of selection and appointment.

[Translation]

Stoppage of New Delhi-Dehradun Jan-Shatabdi Train at Saharanpur

2733. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to provide a stoppage of 2055/2056 New Delhi-Dehradun Jan-Shatabdi train at Saharanpur;

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

(c) whether some technical and administrative reasons are coming in the way of providing stoppage there; and

(d) if so, the measures taken for removal of those reasons and provision of stoppage of said train at Saharanpur?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) 2055/2056 New Delhi-Dehradun Jan-Shatabdi Express does not pass through Saharanpur, hence provision of stoppage at Saharanpur is not possible. Running of this train via Saharanpur will involve reversal at Saharanpur at well as increase its running time by about 45 minutes. However, the train has been provided stoppage at Tapri station w.e.f. 25.10.2003 which is located on the outskirts of Saharanpur at a distance of about 6 kms from Saharanpur city.

Increase in Capacity of Doordarshan Transmission

2734. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been persistent demand for enhancing the transmission capacity of Doordarshan telecasting centres at Neemuch, Mandsaur and Javara of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Doordarshan has informed that a request for increasing the capacity of Doordarshan transmitter at Jaora has been received. However, no such request has been received in the recent past, in respect of Mandsaur and Neemuch.

(c) Scheme for replacement of the existing 100 watt low power transmitter at Neemuch by 500 watt auto mode transmitter has been approved. At present, there is no proposal to replace the transmitters at Mandsaur and Jaora.

[English]

Restructuring of Delhi and Mumbai Airports

2735. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Group of Ministers (GoM) was constituted for restructuring of the Delhi and Mumbai Airport;

(b) if so, whether the GoM has since finalized the details of restructuring of these airports;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the follow-up action taken thereon?

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

(b) to (d) Based on the decision of the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGOM), Nine consortia of Pre-qualified Bidders (PQBs) were short-listed on the basis of Expression of Interest. The short-listed PQBs have been issued the Request for Proposal (RFP) documents on 01.04.2005. EGOM has also considered the bidders' feedback and comments of Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission based on which the draft of transaction documents are being finalised. The final draft of the transaction documents will be issued to the PQBs based on which the PQBs are expected to submit their Technical and Financial Bids.

[*Translation*]

Rail Projects of Andhra Pradesh

2736. SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Railway projects received from Andhra Pradesh during each of the last three years;

(b) the action taken by the Railways thereon;

(c) the details of the works undertaken for improvement and expansion of railway network in Andhra Pradesh during the said period; and

(d) the expenditure incurred thereon during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Probably the Hon'ble M.P. is referring to demands for new rail projects received from Andhra Pradesh during the last three years. The details of each and every demand/proposal received is not maintained. However, details of some of the demands received from Andhra Pradesh are as follows:-

Name of the Project	Current status
Multi-Modal Transportation System (MMTS) for Hyderabad	Work has been completed and commissioned.
Obulavaripalli-Krishnapatnam Port connectivity	The work has been identified as port connectivity work under National Rail Vikas Yojana (NRVY).
Nandyal-Yerraguntla new BG rail line	This is an ongoing work for which land acquisition proceedings have been taken up.
Peddapalli-Karimnagar new BG rail line	Peddapalli-Karimnagar has been completed and commissioned. Earthwork and bridgeworks have been taken up on Karimnagar-Jagityal section along with land acquisition proceedings on Jagityal-Nizamabad section.
Dharmavaram-Pakala gauge conversion	Earthwork has been taken up on part of the section between Pakala-Madanapalli.
Kovvur-Bhadrachalam, Jaggayapet-Vishnupuram and Cuddapah-Bangalore new rail lines	The surveys for the above-mentioned new lines have been completed recently. The examination of surveys has not been completed.
Manorahabad-Kothapalli via Gajwel-Siddipet new rail line	Survey has been completed.
Mantralayam Road-Kurnool new rail line	Survey has been completed and proposal shelved due to constraint of resources and heavy throwforward of projects.

(c) and (d) A total of 8 new line, 7 gauge conversion, 6 doubling and 2 railway electrification works falling fully/partially in the State of Andhra Pradesh are in various stages of progress. An expenditure of about Rs. 1577.23 crore (approximate) has been incurred on these projects up to 31.3.2005 since the start.

[English]

Railway Projects

2737. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the railway projects received from the Government of Karnataka pending with the Railways alongwith the reasons for their pendency;

(b) whether the Railways have approved some of these projects on cost sharing basis;

(c) if so, whether the State Government has agreed in principle to share the cost of these projects;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which these projects are likely to be undertaken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Pending projects are considered as those projects which have been included in the budget but clearances are awaited. In Karnataka, work on doubling of Bangalore-Whitefield-Krishnarajpuram section has not started as necessary clearances are yet to be obtained. Beside this project, requests have also been received for expediting on-going new line, gauge conversion and doubling projects falling fully/partly in the State of Karnataka.

(b) to (d) State Government has agreed to share 2/3rd cost of Kottur-Harihar new line, Bangalore-Kengeri and Kengeri-Ramanagaram doubling projects and 50% cost of Bijapur-Gadag of Solapur-Gadag gauge conversion project. Besides this, State Government has also agreed to share Rs. 45 crore on gauge conversion of Hassan-Mangalore.

(e) On Arsikere-Hassan-Mangalore gauge conversion project, Arsikere-Hassan-Sakleshpur & Mangalore (Kankanadi)-Subramanya Road sections have already been commissioned.

The gauge conversion of Bijapur-Basavana Bagewadi of Bijapur-Gadag, Sakleshpur-Subramanya Road of Hassan-Mangalore and doubling of Bangalore-Kengeri-Bidadi are targeted for completion during 2005-06.

[Translation]

Deployment of Additional Coaches

2738. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI:
SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the Rail Budget 2005-06, the Railways has announced to deploy additional coaches in trains;

(b) if so, the progress made in this regard so far;

(c) the details of trains selected for deployment of additional coaches;

(d) the funds earmarked by the Railways for the purpose; and

(e) the additional income likely to be earned per year by the railways therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Approximately 72 pair of trains have been augmented with nearly 205 coaches. Augmentation of trains is an ongoing process depending on traffic pattern, operational feasibility and availability of resources.

(d) and (e) Since augmentation is an ongoing process, it's full impact on financial position cannot be quantified. However, the passenger earnings have shown an encouraging growth of 11.36% during the first three months, April to June, of the current financial year, as compared to the same period of last year.

New Schemes for Physically and Mentally Challenged Persons

2739. SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has formulated new schemes for educational training, rehabilitation and welfare of the physically and mentally challenged persons during the current year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the funds earmarked under the schemes?

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

(b) Does not arise.

Replacement of Coaches of Shatabdi Express Trains

2740. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted for replacement of coaches of Shatabdi Express trains;

(b) the year in which Amritsar-Delhi Shatabdi Express was introduced;

(c) whether the condition of coaches of this train is satisfactory;

(d) if not, whether the Government proposes to change these coaches; and

(e) if so, the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The criteria for replacement of coaches of Shatabdi Express trains is on age cum condition basis, codal life of coaches being 25 years.

(b) Amritsar-Delhi Shatabdi Express was introduced in the year 1994.

(c) Yes, Sir. The condition of the coaches running in this train is satisfactory.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Licence to Railway Hawkers

2741. SHRI AMITAVA NANDY:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the growing hawker's problem at railway stations especially in Dadar, Kuria, Slion stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to solve hawker's problems;

(d) whether there is any proposal to launch a pilot project in West Bengal to give licence to hawkers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Some cases of unauthorised hawking at stations and in trains have been detected.

(c) Unauthorised hawkers on the railway premises and on trains are punished under the provisions of Section 144 of the Railways Act, 1989 and further amended as Railways (Second Amendment) Act, 2003. Action is taken by Railways Protection Force and Government Railway Police to evict them as they cause inconvenience to the passengers.

Regular checks are conducted by the railways to apprehend the unauthorized hawkers to enable free movement of passengers on railway platforms and have comfortable journey. Instructions have been issued to the railways to ensure that the staff of authorised railway catering contractors are given photo identity cards.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Construction of Overbridges

2742. SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have formulated any scheme for constructing overbridges speedily and in a fixed time frame; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Railway construct the Road Over/Under Bridge in lieu of busy level crossings on cost sharing basis where traffic density is more than 1 lakh Train Vehicle Units (TVUs) otherwise on deposit terms. Proposals in both cases have to be sponsored by concerned State Government/Road authorities duly fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites required under extant rules viz. to share the cost of work, undertaking for closure of Level Crossing on completion of ROB/RUB etc.

Railways construct bridge portion across Railway tracks and approaches are constructed by State Government. All out efforts are made by Railway to complete their portion of work before or simultaneously with the work of approaches.

Stoppage at Orai Station

2743. SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide stoppage for the 1074 up Udyognagari Express (CNB to LTT) and 2107/2108 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Lucknow Express at Orai station in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and time by which the same is likely to become effective?

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

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Counter Insurgency

2744. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of casualties suffered by the Indian Army in counter insurgency operations during each of the last three years;

(b) whether there is any proposal to utilise the services of the Indian Air Force for assisting the Indian Army in counter insurgency operations;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The number of casualties suffered by the Indian Army during the last three years are as follows:-

Year	Fatal
2002	417
2003	463
2004	310
Total	1190

(b) to (d) The Indian Air Force has been assisting the Army in transportation of troops to and from the area of operations, evacuation of casualties, as well as air maintenance of troops deployed or operating in remote and inaccessible areas, in its counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

Borrowing of Money at AAI

2745. SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India has borrowed money at 15 per cent to 16 per cent per annum and is investing the same in fixed deposits at 8.55 per cent to 12.50 per cent;

(b) if so, how much loss has been caused to the Authority as a result thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken against the officials responsible for it?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Procurement of Rails

2746. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has been procuring rails only from the Bhilai Steel Plant;

(b) if so, whether it has come to the notice of the Government that the rails of better quality and more in length are also being produced in private sector in the country; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to encourage the private sector in purchase of rails so that there can be a healthy competition in availability of better quality rails?

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

(b) and (c) No, Sir. However, one private sector firm has approached Railways for supply of rails. Its manufacturing technology and quality standards are under evaluation by Research, Designs and Standards Organization (RDSO) of Indian Railways. Any decision to encourage them to supply rails can only be taken after satisfactory evaluation of quality standards.

Reservation in Armed Forces, Judiciary and Autonomous Bodies

2747. SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Scheduled Castes has sought reservation in armed forces, judiciary and autonomous bodies;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations given by the Commission in this regard; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The National Commission for Scheduled Castes, set-up in February, 2004 has not submitted any report containing recommendations.

[*Translation*]

Pension to Jawans

2748. MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received complaints regarding the fixation of pension of jawans discharged on health grounds;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to amend the rules in this regard;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the judgement passed by the Uttaranchal High Court in this regard; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) Representations continue to be received from Ex-servicemen regarding various aspects of pension including complaints on fixation of pension of jawans discharged on health grounds.

(b) Amendments are carried out as and when necessary.

(c) and (d) Orders from various Courts including Uttaranchal High Court are received from time to time on which appropriate action is taken.

[*English*]

Resignation by Pilots in I.A./A.I

2749. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of pilots working in Indian Airlines and Air India have either tendered their resignation or sought voluntary retirement;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The number of pilots in Public Sector Airlines who have sought resignation/voluntary retirement during the current year is as follows:

(i)	Air India	4
(ii)	Air India Express	12
(iii)	Indian Airlines	8
(iv)	Alliance Air	29

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Railway construct the Road Over/Under Bridge in lieu of busy level crossings on cost sharing basis where traffic density is more than 1 lakh Train Vehicle Units (TVUs) otherwise on deposit terms. Proposals in both cases have to be sponsored by concerned State Government/Road authorities duly fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites required under extant rules viz. to share the cost of work, undertaking for closure of Level Crossing on completion of ROB/RUB etc.

Railways construct bridge portion across Railway tracks and approaches are constructed by State Government. All out efforts are made by Railway to complete their portion of work before or simultaneously with the work of approaches.

Stoppage at Oral Station

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(a) whether there is any proposal to provide stoppage for the 1074 up Udyognagari Express (CNB to LTT) and 2107/2108 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Lucknow Express at Orai station in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and time by which the same is likely to become effective?

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

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Counter Insurgency

2744. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of casualties suffered by the Indian Army in counter insurgency operations during each of the last three years;

(b) whether there is any proposal to utilise the services of the Indian Air Force for assisting the Indian Army in counter insurgency operations;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The number of casualties suffered by the Indian Army during the last three years are as follows:-

Year	Fatal
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(b) to (d) The Indian Air Force has been assisting the Army in transportation of troops to and from the area of operations, evacuation of casualties, as well as air maintenance of troops deployed or operating in remote and inaccessible areas, in its counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

Borrowing of Money at AAI

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(a) whether the Airports Authority of India has borrowed money at 15 per cent to 16 per cent per annum and is investing the same in fixed deposits at 8.55 per cent to 12.50 per cent;

(b) if so, how much loss has been caused to the Authority as a result thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken against the officials responsible for it?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

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(a) whether the Government has been procuring rails only from the Bhilai Steel Plant;

(b) if so, whether it has come to the notice of the Government that the rails of better quality and more in length are also being produced in private sector in the country; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to encourage the private sector in purchase of rails so that there can be a healthy competition in availability of better quality rails?

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

(b) and (c) No, Sir. However, one private sector firm has approached Railways for supply of rails. Its manufacturing technology and quality standards are under evaluation by Research, Designs and Standards Organization (RDSO) of Indian Railways. Any decision to encourage them to supply rails can only be taken after satisfactory evaluation of quality standards.

Reservation in Armed Forces, Judiciary and Autonomous Bodies

2747. SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Scheduled Castes has sought reservation in armed forces, judiciary and autonomous bodies;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations given by the Commission in this regard; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The National Commission for Scheduled Castes, set-up in February, 2004 has not submitted any report containing recommendations.

[Translation]

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(a) whether the Government has received complaints regarding the fixation of pension of jawans discharged on health grounds;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to amend the rules in this regard;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the judgement passed by the Uttaranchal High Court in this regard; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) Representations continue to be received from Ex-servicemen regarding various aspects of pension including complaints on fixation of pension of jawans discharged on health grounds.

(b) Amendments are carried out as and when necessary.

(c) and (d) Orders from various Courts including Uttaranchal High Court are received from time to time on which appropriate action is taken.

[English]

Resignation by Pilots in I.A./A.I

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(a) whether a large number of pilots working in Indian Airlines and Air India have either tendered their resignation or sought voluntary retirement;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The number of pilots in Public Sector Airlines who have sought resignation/voluntary retirement during the current year is as follows:

(i)	Air India	4
(ii)	Air India Express	12
(iii)	Indian Airlines	8
(iv)	Alliance Air	29

However, Air India Express and Indian Airlines have not yet accepted the resignation of 12 pilots and 7 pilots respectively. The request for voluntary retirement of one pilot is under examination by Indian Airlines.

(c) As a result of significant growth in aviation, there is a sudden spurt in the demand for pilots. Both Air India and Indian Airlines and their subsidiaries are maintaining close interaction with the pilots with a view to retain their services. Besides, some of the steps taken by the Public Sector Airlines on continuous basis in this regard are:- (i) keep the emoluments at comparable levels vis-a-vis the established Indian carriers, (ii) offer higher level of job security, (iii) revision of Loss-of-license insurance and insurance coverage for pilots to provide them higher degree of security and (iv) utilise services of the pilots beyond the age of superannuation subject to the validity of their license.

[Translation]

Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi Rail Line

2750. SHRI SITA RAM YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far on construction of new rail line from Muzaffarpur to Sitamarhi;

(b) the expenditure incurred on the said project till date; and

(c) the reasons for non-completion of the proposed rail line within the scheduled time and the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Land acquisition, earthwork and bridge works have been taken up. Overall physical progress is 48%.

(b) An expenditure of Rs. 51.67 crore (approx.) has been incurred on the project upto 31.3.2005.

(c) The work is being progressed as per overall availability of resources. The target date for completion of the project has not been fixed.

[English]

Upgradation of Bhubaneswar Airport

2751. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to upgrade Bhubaneswar Airport as an International Airport has been pending for a long period;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to clear the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Requests have been received to upgrade Bhubaneswar airport as an International Airport. However, there is no proposal to declare Bhubaneswar Airport as an International Airport at present.

Shiva Temple at Ayanikkunnu

2752. SHRI K.C. PALANISAMY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India has recently found remains of an old Shiva Temple at Ayanikkunnu village near Pandalam in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for preserving the site and remains of the ancient temple?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has not found any old Siva Temple in Kerala recently. However, the Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Kerala has recently brought to light a chance discovery of relics of an old Siva temple at Ayanikkunnu near Pandalam in District Pathanamthitta of Kerala. The remains seem to be part of a circular Siva temple, ascribable to a date from *circa* 12th to 14th century A.D. A *Sivalinga* was also noticed at the site. The temple, sharing common features known in the region, had its basement and balustrade dislocated. It appears that the temple was destroyed in some natural calamity.

(c) The Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Kerala, has undertaken detailed study and documentation of the temple remains.

Rail Connectivity to Remote Areas

2753. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scheme 'Rail Connectivity to remote areas' proposed in the 2004 Budget is yet to start for want of funds as reported in 'Business Standard' dated July 18, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Government have declined to contribute their share for this purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to implement the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Remote Area Rail Sampark Yojana (RARSY) envisages investment of Rs. 20,000 crore in five years period to expedite completion of financially unviable new line and gauge conversion projects which would provide rail connectivity to remote and backward areas of the country, thus providing infrastructure for their overall economic development.

(c) to (e) State Governments have been requested to contribute towards the cost of the projects to be covered under RARSY. The response has not been received from most of the State Governments. It is proposed to create specific fund for the Yojana.

Declaration of Protected Monuments

2754. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any monuments/sites declared as protected by the Government during 2004-05;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has identified any other monuments/sites to be declared as protected;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to conserve, preserve and maintain these monuments and the funds allocated for the same?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A list of monuments/sites declared as of national importance during the year 2004-05 is enclosed as statement-I.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. A list of monuments/sites for which the Preliminary Gazette Notification has been issued and the objections/suggestion from the concerned public/agencies have been invited under the provision of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 is enclosed as statement-II.

(e) The conservation and preservation of the monuments is a continuous process. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) undertakes regular maintenance works, structural conservation, special repairs and chemical conservation of the protected monuments under their annual conservation programme. In addition to the above, landscaping of selected monuments is also undertaken. For the year 2005-06, ASI has allocated Rs. 12871.00 lakhs for the conservation programme of the Centrally Protected Monuments.

Statement I**List of Monuments Protected During 2004-05**

Sl.No.	Name of the Monument/Sites	Locality	District	State
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Summer Palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh	Company Bagh	Amritsar	Punjab

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Prehistoric Anthropomorphic Figure	Kumati Tehsil-Kudligi	Distt. Bellary	Karnataka
3.	Chandrasekhar Temple (Group of Monuments and Ancient Steps)	Yogapitha Kapilas Tehsil-Gondia	Distt. Dhenkanal	Orissa
4.	Annakoteswar Temple	Locality-Latadelpur Tehsil-Gondia	Distt. Dhenkanal	Orissa
5.	Kannakeswar Mahadev Temple & Groups to Temples	Mauza-Kualo, Sheet No. 4, Tehsil Parajang	Distt. Dhenkanal	Orissa
6.	Anant Sai Vishnu	Saranga Tehsil-Parajanga	Distt. Dhenkanal	Orissa
7.	Balbn Khain's Tomb & Jamli Kamali	Lado Sarai, Mehrauli	Delhi	Delhi
8.	Unknown Tomb in the vicinity of Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium	Pragati Vihar	New Delhi	New Delhi
9.	Hayagriva Madhava Temple	Hazo	District Kamrup	Assam
10.	Nil Kuthi Mound	Mouza Chak, Chandpara	Dist. Murshidabad	West Bengal
11.	Brahma Temple	Pushkar	Distt. Ajmer	Rajasthan

Statement II

List of Monuments where Preliminary Gazette Notification to declare them as of National Importance is issued during the years 2002, 2003, 2004 & 2005

Sl.No.	Name of the Monuments
1	2
1.	Bhimgarh Fort Reasi, District Udhampur, Jammu & Kashmir
2.	Hanuman Temple Complex, Connaught Place, New Delhi

1	2
3.	Pushkar Ghats Pushkar, District Ajmer, Rajasthan
4.	Gonpas & other historical remains adjoining to Leh Palace, District Leh (Ladakh) Jammu & Kashmir
5.	Ganesh Temple and Kameswar Temple at Hazo, Distt. Kamrup, Assam
6.	Sri Sri Kedar Temple at Hazo, Distt. Kamrup, Assam

1	2
7.	Sthala Sayana Perumal Temple, Mamallapuram, Taluk-Tirukkalukundram, Distt. Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu
8.	Gumti of Shaikh Ali, Defence Colony, New Delhi
9.	Ancient Shiva Temple and Well, Jal Vihar, New Delhi
10.	Kala Gumbad, Pragati Vihar, Defence Colony, Delhi
11.	Shikargah, Jaunti Village, Tehsil-Saraswati Vihar, Delhi
12.	Bhutat Alwar, Mahablipuram Taluk, Tirukalukundram District Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu
13.	Narsingharh Fort, Tehsil Narsingharh, District Rajgarh, Madhya Pradesh

New FM Transmitters in Orissa

2755. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the places identified in Orissa for installation of new FM Transmitters during the current financial year; and

(b) the progress made so far in installation of transmitters at those places?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that, during the 10th Plan, new FM transmitters are proposed at the following places:

- (i) 1 kW FM Transmitter at Rairangpur.
- (ii) 5 kW FM Transmitter at Rayagada.
- (iii) 5 kW FM Transmitter at Deogarh.
- (iv) 5 kW FM Transmitter at Parlakhemundi.
- (v) 10 kW FM Transmitter at Bhubaneswar.
- (vi) 10 kW FM Transmitter at Bhawani Patna.
- (vii) 5 kW FM Transmitter at Baripada.

Transmitters equipment for Rairangpur and Baripada have been received and installation is expected to be completed during the current financial year.

The sites for 5 kW transmitters at Rayagada, Deogarh and Parlakhemundi are yet to be acquired. Besides, schemes of 10 kW FM transmitters at Bhubaneswar and Bhawani Patna are yet to be approved by the Competent Authority.

Cancellation of Petrol Pumps

2756. SHRI PRABODH PANDA:
SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

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

(a) whether the Supreme Court has recently directed the Government to cancel some of the petrol pumps allotted between 2000 and 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) A Committee comprising two retired Judges, appointed by the Supreme Court of India to enquire into certain selections made by the erstwhile Dealer Selection Boards, which were reported in the media during July-August, 2002, had submitted its report to the Court on 29.9.2004. The Committee had considered a total of 409 such cases of retail outlet dealerships (petrol pumps), LPG distributorships and SKO-LDO dealerships. In its interim order dated 19.7.2005, the Supreme Court of India has accepted the report of the Committee in respect of those 178 cases of dealerships/distributorships, out of the total cases examined by the Committee, in respect of which no objections have been filed against the Report of the Committee. The Court has further directed the oil companies to proceed on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee. These 178 cases include 72 cases in which the selection of dealers/distributors has not been upheld by the Committee. The public sector oil marketing companies have been asked to take necessary action as per Court orders.

[Translation]

Setting up of Auto Testing Track

2757. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH:
SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan to set up Auto Testing Track near Indore;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the States which have submitted proposals seeking allotment of land free of cost for setting up of Auto Testing Track; and

(d) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Government has approved the 'National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project (NATRIP)' to provide world-class automotive testing facilities in India. As an integral part of this project, an automotive testing track is also envisaged in Madhya Pradesh subject to suitable land being made available.

(c) and (d) For setting up of the track, sites were offered by the States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. Based on overall locational suitability, the Government has decided to set up the testing track in Madhya Pradesh.

Revision of Pay Scales

2758. SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR DUBEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the pay scales of the employees of the Accounts Department working under the FA and CAO Department of Ministry of Railways has been revised following a pay review on their demand after the Fifth Pay Commission's report;

(b) if so, whether the Railways propose to give same pay scales to the employees of the Cash and Pay Department working under the same Department and who

have so far been getting the pay equal to that of the Accounts Department;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The pay scales of the employees of the Cash and Pay Department have not been revised at par with the employees of the Accounts Department because unlike Accounts cadre, direct recruitment of graduates does not take place at any level in the Cash and Pay cadre.

[English]

Celebration of 150th Anniversary of First War of Independence

2759. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the First War of Independence, 1857;

(b) if so, whether any Committee has been constituted for this purpose; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has constituted Group of Ministers with the following members:-

Shri Arjun Singh, Minister of Human Resource Development

Shri Shivraj V. Patil, Minister of Home Affairs

Shri S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Culture.

Shri Sunil Dutt, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports (Since deceased).

Periodic Meeting with OBC Welfare Employees' Organization

2760. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it was decided to hold periodical meetings with OBC Welfare Employees' Organizations to monitor the implementation of reservation as well as to redress the grievances of OBC Employees;

(b) if so, the number of meetings held during 2004 and 2005 till date; and

(c) the steps the Government proposes to take to hold periodic meetings?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There is no such proposal under consideration.

[Translation]

Setting up of Panchayat Training Centres

2761. SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Rajasthan has sent any proposal for setting up of new Panchayat Training Centres for approval;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon; and

(d) the funds approved by the Union Government therefor?

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

SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. The Ministry of Panchayat Raj has not received any proposal for setting up new Panchayat Training Centres from the State Government of Rajasthan, but stands ready to consider any such proposal, if submitted.

(b) to (d) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj supports capacity building training programmes of newly elected members so that they can effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities as envisaged in the Constitution. For this purpose, the Ministry has earmarked a total of Rs. 29.40 crores for the current financial year 2005-06.

[English]

Funds to OBCs

2762. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the financial assistance provided for empowerment of Other Backward Classes during 2005-06, Scheme-wise;

(b) the details of utilisation of funds under the said schemes during 2004-05;

(c) whether the funds provided is very low in proportionate of their population; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) State Governments/UT Administrations, NGOs are released funds only after Utilisation Certificates of previous releases have been received. In case of NGOs scheme 2nd installment of GIA is released only after receiving Utilisation Certificates along with Audited Statement of Expenditure duly certified by the Chartered Accountant. Details of utilisation of funds under the said scheme during 2004-05 and funds released during 2005-06 upto 31.7.2005 under various schemes are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) and (d) There is no separate enumeration for OBCs in the census.

Statement

Scheme-wise Utilisation Certificates received from States for 2004-05 and Funds released during 2005-06 for Empowerment of Backward Classes

(As on 31.7.2005)
(Rs. in crore)

Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme	2004-05		2005-06	
		Funds released	UC received	UC received from the following States	Funds released
1.	Pre Matric Scholarships for OBCs	18.75	7.10	Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur	4.94
2.	Post Matric Scholarships for OBCs	24.66	12.17	Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur	9.78
3.	Hostels of OBC Boys and Girls	12.76	3.09	Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh	0.00
4.	GIA to Voluntary Organisation working for OBCs	5.50	Not due	—	0.89
5.	National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation	18.72	18.72	—	0.00
6.	Merit Scholarships for OBCs	0.00	Not applicable	—	0.00

Schools/Institutes for Blind

2763. SHRI RAJENDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of blind persons in various States, State-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to open schools and institutes for the blinds during the current year,

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

(d) the funds earmarked for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The Census 2001 figures of visually disabled persons are given in enclosed statement.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Statement

State	Number of Visually Disabled Persons as per Census, 2001
1	2
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	3321
Andhra Pradesh	581587
Arunachal Pradesh	23079
Assam	282056
Bihar	10005605
Chandigarh	8422
Chhattisgarh	160131
Dadra and Nagar Havell	2346
Daman and Diu	1898
Delhi	120712
Goa	4393
Gujarat	494624
Haryana	201358
Himachal Pradesh	64122
Jammu and Kashmir	208713
Jharkhand	186216
Karnataka	440875
Kerala	334622
Lakshadweep	603
Madhya Pradesh	636214
Maharashtra	580930
Manipur	11713
Meghalaya	13381
Mizoram	6257

1	2
Nagaland	9968
Orissa	514104
Pondicherry	10646
Punjab	170853
Rajasthan	753962
Sikkim	10790
Tamil Nadu	964063
Tripura	27505
Uttar Pradesh	1852071
Uttaranchal	85668
West Bengal	862073
All India	10634881

*[Translation]***Infiltration through Sea Routes**

2764. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SINGH:
DR. M. JAGANNATH:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the terrorists are infiltrating into the country through sea routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to check infiltration through coastal areas?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No incident of infiltration of terrorists via sea routes has been reported.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Regular surveillance along the coast and International Maritime Boundary Line is being carried out by the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard.

*[English]***Transfer of HMT Ancillary Industrial Sheds**

2765. SHRI K. VIRUPAKSHAPPA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to transfer the Ownership of HMT Ancillary Industrial sheds to Individual License holders is pending with the Union Government; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) No proposal of transfer of ownership of HMT Ancillary Industrial sheds to individual license holders is pending with the Union Government. The Board of Directors of HMT has decided to consider transfer of the ownership of these sheds only at the prevailing market rate.

(b) Does not arise.

Construction of Border Roads

2766. SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA": Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that many villages in Uttaranchal which run along the border of India with China, Tibet and Nepal have no border roads; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for constructing roads in the border villages of Uttaranchal?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Construction of roads is primarily a State subject and the responsibility of roads within a State lies with the State Government. However, the Border Roads Organisation is engaged in building roads in border areas as per the operational needs of Armed Forces. This Organisation is constructing and maintaining about 620 Km of operational roads and 773 Kms of National Highways in Uttaranchal.

*[Translation]***Home Delivery of Rail Tickets**

2767. SHRI PUNNU LAJ. MOHALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently introduced a scheme to deliver rail tickets at homes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the cities where the said scheme has been introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Reservation on Internet, where reserved tickets can be home delivered, was started in August 2002 through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). The ticket delivery facility is currently available in 170 cities.

(c) The list of cities where ticket delivery facility is available is enclosed as statement.

Statement

Sl.No.	Names of Cities
1	2
1.	Agartala
2.	Agra
3.	Ahmedabad
4.	Alzawl
5.	Ajmer
6.	Alapuzha
7.	Allgarh
8.	Allahabad
9.	Aluva
10.	Ambala
11.	Amritsar
12.	Anand
13.	Asansol
14.	Aurangabad
15.	Bangalore
16.	Bareilly
17.	Belgaum

1	2
18.	Bhatinda
19.	Bhavnagar
20.	Bhilai
21.	Bhopal
22.	Bhubaneshwar
23.	Bhuj
24.	Bikaner
25.	Bilaspur
26.	Bokaro
27.	Chandigarh
28.	Chengannur
29.	Chennai
30.	Coimbatore
31.	Cuddapah
32.	Cuttack
33.	Dadri
34.	Darjeeling
35.	Dehradun
36.	Dhanbad
37.	Dharwad
38.	Dibrugarh
39.	Dimapur
40.	Dindigul
41.	Durg
42.	Durgapur
43.	Erode
44.	Faridabad
45.	Ferozpur
46.	Firozabad

1	2
47.	Gandhinagar
48.	Gangtok
49.	Ghaziabad
50.	Goa
51.	Gorakhpur
52.	Greater Noida
53.	Gulbarga
54.	Guna
55.	Guntur
56.	Gurgaon
57.	Guwahati
58.	Gwalior
59.	Haldia
60.	Haldwani
61.	Hazira
62.	Hooghly
63.	Hoshiarpur
64.	Howrah
65.	Hubli
66.	Hyderabad
67.	Imphal
68.	Indore
69.	Izzat Nagar
70.	Jabalpur
71.	Jaipur
72.	Jullundhar
73.	Jalgaon
74.	Jammu
75.	Jamnagar

1	2
76.	Jamshedpur
77.	Jhansi
78.	Jodhpur
79.	Jorhat
80.	Kakinada
81.	Kandla
82.	Kannur
83.	Kanpur
84.	Karnal
85.	Katni
86.	Kharagpur
87.	Kochi
88.	Kohima
89.	Kolhapur
90.	Kolkata
91.	Kollam
92.	Kota
93.	Kottayam
94.	Kovilpatti
95.	Kozhikode
96.	Kumool
97.	Lucknow
98.	Ludhiana
99.	Madurai
100.	Mangalore
101.	Manipal
102.	Mathura
103.	Meerut
104.	Mettupalayam

1	2
105.	Moradabad
106.	Mumbai
107.	Mysore
108.	Nagercoil
109.	Nagpur
110.	Nainital
111.	Nashik
112.	Navsari
113.	Nellore
114.	New Delhi
115.	Nizamabad
116.	Noida
117.	Ooty
118.	Palakkad
119.	Panchkula
120.	Panipat
121.	Patiala
122.	Patna
123.	Pondicherry
124.	Pune
125.	Puri
126.	Raigarh
127.	Raipur
128.	Rajhamundry
129.	Rajapalayam
130.	Rajkot
131.	Ranchi
132.	Rewa
133.	Roorkee

1	2
134.	Rourkela
135.	Saharanpur
136.	Salem
137.	Satna
138.	Saugor
139.	Secunderabad
140.	Shillong
141.	Shimla
142.	Sibsagar
143.	Silchar
144.	Siliguri
145.	Silvasa
146.	Sivakasi
147.	Srinagar
148.	Surat
149.	Thane
150.	Thanjavur
151.	Tiruchchirapali
152.	Tirunvelveli
153.	Tirupati
154.	Tiruppur
155.	Tiruvalla
156.	Tiruvananthapuram
157.	Trissur
158.	Tumkur
159.	Tuticorin
160.	Udaipur
161.	Udupi
162.	Ujjain

1	2
163.	Vadodara
164.	Vapi
165.	Varanasi
166.	Vijayawada
167.	Vishakhapatnam
168.	Vrindavan
169.	Warangal
170.	Yamunanagar

Expansion and Renovation of Railway Stations

2768. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:
SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE
PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the name of the railway stations in Maharashtra where expansion and renovation work has been initiated during the last financial year;

(b) if so, expenditure incurred thereon, station-wise;

(c) whether expansion and renovation works on these railway stations have been completed;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the name of the railway stations which are prepared to be renovated during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The name of railway stations in Maharashtra where expansion and renovation work has been initiated in last financial year are Akot, Ambari, Aurangabad, Basmat, Bhokar, Bolda, Chondi, Chudawa, Damini, Gangakhed, Hingoli, Jalna, Kinwat, Kosai, Lasur, Limbagaon, Marsul, Manwat Road, Mudhed, Mugat, Nagarsol, Nandapur, Nanded, Mukumdewadi, Parbhani, Purna, Pokami, Narasimha, Setu, Sirt, Umram, Vadgaon nila, Washim, Chakur, Ghatnandur, Her, Janwal, Manikgarh, Makudi, Pangaon, Pari Vajinath, Partur, Wihirgaon, Warur, Sivungaon, Shelgaon, Umri, Bolsa, Kerkheli, Samrala, Dharmabad, Mundikota, Wadsa,

Mulmaroda, Sondad, Brakmapuri, Kamptee, Itwari, Chacher, Itwari, Koka, Khat, Tumsar Road, Andheri, Bandra, Bhayandar, Borivali, Chami Road, Churchgate, Dadar, Jogeshwari, Mahim, Mumbai Central, Lower Parel, Saphale, Vengon, Vasai Road, Grant Road, Virar, Matunga Road.

(b) Number of works for provision of passenger amenities at various stations are clubbed on the basis of various categories like types of amenities proposed, Railway Zone/Division under which the stations fall etc., due to which it is not possible to work out the figures of expenditure for each individual Railway station.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Works are in at various stages of progress commensurate with availability of funds and site limitations.

(e) Renovation works in current financial year are planned at various stations in Maharashtra namely "Aurangabad, Gangakher, Jalna, Lasur, Manwat Road, Nagarsol, Nanded, Parbhani, Pattur, Pingli, Purna, Rotegaon, Selu, Itwari, Kalumna, Kamptee, Kanhan, Salwa, Tharsa, Reweral, Bhandara, Tumsar, Tirora, Gondia, Gudma, Amgaon, Salekasa, Ramtek, Bandra, Malad, Mahim, Dadar, Naliasopara, Ballarshah, Dockyard Road, Vadala Road, Jalgaon, Malkhapur and Kolhapur".

[English]

Expansion of HAL Airport

2769. SHRI VENKATESH A. NAIK:
SHRI M. SHIVANNA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to expand the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) Airport's capacity to handle more passengers and airlines;

(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) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is a proposal for modification of International and Domestic Terminal Buildings at the Civil Enclave of Bangalore Airport by extension of Terminal, re-alignment of Check-in-Counters and Security Hold Area and provision of lift and additional conveyors and Check-in-Counters. All these works are likely to be completed by March, 2006.

[Translation]

Reservation of SCs/STs/OBCs in Defence Services

2770. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:
SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to give reservation to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward classes in the defence services;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Recruitment in the Armed Forces is based on merit and is open to every citizen of the country including Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Class candidates without any discrimination on the basis of their caste, creed, religion or region.

[English]

Repairing of Roads in Barasat-Hasnabad Section

2771. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Railways are aware of the dilapidated conditions of the approach roads to all the stations in the Barasat-Hasnabad section of the Eastern Railways;

(b) if so, whether the Railways authorities have also received representations in the matter; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways for repairing these roads?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Railway is aware of the condition of approach road in the Barasat-Hasnabad section.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The entire area has been got inspected. Necessary steps have been undertaken to take up the works in phased manner commensurate with availability of funds and relative priorities of other works.

[*Translation*]

Impact of Outdated Aeroplanes

2772. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an adverse impact on the environment due to usage of outdated aeroplanes in domestic flights in the country;

(b) if so, the average consumption of fuel per aeroplane as on date;

(c) whether the consumption of fuel is as per environment standards; and

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

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[*English*]

World Heritage Sites

2773. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA:
SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:
SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the sites in India so far inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list;

(b) whether the Government has nominated/proposed to nominate any other monuments/sites for inclusion in the World Heritage list; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) So far 21 cultural and 5 natural sites have been inscribed from India in the UNESCO World Heritage list. The details are given as statement.

(b) and (c) The Government of India has nominated Majuli Island in Assam for consideration of inclusion in the World Heritage List in the year 2006. Besides the Government would also be resubmitting the nomination dossiers of Red Fort.

Shri Harimandir Sahib, Amritsar was nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage list in 2005, but the same has been deferred.

Statement

Sl.No.	Name of site	State
1	2	3
CULTURAL SITES		
1.	Ajanta Caves (1983)	Maharashtra
2.	Ellora Caves (1983)	Maharashtra
3.	Agra Fort (1983)	Uttar Pradesh
4.	Taj Mahal (1983)	Uttar Pradesh
5.	Sun Temple, Konark (1984)	Orissa

1	2	3
6.	Group of monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984)	Tamil Nadu
7.	Chuches & Convents of Goa (1986)	Goa
8.	Group of temples, Khajuraho (1986)	Madhya Pradesh
9.	Group of monuments at Hampi (1986)	Karnataka
10.	Group of monuments, Fatehpur Sikri (1986)	Uttar Pradesh
11.	Group of temples, Pattadakal (1987)	Karnataka
12.	Elephanta Caves (1987)	Maharashtra
13.	Great Living Chola temples at Thanjavur, Gangaikondacholapuram and Darasuram (1987 & 2004)	Tamil Nadu
14.	Buddhist monuments at Sanchi (1989)	Madhya Pradesh
15.	Humayun Tomb, Delhi (1993)	Delhi
16.	Qutab Minar complex, Delhi	Delhi
17.	Mountain Railway of India (1999, 2005)	West Bengal & Tamil Nadu
18.	Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya (2002)	Bihar
19.	Prehistoric Rock shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)	Madhya Pradesh
20.	Champaner-Pavagarh Archaeological Park (2004)	Gujarat
21.	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) (2004)	Maharashtra

NATURAL SITES

1.	Kaziranga National Park (1985)	Assam
2.	Manas Wild Life Sanctuary (1985)	Assam
3.	Keoladeo National Park (1985)	Rajasthan
4.	Sunderban National Park (1987)	West Bengal
5.	Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988, 2005)	Uttaranchal

Abolition of Station Ticket Quota System

2774. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to abolish the existing station ticket quota system;

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

(c) the details of the new system that would replace the existing quota system and the impact on the travelling public thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) As and when Computerised Passenger Reservation System is commissioned at a station, the quota of such a station is withdrawn and merged with the nodal station giving full access to such nodal station.

Gagan Project

2775. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Airports Authority of India has undertaken a GAGAN Project with ISRO;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total cost of the project; and

(d) the major advantages of the project to AAI?

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

(b) GAGAN system uses the Geo Positioning System (GPS) Constellation. GPS signal is augmented by GAGAN to achieve requisite accuracy, reliability, integrity and availability for civil aviation use. AAI and ISRO are developing the infrastructure of GAGAN, which will process the GPS and augmented signal simultaneously to improve their positional accuracy under dynamic conditions.

(c) The total cost of the Project will be known only after the Detailed Project Report is finalised.

(d) Major advantages of the project *inter alia* include seamless navigation over Indian airspace and precision approaches at all Indian airports.

[*Translation*]

Renaming of Jodhpur Airport

2776. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal from the Government of Rajasthan in regard to renaming of Jodhpur Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) There is a proposal to rename Civil Air Terminal at Jodhpur Airport after Maharaja Umaid Singh for which consultation with State Government of Rajasthan has been initiated.

Serials on Great Writers

2777. DR. RAJESH MISHRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Doordarshan has formulated any plan to make serials on the stories of the great story writers of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Prasar Bharati has informed that they are undertaking production of programmes in different formats based on Sahitya Academy award winning works, Jnanpith award winning authors and other classics in 22 languages.

[*English*]

Construction of New Building for Sri Chithira Art Gallery

2778. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the Government of Kerala for construction of new building for Sri Chithira Art Gallery in Trivandrum;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Facilities and Amenities at Airports

2779. SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI:
SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT "BACHDA":

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether international airports in the country lack basic facilities and amenities vis-a-vis international airports of the foreign countries; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to make the airports in the country at par with international airports of the other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) International airports in the country need to be modernised to world-class standards. Government is restructuring the airports at Delhi and Mumbai through Public Private Partnership to modernise them to world class standards. Several non-metro international airports are being upgraded by Airports Authority of India (AAI). In addition, concession for greenfield world class international airports has been granted to Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) and Hyderabad International Airport Limited (HIAL).

[Translation]

Investment in Dabhol Power Project by GAIL

2780. SHRI SURAJ SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether GAIL (India) Ltd. has any plan to invest in Dabhol Power Project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether necessary permission/clearance from the Ministry has been taken by the GAIL in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, whether the GAIL is violating the guidelines of the Ministry for participating in Dabhol Power Project; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) An empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) has been constituted to take steps to restructure and revive the Dabhol Project. The restructuring plan developed by the EGoM envisage the formation of a Project SPV consisting of GAIL, NTPC and Indian Lenders with an equity infusion of Rs. 500 crore each.

Accordingly, the Project SPV, called the Ratnagiri Gas and Power Private Limited (RGPPL), has been formed and incorporated by GAIL and NTPC as a 50:50 joint venture. RGPPL is to take over the assets of the Dabhol Project free from all encumbrances through the Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT)/Court process and thereafter complete, commission and operate the project. The equity structure of RGPPL will subsequently get altered after the Indian Lenders and Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) join RGPPL.

(c) and (d) The GAIL Board has approved an investment of Rs. 500 crore in the equity share capital of RGPPL. While approving the proposal, the GAIL Board has laid down a set of conditions which need to be fulfilled before GAIL's equity contribution can be irreversibly consumed in the joint venture. These conditions primarily relate to adoption of safeguards on certain issues which affect the economic viability of the project.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has conveyed to GAIL that the EGoM, in their meeting held on 9.7.2005, have relaxed as a one time measure, the existing investment limit of Rs. 200 crore for Navratna companies for investment/acquisition in the Dabhol Power Project and have authorized Navratna Boards to take a decision in the matter. Accordingly, GAIL Board is authorized to take a decision in the matter.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Sale of Products

2781. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sale of the products manufactured in Ordnance Factories of the country has increased during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the percentage of increase made by Ordnance Factory, Jabalpur therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) The turnover of the products, manufactured in Ordnance Factories, which includes issues to Armed Forces and sales to non-defence sector is given below:-

Year	Sales to Non-Defence Customers	Value of Issues to Defence Forces	Total Rs. in crore
2002-2003	873	5635	6508
2003-2004	977	5547	6524
2004-2005 (Provisional)	953	5197	6178

(c) There are four Ordnance Factories in Jabalpur. The turn-over made by these four factories together is given below:-

Year	Turnover is in Rs. Crore (Jabalpur Group of Factories)	Percentage Increase
2001-2002	1987	—
2002-2003	2099	5.63
2003-2004	2114	0.71
2004-2005 (Provisional)	1661	-21.42

[English]

Clearance to Warjehadakwasla Water Pipeline Project

2782. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has cleared the Warjehadakwasla water pipeline project passing through the National Defence Academy (NDA) in Pune;

(b) if not, the reasons for the delay; and

(c) the time by which the said project is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Permission for laying Water Pipeline through Defence land at National Defence Academy, Pune has been issued on 29th July, 2005.

Production of Ships and Submarines

2783. SHRI GANESH SINGH:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief of the Naval Staff has expressed concern over the slow pace of production of ships and submarines by the defence and civilian shipyards;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the defence and civilian shipyards have failed to produce ships and submarines in a year as per the requirement of Indian Navy; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government to accelerate the pace of production to meet the requirements of the Indian Navy?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Three Defence Public Sector Shipyards, viz. Mazagon Dock Limited, Mumbai, Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited, Kolkata and Goa Shipward Limited, Goa and two Public Sector Shipyard viz. Hindustan Shipyard Limited and Cochin Shipyard Limited, are currently building ships for the Navy. As these shipyards are not fully equipped to meet the projected demands of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Staff had called for speeding up the construction of ships.

(d) To meet the requirements of the Navy, the production capacities of the Defence Public Sector shipyards are modernized from time to time. The modernization plans include the augmentation of existing infrastructure and technology by creation of modular workshop, extension of slipway, construction of additional wet basin and Hull shop modernization. Better monitoring mechanism has also been put in place to streamline the

construction process. The Government have also promulgated a separate Warship Building Procedure in March 2004.

[Translation]

Shortage of Torpedo

2784. SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN:
SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:
SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Navy is facing an acute shortage of 'Torpedo';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to manufacture light weight 'Torpedo' indigenously; and

(d) if so, the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Indian Navy has sufficient torpedoes to arm all its operational submarines, ships and aircraft.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Trials of indigenously developed Torpedo Advanced Light have been satisfactory.

[English]

Demurrage Rules

2785. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have recently notified the new demurrage rules;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have received representations from the various industry/groups against

reducing the free time for loading and unloading of wagons drastically;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Railways in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The rules regarding permissible free time for loading and unloading have been relaxed w.e.f. 15.7.2005, as under:

- Free time for loading and unloading of jumbo rakes has been increased uniformly from 8 hours to 9 hours.
- Free time for unloading of tank wagon rakes has been increased from 5 hours to 7 hours.
- Free time for mechanized unloading of open wagons has been increased from 5 hours to 6 hours.

The maximum limit of additional free time for extra shunting, placement/removal of rakes etc. has been increased to 2 hours.

(c) to (e) Some representations have been received from various sectors of Trade & Industry like Oil, Fertilizer, Cement, Coal seeking further relaxation in the free time rules and also to clarify the concept of 'additional free time'. The concept of additional free time has been clarified as follows:

"Additional Free Time, which is given on account of extra shunting for placement, removal etc. should be limited to maximum of 2 hours (two hours). However, in cases where the additional free time had been fixed less than 2 hours as per Time & Motion Studies, the same should continue."

However, further relaxation in the free time rules have not been found feasible at present.

[Translation]

Award of Contracts of Bookstalls

2786. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE
PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria or guidelines followed for awarding contracts of bookstalls at railway stations;

(b) the time span for which such contracts are awarded in normal course;

(c) the procedure followed for renewal of such licenses;

(d) the number of complaints received on the progress of awarding the such contracts during the last three years, till date; and

(e) the action taken by the Railways thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Allotment will be done to the successful tenderers through two packet open tender system based on competitive bidding at A, B and C category stations. Similarly, allotment of bookstalls at D, E and F category stations will be done on expiry of existing contracts and at new locations as per latest Bookstall policy by inviting applications through press notification. The major bookstall chains are eligible for consideration for 'A' category stations only and not for lower category stations. Allotment of bookstall licences to philanthropic and social institutions will be made on application and as per requirement of the railways. There is 25% reservation in various categories in the allotment of new bookstalls at 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E' and 'F' category stations.

However, the said bookstall Policy has been recently quashed by Hon'ble High Court of Allahabad in which Hon'ble Court has ordered to consider renewal of the petitioner's licences (M/s A.H. Wheeler & Co.) on the terms of Bookstall Policy 2004 dated 11.06.2004. The said order has been challenged by Indian Railways in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India by filing Special Leave Petition (SLP). Further, zonal railways have been advised to hold up the allotment of bookstalls as per the Bookstall Policy 2004 dated 12.10.2004 and to maintain a status quo till final judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter.

(b) Allotment of such licences are for a specific period of five years.

(c) As per Bookstall Policy 2004 dated 12.10.2004, there will be no renewal of existing bookstalls licences.

(d) No complaint has been received in this regard during the last three years.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Parking Charges

2787. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether parking charges for vehicles at the Railway stations has been increased;

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

(c) whether the Government has received any representations from various quarters for the withdrawal of increased parking charges; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Parking charges are reviewed from time to time and the same are increased as and when justified depending upon various parameters like land value, number of users, type of vehicles, rates of parking prevailing at important/prominent places in the city etc. The endeavour is to ensure optimum utilisation of parking space and to keep the interests of rail users in view as it is experienced that due to lower parking rates in railway area as compared to those in adjoining civil areas results in non rail users also using the parking space creating difficulties in parking for rail users. Representations received on various issues of parking are dealt with appropriately.

Cold Storage Centres

2788. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Airports where cargo complex for perishable goods have been developed;

(b) the name of airports identified for construction of cold storage centres during the Tenth Five Year Plan period alongwith their present status;

(c) whether the Union Government has assessed the benefits of perishable cargo to Air India/Indian Airlines;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the profit earned by Air India and Indian Airlines during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Cargo Complex for perishable goods have been developed at Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad and Mumbai airports.

(b) Kolkata and Amritsar airports have been identified for construction of perishable cargo centre during the 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007).

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

(e) Air India's net profit (Rs. in crores) during the last 3 years is as follows: 2002-03 (133.86); 2003-04 (92.33); 2004-05 (31.20). Indian Airlines net profit/loss (Rs. in crores) during the last 3 years is as follows: 2002-03 (-196.56); 2003-04 (44.17); 2004-05 (17.50).

New Airport at Navi Mumbai

2789. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI MILIND DEORA:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made in clearance of the proposal for setting up of an international airport at Navi Mumbai;

(b) the time by which it is likely to be cleared and work commenced; and

(c) the reasons for delay and the cost escalation as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) AAI has initiated steps for carrying out simulation study of conflict free operations from CSI Airport, Mumbai and the proposed airport at Navi Mumbai and suggest procedures for safe aircraft operations simultaneously from these two

airports. The study is being carried out with assistance from International Civil Aviation Organisation.

(b) and (c) Further action would be taken after completion of simulation study. The cost escalation due to this can not be estimated at this stage.

Reserved Vacancies in Nanded Division

2790. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI:
Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are vacancies in Group 'C' and 'D' posts for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes in the newly formed Nanded Division under the South Central Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to fill up the reserved vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of the vacancies belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) existing as on 30.06.2005 is as follows:-

	Group 'C'			Group 'D'		
	SC	ST	OBC	SC	ST	OBC
Recruitment	08	15	01	12	55	—
Promotion	20	67	—	21	70	—

(c) For filling up the vacancies in Group 'C' (recruitment category) indents have been placed on Railway Recruitment Board (RRB), Mumbai. However for filling the vacancies in Group 'D' (recruitment category) necessary action is being taken in view of revised instructions that these have to be filled up by the Zonal Railways themselves instead of through RRB. Similarly for filling up of vacancies in Group 'C' and 'D' in (promotional categories) selection process is at various stages of finalisation.

Uniform Entertainment Tax System

2791. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to introduce Uniform Entertainment Tax system in all the States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Entertainment Tax is a State subject and the rate of tax vary from State to State.

The 25th State Information Ministers' Conference (SIMCON), which was held in New Delhi on 15-16 April 2005, *inter alia*, discussed the need for rationalization of entertainment tax rates in States. While the rationalization of entertainment tax has been carried out in several States, there was consensus on the need to further bring down the ceiling on entertainment tax levels to 25-30%. The progressive reduction in entertainment tax levels would be able to provide a major fillip to the entertainment industry.

Construction of Airport at Phillaur

2792. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA:
SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of the Government to construct on airport at Phillaur (Punjab) as there is a massive movement to and from the Doaba region;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Punjab has approached the Union Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

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

(b) and (c) No reference from the State Government on Phillaur (Punjab) Airport is under consideration.

(d) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Procurement of Cranes

2793. SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI MUNSHI RAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has procured some cranes from foreign companies for post accident rescue measures as appeared in the 'Navbharat Times' dated July 18, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the terms and conditions of the agreement and expenditure incurred on the procurement of said cranes;

(c) whether tenders had been invited for procurement of such cranes;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the prescribed speed limit of such cranes;

(f) whether the cranes are running as per their prescribed speed;

(g) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(h) the reaction of the Government thereto?

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

(b) Indian Railways had placed two orders for procurement of 140 Tonne Accident Relief Crane against a tender opened in February' 1996. One order for 8 cranes was placed on M/s Mannesman Gottwald, Germany with total Free on Board (FOB) value as Deutsche Marks 24,905,184.20 and other order for 4 cranes was placed on M/s Rolls Royce Power Engineering Plc., U.K. (erstwhile M/s Cowans Sheldon Ltd.) with total FOB value as UK Pound Sterling 5,423,422. Both the contracts were awarded as per Indian Railway standard conditions of contract. The total landed cost of these 12 cranes was Rs. 150 crore approximately.

(c) Limited Tenders were issued after shortlisting.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) As per contract, the prescribed speed limit of these cranes was 90 kmph on track with specified parameters.

(f) The cranes have achieved test speeds of 90/110 kmph during oscillation trials. The speed at which the cranes move to site, depends upon the extant track conditions.

(g) and (h) Do not arise.

Sultanganj Station as Model Station

2794. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to make the Sultanganj Railway Station of Bihar a model station;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the expenditure to be incurred thereon; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Sultanganj railway station has been selected as model station and instructions were given to the concerned zonal railway on 3.11.2004 in this regard. The required amenities, as per norms, have already been provided except Retiring room, Enquiry and computer based announcement, Public Phones, Signages, Modular Catering stalls and Pay & Use toilets.

(c) and (d) Railway's endeavour is to provide all the identified amenities during the current financial year, for which a work at the cost of Rs. 29 lakhs has been sanctioned.

[English]

Training Institutes for Pilots

2795. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Expert Committee on Flight Safety has suggested a qualitative improvement in the intake of pilots and technicians;

(b) if so, whether there is any plan under consideration of the Government to change the training pattern of the Pilots to improve their skill and efficiency;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government has any proposal under consideration to set up more training institutes for pilots and technicians; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) The Expert Committee on Aircraft Accidents has made recommendations which are aimed at ensuring qualitative improvement in the intake of pilots and technicians. Improvement in the training pattern including setting up of more training institutes in the Indian Air Force to enhance the skill and efficiency of the pilots and technicians is a continuous process.

Indo-US Co-operation in Oil and Natural Gas Sector

2796. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI:

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

(a) whether the Government has sought the assistance of USA for enhancing oil and gas exploration in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

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

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) Indo-US Energy Dialogue has been initiated. The Oil and Natural Gas Working Group under this dialogue has started discussions on the possible collaboration between India and United States of America (USA) on the issues of Research & Development in Gas Hydrates, Oil and Gas, Alternative Fuels, Coal Bed Methane, besides developing standards. Further, it was decided that the two countries will sign an agreement on Exchange of Information relating to

Hydrocarbon Sector between the Department of Energy of USA and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Another dialogue has been initiated between India and USA through the US-India Business Council for technical and commercial collaboration in the area of expanding the knowledge base, Improved Oil Recoveries (IORs)/Enhanced Oil Recoveries (EORs), technical know-how for the Deccan Trap and commercial partnerships between US Oil majors and independent and Indian Oil Companies.

Shortage of Skilled Artisans

2797. SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any shortage of skilled artisans with the Archaeological Survey of India for restoration of the ancient monuments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for recruiting skilled artisans?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The Archaeological Survey of India engaged skilled artisans against specific works in their annual works programme. Except occasional shortages of highly skilled artisans, no difficulties are experienced in this regard.

(c) The Government does not recruit the skilled artisans as regular employees; as stated above, they are engaged against specific works as and when need arises.

[Translation]

New Rail Lines in Jharkhand

2798. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal regarding construction of new rail lines in Jharkhand is pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the estimated cost involved therein;

(c) the decision taken in the matter; and

(d) the details of rail lines prioritized during 2005-06?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Government has approved prioritization of rail projects in its meeting held on 20.04.2005 as per which 76 new line and 44 gauge conversion projects have been categorized into four categories.

[English]

Construction of Greenfield Airports with Private Participation

2799. SHRI ANIL BASU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to construct Greenfield airports with the private sector participation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any modalities have been worked out in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) to (d) Government of India having recognized the urgent need to modernize and upgrade the airport infrastructure, promulgated the Policy on Airport Infrastructure, 1997 which taking into account that the airport infrastructure is a capital intensive sector and requires a long term planning, envisages public and private partnership in this regard. Government of India has entered into Concession Agreements with the project companies of two Greenfield airports at Devanhalli near Bangalore and Shamshabad near Hyderabad. The new airport at Devanhalli is required to be completed within 33 months from the date of Financial close.

The Hyderabad International Airport Limited (HIAL) is required to complete the project within 36 months from the date of financial closure, as per the Concession Agreement entered by Government of India with HIAL. In

the project companies, AAI participates as a shareholder with 13% shares.

Railway Freight Rates

2800. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:
SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether new railway freight rates have been introduced recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any concession has been given in freight of some essential commodities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) New freight rates under Class-90W₁, 90W₂ and 90W₃, have been introduced below the lowest Class-90 with effect from 1.4.2005 for certain commodities.

(c) and (d) 30% concession in freight rates has been given to Chemical Manures loaded in BOXN (open) wagons.

[English]

Merger of BRPL with IOC

2801. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any decision regarding merger of Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (BRPL) with the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC); and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) While Government is yet to receive a formal proposal to the merger of Bongaigaon Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited with Indian Oil Corporation Limited, the Boards of Directors of these two companies have accorded 'in principle' approval for the proposed merger. These companies are in the process of appointment of various agencies with a view to working out a fair swap ratio for equity shares and also for developing a scheme of amalgamation.

[English]

Paintings at National Museum of Modern Art

2802. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the paintings stocked by the National Museum of Modern Art are catalogued, numbered and organized according to any particular order; and

(b) if so, the total number of paintings on display and in store?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir. All paintings in the collection of National Gallery of Modern Art are catalogued and accession numbered, in order of its date of acquisition.

(b) The Gallery has a collection of 17,818 art works in its stock as of date, out of which 616 are on display at the galleries, for public viewing. The display of works of arts in the galleries are changed and rotated, from time to time.

[Translation]

Stoppage of Trains at Dhampur and Gajraula

2803. SHRI HARISH NAGPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any request from public representatives regarding stoppage of some trains at Dhampur on Moradabad-Saharanpur and Gajraula on Delhi-Moradabad rail lines under Northern Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Some representations have been received. These have been examined but not found feasible for implementation.

[English]

Newspapers and Weeklies

2804. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of small and big newspapers and weeklies being published in the country as on December 31, 2004;

(b) the details of the newspapers out of them included in the list meant for giving advertisements to them;

(c) the newspapers whose applications for inclusion in the advertisement list pending as on December 31, 2004; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) has reported that according to the annual statements submitted by the publishers, 5591 newspapers including periodicals have been published in the country as on 31st March, 2004. Out of this, 4114 were small, 1195 medium and 282 were big. The information as on 31st December, 2004, has not yet been finalised.

(b) The details of small/medium and big Newspapers and periodicals empanelled with Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) as on 31.12.2004 are as under:

(i)	Small	—	1539
(ii)	Medium	—	642
(iii)	Big	—	182
	Total	—	2363

(c) and (d) Applications of 1429 newspapers were pending in DAVP as on 31.12.2004. These applications were scrutinised and the cases of 713 newspapers and periodicals were approved for empanelment with DAVP during February and March, 2005. The cases of remaining applications would be examined as per procedure, subject to receipt of the complete documents from the publishers and after fulfilment of the conditionalities prescribed in the Advertisement policy of the Government and guidelines for empanelment of newspapers with DAVP.

Centrally Protected Monuments

2805. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state the details of centrally protected monuments so far handed over to NGOs and other private organizations for maintenance, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): No centrally protected monument has been handed over to NGOs and other private organizations for maintenance. However, under National Culture Fund, set up by the Ministry of Culture by notification dated November 28, 1996 provides opportunity for private players, NGOs and Corporate Houses to participate in the repair, upkeep and maintenance of old monuments in the country.

The National Culture Fund accepts institutions and individuals as partners of the Government in the management of the cultural scenario. It is an important initiative for forging public private partnership and mobilizing extra budgetary resources for culture.

Details of conservation/development works carried out under the auspices of the National Culture Fund are enclosed as statement.

Statement

Details of works carried/being carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India under NCF Projects

Sl.No.	Name of the Agency	Financial assistance	Activities carried out
1	2	3	4
1.	M/s Aga Khan Trust for Culture	Rs. 30.00 lacs	Humayun's Tomb Garden in Delhi has been rejuvenated.
2.	M/s Oberoi Group of Hotels	Rs. 5.00 lacs	Humayun's Tomb dome has been illuminated.

1	2	3	4
3.	Pune Municipal Corporation/ Venkateshwara Hatcheries and other agencies, Pune	Rs. 48.00 lacs	Shaniwar wada Palace remains have been conserved and light and sound programme has been installed.
4.	The Taj Group of Hotels	Rs. 45.00 lakhs	At Taj Mahal, Agra, chemical preservation of main gate has been done. Tourist facilitation centre is being developed at Fatehabad and Fatehpuri enclosures and conservation of portion of enclosure wall on the eastern side is in progress. Signages have been installed.

*[Translation]***Utilisation of Information Available in Villages**

2806. SHRI PARAS NATH YADAV: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to make commercial use of the information available in villages;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of States likely to be included in the first phase and the number of projects likely to be implemented; and

(d) the nature of benefits likely to be gained by the villagers from these projects?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) The Govt. is launching an initiative for the creation of Rural Business Hubs to draw upon local resource endowments and the felt needs to the people to give a fillip to village enterprises that add value to existing economic activities in rural areas.

Under a joint initiative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Uttaranchal, Kerala, Karnataka, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Assam have been initially selected as focus States for the purpose of facilitating the establishment of such Rural Business Hubs. Representatives from the Ministry/CII have been assigned the responsibility of taking up the facilitation process in the States concerned for Rural Business Hubs to be

established in association with Panchayati Raj Institutions. Local CII offices in the States concerned would be actively involved in the facilitation at the State level. Models such as the Chinese Town and Village Enterprises and the Thailand model of One Tambon One Product (OTOP) would be used as initial examples for developing State specific models.

*[English]***Exploration of Oil and Gas Reserves**

2807. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Directorate General of Hydrocarbons is planning to collect data on the oil and natural gas reserves in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether several oil and gas fields have not been properly explored in the country;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to boost oil and gas exploration in the country?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Collection of data on Oil & Natural Gas reserves in the country is a continuous process. Total prognosticated resources of the country have been estimated at about 28 billion tonnes.

The proven Oil and Gas Reserves of the country, as on 1.4.2005, are of the order of 1812 Million Metric Tonnes.

(c) and (d) No Sir. Exploration is a high risk and capital intensive activity. Exploration activities are being carried out by National Oil Companies (NOCs), private companies, both domestic and foreign, in areas awarded to them under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and the pre-NELP regime. The exploration programmes are being carried out in terms of the respective Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) or in terms of Petroleum Exploration Licenses (PELs) granted on a nomination basis and are monitored periodically by the Government.

(e) To boost the oil & gas exploration in the country, the Government has awarded 90 exploratory blocks under four rounds of NELP with attractive terms and conditions. 20 more blocks have been offered under NELP-V. In addition, exploration is also conducted in pre-NELP blocks and areas given to NOCs on nomination basis. These exploration efforts have resulted in 17 oil and gas discoveries during 2004-05.

Funds for Howrah to Balurghat Rail Line

2808. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new rail line between Howrah to Balurghat has been sanctioned in the current budget;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the funds earmarked for this project during the current year; 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) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Air Service for Khajuraho and Jabalpur

2809. SHRIMATI NEETA PATERIYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines has discontinued air services to Khajuraho and Jabalpur;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the air services are likely to be restored to these places?

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

(b) Due to capacity/operational constraints Indian Airlines/Alliance Air (a wholly owned subsidiary of Indian Airlines) had to discontinue operations to/from Jabalpur and Khajuraho.

(c) Khajuraho and Jabalpur are connected by regular flights of Jet Airways and Air Deccan, respectively. Hence, does not arise.

[English]

Cargo Service at Tiptur

2810. SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to commence the cargo service at Tiptur;

(b) if so, whether any survey has been undertaken in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the further action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) There is no airport at Tiptur in the State of Karnataka. Therefore, the question of starting air cargo service from Tiptur does not arise.

Collection of Works of Mahatma Gandhi

2811. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has stopped the sale of the revised edition of the collection of works of Mahatma Gandhi;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the corrected version is likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) The Publications Division had brought out a revised edition (version) of Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. Complaints were received from various Gandhian institutes, individuals etc. that the revised edition was replete with errors. To look into the matter, the Government constituted an expert committee. On the basis of the recommendations of the committee, it has been decided to stop the sale of the revised edition of the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. It has also been decided that the original edition will be treated as the official edition. To help and guide those who have already purchased by revised edition, Publications Division has been asked to prepare a Concordance Table.

[Translation]

Handover of Catering Contracts to IRCTC

2812. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to handover the management of catering activities like vendor, stall and canteen in trains and at the railway stations to the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC);

(b) if so, the time by which the process is likely to be completed;

(c) whether hindrances are coming in the way of effecting improvement in the quality of catering in the absence of any provision of the present rule for changing the vendors and owners of stalls and canteens in normal conditions;

(d) if so, whether the Government proposes to amend the above rule and change the owners who enjoy monopoly in the Railway catering;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Transfer of units to Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is being done phase wise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

(f) Provision of ceiling on holding of catering units by company/firm or individuals and a system of tender to rule out possibilities of monopoly in the Railway Catering already exist in Catering Policy, 2005.

Dr. Ambedkar Social Equality Scheme

2813. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether financial assistance is being provided to various social organizations under 'Dr. Ambedkar Social Equality Scheme' of Ambedkar Foundation for the construction of buildings for schools and library;

(b) if so, the number of social organisations benefited during the last three years and the current year alongwith financial assistance provided to them;

(c) the number of pending proposals in this regard, State-wise;

(d) the present status of the proposals received from Nasik (Maharashtra); and

(e) the time by which these proposals are likely to be cleared?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Show-Cause notice to TV Channels

2814. SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has issued show-cause notices to some TV channels for violating the provisions of the Cable Network Act by promoting obscenity and impairing public morality in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the further action taken in the light of responses received from them?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Show cause notices are issued to channels for telecasting programmes in violation of the Programme Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder, from time to time. It is a continuous and ongoing process.

In the recent past, a show cause notice has been issued to a Fashion Channel. The reply of the channel has been received and is under examination.

In the recent past, action was also taken against one News & Current Affairs channel in response to the two show cause notices issued to it. The said channel was issued a warning by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and directed to telecast the warning for a period of three days on its channel.

International Air Services from Bangalore Airport

2815. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the demand for improving the air connectivity from Bangalore Airport to United States and other countries; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and the plans for improving air connectivity from Bangalore to different parts of the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) As per the recent Air Services Agreement signed between India and USA, the airlines of each side are entitled to operate to any point(s) in the other country's territory including Bangalore. At present, 7 foreign carriers namely Gulf Air, Lufthansa German Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Royal Nepal Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Sri Lankan Airlines and Thai Airways are operating to/from Bangalore. Indian carriers are also providing connectivity to USA/UK/Europe/South East Asia/Far East/Gulf from Bangalore either by direct flights or through convenient connections.

(b) Review of traffic rights is a continuous process based on the demand to/from specific destinations. Traffic

entitlement to foreign countries to/from Bangalore have been enhanced Bangalore has been allowed as a point of call also to France, Mauritius and Canada in recently held bilateral talks.

Guru Gobind Singh Refinery

2816. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA:

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

(a) whether the work on Guru Gobind Singh Refineries Ltd. at Bhatinda in Punjab is going on as per the schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for delay;

(d) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred on the project and the total amount spent so far; and

(e) the time by which the refinery is likely to be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Based on the incentives offered by the State Government of Punjab (GOP), as also other commercial considerations, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) have decided to set up a refinery at Bhatinda. The Deed of Assurance (DOA) is scheduled to be signed at Bhatinda on 12.8.2005 in the presence of the Chief Minister of Punjab and the Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

(d) The approved project cost is Rs. 9,806 crore (at June 1998 prices). Upto July, 2005 an expenditure of Rs. 289 crore has been incurred on the project.

(e) The configuration of the refinery is being finalized. After the DOA is signed, financial appraisal and tie-up of the funding for the project will be carried out. The refinery is likely to be commissioned in 60 months' time from the tie-up of funds for the project.

Supply of Natural Gas in Andhra Pradesh

2817. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formed any alliances with the Andhra Pradesh Gas Grid and Reliance for supply of natural gas in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the locations have been identified for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) Whereas the Government have not formed any alliance with the Andhra Pradesh Gas Grid and Reliance for supply of natural gas in Andhra Pradesh, GAIL (India) Limited is operating about 750 KM pipelines and supplying around 7 MMSCMD Natural Gas to various industries in the Krishna-Godavari Basin of Andhra Pradesh. Also, GAIL (India) Limited, HPCL and the Government of Andhra Pradesh have formed a Joint Venture, Bhagyanagar Gas Ltd." for developing city gas distribution projects across Andhra Pradesh. Subsequently, Vijaywada city has been connected in July 2005 by laying a pipeline from Kondapalli to Vijayawada for supplying natural gas to the Automobile, Domestic, Commercial and industrial segments.

Akashvani Station at Amritsar

2818. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a full-fledged Akashvani Station at Amritsar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A 20 kW FM transmitter with receiving, play-back, voiceover, recording/dubbing and field production facility has been proposed for approval at Amritsar during the 10th Plan. It will take about two years to complete the scheme after approval, subject to availability of funds.

Bagdogra Airport

2819. SHRI D. NARBULA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to upgrade the Bagdogra Airport into International Airport is under the consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Requests have been received to upgrade Bagdogra airport as an International Airport. However, there is no proposal to declare Bagdogra Airport as an International Airport at present.

Encroachment on Defence Land

2820. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the large scale encroachment on Defence land by migrants in Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time bound period fixed by the Government to allot alternative land to these migrants?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There is no large scale encroachment on Defence land by migrants in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. However, as per records, there are five cases of encroachments.

(b) Details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) There is no policy to allot alternative Defence land to encroachers of Defence land. Therefore, the question of fixing of time period does not arise.

Statement

Sl.No.	Island/location	Encroached by	Area
1.	South Andaman/Port Blair	(a) Shri Muthumarimman Temple Buniyadabad (b) Individual accommodation (Smt. Kamala Narayan) (c) Encorached by Anganwadi School and Church	1653 square metres 190 square metres 4600 square metres
2.	South Andaman/Port Blair	65 temporary shelters constructed for tsunami victims of Machhipatti colony at Tirupati Nagar in Port Blair.	Approximately 65 temporary shelters
3.	Great Nicobar Island/Campbell Bay	Encorachment by local labours in Survey Number 03 in Gadda Bijan at Campbell Bay	31.55 hectares

*[Translation]***Unmanned Level Crossing in Haryana**

2821. SHRI ATMA SINGH GILL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of unmanned level crossings in Haryana;

(b) whether the Government proposes to construct road overbridges at unmanned level crossings in Sirsa, Fatehabad and Hisar districts of Haryana and also manned the unmanned level crossings there; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which this work is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There are 328 unmanned level crossings in the State of Haryana.

(b) and (c) Railway construct Road Over/Under bridges (ROBs/RUBs) on cost sharing basis in lieu of busy level crossings (LCs) where traffic density is more than 1 lakh Train Vehicle Units (TVUs); otherwise on deposit terms. Road over bridge/Road under bridge on certain important National Highways are constructed by National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) under National Highway Development Programme (NHDP) Scheme.

These Road over bridges/Road under bridges are fully funded by NHAI. On other National Highways work is executed on cost sharing basis with respective State Governments. There is no provision to construct Road over bridges at unmanned level crossings anywhere in the country.

Further, as per extant rules, in case an unmanned level crossing provided initially and maintained at the cost of the railways needs manning/upgrading/posting of additional gatekeeper due to increase in road traffic only, the cost both initial as well as recurring and maintenance has to be borne by the State Government/Road Authority concerned. However, keeping in view the grave consequences of accidents at unmanned level crossings, Railways have decided to man vulnerable level crossings based on the traffic volume and visibility conditions at the unmanned level crossings. Manning of such level crossings is being done progressively. Railways do not maintain district-wise details of works to be undertaken in future.

*[English]***Integrated Management Plan for Monuments at Hampi**

2822. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) has been formulated to protect and manage the monuments at Hampi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the said plan?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) The Archaeological Survey of India has assigned the task of preparation of an Integrated Site Management Plan for Hampi to the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. The draft plan is being finalised in consultation with all stakeholders.

Recommendations of Expenditure Reforms Commission

2823. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting examined the recommendations of the Expenditure Reforms Commission;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations which have been accepted and implemented by the Ministry;

(c) the details of recommendations which have not been accepted by the Ministry alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of recommendations on which decision has not been taken so far and time by which decision is likely to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) The Expenditure Reforms Commission has, *inter alia*, recommended winding up Films Division, Photo Division, Song & Drama Division, Directorate of Field Publicity, Directorate of Publications Division, handing over of Film & Television Institute of India, Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Directorate of Film Festivals to Film Industry and the Children's Film Society, India, to Non-Governmental Organisations; disinvesting National Film Development Corporation and Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited and reducing/rationalising the role of other units.

The recommendations were examined in consultation with the heads of the media units of the Ministry and a response was sent to the Ministry of Finance.

The matter regarding implementation of the ERC's recommendations was placed before the Committee of Secretaries which in its meeting held on 28th April, 2004, *inter alia* recommended that:

"The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting shall implement the ERC recommendations and Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting shall quickly propose a road map for the implementation of the recommendations. The Field Publicity and Song & Drama Division shall be closed down and the Photo Division, Publications Division and Films Division shall be downsized substantially. The disinvestment of National Films Development Corporation and Broadcast Engineering Consultants of India Limited may be deferred."

No final decision on any of the recommendations has been taken so far.

[Translation]

Encroachment and Corruption In Cantonments

2824. SHRI BHUBNESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of encroachments in the cantonment areas and corruption in various Cantonment Boards/Cantonment Councils of the country;

(b) if so, the number of cases in regard to encroachment/corruption reported in Bareilly Cantonment Council and other Cantonment Boards during the last three years;

(c) the action taken against the officers found guilty; and

(d) the amount allocated by the Government for the development of these Cantonment Boards during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Encroachments on defence land within Cantonment areas are reported from time to time. There is no Cantonment Council in the country. The year-

wise details of encroachment of defence land within the Cantonments are as under:

Year	Encroachments in the Cantonment	
	Bareilly	Total
2002-2003	25	901
2003-2004	39	1152
2004-2005	16	306

There have been allegations of corrupt practices in a few Cantonment Boards including Bareilly. On charges of irregular purchase disciplinary proceedings against three officers were initiated during the last three years.

(d) The grant released by the Government to the Cantonment Boards during the last three years is as follows:

Year	Grants (in Crores)
2002-2003	Rs. 25.98
2003-2004	Rs. 25.00
2004-2005	Rs. 29.97
Total	Rs. 80.95

[*English*]

Passenger Coach Production Company

2825. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is considering to set up a passenger coach production company with a foreign company; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.

1-A Terminal for Private Airlines

2826. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India proposes to allow private airlines to operate from 1-A terminal in IGI Airport, Delhi; and

(b) if so, the reasons for allowing private airlines to use 1-A terminal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Indian Airlines, who is the handling agent for Kingfisher Airlines have asked permission from Airports Authority of India to allow Kingfisher Airlines to operate from 1-A terminal which has been agreed to.

(b) The decision was *inter-alia* based on the request from Indian Airlines and the need to improve services to passengers.

[*Translation*]

Goods Loading

2827. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:
SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the profit earned by the Railways by goods loading during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Railways have fixed any target for goods loading during the current year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof; and the target achieved till June 30, 2005?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Profit earned from goods loading is not worked out. However, the earning from goods loading and the expenditure incurred on goods services for the last three years are given below:

Year	Earning* from goods loading (Rs. in crores)	Expenditure on goods services (Rs. in crores)
2002-03	26231.45	20122.74
2003-04	27403.15	19401.34
2004-05	30844.13 (Provisional)	Not yet available

*Excluding miscellaneous earnings like wharfrage, demurrage etc.

(b) and (c) During the current year *i.e.* 2005-06, the target for goods loading has been fixed as 635 million tonnes for the full year and till 30th June, 2005 against the target of 152.81 million tonnes, the achievement was 159.98 million tonnes.

[English]

International Airport at Pune

2828. SHRI EKNATH M. GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for setting up an International Airport at Pune-Chakan;

(b) if so, the details alongwith its estimated cost thereof; and

(c) the present status of the project and the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) There is a proposal for development of a Greenfield International airport at Pune by Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) of Government of Maharashtra under joint venture with private participation. The site suggested by State Government of Maharashtra is under technical evaluation. No cost/project completion date can be stated at this stage.

[Translation]

Doubling of Line from Meerut to Saharanpur

2829. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal for doubling of Meerut-Saharanpur line is under consideration of the Government; and

(b) if so, the time by which the work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) An updating survey for doubling of Meerut-Saharanpur section has been completed recently. As per survey report, the cost of doubling of 113.62 kms. long line has been assessed at Rs. 238.38 crore with a rate of return as (-) 7.83%. In

view of constraint of resources, it has not been considered feasible to take up this work.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Irregularities in North East Frontier Railway

2830. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1339 dated March 10, 2005 regarding irregularities and corruption in North-East Frontier Railways and state:

(a) whether the investigation pertaining to irregularities in the award of contracts as well as execution thereof in Eklakhi-Balurghat New Line Construction Project has been completed;

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

(c) the action taken by the Government against the erring officials; and

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

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

(b) Investigations have been completed both by the Railway Vigilance as well as the Organisation of the Chief Technical Examiner (CTE), Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). The investigations conducted by the Railway Vigilance have revealed various irregularities on the part of some railway officials, while the investigations conducted by CTE's Organisation are under process with CVC.

(c) For the irregularities as revealed in the investigations conducted by the Railway Vigilance, chargesheets are under issue to the concerned railway officials.

(d) Does not arise.

Engagement of Private Producers

2831. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prasar Bharati has engaged the private producers for certain programmes like Kashmir Affairs and North East; and

(b) if so, the details of private producers engaged in the last two years along with the details of their programmes telecast with the payment made?

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

Appointment on Compassionate Grounds

2832. SHRI AMITAVA NANDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending with the Railways for appointment on compassionate grounds as on March 31, 2005, zone-wise; and

(b) the action taken or proposed to be taken to clear the cases and to provide employment to the dependants in a fixed time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Organisation Engaged In Collection and Distribution of News

2833. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of organisations engaged in collection and distribution of news and write-ups in the country;

(b) the number out of them having recognition of the Union Government;

(c) the norms fixed for recognising them; and

(d) the quantum of grants/loan provided to them during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) This Ministry does not

maintain a record of organizations engaged in collection and distribution of news and write-ups in the country. However, the representatives of the following major news agencies are accredited with Press Information Bureau (PIB):

1. United News of India (UNI)
2. UNIVarta-United News of India Varta
3. Press Trust of India (PTI)
4. Press Trust of India—Bhasha
5. Asian News International—India (ANI) (Wire Service)
6. Indo-Asian News Service (AINS)
7. India News & Feature Alliance (INFA)

(c) Norms for grant of accreditation are enclosed as statement.

(d) No grant/loan to such organizations has been provided by this Ministry during the last three years.

Statement

Press Information Bureau

Government of India

(These rules have been approved by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting vide I.D. Note No. 25/33/98-Press dated 10.8.1999)

Rules for Grant of Accreditation to News Media Representatives at the Headquarters of the Government of India and the Norms for the Constitution of Central Press Accreditation Committee

1. Short Title

These rules may be called 'The Central Newsmedia Accreditation Rules, 1999'.

2. Commencement and Scope

2.1 These rules shall come into force from the date of notification by the Government.

2.2 These rules shall apply to the grant of accreditation to representatives of news media organisations at the headquarters of the Government of India and shall supercede all previous rules in this regard.

3. Amendments

The Central Press Accreditation Committee or the Principal Information Officer can make recommendations to the Central Government for amendment of the rules from time to time as considered necessary.

4. Definitions

4.1 "*Central Press Accreditation Committee*" means a Committee constituted by the Government of India under these Rules.

4.2 '*Newspaper*' shall have the same definition as given in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867.

4.3 '*News Media*' shall include newspapers, wire service and non-wire service news agencies, News Feature Agencies, Electronic Media Agencies and organisations containing news and comments on public news.

4.4 A '*Daily Newspaper*' shall be published on not less than five days in a week or as defined in the PRB Act.

4.5 '*A Weekly*' and '*Fortnightly*' newspaper shall have not less than 45 or 22 issues in a year, respectively.

4.6 '*Principal Information Officer*' means the Principal Information Officer to the Government of India, hereinafter referred to as the PIO.

4.7 '*Working Journalist*' means any working journalist as defined in the Working Journalist (Conditions of Service and Miscellaneous Provision) Act, 1955.

4.8 '*Accreditation*' means recognition of news media representatives by the Government of India for purpose of access to sources of information in the Government and also to news materials, written or pictorial, released by the Press Information Bureau and/or other agencies of the Government of India.

4.9 '*Electronic News Media Organisation*' (Television or Radio) will include any TV/Radio News Programme Production Unit and TV/Radio News Agency.

5. The Central Press Accreditation Committee

5.1 The Government of India shall constitute a Committee called the Central Press Accreditation

Committee (hereinafter referred to as the CPAC) to discharge the functions laid down under these rules.

5.2 The CPAC shall consist of PIO as Chairperson and a maximum of 19 other members, representing Associations/Organisations or working journalists/mediapersons who should otherwise be eligible for accreditation under these rules.

5.3 The CPAC once constituted shall function for a period of two years from the date of its first meeting.

5.4 The CPAC shall meet generally once in a quarter or more frequently, as considered necessary.

5.5 The decisions of the CPAC shall be taken on the basis of majority of the members present and voting.

5.6 There will be a Standing Sub-Committee of the CPAC consisting of five Delhi based members to consider and take decisions on the accreditation cases of urgent nature and other related matters. These cases will be placed before the CPAC at its next meeting.

5.7 The PIO will have the power to grant regular accreditation in cases where an accredited news media representative changes his organisation to another accredited organisation.

6. General Terms of Accreditation

6.1 Accreditation will be given in accordance with these rules to news media representatives of various categories in different types of News-Media organisations as per eligibility conditions laid down in schedule I and within the Quota limits specified in Schedule II & III of these rules.

6.2 Accreditation shall be granted only to those representatives who reside at Delhi or its periphery.

6.3 Accreditation shall not confer any official or special status on news media representatives, but shall only recognise their identity as a professional working journalist.

6.4 Accreditation of representatives of only those media organisation will be considered which have been functioning or operating for at least one year, continuously.

- 6.5 The publication should carry at least 50 per cent of its contents as news and/or comments of general public interest. It should also include news and information emanating from the headquarters of the Government of India.
- 6.6 Publications containing information of sectional interest such as house journals, technical/professional publications etc. are not eligible for accreditation.
- 6.7 The organisations owned and run by Cable Operators providing Cable television service through Cable Television Network will not be eligible for accreditation.
- 6.8 Accreditation shall be withdrawn as soon as the conditions on which it was given cease to exist. Accreditation is also liable to be withdrawn/suspended if it is found to have been misused.
- 6.9 If an applicant or a media organisation is found to have supplied false/fraudulent/forged information/documents the representative/media organisation shall be debarred from accreditation upto a maximum of five years but not less than two years, as decided by CPAC.
- 6.10 The CPAC reserves to itself the right to recommend or reject grant of accreditation. In all accreditation cases, decision of the CPAC will be final.
- 7. Procedure for Accreditation**
- 7.1 The procedure for accreditation shall be laid down by the PIO in consultation with the CPAC.
- 7.2 The PIO can call for any information and documents considered necessary for the purpose of ensuring credibility and genuineness of cases of accreditation, at the time of accreditation or at its renewal or at any other time if so required.

Schedule-I***Eligibility Conditions******(Rule 6.1)***

Sl.No.	Category	Conditions
1	2	3

(A) News Representatives

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | Correspondents/Cameraman and other categories except freelance | Minimum 5 years professional experience as a full time working journalist/cameraman in news organisation(s). |
| 2. | Freelance Correspondents/ Camerapersons | (a) Minimum 15 years professional experience as a full time working journalist.
(b) Annual income not less than Rs. 36,000/-per financial year from the journalistic work only, for correspondents and still photographers.
(c) For TV camerapersons/correspondent-cum-cameramen, a minimum revenue of Rs. 5 lakh per year from news related programmes. |

(B) News Organisations (Print Media)

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 1. | Newspapers (Daily) | Circulation should not be less than 10,000 copies of 4 full size pages per publishing day. |
|----|--------------------|--|

1	2	3
2.	Newspapers (Weekly/fortnightly)	Circulation should not be less than 10,000 copies of 4 full size pages or 8 pages of tabloid size per publishing day.
3.	Periodicals/Magazines (Unto fortnightly only)	Circulation should not be less than 10,000 copies with a minimum of 40 pages per publishing day.
4.	Wire News Agency	(a) Annual Revenue not less than Rs. 20.000 lakh (b) Should have at least 30 news subscribers.
5.	News Photo Agency/News Feature Agency	(a) Annual Revenue not less than Rs. 2.50 lakh (b) Should have at least 20 paying subscribers.

(C) News Organisations (Electronic Media)

1. **TV Programme Production/Telecasts Organisations**
 - (i) TV/Radio News Production Organisations having air time arrangements with Channels/Stations
 - (a) Should have at least one news bulletin/programme of minimum 15 minutes duration per day.
 - (ii) Statellite Channels
 - (b) At least 15 percent of their respective air-time (approx. 3.5 hours in a 24 hours cycle) dedicated to telecast/transmission of news and news related programmes per day.
 - (iii) News magazine producing organisations having telecast/broadcast tie-up with TV Channels/Stations.
 - (c) A minimum total cumulative programme duration of 60 minutes per week on news and news related contents.
 2. **Television/Radio News Agencies**
 - (a) A minimum annual revenue of Rs. 15.00 lakh from news clips etc.
 - (b) Should supply news clips to at least 5 subscribing Satellite TV/Radio organisations on regular basis.
- (D) Foreign News Media Representatives and Organisations will also be governed by the same eligibility as mentioned at (A), (B) and (C) of this schedule. However, no foreign freelance journalist will be eligible for grant of accreditation.

Schedule II***Schedule of Quotas Fixed for various Categories of Newspapers/Media Establishments******(Rule 6.1)******Print Media***

1	2
1. Newspapers Belonging to Chains and Common Ownership Units with Aggregate circulation:	
1. Between 75000 and One lakh	10
2. Between 1 lakh and 2 lakh	12

1	2
3. Between 2 lakh and 3 lakh	22
4. Between 3 lakh and 5 lakh	30
5. Between 5 lakh and 10 lakh	40
6. 10 lakh and above	45
2. Dailies with Circulation:	
1. Between 10,000 and 15,000	01
2. Between 15,000 and 25,000	02
3. Between 25,000 and 35,000	03
4. Between 35,000 and 50,000	04
5. Between 50,000 and 75,000	05
6. Between 75,000 and one lakh	08
7. 1 lakh and above	10
3. Periodicals with Circulation:	
1. Between 10,000 and 25,000	02
2. Between 25,000 and 75,000	03
3. Between 75,000 and 1 lakh	04
4. Between 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh	06
5. Between 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh	08
7. Periodicals belonging to chains with common ownership/multi-lingual editions and combined circulation above 5 lakh	12
4. Cartoonist and Cartographers of Newspapers	
	01
5. Cameramen:	
1. Circulation between 10,000 and 25,000	01
2. Circulation between 25,000 and one lakh	03
3. Circulation between one lakh and 5 lakh	08
4. Circulation above 5 lakh	15
6. News Agencies (Wire) with Gross Annual Revenue:	
1. Between Rs. 20 lakh and 1 crore	12
2. Between Rs. 1 crore and Rs. 5 crore	18

1	2
3. Between Rs. 5 crore and Rs. 10 crore	25
4. Rs. 10 crore and above (Having services in one or more languages)	40
7. News Feature Agencies with Gross Annual Revenue:	
1. Between Rs. 2.50 lakh and 5 lakh	02
2. Rs. 5 lakh and above	04
8. Indian News Photo Agencies with Gross Annual Revenue:	
1. Between Rs. 2.50 lakh and Rs. 5 lakh	02
2. Rs. 5 lakh and above	05
3. Photo (Wire) Agencies	10
9. Foreign Based Dailies and Periodicals	05
10. Foreign News Agencies:	
1. Foreign News Agencies	10
2. Foreign Photo News Agencies	05

Schedule III

Schedule of Quotas Fixed for Various Categories of Electronic Media

(Rule 6.1)

1. TV News Production/Telecast/Organisation:	
• The Electronic Media Organisation having news Bulletin/current affairs programmes of a minimum of 15 minutes per day	3 Cameramen and 3 Correspondents
• An electronic media organisation having news Bulletins/Current Affairs programmes of more than 15 minutes and upto 30 minutes per day	5 Cameramen and 5 Correspondents
• An electronic media organisation having news Bulletins/Current Affairs programmes for more than 30 minutes per day	10 Cameramen and 10 Correspondents
• A TV Programme production/telecast organization producing a minimum total cumulative programme duration of 60 minutes per week on news and news related contents.	2 Cameramen and 2 Correspondents

2. Electronic Media News Agencies:

The eligibility of quota of accreditation in respect of TV/Radio News Agencies from news and news related programmes with a verifiable revenue will be as follows:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • Revenue of Rs. 15 lakh to 25 lakh per annum | 2 Cameramen and
2 Correspondents |
| • Revenue of more than Rs. 25 lakh and upto 75 lakh per annum | 4 Cameramen and
4 Correspondents |
| • Revenue of over 75 lakh and upto 2 crore per annum | 6 Cameramen and
6 Correspondents |
| • Revenue of more than 2 crore and upto Rs. 10 crore per annum | 8 Cameramen and
8 Correspondents |
| • Revenue of more than Rs. 10 crore Per annum | 10 Cameramen and
10 Correspondents |

3. Foreign Electronic Media:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Radio Broadcasting Organisations | 3 Correspondents |
| • TV News Telecasting Organisation and News Agencies | 5 teams of one Cameraman and one Correspondent each |
| • TV and Radio News Channels with hourly telecast of News and current affairs programmes | 8 teams of one Correspondent and one cameraman each |

Construction of Platform at Barbil

2834. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct a full-fledged platform at Barbil in East Coast Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the funds allocated for the project during the current financial year; and

(d) the steps taken to construct the platform at Barbil with all passenger amenities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Station is already provided with low level platform as per norms.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) The existing amenities at Barbil station are sufficient to cater to the present level of traffic, as per norms.

Regional Language Films

2835. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to promote regional language films;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) According to the Constitution of India, 'cinema' is a State subject, except certification of films, which is on the Union List. However, the Central Government has taken several supportive measures for the growth of cinema, including regional cinema, through the National Film Development Corporation Ltd., which extends finance to regional cinema; through Children's Film Society of India which produces children's films in various languages, including regional languages, through Doordarshan, which exhibits such cinema and through National Film Awards and the Indian Panorama section of the International Film Festival of India by recognizing the best of regional cinema.

Financial Assistance for Fairs and Festivals

2836. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has prescribed any guidelines for sanctioning of financial assistance to the State Governments for organizing fairs and festivals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any financial assistance has been extended to Tamil Nadu for organising such fairs and festivals during the last three years; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The Government has not prescribed any guidelines for sanctioning financial assistance to State Governments for organizing fairs and festivals. However, Zonal Cultural Centres associate with State Govts. in organizing selected fairs and festivals, as decided in their respective Programme Committees and Executive Bodies.

(c) and (d) The South Zone Cultural Centre, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture had extended financial assistance for organizing fair and festivals. During the last three years the South Zone Cultural Centre allotted funds to Tamil Nadu Government, Art and Culture Department, as per details given below:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Amount allotted
2003-04	12.70
2004-05	14.26
2005-06	18.07

Consumption of HSD

2837. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATIL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

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

(a) whether there has been a declining trend in consumption of High Speed Diesel by major consumers;

(b) if so, whether the causes for declining trend have been investigated in the matter;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. While the retail sales of OMCs have declined by about 2.7% during the first quarter of the current year, there has been a growth of 4.8% in direct sales to major consumers during this period.

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

Constitution of Rail Freight Authority

2838. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Railways has any plan to constitute a Rail Freight Authority for executing the proposed Golden Quadrilateral Project;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Utilisation of Reserves and Surplus Amount

2839. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge amount of 'Reserves and Surplus' was lying as unproductive in the Central Public Sector Enterprises at the end of March, 2004;

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

(c) whether there is any scheme to utilise this amount towards productivity; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) As per Public Enterprises Survey, 2003-04 which was laid in Parliament on 02.05.2005, there were reserves & surplus of Rs. 2,59,576 crore in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) as on 31.03.2004 till which period the information is available. This amount is utilized in the normal course of business by the concerned CPSEs, which take a view in this regard as per their requirements.

[English]

Export of Dhruv

2840. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has exported the Advanced Light Helicopter, Dhruv manufactured by HAL;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of Dhruv Helicopter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY

HANDIQUE): (a) Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) has exported Dhruv Helicopters.

(b) HAL has supplied three helicopters to foreign countries of which one is on lease.

(c) For marketing purposes, Dhruv Helicopter is demonstrated at prominent Air Shows abroad. Proposals for export are followed up with potential customers.

[Translation]

Operation of Illegal Vendors in Catering System

2841. MOHD. SHAHID:
SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI MUNSHI RAM:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the operation of illegal vendors in the catering system in trains;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Some cases of illegal vendors operating in trains have come to notice.

(b) and (c) Unauthorized hawking on railway stations and in trains is a punishable offence under the Railways Act. Railway administration conduct special drives from time to time to curb illegal vending and strict action is taken against the persons as per the provisions of the Act.

Pending Projects

2842. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some schemes/projects relating to petroleum sector received from the State Governments are pending for clearance with the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for delay in giving clearance to these projects/schemes; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to clear these projects?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. No scheme/project pertaining to Petroleum Sector for clearance of the Union Government has been received in this Ministry.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Computerised Railway Reservation Facility at Amalner Railway Station

2843. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether computerised railway reservation facility at Amalner railway station in Maharashtra is being provided or proposed to be provided by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which this facility is likely to be provided; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Computerised railway reservation facility has already been provided at Amalner on 30.3.05.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Travelling of Train Passengers on Roof-Top

2844. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that passengers often travel on the roof-top of coaches due to heavy rush in trains, leading to accidents;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to adopt stringent measures to check travelling on roof-top of the trains to avoid accidents; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) some cases of passengers travelling on the roof of the train have come to notice.

(b) and (c) Roof top travelling is a punishable offence under the Railways Act and strict action is taken against the persons violating these provisions. Regular checks are conducted by various railway agencies in association with Railway Magistrates on sections prone to roof-top

travelling. A constant watch is also kept at the stations to prevent passengers from travelling on roof-top of the trains. Extensive publicity is given through various media including Public Address System to educate the travelling public about the consequences of such travel.

[English]

Air Connectivity with Foreign Countries

2845. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to increase air connectivity to various countries; and

(b) if so, the countries to which additional flights are proposed to be introduced during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Review of traffic rights in the international sector is continuous process. Bilateral talks are held with various countries from time to time to consider their requests for enhancement of traffic rights with a view to increase air connectivity, based on balance of benefit to our carriers, as well as overall interest of national economy and diplomatic considerations.

(b) During the current year, additional traffic rights have been granted to the designated airlines of USA, France, UK, Mauritius, China, UAE, Iran, Oman, Qatar, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Canada, Bhutan, Philippines, South Africa & Brazil subject to reciprocal rights to the designated airlines of India. Actual commencement of services is subject to the commercial judgement of the designated airlines.

[Translation]

Construction of Airports

2846. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:
DR. K. DHANARAJU:
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:
SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:
SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:
SHRI HITEN BARMAN:
DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:
SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
SHRI TUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE
PATIL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of new airports proposed to be constructed during Tenth Five Year Plan along with locations thereof;

(b) the allocation of funds made for each airport;

(c) the details of such airports which are under construction; and

(d) the time by which the construction work of remaining airports is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) At present two Greenfield airport projects, one at Devanahalli near Bangalore and the other at Shamshabad near Hyderabad, are in progress. Government of India has already entered into Concession Agreements with the project companies of these Greenfield airports. The project company for Devanahalli airport, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), has already executed the relevant project agreements and the Financial Close has been achieved by it on 23rd June, 2005. As per the Concession Agreement entered by Government of India with BIAL, the new airport at Devanahalli is required to be completed within 33 months from the date of Financial Close.

The project agreements for Shamshabad, Hyderabad airport are in different stages of execution. The project Company for this airport i.e Hyderabad International Airport Limited (HIAL) is required to complete this project within 36 months from the date of financial close, as per the Concession Agreement entered by Government of India with HIAL. Financial Close is expected to be achieved by September, 2005. Approximately Rs. 1400 crores each are likely to be spent on construction of international airport at Bangalore and Hyderabad. Government has also given 'in principle' approval for construction of new Greenfield airports at MOPA in Goa for which the State Government has got a Techno Economic Feasibility Report prepared. There are also plans for construction of greenfield airports at Navi Mumbai, Chakan near Pune, Ludhiana in Punjab, Kannur in Kerala, Pakyong in Sikkim, Kohima in Nagaland which are at preliminary stages.

Panchayat Portal Scheme

2847. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to formulate the National Panchayat Portal Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the rationale behind formulating the National Panchayat Portal Scheme;

(d) the time by which the said scheme is likely to be implemented; and

(e) the fund likely to be spent by the Government for the implementation of the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) A National Portal at <http://panchayat.nic.in> is already functional.

(b) to (d) The Portal contains the framework for the websites of all State Panchayati Raj Departments, all Zilla Parishad, all Block Parishads and all village panchayats. States have been advised to update the District and Block wise data of village panchayats and their bank accounts through the State units of National Informatics Centre (NIC) to finally upload these on the National Panchayat Portal.

(e) No fund allocation has been made specifically for this purpose.

[English]

Installation of anti-Collision Device

2848. DR. K. DHANARAJU:

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4185 dated April 21, 2005 regarding Anti-Collision Device and state:

(a) the present status of installation of Anti-Collision Device (ACD) as a pilot project on North-East Frontier Railway (NFR);

(b) whether the work of installation of ACD on the said route has been completed;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith total expenditure incurred thereon;

(d) whether the Railways have selected other routes/ sections for installation of ACD; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and expenditure to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) After completion of installation, checking and fine tuning of Anti Collision Device (ACD) by Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. (KRCL) on Katihar-Guwahati section, Site Acceptance Test has started.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) An expenditure of Rs. 43.24 crore has been incurred upto 30.7.2005 on ACD project of N.F. Railway.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) These sections are Jalandhar-Amritsar on Northern Railway, Ernakulam-Palghat-Erode-Chennai on Southern Railway, Bellary-Guntakal-Renigunta on South Central Railway, Vasco-Madgaon-Londa-Hubli-Bellary and Bangalore-Jolarpettai on South Western railway. In the Corporate Safety Plan of Indian Railways (2003-2013), the ACD works has been projected on entire Board Gauge section of 52,600 route Kms at a cost of Rs. 1815 crore to be completed by 2013-14).

Induction of INS Beas

2849. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government plans to induct INS-Beas;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be inducted;

(c) whether the Government intends to explore export market for the same; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) INS Beas was commissioned on 11th July 2005. It was built at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) GRSE and Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) are capable of building warships for export purposes and are exploring the possibility of getting export orders. They also regularly participate in Defence exhibitions abroad to publicise their capabilities.

Outsourcing of Public Relations Work by A.I.

2850. KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH:
SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air India proposes to outsource its public relations works;

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

(c) whether Air India is considering to appoint public relations agency;

(d) if so, the details of agencies shortlisted and selected for the purpose; and

(e) the main activities to be assigned to these agencies?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) While the Public Relations Department of Air India would continue to handle the function of media relations, two agencies have been shortlisted based on technical bids to supplement the efforts of the Department. The main activities proposed to be assigned to the agency include media monitoring, image audit, providing communication counsel and advice on an ongoing basis, assist and develop effective channels of communications to consumers, employees, trade and other partners and other related activities.

Defence Modernisation Fund

2851. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had dispensed the non-lapsable Defence Modernisation Fund;

(b) if so, whether the Government is now contemplating to revive the said Fund;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Non-lapsable Defence Modernisation Fund has not been set up so far. Therefore, the question of dispensing with it or of its revival does not arise.

(d) Government have already decided not to pursue the proposal for setting up a Defence Modernisation Fund.

[English]

Allotment of Commissioned Programmes

2852. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the large scale irregularities and discrepancies in allotment of commissioned programmes in the North-Eastern Region;

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

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

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (e) Prasar Bharati has informed that petitions were filed in the Guwahati High Court alleging irregularities by Doordarshan Kendra, Guwahati in the selection of producers for commissioned programmes during 2004-05. The petitions have since been dismissed.

Mobile Telephones in Railways

2853. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to introduce mobile telephones in the Railways as a channel of communication among the driver, guard and station manager.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether introduction of mobile telephones will replace the present system of walky talky; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the decision is likely to be effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It has been decided to provide Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) between Driver & Guard of a running train, Master & control office, on category 'A', 'B' & 'C' routes, on Indian Railways. MTRC System would not only enhance safety in train operations but would also help maintenance staff along the railway track.

Eight (8) Works for provision of MTRC on a total of 2530 Route Kilometres have already been sanctioned on 5 zonal railways viz. Eastern, East Central, Northern, Northeast Frontier and North Central Railways for execution.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Eight Sanctioned works are expected to be completed by the financial year 2006-07 subject to availability of funds. Walkie-talkie sets on these sections will be withdrawn as soon as the work is commissioned.

Facilities for Handicapped

2854. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme court has directed the Union Government as well as some State Governments to take certain measures to ensure safety and accessibility to roads, public transport and related facilities for visually handicapped people;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or being taken by the Government in the light of directions issued by the Supreme Court?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Opening of Army Schools

2855. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI:
SHRI D. NARBULA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open army schools in different States;

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

(c) the time by which these are likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There are no 'Army Schools' being run by the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

GAIL's Training Centres

2856. SHRI SURAJ SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new training centre is being constructed in Jaipur (Rajasthan) by the GAIL (India) Ltd;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon;

(c) whether the GAIL proposes to modernize and expand the GAIL training centre at Noida;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the plan chalked out in this regard;

(e) whether any irregularities have come to the notice of the Government on these two projects;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken by the Government thereon?

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

SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) A technical training centre for non-executives has been commissioned at Jaipur by GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL) on 31.1.2005 involving an expenditure of about Rs. 3.57 crore. It has training facilities like classrooms, computer lab, mechanical/instrumentation/electric labs, library etc besides residential accommodation for trainees.

(c) and (d) GAIL have reported that there management development centre at NOIDA is under renovation for creating infrastructure facilities, benchmarked to world-class institutions, for conducting specialized/customized training programmes in the hydrocarbon sector. The likely cost of the project is Rs. 12.30 crore and is expected to be completed by April 2006.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

[English]

Jobs to Displaced Persons

2857. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have taken over land from individuals in Maharashtra for railway projects;

(b) if so, the details of the land acquired by the Railways during the last three years; and

(c) the number of persons whose land was acquired and the number of persons out of them provided jobs during each of the last three years?

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

(b) and (c) A Statement is enclosed.

Statement

Name of the project	Year of land acquisition	Qty. of land acquired from private parties	No. of land owners involved	No. of persons given employment
1	2	3	4	5
Thane-Turbhe Vashi/Nerul	2002-03	1099.70 square metres	11	Nil

1	2	3	4	5
Panvel-Karjat New BG line	1996-2004	152.56 hectare	749	Nil
Panvel-Roha Doubling	1999-2004	9.98 hectare	89	Nil
Daund-Bhigwan	2002	40.64 hectare	185	Nil
Amravati-Narkher New Line	1995-2002	762.9 hectare	2239	Nil
Kurla-Thane 5th & 6th Line	2002-03	269.10 square metres	4	Nil
Latur-Miraj gauge conversion	2003-04	112.21 hectare	281	Nil

Free Travel Facility to Freedom Fighters

2858. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI:
Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the trains in which freedom fighters are not having free travel facility;

(b) whether the Railways propose to provide free travel facility to freedom fighters in such trains;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) As per the scheme finalised in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Freedom Fighters are not eligible to travel by Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express trains on Freedom Fighters pass, except for ex-Andaman political prisoners who have been allowed this facility as a special privilege.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The scheme has been finalised by the Ministry of Home Affairs who bear the cost of passes issued to Freedom Fighters. The scheme does not envisage travel by Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express trains by the Freedom Fighters holding Railway Passes except for ex-Andaman political prisoners in view of financial implications as well as limited accommodation available on these trains.

Agreement with Turkey and Romania

2859. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minister of Petroleum visited Turkey and Romania recently;

(b) if so, the issues discussed and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether any agreement was signed with both the countries in the field of oil and natural gas;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extent to which these countries have agreed to provide gas to India?

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

(b) to (e) The details are given at statement enclosed.

Statement

(A) Turkey

An official delegation led by the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Panchayati Raj visited Turkey on 28-30 June 2005 and held discussions with the Turkish Minister for Energy and Industry and senior officials of Turkish Oil Industries. The two sides identified a number of specific areas of bilateral cooperation and agreed to provide necessary support for further strengthening the relationship. The following points emerged:

1. Turkish companies were invited to participate in Exploration & Production activities in India as well and form alliances to obtain Exploration and Production Contracts with Indian companies in Turkey.

2. Seek the interest of Turkish companies in establishing export-oriented refineries in India. Indian Oil companies will explore investment opportunities in Turkish Refineries.
3. Turkish companies to be approached for joint pursuit of oil and gas projects in third countries.
4. Cooperation/partnership in pipeline projects under execution for transport of oil and gas through Turkey to Europe.
5. Explore possibilities of participation in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline to try to access the Turkish share of the oil.
6. To establish a Joint Working Group (JWG) under the overall aegis of the Joint Commission to promote cooperation in the oil and gas sector in both countries as well as third countries.

(B) Romania

An Official delegation led by the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Panchayati Raj visited Romania on 1-4 July, 2005 and held discussions with the deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Economy and Commerce, senior officials of the Romanian oil industry, businesspersons of the regional Chambers of Commerce & Industry and senior officials in the R&D, training and academic sector of the oil industry. The two sides identified a number of specific areas of bilateral cooperation, including: exploration, refining projects in third countries, transnational pipelines, academic exchanges and cooperation in the R&D sector. During the visit, the following Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed:

- (i) Inter-governmental MoU between India and Romania on co-operation in various oil and gas activities;
- (ii) MoU on cooperation between the Indian University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, Dehradun and the Petroleum & Gas University, Ploiesti, Romania.
- (iii) MoU on cooperation between the K.D. Malviya Institute of Petroleum Exploration, ONGC, and Petroleum & Gas University, Ploesti, Romania; and
- (iv) MoU on cooperation for enhancing business partnership between CII, India, and the Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Prahova, Romania.

Training for Operation of High Speed Bullet Trains

2860. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the French Railways has offered to provide training to Indian Railways in signalling, manufacture and operation of High-Speed Bullet Trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to introduce High Speed Bullet Trains in the near future;

(d) if so, the salient features thereof:

(e) the routes on which these trains are proposed to be run; and

(f) the manner in which the Government proposes to meet the funds required for the said project?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) Do not arise.

Upgradation of Museums

2861. SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of museums under the control and supervision of Archaeological Survey of India, State-wise;

(b) the details of museums upgraded during the last three years;

(c) whether there is any proposal to upgrade some of the museum during 2005-06; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) The details of the museums under

the control and supervision of Archaeological Survey of India State-wise is placed at Statement enclosed.

(b) During the last three years ASI had carried out improvements in the following site museums:

Koch Behar Palace (West Bengal), Residency (Lucknow), Purana Quila (New Delhi), Samath (UP), Hampi (Karnataka), Hazarduari Palace (West Bengal), Konark (Orissa) and Fort St. George (Chennai).

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. ASI proposes to undertake a phased programme of upgradation of the site museums. During 2005-06, it is proposed to take up the work on the museums located at Samath, Hazarduari Palace, Nagarjunakonda, Hampi, Agra (Taj Mahal) and two museums at New Delhi (Red Fort). The scope of upgradation is yet to be finalized, but would include renovation of the building, improvement of the display and lighting and augmentation of visitors' facilities.

Two museums buildings are being constructed at Khajuraho and Chanderi in Madhya Pradesh.

Statement

Museums Under the Control and Supervision of Archaeological Survey of India, State-wise

Sl.No.	State	District	Name of Museum
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	District Guntur	1. Amaravati Museum, Amaravati
		District Chittoor	2. Chandragiri Museum, Chandragiri
		District Medak	3. Kondapur Museum, Kondapur
		District Guntur	4. Nagarjunakonda Museum, Nagarjunakonda
2.	Assam	District Golpara	5. Surya Pahar Museum, Surya Pahar
3.	Bihar	District Bhagalpur	6. Vikramshila Museum, Antichak
		District Gaya	7. Bodhgaya Museum, Bodhgaya
		District Nalanda	8. Nalanda Museum, Nalanda
		District Vaishali	9. Vaishali Museum, Vaishali
4.	Delhi	Delhi	10. Archaeological Museum, Red Fort, Delhi
		Delhi	11. Indian War Memorial Museum, Red Fort, Delhi
		New Delhi	12. Purana Qila Museum, Purana Qila, New Delhi
		Delhi	13. Swatantrata Sangram Sangrahalaya, Red Fort, Delhi.
		Delhi	14. Salimgarh Museum, Red Fort, Delhi
5.	Gujarat	Distt. Ahmedabad	15. Lothal Museum, Lothal
6.	Goa	North Goa	16. Velha Goa Museum, Old Goa
7.	Haryana	District Kurukshetra,	17. Sheikh Chilli's Tomb Museum, Thaneswar
8.	Himachal Pradesh	District Kangra	18. Kangra Fort Musuem, Kangra

1	2	3	4
9.	Karnataka	District Bagalkot, Bijapur District Bagalkot District, Hassan, District Hospet Distt. Mandya	19. Aihole Museum, Aihole 20. Bijapur Museum, Bijapur 21. Badami Museum, Badami 22. Halebidu Museum, Halebidu 23. Hampi Museum, Kamalapur 24. Tipu Sultan Palace Museum, Daria Daulta Bagh, Srirangapattana
10.	Kerala	District Kochi,	25. Mattanchery Palace Museum, Ernakulam
11.	Madhya Pradesh	District Raisen District Ashok Nagar District Gwalior District Chhatarpur	26. Sanchi Museum, Sanchi 27. Chanderi Museum, Chanderi 28. Gwalior Museum, Gwalior 29. Khajuraho Museum, Khajuraho
12.	Orissa	District Puri District Jajpur	30. Konark Museum, Konark 31. Ratnagiri Museum, Ratnagiri
13.	Punjab	District Roop Nagar	32. Ropar Museum, Ropar
14.	Rajasthan	District Hanumangarh	33. Kalibangan Museum, Kalibangan
15.	Tamil Nadu	District Chennai	34. Fort St. George Museum, Chennai
16.	Uttar Pradesh	District Varanasi District Lucknow District Agra	35. Samath Museum, Samath 36. Residency Museum, Lucknow 37. Taj Mahal Museum, Agra
17.	Uttaranchal	District Almora,	38. Jageshwar Museum, Jageshwar
18.	West Bengal	District Murshidabad District Koch Behar District East Midnapore	39. Hazarduari Place Museum, Hazarduari 40. Koch Behar Palace Museum, Koch Behar 41. Tamluk Museum, Tamluk

Outstanding Dues Against Power Houses/SEBs

2862. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of Railways outstanding against the power houses/State Electricity Boards as on June 30, 2005; and

(b) the steps taken by the Railways to recover these outstanding dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The amount of Railways outstanding against the power houses/State Electricity Boards as on June 30, 2005 is Rs. 1480 crore.

(b) The steps taken by the Railways to recover these outstanding dues are as under:

- (1) Close monitoring of recovery of outstanding dues is done at all levels by holding meetings with the representatives of State Electricity Boards (SEBs)/Power Houses. Special drives for clearance of outstanding dues are lunched from time to time.
- (2) State Electricity Boards/Power Houses are being encouraged to adopt the pre-payment scheme of freight for carriage of coal.
- (3) Extension of facility of Electronic Payment Gateway to all major customers including SEBs.
- (4) Adjustment of dues outstanding from State Electricity Boards/Power Houses is done against traction bills payable to them by the Railways.
- (5) Meetings are also held with Secretaries of the concerned Ministries.

[Translation]

Working Conditions of Gangmen

2863. SHRI PARAS NATH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted a Committee to improve the working conditions of gangmen; and

(b) if so, the details alongwith the terms of reference thereof?

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

(b) The committee consisting of 3 Executive Directors was constituted in June, 2005 to look in to various issues related with uniforms and other protective equipments required for the Gangmen and its allied categories like Keymen, Mates and Track Patrollers so that their working efficiency could be improved.

The terms of the reference of the Committee are:

- (i) To review the existing norms and specifications of the Uniform and other protective equipments being supplied to Gangmen, Keymen, Mates and Patrolmen.

- (ii) to examine the need and justification for additional items, if any, to be given to these categories of staff and make appropriate recommendations with likely financial implications.

[English]

Bid for Oil Blocks In Myanmar

2864. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Myanmar has allowed Indian Oil companies to bid for oil blocks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the oil companies would be benefited by such offer of oil blocks?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) the onland areas of Myanmar are oil prone and the offshore areas are rich in gas. A consortium of ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), GAIL (India) Limited, KOGAS and Daewoo International Corporation (Operators) have Participating Interests (PI) in offshore Block A-1 I the ratio of 20%, 10%, 10% and 60% respectively. OVL and GAIL have finalized an agreement with Daewoo to acquire 20% and 10% PI in the offshore A3 Block. A private Indian company has also signed contracts for two blocks in Myanmar. The consortium of IOC, OIL and GAIL has recently submitted bids for participation in two onshore blocks, viz., RSF-6 and RSF-9 offered by the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE).

(c) The Indian oil companies would have an opportunity to explore prospective blocks of Myanmar where significant hydrocarbon reserves have been discovered. The blocks are being offered under Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) which will entitle the parties to contract to take their share of petroleum upon production of oil/gas from the blocks following any discoveries made.

[Translation]

Cities without Air/Doordarshan Broadcasting Facility

2865. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Doordarshan/AIR facility has been provided in all the cities/towns in the country;

(b) if not, the name of the cities/towns where telecasting/broadcasting facility of Doordarshan/All India Radio has not been provided so far in the country and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the facility would be provided in these cities/towns?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (e) While all the cities/towns in the country may not have AIR and Doordarshan Kendras, the existing radio stations and Doordarshan transmitters provide primary grade terrestrial coverage to about 99.13% and 99.7% population respectively in the country.

In addition, to ensure total coverage a multi-channel facility with a bouquet of 33 TV and 12 radio channels has been provided through "DD direct-Plus"—free-to-air DTH service of Doordarshan, launched in December, 2004 to provide coverage to hitherto uncovered and under-served areas. It is possible to receive DTH signals anywhere in the country (except Andaman & Nicobar Islands) with the help of a small sized dish receive unit.

In view of the coverage provided by the DTH facility, no new Doordarshan transmitters are envisaged to be set up. Schemes for terrestrial expansion of radio coverage under implementation will be completed during the 10th Plan depending upon approvals and availability of funds.

[English]

Utilisation of Services of Retired Officers' in PSUs

2866. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any shortage at Board level posts in the Public Sector Undertakings;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to utilize the services of retired officers in the Public Sector Undertakings;

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

(d) whether the Government has identified the PSUs in which the services of such retired officials are to be used;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (f) Out of a total of 210 posts of Chief Executives and 460 posts of functional Directors in various Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs), 30 posts of Chief Executives and 65 posts of functional Directors were vacant as on 30.6.2005. In respect of these vacant posts, the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) has already made selection for 21 posts of chief executives and 40 posts of functional directors. Filling up of the Board level posts is a continuous process.

Aircraft Engineering Centres

2867. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up aircraft engineering centres and technical training institutes keeping in view the increase in growth of aviation market in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, Directorate General of Civil Aviation has approved 36 Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Training Institutes including five under Indian Air Force for imparting ab-initio training in the field of Aircraft Maintenance Engineering.

Opening up of Air Services to Foreign/ Private Airlines

2868. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has studied the implication of opening up of aviation sector to the foreign and private carriers; and

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) According to Government's assessment, gradual liberalization in international air services is necessary both for accelerating economic growth and also to meet the increasing demand for travel on international routes. Greater air connectivity is particularly important from the point of view of growth of the national economy through comparative advantages in the fields of tourism, business, trade and commerce, each requiring enhanced capacity and connectivity, both in terms of quantity and quality. The policy of measured liberalization pursued in the civil aviation sector, which includes permitting private airlines to fly to overseas destinations, has been done keeping these aspects into consideration.

Central Monitoring Cell

2869. SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPAPARAI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up Central Monitoring Cell to oversee the progress of implemented schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Track Cleanliness

2870. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work of track cleanliness in Railways has been entrusted to private sector;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure cleanliness in all railway premises?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The work of track cleanliness to the extent of facilitating working by maintenance personnel is being got done through private agencies/individual at selected locations like approaches of major cities where the problem of deposition of night soil in track is more acute.

Only on some of the Railways, partially work has been entrusted to private sector.

Eastern Railway: At Sealdah, Ballygunge, Sonarpur, Barasat, Howrah Old Complex (partially), Howrah New Complex (partially) & Asansol stations.

Northern Railway: Delhi-Ambala Section (Delhi area).

Western Railway: Churchgate-Virar Section.

(c) For improving cleanliness at railway stations, a number of steps have been taken which include emphasis on mechanized cleaning processes, additional dustbins, regular removal of garbage, spraying of insecticides, repairs to drains, introduction of 'Pay & Use' scheme of toilet etc. Moreover, cleanliness drives and surprise checks are also conducted from time to time. Frequent announcements are made to seek the cooperation of the travelling public in keeping the station premises clean.

Removal of Media Restrictions

2871. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the experts have demanded from the Governments of India and Pakistan to immediately remove all restrictions on sale and exchange of newspapers, magazines and beaming of news channels from either country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Indian Government in the matter?

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

S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) As informed by the Ministry of External Affairs, Pakistan exercises a ban on Indian news channels and print media. Pakistani TV channels and civil society have been lobbying to lift this ban. The Government of India have asked Pakistan to remove the existing ban on Indian TV news channels and to permit commercial exchange of newspapers, books and periodicals.

Development and Expansion of Delhi Airport

2872. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India is currently considering the development and expansion of Delhi Airport;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the natural quiet and heritage of Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi is eroding due to development and expansion plan formulated for Delhi Airport; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to restore the natural quiet and heritage of JNU?

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

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Modernisation of Tindharia Workshop

2873. SHRI D. NARBULA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the Darjeeling Himalayan Railways and its workshop at Tindharia are presently in deplorable conditions;

(b) if so, the remedial action taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government proposes to modernize the Tindharia workshop;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons, therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) and its workshop are in need of inputs of improvement of locomotives and coaches.

(b) The Railway Board has decided to create an independent management unit for DHR under a senior officer at Kurseong. An officer has been identified and is being posted at Kurseong by General Manager, Northeast Frontier Railway in terms of this decision of the Railway Board. Also, a Heritage Directorate for the World Heritage considerations has already been created in the Railway Board.

Air Brakes have been provided on one Rake of coaches of DHR and shall be progressively extended to other coaches. One Narrow Gauge wheel lathe has been sanctioned for Tindharia Workshop on replacement account at the cost of Rupees Three crores.

(c) No, Sir. Original heritage character of workshop shall be maintained.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The authenticity and integrity of the workshop is proposed to be maintained in view of its world Heritage status. However, technical inputs for upgradation of facilities shall be provided in a need based manner from time to time.

Foreign Airways Participation

2874. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some foreign Airways have applied for air business expansion at Port Blair;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No foreign airlines have applied for scheduled operations at Port Blair.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

World Heritage Sites in Agra

2875. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether UNESCO suggested in its recently concluded meet that three World Heritage sites in Agra—Taj, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri be renominated as world Heritage property;

(b) if so, the response of the Union Government on this suggestion; and

(c) the measures taken by the Union Government to maintain individual World Heritage status of these three sites?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) The World Heritage Committee in its recently concluded meeting at Durban suggested that the State Party (India) may consider possible future renomination of the three sites of Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri and Agra Fort as a single World Heritage property.

(b) and (c) The Union Government is not considering such a renomination and the three sites would continue to remain as separate World Heritage sites.

[Translation]

School of Drama and Training Centres

2876. SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the School of Drama and Training Centres functioning in the country at present;

(b) whether the Government has any proposal to establish more School of Drama and Training Centres;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Apart from National School of

Drama set up by the Government of India, the School of Dramas and Training Centres in other States are: Bhartendu Natya Academy, Lucknow (UP); Rangayana, Mysore (Karnataka) and Kala Academy, Goa funded by respective State Governments. There are Theatre Departments in various Universities like Punjab University; Chandigarh; Patiala University, Patiala; Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata; Calicut University, Calicut (School of Drama, Trichur), Kerala; Mumbai University, Mumbai; Hyderabad University, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh; Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar University, Baroda; Rajasthan University, Jaipur, etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Financial Assistance to Panchayats

2877. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has provided financial assistance to village panchayats in Bihar through "Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana"; and

(b) if so, the funds provided to panchayats in Bihar during each of the last three years and current year so far?

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

(b) The details of the Central funds released under SGRY to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Bihar during the last three years and the current year are given below:

Year	Rs. in lakhs
2002-03	26727.42
2003-04	34203.10
2004-05	49196.29
2005-06	22450.34

Coal Bed Methane

2878. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

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

(a) the estimated Coal Bed Methane (CBM) resources in India;

(b) whether the Government has signed any contract with PSUs/private companies for exploration and production of CBM;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which the commercial production of CBM will start in the country?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The estimated CBM resources in the country are approximately 1.4 TCM.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Government have signed 16 CBM contracts with the PSUs and private companies for exploration and production of CBM. Details are enclosed as statement.

(d) The commercial production of CBM in the country is likely to commence by 2007-08.

Statement*Details of 16 contracts signed for exploration and production of CBM*

Sl.No.	Block	State	Area Sq.Km	Contractor
1	2	3	4	5
(A) Contracts signed under the first round of CBM (CBM-I)				
1.	Bokaro	Jharkhand	95	ONGC-IOC
2.	North Karanpura	Jharkhand	340	OnGC-IOC
3.	Sohagpur East	Madhya Prades	495	RIL
4.	Sohagpur West	Madhya Pradesh	500	RIL
5.	Raniganj East	West Bengal	500	EOL
(B) Contracts signed on nomination basis				
6.	Raniganj North	West Bengal	350	ONGC-CIL
7.	Jharia	Jharkhand	85	ONGC-CIL
8.	Raniganj South	West Bengal	210	GEECL
(C) Contracts signed under the second round of CBM (CBM-II)				
9.	South Karanpura	Jharkhand	70	ONGC
10.	North Karanpura (W)	Jharkhand	267	ONGC
11.	Satpura	Madhya Pradesh	714	ONGC
12.	Wardha	Maharashtra	503	ONGC
13.	Sonhat	Chhattisgarh	825	RIL

1	2	3	4	5
14.	Barmer (1)	Rajasthan	1045	RIL
15.	Barmer (2)	Rajasthan	1020	RIL
16.	Barmer-Sanchor	Gujarat	790	ONGC-GSPCL
Grand Total (A+B):		7809		

- (i) ONGC : Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited
(ii) IOC : Indian Oil Corporation Limited
(iii) RIL : Reliance Industries Limited
(iv) EOL : Essar Oil Limited
(v) CIL : Coal India Limited
(vi) GEECL : Great Eastern Energy Corporation Limited.
(vii) GSPCL : Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Limited

[Translation]

Installation of Automatic Coach Washing Plant

2879. MOHD. SHAHID:
SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI MUNSHI RAM:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:
SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to install automatic coach washing plants at the railway stations;

(b) if so, the details of the railway stations where such washing plants are to be installed;

(c) the estimated cost likely to incur on installation of such automatic plants; and

(d) the other steps being taken to improve the cleanliness at the stations and in trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) There is no proposal to install coach washing plant at railway stations. However automatic coach washing plants are planned to be installed at coach maintenance depots. An automatic coach washing plant of indigenous make has been running in Southern Railway. Railways is also considering

procurement of an advanced fully automatic coach washing plant through global tender. The cost of indigenous plants may be in the range of Rs. 40-50 lakhs and the cost of coach washing plant with advanced feature is expected to be between Rs. 2.5 and 4 crore. After sufficient experience is gained, the Railway shall decide on the location and type of such plants.

(d) For improving cleanliness at railway stations, a number of initiatives have been taken which include emphasis on mechanized cleaning processes, additional dustbins, regular removal of garbage, spraying of insecticides, repairs to drains, introduction of 'Pay & Use' scheme of toilets etc. Moreover, cleanliness drives and surprise checks are also conducted from time to time. frequent announcements are made to seek the cooperation of the travelling public in keeping the station premises clean.

For improving cleanliness of trains, during Primary Maintenance the trains are cleaned thoroughly both internally and externally. At the other end of the journey only internal cleaning is done in respect of trains having a round trip distance of not more than 2500 kilometres.

For enroute cleaning of coaches a pilot project under the name "Clean Train Station", where all the coaches of a passing train are cleaned using suitable machines, was successfully implemented at Ratlam, Western Railway. The overall objective of the project is to ensure that all passing through trains get thoroughly cleaned every six to eight hours of running time during the day. Zonal Railways

have now been instructed to set up one station each as "Clean Train Station" during 2005-06 on the pattern of Ratlam.

As per Integrated Railway Modernization Plan (IRMP) 2004, 50 "Clean Train Stations" to cover important stations over the whole of Indian Railways are to be set up in the next 5 years i.e., by end of 2009-10.

Rail Projects of Uttar Pradesh

2880. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:
KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH:
SHRI SURENDRA PRAKASH GOYAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work on some sanctioned rail projects in Uttar Pradesh is behind the schedule;

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

(c) the measures taken or proposed to be taken for timely completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The works are progressing as per availability of resources.

(c) a number of initiatives have been taken to mobilize other than normal budgetary resources to expedite completion of ongoing projects.

Testing of Nag Missile

2881. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the anti-tank missile Nag has been tested recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Nag, anti-tank missile, has been successfully flight tested during March 2005 in guided mode with live warhead.

(c) Nag missile system is expected to be inducted in Service after the user trials which are scheduled to begin by end 2005.

Expansion of Platform

2882. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:
SHRI TUFANI SAROJ:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the length of many of railway platforms is getting shorter than the length of trains in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government is considering to increase the length of railway platforms keeping in view of the length of train; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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

(c) Expansion/upgradation/renovation of railway stations is a continuous process and the same is undertaken every year in accordance with the laid down norms based on traffic growth and inter-se priorities. Railway has taken up the works of extension of Railway platforms wherever required keeping in view of length of trains i.e. up to 24/26 coaches, on various railway stations on priority. Such works are taken up under Planhead 'Passenger Amenities' and 'Traffic Facilities' which are shown under respective plan-heads in the Works Machinery and Rolling Stock Programme, Part II presented every year in the Parliament along with Budget documents. In addition a number of works are taken up every year under General Manager's power of sanction at zonal railway level.

Additional Flights for Tsunami Rescue Works

2883. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of extra flights operated by both public and private sector airlines during the Tsunami Crisis for rescue works; and

(b) the extent to which the public sector airlines have provided help in the rescue works during Tsunami crisis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Public Sector Airlines operated 139 relief flights from 27.12.2004 to 17.1.2005 and Private Sector Airlines operated 35 relief flights from 27.12.2004 to 17.1.2005 during the Tsunami crisis for rescue works.

(b) Public sector airlines airlifted:

1. 8448 adults and 245 infants from Port Blair to mainland.
2. 5067 relief personnel and Para-military personnel for relief operations to Port Blair.
3. 358.26 tons of relief cargo to Port Blair.

[English]

Railway Employees

2884. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of the Railways that many class IV employees of Railways are working in the houses of senior officials of Railways in place of their designated work;

(b) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted in the matter;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Railways thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No such instance has come to the notice of the Ministry of Railways in the recent past.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Contracts for Stalls and Trolleys at Stations

2885. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan to go ahead with a system of tendered contracts for stalls and trolleys on Metro A and B class stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the system is likely to be implemented and extended all over the country; and

(d) the efforts being made by the Government to involve State Governments therein to make this system a success?

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

(b) All Stations of Indian Railway are categorized commercially in order of descending Passenger earning as A, B, C, D, E, & F Category Stations. All small units viz. Stalls, trolleys, khomchas at A, B & C category stations and refreshment rooms/Restaurants on B & C category stations in un-reserved category are allotted as per Catering Policy, 2005 through two packet tendering system.

(c) Policy is under implementation and new allotments will be made as per requirement on different Railways. Tenders against existing static units have been pended till October, 2005 by the Ministry.

(d) There is no specific plan for involving State Government in the process. However, State run businesses can also participate in tenders. Railways are allotting milk stalls/Parlours to cooperatives approved by State Government, Centre Government and Union Territory Government.

[Translation]

Leasing of Loss-Making Trains

2886. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:
SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some trains running in the country are causing loss to the railways;

(b) if so, the details of the such trains and the annual loss to the railways therefrom;

(c) whether the Railways are considering to give such trains on lease;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith their names; and

(e) the benefits likely to be accrued to the Railways therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Train-wise figures of profitability, earnings and expenditure are not separately maintained. However, on an overall basis Railways are making losses on passenger services (excluding Electric Multiple Unit). The losses incurred on this account during the last three years are as under

Year	Losses (Rs. in crore)
2000-2001	3849.82
2001-2002	4339.07
2002-2003	4245.68

(c) to (e) No such proposal is under consideration.

[English]

Songs and Drama Division

2887. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made on the role played by Songs and Drama Division in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Songs and Drama Division has been able to fulfil the desired objectives in the North East;

(d) if so, the details of contribution made in the field of national integration as well as promotion of local arts;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the specific action plan drawn for promotion and propagation of various arts of the region including Satriya during tenth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No formal assessment has been made in this regard.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. During the year 2004-05, the Guwahati Regional Centre of Song and Drama Division presented 2930 programmes on various subjects including national integration, utilizing local art forms of North-eastern Region.

(c) Does not arise.

(f) During the Tenth Plan period, Rs. 220 lakhs has been provided under Plan Schemes for presenting 5867 programmes on propagation of various Government programmes and schemes utilizing various art forms of North-eastern Region including 'Satriya'.

Oil India Limited's Subsidiary

2888. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:
SHRI A.K. MOORTHY:

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

(a) whether the Oil India Limited has been permitted to set up a separate subsidiary for foreign operation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) OIL and IOC have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for pursuing L.P. opportunities abroad. The OIL-IOC consortium has asked Government to delegate to them the same powers as have been delegated to ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) in pursuit of equity oil abroad.

Village Knowledge Centres

2889. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up village knowledge centres across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the funds required for setting up these village knowledge centres in the country; and

(d) the extent to which these Centres will be helpful to they village Panchayats?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) In its first report to the Union Agriculture Minister submitted on 29th December, 2004, the National Commission on Farmers, has made several recommendations, including setting up Rural/Village Knowledge Centres to harness Information Communication Technology and other tools of communication for village and rural development. In the Seventh Round Table of Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj held in Jaipur from 17-19 December, 2004 in para-8 of the Resolution, it was resolved that the Community Service Centres being rolled out by the Ministry of Information Technology at the Centre may be located in the Panchayat offices so that Panchayat services can also be delivered through the Common Service Centres. A copy of the resolutions passed during the Seventh Round Table Conference is enclosed as statement. The number and location of the Centres, the extent to which these Centres will be helpful to the village Panchayats and the financing implication of establishing them will be known only after the Commission's recommendations have been processed and passed by Government.

Statement

Seventh Round Table of Ministers In-charge of Panchayati Raj-Jaipur, 17-19 December, 2004

IT enabled e-Governance

1. It is recognized that IT (Information Technology and Communication) is a vital input of capacity for Panchayats so that they can perform their constitutionally and legislatively mandated functions better.

2. IT ought to be primarily positioned as:

- (i) a decision making support system for panchayats themselves;
- (ii) a tool for transparency, disclosure of information to citizens social audit;
- (iii) a means for better and convergent delivery of services to citizens;
- (iv) a means for improving internal management and efficiency of Panchayats;
- (v) a means for Capacity building of representatives and officials of the Panchayats.
- (vi) an e-Procurement medium

In this endeavour, the Round Table specifically proposes the following initiatives.

Process Re-engineering:

3. All States shall undertake a time-bound exercise of process re-engineering in consonance with the activity mapping already being undertaken by them for the functions transferred to the Panchayats, with a view to moving the processes of decision making, implementation, disclosure to the public, delivery of services and reporting and dissemination of information to Panchayat representatives to an IT enabled environment.

4. In this exercise regard shall be had to avoid duplication of hardware and software initiatives by different State government departments and agencies.

5. Considering the functional domain of Panchayats that potentially extends to 29 subject listed in the Eleventh Schedule, all e-Governance initiatives at the local level have to converge with the appropriate PRI as the nodal point.

Data Ownership

6. Such re-engineered processes shall ensure that the ownership of the data collected at the Panchayat level is with that level in the first instance, as the system becomes sustainable when those who use the data feel that they own it.

7. While owning the data, the Panchayat could also operate, outsource or provide space to IT enabled multi service kiosk centers that provide IT enabled services to the people, including those that fall within the functions of the Panchayats.

8. The Community Service Centers being rolled out by the Ministry of Information Technology at the Centre may be located in the Panchayat offices so that panchayats services can also be delivered through these Common Services Centers (CSC).

Training:

9. There has to be a systematic approach on training of staff and Panchayati Raj members through a cascading mode on use of IT.

10. The opportunities offered by the satellite connectivity provided through the ISRO, including EDUSAT, can be used for undertaking training.

11. While developing training material, regard shall be had to design user friendly approaches that can facilitate training of the illiterate or the neo-literate.

Software

12. Development of common software application packages with provision for appropriate customization by states is preferred. In this connection, the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which being a government body present in all districts of the country and which has already done considerable software development for Panchayats, may be considered as the primary software provider.

13. It is recommended that NIC strengthens themselves at all levels and provide dedicated staff through creating a Panchayat informatics division, with a time bound mandate to develop e-Governance solutions to all levels of Panchayats. This will include the strengthening of the District Informatics Office of the NIC to support the District Planning Committee and the Panchayats.

14. The National Panchayat Portal developed by the NIC for the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to become the information hub that links up Panchayats, the State Government and the Central Government for sharing of information, experiences and best practices. As a first step, all State Governments may immediately link and port the content of their existing Panchayat Raj websites or portals to the National Panchayat Portal and all District, Intermediate and Village Panchayats can be enabled and facilitated to link up with the portal. The content can be regularly updated by the respective stake holders.

15. A repository of software solutions already developed by several states shall be maintained by the Ministry of Panchayat Raj or an institution nominated by it, so that they can be used by other states.

16. Software development shall be primarily undertaken in open source software, with Indian language interphase, so as to reduce cost of replication and licencing.

Hardware

17. States should consider specifying a framework for common standards for hardware and put in place a system for transparent procurement through competitive bidding.

18. Funds for acquisition of hardware could be dovetailed from various sources and could include.

- (i) Infrastructure funds available in multilaterally funded projects,
- (ii) Own incomes of Panchayats,
- (iii) Funds recommended by the Finance Commission for the creation and maintenance of Databases,
- (iv) Funds sourced from a fund to be created and managed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj,
- (v) MP and MLA Local Area Development funds
- (vi) Purchases based on systems of annuity based purchases.

19. Considering the present power situation in the country, while procuring hardware, special attention shall be paid to providing reliable and uninterrupted power supply to computer systems. Special emphasis shall be placed on renewable energy devices and systems that consume less energy.

Infrastructure and connectivity

20. It is recommended that the NIC expands its communication network, NICNET, to link all Panchayats at all levels by using State Wide Area Network funds provided by the Department of Information Technology, Government of India.

21. State Governments can approach ISRO for providing satellite based connectivity in all the states to enable connectivity of all Panchayats. The initial infrastructure cost could be considered to be met or supported by an infrastructure fund that could be operated by the Ministry of Panchayat Raj.

Operationalisation of the plan

22. The initiative of empowering Panchayats with IT capacity shall be treated on par with creating national infrastructure such as power, telecom and roads.

23. Formulate a mission mode/empowered committee mode for IT enabled automation of panchayat institutions with NIC and other solution providers, keeping in view the national e-governance action plan of the Government of India.

Capacity Building & Training

1. Training and communication ought to reach all PRI functionaries and elected representatives, namely,

- (i) Gram Panchayat Members, Chairpersons and Office bearers,
- (ii) Intermediate Panchayat Members, Chairpersons and Office bearers,
- (iii) District Panchayat Members, Chairpersons and Office bearers,
- (iv) All officials concerned at National, State, District, Intermediate & Village level; and
- (v) Standing Committee members at all levels.

2. There should be special effort made towards sensitising the media, political parties, representatives in the legislatures, civil society organisations and citizens,

3. There must be special campaigns for mobilization of Gram Sabha members,

4. There must be special training for women, SC/ST representatives as well as first time entrants into the panchayat system within 3 months of their entry.

5. Training for PESA areas should be designed so as to have regard to the cultural traditions and special needs of tribal people.

6. Training and communication should not be viewed as a single one-time intervention but should be a continuous, ongoing process leading to enhanced sense of self esteems and confidence. Training should cover both the "before" and "after" election periods. Initial training and communication should reach all elected representatives within one year.

7. For those Panchayat members who need it, a functional literacy training course should be undertaken immediately after their elections.

8. The panchayats should be encouraged to have a sense of ownership of the training programmes and play a major role in designing content and mechanisms of training. To this end, there must be representation for Panchayat members in the governing boards of training institutions that cater to their needs.

9. Content of training should press on strategic and technical aspects and should be based on a systematic Training Needs Analysis arrived at through multi-stakeholder consultative workshops, which would precede the design of training modules and materials.

10. There should be a minimum core curriculum that is common across the States adapting to suit local context. Core curriculum should include:

- (i) Vision on purna swaraj through Gram Swaraj,
- (ii) Principles of secularism, equality and human rights emanating from the Constitution of India;
- (iii) Gender equity and social justice;
- (iv) Status of human development,
- (v) Poverty alleviation;
- (vi) Participatory planning, implementation and monitoring;
- (vii) Right to information and transparency; and
- (viii) Social Audit.
- (ix) Rules and regulations covering Panchayati Raj.

11. Overall perspective of training must reinforce issues of social equity, gender sensitivity and justice among all participants in the process of governance through Panchayati Raj, including all levels of the bureaucracy.

12. Thematic curriculum should include:

- (i) Human Resource Management,
- (ii) Natural Resources Management,
- (iii) Disaster Management,
- (iv) Financial management, including own resource management and accounting,
- (v) Sectoral approaches into providing basic human needs.

13. Training strategy should be inclusive, participative and interactive and a composite mix of various interventions:

- (i) face-to-face participatory training;

- (ii) exposure visits;
- (iii) peer training/learning;
- (iv) satellite training; and
- (v) radio/cassettes/films.
- (vi) Traditional means of communication,
- (vii) Newsletters, updates and digests of replies to Frequently Asked Questions,
- (viii) Resource centers and Help Desks for Panchayats.

14. Training content and processes should be relevant to the ground reality of elected representatives. It should continue to develop and evolve based on feedback and impact assessment. Training should become a two way process so that feedback can help in reforming the content and process of training, as also result in systemic changes in panchayat and government functioning.

15. States should move towards formation of training networks and collectives to share experiences, learn from each other, and access material from each other. States should also institutionalize collaboration with Community based organisations at the State, District, and Block level.

16. Training should inspire elected representatives to form federations or collectives and facilitate them to voice their demands for genuine devolution and development.

17. Trained members should be encouraged to become resource persons for further training of panchayat representatives Peer to peer learning, both within and outside the state through regional or national tie ups should be encouraged and supported.

18. Training should include exposure to best practices through visits to other Panchayats.

19. All open universities may tie up with IGNOU and build linkages with the SIRDs and other like institutions engaged in training and capacity building.

20. Training programmes shall be designed especially for the secretarial and technical staff working with Panchayats through institutions such as IGNOU. Such training programmes should lead to formal certification on achieving prescribed standards of learning.

21. Education in democracy and the constitutional role of panchayats as institutions of local self-government should be made part of school curricula.

22. It shall be the endeavour of the central government to provide in as short a time as possible a panchayat capacity building fund through the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, which could include a certain percentage of central transfers specially earmarked for that purpose. Similarly, State Governments should also create a Panchayat Capacity Building Fund for periodic training.

23. There should be a national perspective plan on decentralized training and capacity building for all PRI functionaries with specific objectives timeframe and resources.

24. States can benefit by the use of pedagogy and training techniques with information accessible to all. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj could develop a repository of training programmes, including training resources and manuals developed by the Commonwealth. Development of master modules in training in issues of gender, poverty, mass communication etc. could also be developed.

25. Independent training impact assessment studies should be periodically undertaken to assess the outcomes of training and inform emerging needs for follow up,

26. States shall work towards upgradation of training centres, such as SIRDs, and extension training centers at the district, block level and below.

27. With respect to the training needs of Panchayat members from the Union territories and States with Sixth Schedule areas, the Government of India would identify an SIRD or a group of institutions that could undertake the training.

[Translation].

Inclusion of Castes in SC and OBC List

2890. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":
SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:
MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has received some proposals/requests from State Governments/Union Territory Administrations including U.P. and Uttaranchal for inclusion of Castes/Sub-Castes in the list of Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes;

(b) if so, the details of proposals/requests received alongwith the name of castes thereof during the last one year, till date separately for inclusion in SC and OBC list, State/Union Territory-wise;

(c) the present status of each proposal/request including the name of castes so far included in the list, State/Union Territory-wise; and

(d) the time by which the said castes are likely to be included in the lists?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The details regarding requests received from State Governments/UT Administrations for inclusion of castes/sub-castes in the List of Scheduled Castes and Central List of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) during the last one year alongwith the present status of each request are at Statement-I & II, respectively.

(d) It is not possible to indicate a time frame.

Statement I

Scheduled Castes

Sl.No.	Name of State/UT	Name of caste/sub-caste/community	Present status
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Katia, Are-Katiaka	Referred to Registrar General of India
2.	Bihar	Noniya	-do-
3.	Jharkhand	Tanti (Tatwe)	-do-
4.	Punjab	Rai Sikh Mahatam	National Commission for Scheduled Castes have approved the proposal.
5.	Sikkim	Biswakarma	Referred to Registrar General of India
6.	Uttaranchal	Nil	
7.	Uttar Pradesh	1. Mallah, Kewat, Nishad, Bind, Dheedar, Dheema, Machhua, Kashyap 2. Chik, Chak, Hindu Chikwa	Referred to Registrar General of India
8.	West Bengal	Layak	-do-

Statement II

Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

Sl.No.	Name of State/UT	Name of caste/sub-caste/community	Present status
1	2	3	4
1.	Assam	1. Marm, Newar (Nepali Community) 2. Khaund (Ex-Tea Garden Labourers/Tribes) 3. Sawar (Tea Garden and Ex-Tea Garden Tribes)	Request has been registered with National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) on 07-07-2005. The Commission after

1	2	3	4
			examining the requests will send its advice to the Govt. and further action will be taken b the Govt. on the basis of advice tendered by the Commission.
2.	Madhya Pradesh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bargahi, Bargah, Gowari, Mahakul (Raut), Mahakul, 2. Asada 3. (Vaishnava) 4. Dawej 5. Wari 6. Tharwar 7. Jammalondhi 8. Madhav 9. (Kashyap, Nishad, Batham), Singraha, Jalari (Jalamalu in Bastar Dist.) 10. Panwar 11. Bhopa, Manbhav 12. Batthi, Baretha, Rajak 13. Mina (Rawat), Meena (exluding Sironj Tehsil of Vidisha, Latehri Tehsil) 14. Dhariya, Dhoshi, (Gadariya), (Pal, Bahel) 15. Kodar 16. Koshkati (Lingayat), Dukar, Kolhati 17. Dholi, Damami 18. Nunga, Lohar, Lohar 19. Haridas 20. Jhhani, Soni (Swarnkar) 21. Koyri 22. Joshi (Bhaddari), Dakocha, Dakota 23. Otari, Garhwa, Jhariya 24. Khathiya, Kafer 25. Kurm-vanshi, Chandrakar, Chandra Nahu, Kumbhi, Sirwi 26. Dudsena 27. Kalothaa 28. Usrete 29. Panka 30. Kisri, Kasri 31. Voveriya 32. Nahal 33. Khairuwa 34. (Tanwar) 35. Mowar 36. Aghariya 37. Tiior, Toori 	Request has been registered with National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) on 06-07-2005. The Commission after examining the requests will send its advice to the Govt. and further action will be taken by the Govt. on the basis of advice tendered by the Commission

1	2	3	4
		38. Sut, Sarthi 39. Telanga, Tilga 40. Rajbhar 41. Saragra 42. Golan, Gawalan, Gaulan 43. Rajjadh, Rajjhadh 44. Jadam 45. Gayaar/Pardhaniya 46. Kudmi 47. Vaya Mahra/Kaushal, Vaya 48. Vilopit 49. Anjana 50. Thoria 51. Rewari 52. Ruala/Rohela Islamic Group 53. Shah, Sai, Kabrakotu 54. Kankar 55. Seeshgar 56. Goli 57. Rajgeer 58. Dafali 59. Ghoshi or Gawli Goli 60. Sikkigar 61. Santras Kharadi Kamaligar 62. Sheikh Mehtar 63. Mukeri, Makarani 64. Baishwar 65. Vani 66. Bishnoi Jat 67. Rathore Jati	
3.	West Bengal	1. Banshi Barman 2. Bharbhujia 3. Dewan 4. Gangot 5. Patidar 6. Pashadia-Muslim 7. Rai (including Chamling)	Request has been registered with National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) on 26-06-2005. The Commission after examining the requests will send its advice to the Govt. and further action will be taken by the Govt. on the basis of advice tendered by the Commission
4.	Daman & Diu	1. Luhar (Panchal) 2. Kansara 3. Kumbhar (Prajapati) 4. Dasnam Goswami, Gosain 5. Rana 6. Kapdi	Request has been registered with National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) on 12-05-2005. The Commission after examining the requests will send its advice to the Govt. and further

1	2	3	4
	7. Khatri (Vankar)		action will be taken by the Govt. on the basis of advice tendered by the Commission
	8. Khatri (Rangara)		
	9. Mangela		
	10. Baria		
	11. Sorthi		
	12. Soni, Sonar		
	13. Koli Patel		
	14. Koli Machhi		
	15. Koli Kadia		
	16. Koli Khania		
	17. Mali		
	18. Kasbati (Muslim)		
	19. Mansuri (Muslim)		
	20. Darji		
	21. Salat		
	22. Bhoi		
	23. Vanza		
	24. Kharva		
	25. Khatki (Butcher)		
	26. Kureshi (Muzavar), Mogal, Thapania, Vadhel (Muslim)		
	27. Mir		
	28. Fakir		
	29. Khalifa (Nai)		

*[English]***Grants to NGOs****Statement**

2891. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI:
Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Non-Governmental Organisations received grants for construction of building for cultural halls during the last two years; State-wise;

(b) whether the Government is considering to enhance the funds under this scheme; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) A statement is attached.

(b) and (c) Keeping in view the increase of number of applications every year, we are projecting enhancement of funds in the budget allocation as per details below:

Year 2004-05	Rs. 450 lakhs
Year 2005-06	Rs. 500 lakhs

Sl.No.	Name of the State	No. of NGOs got grant in the year 2003-04	No. of NGOs got grant in the year 2004-05
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2	—
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	—
3.	Assam	3	3
4.	Bihar	1	—
5.	Delhi	—	3
6.	Goa	1	—
7.	Gujarat	1	1
8.	Himachal Pradesh	—	1
9.	Karnataka	3	5

1	2	3	4
10.	Kerala	1	4
11.	Madhya Pradesh	2	2
12.	Maharashtra	2	3
13.	Manipur	—	6
14.	Meghalaya	1	2
15.	Nagaland	11	23
16.	Orissa	3	8
17.	Punjab	—	1
18.	Rajasthan	1	4
19.	Tamil Nadu	1	2
20.	Tripura	1	—
21.	Uttar Pradesh	3	1
22.	Uttaranchal	1	3
23.	West Bengal	1	4

Use of Israeli Pipe Line

2892. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to diversify its sources of crude supplies by using an Israeli pipeline to access crude oil from the Central Asia and Caspian Sea region to feed its fuel needs;

(b) if so, whether any agreement between India and Israel has been reached; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Given the increasing dependence on imported crude, it is the constant endeavour of the Government to diversify its sources of crude supplies. Accordingly, the possibility of using the Ashkelon-Eilat (Israeli) pipeline from Baku (Caspian Sea) via Tbilisi (Georgia) to Ceyhan (Turkey) is under consideration for crude oil that India may pick up at the

Ceyhan Terminal of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline as a supplement to the Suez Canal route. While no agreement has been signed between the Government of Israel and Government of India in this regard, the oil companies will consider using this pipeline, subject to commercial economics, once the pipeline is made operational by the end 2005.

Employment to Retired Engine Drivers

2893. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to provide temporary re-employment to retired/retiring engine drivers and employees manning railway crossings;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of retired persons expected to be re-employed for these jobs; and

(d) how long this arrangement of re-employment of retired drivers will continue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) It has been decided to permit re-engagement (not extension) of retired running staff on daily rate basis and not to employees manning railway crossings. This has been allowed to tide over administrative exigencies that may arise due to day to day shortage. These orders will be in force till 31.3.2006.

Import of Sub-Standard Items in Railways

2894. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that sub-standard items are being imported by the Railway authorities;

(b) if so, the items imported during each of the last three years;

(c) the reasons for importing these items;

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

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the steps being taken by the Government to produce all the Railway items indigenously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No such case has been reported so far.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

(f) Indigenous development of imported items on Railways or to find their import substitutes is a continuous process and the same is done by Indian Railways themselves as well as in association with indigenous industry.

Freight and Passenger Earnings

2895. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways in a recent meeting with General Managers of Railway Zones has worked out plan to increase freight and passenger earnings;

(b) if so, details of facts and action to be initiated to achieve the target;

(c) whether passenger's safety and security on trains has also been discussed and the implementation of recommendations of the Railway Safety Review Committee on Disaster Management was reviewed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action to be taken in this regard?

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

(b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) and (d) Various aspects related to Safety on Indian Railways were discussed, including implementation of the recommendations of Railways Safety Review Committee and High Level Committee on Disaster Management, in the meeting of General Managers. The Railways were directed to keep up the momentum for implementation of the recommendations of Railway Safety Review Committee and High Level Committee on Disaster Management.

Statement

In order to increase the freight carriage by goods trains, many initiatives have been taken by Indian Railways. A new attractive "Wagon Investment Scheme" (WIS) has been formulated assuring guaranteed supply of wagons to customers investing in railway wagons. The Scheme also envisages freight rebate and higher priority for such customers. A scheme for development of rail-side warehousing complexes through public-private partnership has also been introduced. With a view to generate additional traffic from sidings in the notified empty flow directions of wagons, a concession of 20% in freight rates shall be granted for incremental traffic booked from the siding. A concession of 15% in freight rates shall also be granted to incremental traffic booked from sidings, during the non-peak period from July to September. Further, Permissible Carrying Capacity (CC) of BCN (covered) wagons has been increased from 58 tonnes to 60 tonnes. Permissible Carrying Capacity of BOXN (open) wagons has been increased from CC+4 (58.8+4) tonnes to CC+8 (58.8+8) tonnes on certain specified iron ore routes as a pilot project for one year and Carrying Capacity of VPH has been increased from present 23 tonnes to CC+2 (25) tonnes on trial basis for a period of one year. Above schemes will result in increase in freight carriage by goods trains and also optimise utilization of resources.

Halt of Trains in Rural Areas

2896. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that trains halt only for 2-3 minutes at stations in rural areas which causes lot of hardship and inconveniences to the ladies, children and senior citizens in getting down and climbing with luggage;

(b) if so, whether any measures are being taken by the Government to increase the halting time of trains at stations in rural areas to give the required relief and safety to the passengers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Duration of halt of all the passenger carrying trains at any station is based upon various factors like volume of passenger and parcel

traffic, operational requirements etc. At small stations, where passenger traffic is meagre, a half of 2-3 minutes is considered adequate. Increase in duration of halt at small stations will decelerate the trains affecting the operation of the trains and line capacity.

Joint Venture with Singapore

2897. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines Board had approved the formation of a Joint Venture with the Singapore Airport Terminal Services in the area of ground-handling comprising passengers, cargo, ramp and security services at various airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has approved the proposed Joint Venture;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) 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) and (b) The Board of Indian Airlines Limited in its 78th meeting held on 30.03.2005 has given an "in principle" approval and sought information from the Management before the Joint Venture with Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS) is considered for final approval.

(c) to (e) The formation of a subsidiary of Indian Airlines Limited for ground handling services is under consideration of the Government. However, the selection of a Joint Venture partner for such services is a matter of commercial judgement of the company.

Salem and Thoothukudi Airports

2898. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the airports at Salem and Thoothukudi are not in proper operation and put to commercial use;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to make the airports fully operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir, the airports at Salem and Thoothukudi are operational and suitable for operation by 50 seater type of commercial aircraft.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Public-Private Partnership in Defence Production

2899. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan to increase public-private partnership in defence production;

(b) if so, the progress made in this regard so far;

(c) whether the recommendations made by the Vijay Kelkar Committee on integration of users have been implemented by the Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Government is generally supportive of increasing public-private partnership in defence production, although there is no structured plan in this regard.

(c) and (d) The recommendations made by the Vijay Kelkar Committee in Part I of its Report are under examination of the Government.

[Translation]

Shortage of Kerosene

2900. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of kerosene oil is less than the demand and it is being imported in large quantity for public distribution;

(b) if so, whether many private sector companies are exporting oil having similar properties of kerosene oil for earning profits; and

(c) if so, the reasons as to why the Government is not purchasing kerosene oil from these companies in order to avoid import of large quantity of kerosene oil?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Although current refinery capacity is sufficient to meet the domestic demand of PDS kerosene, Oil marketing companies who are distributing PDS kerosene had represented to the Government that owing to non-availability of adequate quantities of kerosene from domestic refineries they have to import kerosene at higher prices, whereas some of the stand-alone refineries were exporting jet kerosene/aviation turbine fuel which is equivalent to PDS kerosene product. Considering that non-availability of kerosene may assume significant proportions, it became essential that Government take pro-active action. Accordingly, a proposal to direct refineries to produce a minimum amount of kerosene has been examined. The Department of Legal Affairs has confirmed the powers of the Central Government to issue such an order under the Essential Commodities Act. In the meantime, Oil marketing companies have been advised to discuss the availability of kerosene with various refineries to meet domestic demand.

[English]

Monsoon Super Saver Offer

2901. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has introduced 'Monsoon Super Saver' offer;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the discounts offered under the scheme; and

(c) the details of the domestic sectors where such scheme has been introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b)

Yes, Sir. The Monsoon Super Saver Promotional Scheme, introduced as a lean season initiative by Indian Airlines Limited, is open for sale of tickets from 5.7.2005 to 5.9.2005. Under the scheme, 12 flight coupons are offered for unrestricted travel on domestic sector of Indian Airlines Limited for all inclusive fare of Rs. 48,500/- in economy class and Rs. 72,500/- in executive class. Besides, change of sector/flight number/date of travel is also permitted under this scheme. Tickets sold under this scheme are valid for travel upto 31st March 2006.

(c) The scheme is open for travel on all domestic sectors of Indian Airlines. A single flight coupon is required for travel between any two city pairs where there is no change of aircraft and flight number with the following exceptions, where two flight coupons will be uplifted:

- (a) Delhi-Thiruvananthapuram or vice versa
- (b) Delhi-Kozhikode or vice versa
- (c) Delhi-Kochi or vice versa
- (d) Delhi-Coimbatore or vice versa

Research and Development by Oil Companies

2902. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

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

(a) the expenditure incurred on Research and Development by major oil companies during each of the last three years; and

(b) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The amount of expenditure incurred on Research and Development by major oil PSUs during each of the last three years is given in statement enclosed.

(b) Research and Development by these Oil Companies resulted in enhanced oil production, decrease in cost of production, improved quality of products, development of new products, increased competitiveness and customer satisfaction.

Statement

(Rs. in Crore)

Name of oil PSU	Expenditure incurred		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
ONGC	92.93	93.83	105.27
IOCL	103.29	101.03	125.73
IBP	2.35	2.94	2.71
HPCL	4.31	7.36	7.67
BPCL	18.98	13.83	30.70
OIL	12.85	11.12	11.68
GAIL	14.82	0.98	1.11

*[Translation]***Modernisation of Non-Profitable Airports**

2903. MOHD. SHAHID:
 DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA:
 SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:
 SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
 SHRI MUNSHI RAM:
 PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been formulated by the Government for modernisation of non-profitable airports;

(b) if so, the details of the non-profitable airports to be modernised;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the time by which the said scheme is likely to be formulated;

(e) whether the Government proposes to allow only private airlines to operate from such non-profit-making airports; and

(f) if so, the details alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Modernisation of profitable as well as non-profitable airports is a continuous process and is taken up on the operational, safety requirements and demand from airlines. Currently, various works like strengthening and extension of runway at Trichy, Madurai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Khajuraho, Dehradun, Silchar, Surat and Dibrugarh; construction of new integrated terminal complex at Trichy, Madurai, Ahmedabad and Dibrugarh; construction of new integrated terminal building at Amritsar, Visakhapatnam, Calicut, Srinagar and Gaya; construction of new runway at Vishakhapatnam and Mangalore are in various stages of progress.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Monuments under ASI

2904. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:
 KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH:

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

(a) the number of monuments in Uttar Pradesh which are being looked after by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI);

(b) whether there is any proposal to renovate some of these monuments during the remaining period of the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(c) if so, the details alongwith the amount allocated for the purpose; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) There are 742 centrally protected monuments/sites in the State of Uttar Pradesh under the control of Archaeological Survey of India.

(b) and (c) The conservation and maintenance of these monuments is a continuous task. The activities include structural conservation, special repairs, chemical preservation and development of their environs. During 2005-06, the Archaeological Survey of India has allocated Rs. 745 lakhs under Plan Schemes for this purpose.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Rail Line to Four Indian Metro Cities

2905. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:

DR. M. JAGANNATH:

SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the project to provide rail link along super highways linking the four Indian metros is on anvil;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any target has been set for completion of the project;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the budget allocation made for the project?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Introduction of 'Spurt' Cars

2906. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering a proposal to introduce spurt cars to find out defects in the rail and welded joints; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Purchase order for procurement of two Self Propelled Ultrasonic Rail Testing (SPURT) cars was placed on M/s Scan Master, Israel, in December 2003. Coaches for SPURT Car are under manufacture at Integral Coach Factory (ICF). M/s Scan Master are presently installing the Ultrasonic testing system on the coach and commissioning is in progress. The trial run is expected to begin in September 2005.

The work of procurement of three more SPURT Cars either on purchase or on operational lease basis at an estimated cost of Rs. 60 crore is included in Green Book 2002-2003 under the head Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF). The process for procurement has already been initiated by Research, Designs and Standards organization (RDSO) of Indian Railways.

Expansion Plan of BHEL

2907. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the profit/loss position of Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL) during each of the last three years;

(b) the export turnover of the company during the said period;

(c) whether BHEL is considering an expansion plan with an investment of around Rs. 1000 crore; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) The profit/loss position and export turnover of BHEL during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in Crore)

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05 (Before Govt. Audit)
Profit After Tax	444.51	658.15	953.40
Export Turnover (Physical export)	636.89	595.84	829.26

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. BHEL is planning to invest about Rs. 1000 crore for modernization and augmentation of its manufacturing facilities by 2007 to meet the anticipated increase of demand for power plant equipments.

Introduction of Fastest Train between Delhi and Agra

2908. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have decided to introduce the country's fastest train between Delhi and Agra;

(b) if so, whether all the safety measures have been completed;

(c) the time by which the said train is likely to be introduced;

(d) whether the Railways have any proposal for running such trains on other routes; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) yes, Sir. It was contemplated to introduce the country's fastest train (up to 150 kmph) between Delhi and Agra subject to availability of resources and operational feasibility.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir The track and signalling system, available on the section is adequate to run such a train. However, the Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety (CCRS) has drawn attention to some issues like provision of fencing throughout to prevent cattle straying on a track, train protection and warning system as an additional measure to prevent a driver passing signal at danger, provision of frills on lifting barrier at level crossing gates as an additional measure to prevent entry of road users in a closed gate, Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) of rails by Self Propelled Ultrasonic Rail Testing (SPURT)

car in addition to manual testing etc. Action has been taken to satisfactorily address all these issues, before the train is introduced.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Railways have plans to introduce passenger trains at 150 kmph on Howrah-Patna-Delhi and Delhi-Chennai Sections.

[*Translation*]

Touch Screen Terminals at Stations

2909. MOHD. SHAHID:
SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHWAHA:
SHRI MUNSHI RAM:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to install 'Touch Screen' Terminals at some railway stations during 2005-06;

(b) if so, the name of railway stations thereof and the expenditure to be incurred thereon, Zone-wise; and

(c) the time by which the said terminals are likely to be installed and become functional?

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

(b) The details of names of stations where Touch Screen is planned to be provided alongwith expenditure to be incurred Zone-wise, are given in Statement.

(c) Touch Screens are targeted to be installed and made functional by March, 2006.

Statement

Name of Stations proposed to be provided with 'Touch Screen' Terminals during 2005-06

Sl.No.	Station	Railway	Approx. Expenditure (In Rs.)
1	2	3	4
1.	Bhatinda	Northern	27 Lac
2.	Saharanpur	Northern	
3.	Ambala	Northern	
4.	Chandigarh Station	Northern	
5.	Chandigarh CBO	Northern	
6.	Kalka	Northern	
7.	Shimla	Northern	
8.	Jalandhar Cantt	Northern	
9.	Beas	Northern	
10.	Gorakhpur Jn.	Northeastern	5.16 lacs
11.	Gorakhpur	Northeastern	
12.	Lucknow City	Northeastern	
13.	Chhapra Jn.	Northeastern	
14.	Hisar	Northwestern	7.62 lacs
15.	Sri Ganganagar	Northwestern	
16.	Bikaner	Northwestern	
17.	Jaipur	Northwestern	
18.	Rewari	Northwestern	
19.	Alwar	Northwestern	
20.	Gandhi Nagar	Northwestern	
21.	Durgapur	Northwestern	
22.	Jalebi Chowk	Northwestern	
23.	Jodhpur	Northwestern	
24.	Coimbatore	Southern	79.05 lacs

1	2	3	4
25.	Alleppey	Southern	
26.	Alwaye	Southern	
27.	Calicut	Southern	
28.	Dindigul	Southern	
29.	Emakulam Jn.	Southern	
30.	Emakulam Town	Southern	
31.	Erode	Southern	
32.	Kanniyakumari	Southern	
33.	Karur	Southern	
34.	Kayankulam	Southern	
35.	Kottayam	Southern	
36.	Mangalore	Southern	
37.	Nagercoil	Southern	
38.	Ottapalam	Southern	
39.	Palghat	Southern	
40.	Palghat Division Office	Southern	
41.	Quillon	Southern	
42.	Shoranur Jn.	Southern	
43.	Tellicherry	Southern	
44.	Thanjavur	Southern	
45.	Tiruchirapalli	Southern	
46.	Tirunelveli	Southern	
47.	Triuvalla	Southern	
48.	Trivendrum central	Southern	
49.	Tuticorin	Southern	
50.	Varkala	Southern	
51.	Villupuram	Southern	
52.	Shahdol	Southeast Central	19 lacs
53.	Raipur	Southeast Central	

1	2	3	4
54.	Tilda	Southeast Central	
55.	Bhatapara	Southeast Central	
56.	Durgapur	Southeast Central	
57.	Dahod	Western	2.4 lacs
58.	Nagda	Western	

[English]

Facilities for Disabled in Railways

2910. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY:
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government is invited to the news-item captioned "Railways no friend of the disabled" appeared in *Hindustan Times* dated May 17, 2005;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to provide adequate facilities to the disabled people at the stations and in trains?

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

(b) and (c) Amenities to make stations more accessible to handicapped persons have been planned to be provided through an action plan in a phased manner to provide seven short term facilities namely (i) standard ramp for barrier free entry, (ii) earmarking of two parking lots for vehicles used by disabled persons, (iii) non-slippery walkway, (iv) signages, (v) toilets, (vi) water taps suitable for needs of handicapped persons, and (vii) "May I Help You" Booth for physically disabled persons. One disabled friendly toilet on ground floor has been provided at all major and important stations. In the first instance, identified facilities have been provided at all 'A' category stations by 31.3.2005. Now, Railway has targeted to provide these facilities at all 'B' category stations by March, 2007 subject to availability of funds.

Around 450 Guard-cum-luggage-Coaches with space for disabled passengers have been introduced on

passenger trains over the last three years. The entry doors are wider than normal coaches to enable the passengers to enter the coach while seated on the wheel chair. The toilet has been designed with sufficient space for a wheel chair borne passenger and the passage in the corridor is also wider to allow for movement of wheel chair.

Zonal Railways have already been instructed regarding announcements for disabled and to provide standardised signages for passengers including disabled persons at appropriate locations with no obstruction in their visibility and placed as such to benefit maximum number of passengers.

Efforts are on to provide these facilities at more and more stations.

Guidelines for Selection of Contestants

2911. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJI RAO:

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

(a) whether there has been a controversy on the recently announced National Film Fair Awards;

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

(c) the criteria fixed for declaration of National awards;

(d) whether the Government proposes to issue guidelines to bring transparency in the selection of contestants;

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

(f) the time by which these guidelines are likely to be issued?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The criteria for selection of the recently announced National Film Awards was prescribed in the Regulations

for National Film Awards 2005 under 'Procedure for Selection'. A copy of the relevant portion is enclosed as statement.

(d) and (e) Guidelines for eligibility, entry and selection etc. are prescribed each year under the Regulations for National Film Awards. Entry in the competition is open to anyone who is eligible in accordance with the Regulations for the National Film Awards. Copies of these Regulations are widely circulated and are available with the offices of film industry organisations, Central Board of Film Certification, State Film Development Corporations, Department of Information & Public Relations of State Governments and all branches of National Film Development Corporation on a countrywide basis.

(f) Does not arise.

Statement

Extract from Regulations for National Film Awards 2005

Procedure for Selection

19. (a) The Awards shall be decided by two juries, one for feature films and other for non-feature films, duly constituted by the Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF) with the approval of the Government of India.
- (b) The Jury for Feature films shall comprise a Chairperson and not more than 16 members distinguished in the field of cinema, other allied arts and humanities.
- (c) The Jury for Non Feature Films shall comprise a Chairman and not more than 6 members distinguished in the field of cinema, other allied arts and humanities.
20. (a) The juries will determine their own work procedure.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Feature Film Jury, may constitute a maximum of four panels from amongst the members of the Jury.
- (c) The Chairperson of the Non Feature Film Jury may constitute a maximum of two panels from amongst the members of the Jury.
- (d) Each panel will recommend not more than 33% of the films viewed by it for combined viewing by the full jury.
- (e) The jury shall have the right to recall not more than such percentage of total number of entries received as has been decided by the jury before the screening of the films for the panels starts.
21. The Chairpersons of the Juries may seek advice of experts in specialized areas, whenever necessary.
22. (a) Any person directly or indirectly associated with any of the entries for competition in feature or non-feature sections, shall not be eligible to serve on the jury.
- (b) Any person who is related either by blood or marriage to any of those whose work is to be adjudged shall not also be eligible to serve on the jury.
- (c) A person appointed as Chairperson or member of the Jury shall make a declaration in writing in the form given in Schedule VI (copy enclosed) to these regulations.
23. The quorum for the final deliberations of the jury, both for feature and non-feature films, shall be 75% of the members of the concerned jury and the Chairman.
24. The juries shall select the award winners and given their reports to the Directorate.
25. The juries shall have the discretion to recommend that an award in any particular category may not be given if they are of the opinion that the entries in the category are not of the required standard.
26. The Director of the Directorate and/or his/her nominee may be present at the time of the deliberations of the juries only in order to provide information/clarifications, if any, required by the juries and not to participate in the deliberations.

Schedule-VI

National Film Awards Regulations

(see Regulation 22 (c))

Declaration

I herby Declare that—

1. I have seen the Complete List of entries of the 52nd National Film Awards (Feature film section/

non-feature film section) made available to me by the Directorate of film of film festivals to the best of my knowledge I am not directly or indirectly associated in any manner nor do I have any financial interest with any of these entires.

2. I am not related either by blood (Sons, Daughters, Maternal/Paternal Uncles/Aunts, First Cousins, Nephews, Nieces, Grand Mother, Grand Father, Parents, Brothers, Sisters) or Marriage to any of those whose work has been entered for selection.
3. I have gone through the regulations of the 52nd National Film Awards and I will abide by them.
4. I will keep the deliberation of the jury confidential.

New Delhi

Dated:

Signature: _____

Name and Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Local Address: _____

Starting of New Air Services

2912. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR:
 SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the name of cities in the country where new air services are likely to be started during the current year;
- (b) whether any time schedule has been drawn up in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) 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. 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 the Government.

Rail Projects in Orissa

2913. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made on the ongoing rail projects in Orissa till date, project-wise;

(b) the amount sanctioned and spent so far, project-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite the completion of these projects as scheduled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The various ongoing projects in Orissa are being progressed as per their operational priorities and availability of resources. Railways have taken a number of initiatives to get additional resources from sources other than the normal budgetary support to expedite the progress of the projects. Some of the ongoing projects in Orissa have been identified as part of National Rail Vikas Yojana (NRVY) for strengthening of Golden Quadrilateral & Diagonals and Port Connectivity routes. Execution of these projects by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) under NRVY will expedite their completion. These include Daitari-Banspani and Haridaspur-Paradeep new lines and some doubling projects.

The project-wise actual expenditure incurred up to 31/03/2005 since the commencement of work, budget outlay provided during 2005-06, and up-to-date overall physical progress of work of various new/ongoing New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling projects under in Orissa are as given under:

Sl.No.	Name of the Project	Actual Expenditure incurred upto 31.03.2005 (Rs. in crore)	Budget Outlay provided during 2005-06 (Rs. in crore)	Present Status
1	2	3	4	5
<i>New Line</i>				
1.	Daitari-Banspani (155 Kms)	529.14	128.61	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. Overall physical progress is 73%.
2.	Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh (56 Kms)	21.32	8.00	Overall physical progress is 33%.
3.	Khurda Road-Bolangir (289 Kms)	36.55	10.00	Overall physical progress is 20%.
4.	Haridaspur-Paradeep (82 Kms)	29.51	20.00	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. Final Location Survey (FLS) has been completed. Soil investigations of bridges & embankment and Land acquisition have been completed partially. The project has been found bankable and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) has been signed among RVNL and Government of Orissa, Paradeep Port Authority and M/s Jindal Steel Ltd on 24.05.2005.
5.	Angul-Sukinda Road (98.7 Kms)	0.78	0.10	FLS and soil investigation along the alignment have been completed.
6.	Talcher-Bimlagarh (154 Kms)	0	5.00	FLS has been completed partially. Preparation of plans & estimates has been taken up.
<i>Gauge Conversion</i>				
1.	Naupada-Gunupur (90 Kms)	28.47	5.00	Overall physical progress is 19%.
2.	Rupsa-Bangriposi (89 Kms)	53.94	3.00	Overall physical progress is 42%. (94% on Rupsa-Baripada section)
<i>Doubling</i>				
1.	Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghunathpur (43 Kms)	148.51	8.97	Overall physical progress is 88%.

1	2	3	4	5
2.	2nd Bridges on Mahanadi & Birupa (3 Kms)	20.82	28.60	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRV. 2nd bridge over River Birupa has been completed and commissioned. Contract for the work of 2nd bridge over River Mahanadi has been awarded.
3.	Lanjigarh-Titlagarh (47 Kms)	98.93	10.00	Overall physical progress is 81%.
4.	Rajathgarh-Barang (20 Kms)	1.36	30.00	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS and geo-technical investigation of all major bridges have been completed. Work on Mahanadi Bridge has been taken up.
5.	Khurda Road-Puri (Phase-I) (15.3 Kms)	36.02	10.00	overall physical progress is 54%.
6.	Sambalpur-Rengali (22.7 Kms)	5.81	10.70	Overall physical progress is 11%.
7.	Jharsuguda-Rengali (25.6 Kms)	0	7.00	New work included in the Budget 2005-06
8.	Cuttack-Barang (12 Kms)	0	30.00	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS has been completed. Work of substructure of Kuakhal Bridge has commenced.
9.	Khurda Road-Barang 3rd Line (35 Kms)	0	30.00	The work is being implemented by RVNL under NRVY. FLS has been completed.

[*Translation*]

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Construction of Overbridge

Transportation of Fertilizers

2914. SHRI TEK LAL MAHTO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

2915. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN:
SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE:

(a) whether a proposal for constructing an ROB above the three main railway lines passing at the Gomo railway station in the Dhanbad district of Jharkhand is pending for consideration with the Government;

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is considering to increase the number of rake points and change the category for proper transportation of fertilizers keeping in view the area of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

(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) No, Sir.

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Investment in Air Transport Service Sector

2916. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID:
DR. RAJESH MISHRA:
SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:
SHRI SURENDRA PRAKASH GOYAL:
SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY:
SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is lack of transparency with regard to investment by Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) in Air Transport Service Sector;

(b) if not, the reasons for not granting NOCs to PIOs who are treated at par with NRIs;

(c) whether the Government has taken the views of the concerned Ministry/Department with regard to the status of PIOs vis-à-vis NRIs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to grant NOCs to PIOs expeditiously to operate Schedule Air Transport Service in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The existing Civil Aviation Requirements stipulate that a scheduled/non-scheduled air transport operator's permit can be granted only to a citizen of India or to a company/body corporate provided, inter-alia, that its substantial ownership and effective control is vested in Indian nationals. Hence, persons of Indian Origin, who are not Indian citizens, can not be permitted to operate air transport services in terms of the present regulatory position.

(c) to (e) The matter is under examination in consultation with all concerned.

Declaration of Ancient Monuments/Sites

2917. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government vested with the power of declaring the ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national cultural heritage without any consideration of religion and communities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to enact a comprehensive law to declare monuments/sites as of national importance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The monuments/sites are declared as of national importance under the provision of section 4 of the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 without any consideration of religion and community. In the above act, ancient monument has been defined as, "any structure, erection, or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock sculpture, inscription or monolith, which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than one hundred years". Under the prescribed procedure, the objections/views of all interested parties, including the State Government are considered, before notifying various sites/monuments as national monuments.

(c) and (d) Government is contemplating to set up Heritage Sites Commission. As the present legal and institutional framework is not adequate to address the documentation, inventorisation and conservation of built heritage in its broadest outline, it is proposed to constitute a Heritage Sites Commission. The Commission would lay down broad policy guidelines and take steps to ensure that such guidelines are observed. The mandated of the proposed Heritage Sites Commission is being worked out. It is expected that the Commission would:

- tender advice to Govt. on heritage matters.
- frame guidelines in the matter of conservation of heritage monuments and sites.
- can study or cause to study in important matters regarding conservation of heritage and submit reports to the Government.

- suggest appropriate amendments to the existing heritage legislations.

Linking of Ports with Rail

2918. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to link the minor ports viz Bedi, Porbandar and Hajiraport (Magdalla) of Gujarat with rail;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. There is a proposal to connect Hajira Port to its Hinterland. The project is proposed to be implemented through a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The construction will be taken up on completion of the project development, agreement of strategic partners in financial participation and sanction of the project.

There is at present no proposal to connect Bedi and Porbandar ports by rail line as traffic generated is not considered adequate to provide rail linkages.

Integrated Railway Modernisation Plan

2919. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:
SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have formulated an Integrated Railway Modernisation Plan;

(b) if so, the funds earmarked for implementing the said plan;

(c) whether the Railways intend to associate private partners in implementing the plan;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extent to which private participation would be allowed?

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

(b) Out of the total expenditure envisaged for execution of the identified items in the Integrated Railway Modernisation Plan of Rs. 24,000 Crore, Rs. 4,000 Crore is available under Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF), Rs. 3,730 Crore will be mobilized through international generations and Rs. 6,000 Crore through market borrowing. The balance requirement of Rs. 10,270 Crore is proposed to be met through Enhanced Budgetary Support.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Purchase of A-320 by I.A.

2920. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MAHDAVRAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the wake of allegations of over-pricing by Airbus Industries of its A-320 version being supplied to Indian Airlines, the Government has sought clarifications from the company in the matter;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the further action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) After publication of certain newspaper reports regarding offer made by Airbus Industries to Air Asia at prices much lower than the prices offered to Indian Airlines Limited, the matter was taken up with Airbus Industries by Indian Airlines Limited at the instance of the Government. Airbus Industries vide letter dated 11.05.2005 have pointed out that the price of an aircraft is based upon many factors including design, weight, engine thrust selection, specification, volume and delivery date. Airbus Industries has also stated that taking these aspects into consideration, the price negotiated by Indian Airlines Limited is very competitive.

(c) The proposal to purchase 43 aircraft by Indian Airlines Limited is under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Indo-Kazakhstan Co-operation in Oil Sector

2921. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:
SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:

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

(a) whether India and Kazakhstan have agreed to cooperate in oil and natural gas sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof and areas identified for cooperation; and

(c) the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. In the 5th Session of the India-Kazakhstan Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade-Economic Scientific, Industry and cultural cooperation held in Astana, Kazakhstan on the 17th-18th February, 2005, both sides noted the progress and positive dynamics of the increase in bilateral cooperation in various fields and agreed to provide necessary support for further strengthening the relationship. In the area of oil and gas, the following points emerged:

- (i) The Kazakh side invited Indian oil and gas companies to participate in tenders for onland E&P projects.
- (ii) ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) and Kazmunaigaz (KMZ), the national oil company of Kazakhstan, entered into an MOU to jointly study opportunities in Kazakhstan and identify a suitable project and negotiate with the Government of Kazakhstan for joint participation. Joint studies by the Indo-Kazakh team have commenced and a contract for Technical services between OVL and KMG signed. OVL is exploring the possibility of acquiring some E&P assets in Kazakhstan. Recently concluded MOUs between the Mittal Group and ONGC/OVL are also expected to facilitate in India's presence in Kazakhstan hydrocarbon sector.
- (iii) The Indian and Kazakh side also agreed to form a Joint Working Group on Hydrocarbons under the aegis of the Joint Commission. The Working Group would examine and develop various concepts for joint participation, including oil and gas evacuation and transportation facilities within Kazakhstan and across the border to other countries, gas processing plants, petrochemical industries, various service activities like seismic survey, exploratory drilling, development of fields, R&D and training. A Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) on hydrocarbons has been set up and its meeting has already been held.

[English]

Doubling of Irugur Rail Line

2922. SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made on doubling of Irugur-Coimbatore rail line project;

(b) the expenditure incurred on the said project till date; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Coimbatore-Coimbatore North has already been commissioned. Target for completion of balance work is not fixed. Rs. 17.41 crore has been incurred upto March, 2005.

Ferozepur-Amritsar Rail Line

2923. SHRI ZORA SINGH MAAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey was undertaken by the Railways for direct link between Ferozepur and Amritsar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any decision has been taken by Railways for constructing the said rail line;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which work is likely to be started; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. To provide direct rail link between Ferozepur and Amritsar, a survey was conducted for construction of rail line between Ferozepur Cantt. (Mahlam) and Tam Taran (Patti) in February, 2002. As per survey report, the cost of construction of 36 kms. long line between Mahlam and Patti was assessed at Rs. 121.60 crore with a rate of return as (-) 30.12%. In view of heavy throwforward of ongoing projects and acute constraints of resources, it was not considered feasible to take up this work.

*[Translation]***Electrification of Jhansi-Kanpur Railway Section**

2924. SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal for electrification of Jhansi-Kanpur railway section;

(b) if so, the time by which the work on the project is likely to be commenced; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Due to relative priority for electrification of other high density routes, there is at present, no proposal to electrify Jhansi-Kanpur section.

*[English]***Gauge Conversion**

2925. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the works of gauge conversion between Rewari-Ratangarh, Ratangarh-Degana and Ratangarh-Bikaner rail sections have been completed;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Out of Rewari-Ratangarh, Ratangarh-Degana and Ratangarh-Bikaner sections only the work of gauge conversion of Rewari-Sadulpur section has been sanctioned. The work of gauge conversion of this section is progressing as per availability of resources. The target date for completion of work on this section has not been fixed.

Amendment to Aircraft Rules, 1937

2926. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE:
SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item 'Magic Air cruises back into turbulent skies' appearing in the 'Times of India', New Delhi on July 22, 2005;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Government has not amended the Aircraft Rules, 1937 due to delay in taking a policy decision on the investment in aviation sector by the Persons of Indian Origins (PIOs) *vis-à-vis* NRIs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which Aircraft Rules, 1937 are likely to be amended?

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

(b) The existing Civil Aviation Requirements stipulate that a scheduled/non-scheduled air transport operators permit can be granted only to a citizen of India or to a company/body corporate provided, inter-alia, that its substantial ownership and effective control is vested in Indian nationals. Hence, persons of Indian Origin, who are not Indian citizens, can not be permitted to operate air transport services in terms of the present regulatory position.

(c) to (e) The matter is under examination in consultation with all concerned.

*[Translation]***Gauge Conversion of Jaingar-Darbhanga-Sitamarhi Rail Line**

2927. SHRI SITA RAM YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work on gauge conversion of Jainagar-Darbhanga-Sitamarhi rail line was started;

- (b) the progress so far made on the project;
- (c) the reasons for delay in completion of the said project;
- (d) the amount spent on the project till date; and
- (e) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The gauge conversion work of Jaynagar-Darbhanga-Narkatiaganj-Sitamardi rail line was included in the Budget 1997-98.

(b) to (e) Earthwork and bridge works have been taken up. Recently, gauge conversion of Narkatiaganj-Bhiknathori section has been approved as a part of this project. The project is being progressed as per the overall availability of resources. The overall physical progress is 32%. An expenditure of Rs. 57.54 cr. (approx.) has been incurred on the project up to 31.3.2005. An outlay of Rs. 20 crore has been provided for the project in the Budget 2005-06. The target date for completion of the project has not been fixed.

[English]

Killing of Colleagues

2928. SHRI ANANT GUDHE:
SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the incidents of killing of colleagues in security forces are increasing in Indian army;
- (b) if so, the number of such incidents during the last three years particularly in Jammu and Kashmir;
- (c) the reasons for these incidents; and
- (d) the measures taken to curb such incidents in future?

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

(b) The total number of such incidents during the last three years, particularly in Jammu & Kashmir are as under:

Year	Total number of Incidents	Incidents in Jammu and Kashmir
2002	14	07
2003	05	05
2004	06	05
2005	02	02

(c) Such incidents can be attributed to stress or a specific individual grievance.

(d) Instructions have been issued whereby Commanders at all levels are sensitised to the feelings and needs of the troops. Timely and positive response to their requirements and unit sentiments are encouraged.

[Translation]

Licence Fee for Small Tea Stalls Vendors

2929. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPAN:
SHRI BHUBNESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the licence fee for the small tea stall vendors at Railway stations was increased steeply during 1999;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Delhi High Court has issued any stay order on a petition filed by the vendors of Delhi Railway Station;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Railways have served notices to pay arrears of licence fee at the revised rate since 1997-98 failing which to close down their stalls w.e.f. June 29, 2005 despite the matter is pending with the Delhi High Court;
- (f) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government to give relief to the vendors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Licence fee

was revised in the year 1999. The licence fee was increased to 12% of the actual sales turnover as a policy decision of the Ministry of Railways.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Some of the catering contractors and vendors went to court and secured stay from the Hon'ble Court of Delhi.

(e) and (f) Notices were served in the light of Hon'ble Supreme Court's Orders dated 29.03.2005 in the Civil Appeal No. 4897/2002, 4898/2002, 4899/2002, 4900/2002, 4901/2002, 4902/2002, 1667/2004, 48/2005 and SLP (C) No. 5353/2003 in which revision of licence fee was upheld and permission was granted to realize arrears. Orders also stipulate that if licence fails to deposit the arrears within 2 months (upto 29.05.2005), Indian Railways may terminate the licence and make recovery of the arrears in accordance with the law.

(g) Does not arise.

Capital Investment by ONGC

2930. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether ONGC has made additional capital investment to increase domestic production of crude oil in the country;

(b) if so, the amount invested during each of the last three years;

(c) whether domestic production of crude oil has increased during the above years as result of additional capital investment; and

(d) if so, details thereof and the rate of increase in production achieved during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The total capital investment made by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) during the last three years to increase domestic production of oil and gas is given below:

Year	Total Capital Investment (Rs. Crores)
2002-03	4887.06
2003-04	6166.67
2004-05	9594.20

(c) and (d) Additional capital investment made for various schemes for augmenting oil/gas production is generally a long-term measure envisaging future field development and the effect is spread over years. Hence, there may not be a direct link between the capital investment made and crude oil production in a particular year. Also, while new areas are brought into production, there may be decline in production from mature fields as a natural process.

The details of oil production by ONGC during 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 and the percentage increase over the previous year are given below:

Year	Crude Oil Production* (MMT)	Percentage Increase
2001-02	24.708	—
2002-03	26.005	5.2%
2003-04	26.057	0.2%
2004-05	26.484	1.6%

*Including condensate and excluding contributions from fields being operated by Joint Ventures.

[English]

OVL's Participation in Caspian Sea Area

2931. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation—Videsh Limited (OVL) has acquired equity oil and oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties in the several identified countries including countries in the Caspian Sea area;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any decision has been taken by OVL about participation in oilfields in Caspian sea area; and

(d) if so, the details alongwith the investment made therein; and

(e) if not, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) To enhance the country's energy security in keeping with the objectives of the Energy Security section of the National Common Minimum Programme, ONGC-Videsh Limited (OVL), as well as other national oil companies such as Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Oil India Limited (OIL) and GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL), have been pursuing the acquisition of equity oil as well as the acquisition of oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties abroad. OVL has Participating Interests in oil and gas projects located in Vietnam, Sudan, Russia, Iraq, Iran, Myanmar, Libya, Syria, Australia, Ivory Coast, Qatar and Egypt.

However, OVL have not yet acquired any Exploration and Production assets in the Caspian Sea area.

(c) to (e) Following visits by the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas to several littoral states of the Caspian Sea, including Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Iran, and the understandings/agreements arrives at or being pursued, OVL are vigorously pursuing the acquisition of oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties in several identified countries of the Caspian basin. Proposals for participation in oilfields in the Caspian Sea area are at different stages of consideration, the outcome of which would depend upon techno-commercial viability, geo-political environment, etc.

[Translation]

New Rail Line between Ramtek and Goregaon

2932. SHRIMATI NEETA PATERIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether survey work has been completed to construct the new rail line between Ramtek and Goregaon (Shridham) via Seoni;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the expenditure likely to be incurred on the said project; and

(c) the time by which construction work of this line is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) An updating survey for a new line between Ramtek and Goregaon via Seoni has recently been completed. As per the updated survey report, the cost of the project has been assessed as Rs. 775.29 crore with a rate of return of (-) 3%.

Archaeological Items Stolen from National Museum

2933. SHRI ANJAN KUMAR M. YADAV:
SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH
DEO:

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

(a) whether several rear idols and archaeological items has disappeared/stolen from the National Museum and other important places;

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

(c) the action taken against the persons found involved therein; and

(d) the measures taken to provide adequate security at these places?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) During the last three years some cases of theft have been reported from the centrally protected monuments and museums under the administrative control of Ministry of Culture. The details of the cases are annexed in a statement-I.

(c) The action taken against persons found to be involved is enclosed as statement-II.

(d) The museums under the administrative control of Ministry of Culture are having surveillance equipment and electronic gadgets like CCTV etc. to strengthen security system in the Museum. In National Museum, a detailed plan for strengthening of security has been prepared and one additional X-ray baggage inspection machine, two doorframe metal detectors, six hand held metal detectors have been acquired. Security of various centrally protected

monuments is being looked after by watch and ward staff. The security has been further supplemented by engagement of private security guards, state police and CISF etc.

A Committee was also constituted under the Chairmanship of Director General, National Museum to review the security arrangements in the Museums and to make recommendations. The Committee has

recommended, four-layer coverage for external and internal security. The Committee has also recommended, inter-alia, installation of advanced electronic security gadgets, strengthening of internal intelligence system, security personnel management, preventive and fire fighting measures. The report of the committee has been circulated to all Museums under the administrative control of Ministry of Culture.

Statement I

Statement showing the number of theft Cases during last three years

Sl.No.	Name of Monument/ Sites & the District	Name of State	Description of the Objects	Date of Theft
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Jain Temple, Mettupudar	Tamil Nadu	5 Jaina Sculpture	21/22 July, 2002
2.	Bajramatch, Gyaraspur, Distt. Videsha	Madhya Pradesh	Head of Female	6/7 August, 2002
3.	Mahadev Temple, Village Pali, Bandari Distt. Sagar	Madhya Pradesh	Sculpture of Dikpal	12th August, 2002
4.	Neudurga Temple, Jhalera Pattam, Distt. Jhalawar	Rajasthan	Stone image of female	28/29 August, 2002
5.	Apathsahey Wersuva Temple, Distt. Villupuram	Tamil Nadu	Stone Sculpture of dancing figure	14/15 November, 2002
6.	Deepadhi, Distt. Surguja & Duhara Tank, Rattanpur, Distt. Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh	5 Stone Sculpture	8th & 14th January, 2003
7.	Rock Cut Shiva Temple, Narthamali Kulathur, Distt. Pudukkottai	Tamil Nadu	4 Stone sculpture	27/28 January, 2003
8.	Temple in Marad Khera, Distt. Sangrur	Punjab	Lord Surya	19th February, 2003
9.	Shri Kapotesvaraswamy Temple, Chejerla, Guntur Distt. Guntur	Andhra Pradesh	Sculpture of Nandi	11/12 March, 2003
10.	Sri Desh, Ram Wari Opposite Joker Cinema, Kalyan	Maharashtra	Statue of Shri Girdhar Gopal	20/21 June, 2003

1	2	3	4	5
11.	Maritime Heritage Gallery, National Museum, New Delhi	Delhi	1 Pistol	28th June, 2003
12.	Jaina Temple, Trimalai	Tamil Nadu	2 Bronze Statues	24/25 August, 2003
13.	Shri Janardhana Swamy Devathana Temple, Kadur Taluk, Chikmangloor	Karnataka	2 Pillars	19th September, 2003
14.	Machukuinmdesava Temple, Kodumbalur, Distt. Pudukottai	Tamil Nadu	Sculpture of Varahi	11/12 October, 2003
15.	Excavated site Udayagiri, Distt. Jaipur	Orissa	Buddha in Dhyammudra	7/8 November, 2003
16.	Lakha Mendal Temple, Lakhamandal, Dehradun	Uttaranchal	5 Sculpture	16/17 December, 2003
17.	Charkhamba Temple premises at ruined Krishna Vilas	Rajasthan	2 Sculptures	21st April, 2004
18.	Bumzuva Cave, Distt. Anantnag	Jammu & Kashmir	Shiv Linga of stone	23/24 May, 2004
19.	Sun Temple Modhera Distt. Mehana	Gujarat	2 Fragment Sculpture	4th August, 2004
20.	Alathur, Taluk Kulathur Distt. Pudukkottai	Tamil Nadu	Jaina Image	6th August, 2004
21.	Lanji Fort, Distt. Balaghat	Madhya Pradesh	2 Sculptures	21st August, 2004
23.	Ruin of buried Jaina Temple, Denavulapadu Village, Jammalamadugu Mandal	Andhra Pradesh	Bust of Jainatirthankara	8/9 September, 2004
23.	Archaeology Gallery of Indian Museum, Kolkata	West Bengal	1 Buddha Head (Sarnath)	29th December, 2004
24.	Ancient Site Nagar, Distt. Tonk	Rajasthan	7 Sculpture	12th January, 2005
25.	Protected Site, Sirpur, Distt. Mahasamund	Chhattisgarh	1 stone image of Hariti	22/23 June, 2005

Statement II

Statement showing the Action Taken against the Person found involved in thefts of Cases from July, 2002 to till date (Last three years)

Sl.No.	Name of Monument/ Sites & the District	Name of State	Description of the Objects	Date of Theft	Action Taken against the person found involve
1.	Bajramatch, Gyaraspur, Distt. Videsh	Madhya Pradesh	Head of Female	6/7 August, 2002	(i) Sr. Conservation Assistant's two increments withheld (ii) Caretaker's five increments withheld (iii) One Monument Attendant dismissed from service
2.	Mahadev Temple, Village Pali, Bandari Distt. Segar	Madhya Pradesh	Sculpture of Dikpal	12 th August, 2002	(i) Caretaker's 3 increments withheld (ii) One Monument Attendant's basic pay was reduced back to his basic of 1996. (iii) One Monument Attendant was compulsorily retired.

[English]

Expansion Work at Amritsar International Airport

2934. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the expansion work including cargo facilities at Amritsar International Airport has been delayed;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the cost escalation as a result thereof;

(c) the original time schedule for completion of the work; and

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

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

(b) The Terminal Building work was delayed initially due to recall of tenders on account of high rate received. There was abnormal delay in execution of this work by

M/s HSCL, a Government of India Undertaking who were awarded the work. Therefore, the work was re-awarded to another agency at their risk and cost with stipulated date of completion. In one of the project review meetings, it was pointed out that for better aesthetics, ambience and overall view to present modern day design dynamism of aviation industry, the proposed design of the Terminal should be improved. Some of the activities in central concourse and departure terminal were temporarily suspended for 2 to 3 months. The exact cost escalation shall be known when the project is completed.

(c) and (d) The construction is likely to be completed by October, 2005 in place of November, 2003, which was the original time schedule.

Recruitment of Tribals in Railway Protection Force

2935. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has adopted any policy to recruit tribals exclusively from Andaman and Nicobar Islands in Railway Protection Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of tribals from Andaman and Nicobar Islands recruited in RPF so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, a recruitment for 2040 vacancies from West Bengal, Sikkim and Andaman & Nicobar Islands was notified and selections were held at Port Blair from 29.4.2005 to 2.5.2005.

(c) A total of 28 candidates were selected from the Islands, including 4 candidates belonging to Scheduled Tribe category

Investigation of Complaints

2936. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) regarding investigation of anonymous/pseudonymous complaints against their distributors/dealers;

(b) the number of anonymous/pseudonymous complaints received by Indian Oil Corporation Limited in the State of Punjab against their LPG dealers/distributors during 2004-05;

(c) whether those complaints have been investigated;

(d) if so, the action taken against the dealers/distributors;

(e) the prescribed procedure laid down under the CVC guidelines has been followed while investigating the complaints;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the action taken by the Government against those found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that on receipt of any information or complaint, including anonymous/pseudonymous complaints against their distributors/dealers, investigations are conducted by them.

(b) to (d) During the year 2004-05, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) had received 5 pseudonymous complaints against their LPG distributors in the State of Punjab. These complaints have been investigated but could not be established and hence no action was taken against the distributors concerned.

(e) to (g) As per CVC guidelines, as a general rule, no action should be taken on anonymous/pseudonymous complaints. However, verifiable facts alleged in such complaints may be enquired into with the concurrence of the CVC.

Renovation of FOB

2937. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that foot overbridges in Dadar, Kuria and Sion railway stations of Central and Western railways are in dilapidated conditions;

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

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to re-construct/renovate these bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The foot over bridges at Dadar, Kuria and Sion have been inspected and are not found in dilapidated condition.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Remains of Ancient Civilization and Urban Settlement

2938. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that remains of bustling ancient civilization and urban settlement have been found by Archaeological Survey of India in Kotalal, Anantnag district of South Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any such findings suggesting ancient settlements and civilizations have been made in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and other States in the country during the last three years; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The Directorate of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, Government of Jammu & Kashmir, recently carried out explorations in Kotabal, Distt. Anantnag, Kashmir. These explorations have reported to have revealed some decorative tiles bearing stamped geometrical, natural and abstract motifs. These tiles, forming part of pavement, and similar to those found at Harwan, Distt. Srinagar, J&K. On stylistic grounds, the tiles are datable to *circa* 3rd-4th century A.D. The discovery suggests possibility of an ancient settlement thriving at the exploration site.

(c) and (d) These tiles are remains of a unique kind, and are not so far reported to be found outside Kashmir, any other state in India.

ROBs at Mahavirskan

2939. SHRI D. NARBULA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been persistent demands for construction of a railway overbridge at Mahavirskan for a long time; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There is no sanctioned work or proposal for Road Over Bridge at place named as Mahavirskan. However, there is Road Over Bridge (ROB) work sanctioned in lieu of level crossing No. NS-2A at Km 2/3-4 at Mahabirasthan near Siliguri on North Frontier Railway. This work of Road Over Bridge was sanctioned in 2000-01 on cost sharing basis. Railway shall construct bridge proper across the railway track and approaches by State Government. Work could not be taken up as the General Arrangement Drawing had to be revised due to some technical reasons. Now Drawing and Design have been finalized, Estimate sanctioned and the work has been taken up on both sides of the approaches. Tender for Bridge proper over the Railway tracks has been invited and work is likely to be completed by the end of 2006.

Electrification Work in East Coast Railway

2940. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made regarding electrification work in East Coast Railway;

(b) the funds allocated for the purpose; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite the electrification work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) 44% of total route kilometres of East-Coast Railway is already electrified. Electrification work on Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar and Cuttack-Paradeep sections (540 RKM) which falls in East-Coast Railway, is in progress. Out of 540 RKM, 417 RKM has already been electrified and work is in progress on balance portion of Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar i.e. 38 RKM, which is targeted for completion by Dec. 2005. Electrification of Cuttack-Paradeep (85 RKM) will be taken up with doubling work.

(b) and (c) Rs. 19.50 crore have been allotted during the year 2005-06 for the above project and the progress of the work is being regularly monitored.

[Translation]

Private Sector Participation in Railways

2941. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have prepared any plan to increase private sector partnership as per the directions of Infrastructural Committee;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the further steps taken by the Railways in this regard;

(d) whether there would be any adverse affect on the revenue earnings of the Railways; and

(e) if so, the corrective steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The Committee

on infrastructure under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister had discussed certain issues pertaining to Railway sector in its fourth meeting. In the meeting, no direction has been given for preparation of any plan to increase private sector participation. However, a decision was taken for preparation in consultation with Planning Commission a scheme for allowing operators other than CONCOR (a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Railways) in the movement of containers. This decision can enhance private sector participation. Ministry of Railways have granted a study to M/s. RITES Ltd. in this regard.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Doordarshan Tower at Dibrugarh

2942. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3825 dated December 23, 2004 regarding Doordarshan Tower at Dibrugarh and state:

(a) whether the extension work of height of Doordarshan Tower at Dibrugarh has been awarded;

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

(c) if not, the reasons for not awarding the contract?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) No Sir. The scheme for raising the height of the High Power Doordarshan transmitter (HPT) at Dibrugarh was entrusted to Civil Construction Wing (CCW) which floated tenders; but in vain. Later, the idea of extending the height through an all-steel frame was also explored; but, finally dropped in 2004 as the cost was found to be beyond the sanctioned amount.

With the launch of Doordarshan's D.T.H. (Ku band free-to-air) transmission service from 16th December, 2004, the multi-channel TV coverage has been extended to hitherto uncovered and under-covered areas (including Dibrugarh and the entire N.E. region). The signals can be received anywhere in the country (except A&N Islands) with the help of a small sized dish receive unit.

[Translation]

Demand of Petrol and Diesel

2943 SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether the demand of petrol and diesel has been continuously increasing during the last few years in the country;

(b) if so, the demand of petrol and diesel during each of the last three years and current year;

(c) the percentage increase in demand of the other petroleum products in the country during the said period; and

(d) the steps taken to meet the demand of petroleum products in future?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The demand for petrol and diesel during the last three years and the first quarter of the current year is as under:

(Figs. in TMT)

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05 (Provisional)	2005-06 (April-June) (Provisional)
Petrol	7570	7897	8265	2188
Diesel	36645	37074	39677	10252

(c) The percentage growth in demand of other petroleum products in the last three years and the first quarter of the current year is enclosed as statement.

(d) The indigenous production of petroleum products is more than the demand in the country. The overall production and consumption of petroleum products in the last three years is as under:

(Figs. in TMT)

Year	Production	Consumption
2002-03	108674	104126
2003-04	117640	107751
2004-05 (P)	122749	111710

Statement

Percentage growth in demand of other petroleum products in the last three years and first quarter of the current year

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05*	2005—06 (April-June)*
LPG	8.1	11.4	9.4	2.0
Naphtha/NGL	1.8	-0.8	17.7	-12.6
ATF	0.4	9.4	14.2	12.1
SKO	-0.3	-1.7	-8.2	-0.7
LDO	29.6	-21.6	-8.7	-42.9
Lubes	9.9	14.2	-1.0	9.0
FO/LSHS	-1.9	1.6	4.7	-1.5
Bitumen	15.6	13.0	-0.9	1.5
Others	23.2	20.9	-20.2	-1.1

*Provisional.

[English]

Army Operations against Militants in Manipur

2944. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Army has stepped up its operations in the militants stronghold district Manipur as reported in the Times of India dated June 23, 2005;

(b) if so, the number of militants killed/injured and arrested in the operations; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure that innocent persons in the State do not become victims in the cross fire?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Troops of Indian Army were inducted into the Southern districts of Churachandpur and Bishenpur in Manipur in October 2004. In addition, operations have also been conducted to clear National

Highways 53 and 150 to facilitate opening and repair of these roads. A total of 83 terrorists were killed and 359 apprehended in Manipur during these operations from October 2004 to July 2005.

(c) Strict instructions have been issued to the troops to conduct operations in such a way so as to avoid civilian casualties or any collateral damage.

Policy on Containerized Operations

2945. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have taken any decision to appoint a consultant to get user perspectives for its policy on containerized operations;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether a number of firms have shown their interests for containerized operations but unable to start operations for want of policy;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the policy on containerised operations is likely to be formulated?

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

(b) The study has been given to M/s Rail India Technical & Economic Services (RITES).

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The following firms have shown interests for containerised operations:

- (1) Pipavav Railway Corporation Limited.
- (2) Central Warehousing Corporation.
- (3) P&O Nedlloyd.
- (4) Gujarat Adani Port Limited.
- (5) The Thar Dry Port.
- (6) Sattva H-Tech and Conware Private Limited.

(e) Policy will be framed after examination of the Report of the Consultant, which is awaited.

Gauge Conversion of Coimbatore-Dindigul Rail Line

2946. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that there is a long pending demand for gauge conversion of Coimbatore-Dindigul line and BD uplinking of Pollachi to Palakkad; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government and the present status thereof?

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

(b) An updating survey for gauge conversion of Dindigul-Pollachi-Coimbatore and Pollachi-Palghat has been completed in January, 2005. As per the survey report, cost of conversion of 225 kms long Metre Gauge line into broad gauge has been assessed as Rs. 289.39 crore.

Supply of Gas to Power Plants

2947. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:
SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:

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

(a) the quantum of gas demanded and supplied to each gas-based power plant during each of last three years;

(b) whether some of the gas-based power plants have asked the Government to enhance gas supply;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Gas supply by GAIL to the power sector during the last three years (i.e. 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05) stood at 25.11, 25.91 and 25.97 MMSCMD respectively. Total APM allocations to existing power units are around 39 MMSCMD against which supply was around 28 MMSCMD in the first quarter of 2005-06. In addition, around 2.5 MMSCMD of RLNG was supplied by GAIL to power sector. Details are enclosed as statement.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. Though request have been received for the enhancement of gas supply to power plants, these could not be acceded to owing to the limited availability of domestic gas. In addition, around 2.5 MMSCMD of RLNG is being supplied by GAIL to power plants.

In view of the depleting domestic gas supplies, efforts are being made to augment the availability of natural gas, through the import of natural gas in the form of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) or through transnational pipelines, besides increasing domestic availability of gas from NELP sources. The gas from new domestic sources would be available at market-driven prices.

Statement**Gas Supply to Power Sector Consumers**

MMSCMD

Sl.No.	Consumer	Allocations		Total Allocation	Action Plan qty.	Avg. supply	Avg. supply	Avg. supply	1st Qtr 05-06		
		Firm	Fallback			2002-03 APM	2003-04 APM	2004-05 APM	APM	PMT	RLNG
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
HVJ Pipeline											
1.	NTPC, KAWAS	2.19		2.19	1.5	0.75	0.64	0.15	0	2.18	0.37
2.	NTPC Anta	1.71		1.71	1.17	1.5	1.48	1.52	1.13	0.33	
3.	NTPC Auriya	2.43		2.43	1.67	2.23	2.08	2.1	1.61	0.39	
4.	NTPC, Dadri	2.93		2.93	2.01	2.62	2.45	2.66	1.94	0.51	
5.	NTPC, Faridabad	1.95		1.95	1.34	1.56	1.53	1.67	1.29	0.22	0.48
6.	Indraprastha Power (DVB)	0.84		0.84	0.58	0.95	0.94	0.7	0.56	0.09	0.59
7.	Pragati Power	1.75		1.75	1.2	0.74	1.44	1.51	1.16	0.27	
8.	NTPC Jhanore					1.46	1.57	2.05	1.45	1.16	
9.	GIPCL				0.34	0.47	0.48	0.43	0.33	0.08	
Sub Total		13.8		13.8	9.81	12.33	12.61	12.79	9.48	5.24	1.44
Gujarat											
10.	NTPC Jhanore	0.6	1.65	2.25	0.44	0.46	0.33	0.37	0.39		
11.	GIPCL	0.28	0.42	0.7		0.53	0.51	0.44	0.33		0.65
12.	GEB Dhuvaran	0.2	0.3	0.5		0.06	0.23	0.43	0.34		0.14
13.	GEB Uttaaran	0.28	0.42	0.7		0.44	0.14	0	0		0.26
14.	GTEC	0.6	0.9	1.5		0	0	0	0		
15.	AEC Ahmedabad	0.16	0.24	0.4		0	0	0	0		
Sub Total		2.12	3.93	6.05	0.44	1.49	1.22	1.23	1.06	0	1.05
KG Basin											
16.	Andhra Pradesh Gas Power	1.22	0.1	1.32		1.15	1.19	1.09	1.14		
17.	GVK Industries	0.9	0.15	1.05		0.92	0.89	0.83	0.86		
18.	Spectrum Power Generation	0.9	0.15	1.05		0.79	0.85	0.81	0.84		
19.	Lanco Kondapalli Power	1.46	0.29	1.75		1.45	1.31	1.31	1.26		
20.	Reliance Energy Ltd.	0.64	0.36	1		0.68	0.73	0.69	0.64		

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
21.	Vathsasa Power Project Ltd.	0.07	0	0.07		0.06	0.07	0.08	0.09		
	Sub Total	5.19	1.05	6.24		5.06	5.04	4.81	4.83		
	Cauvery Basin										
22.	PPCL	0.18	0.02	0.2		0.17	0.18	0.18	0.18		
	PPCL Addnl.		0.3	0.3				0			
23.	PPN Power		1.46	1.46		0.21	0.19	0	0		
24.	TNEB-TMK Kovilakalpal	0.45		0.45		0.38	0.38	0.4	0.29		
25.	TNEB Perungalam	0.45		0.45		0.09	0.4	0.32	0.4		
26.	TNEB Kuttalam	0.45		0.45		0	0.09	0.34	0.38		
27.	OPG Energy	0.09		0.08		0	0.01	0.09	0.09		
28.	Saheli Exports	0.04		0.04		0		0.01	0.03		
29.	ABAN Power	0.5		0.5		0		0.01	0.27		
30.	Coromandel Electric	0.08		0.08		0		0.03	0.09		
31.	Arkay Engg. Ltd	0.25		0.25		0		0	0		
	Sub Total	2.48	1.78	4.26		0.85	1.24	1.37	1.72		
	Uran										
32.	MSEB, Uran	3.5		3.5	2.5	2.57	2.63	2.61	2.82		
33.	TEC, Trombay	1.5		1.5	0.85	0.79	0.94	0.92	1.06		
	Sub Total	5		5	3.35	3.36	3.57	3.53	3.87		
	Assam										
34.	Assam State Electricity Board, Mailbela Ph-I & II	0.8	0.07	0.8		0.41	0.41	0.33	0.29		
35.	Assam State Electricity Board, Geleki			0.07		0	0	0	0		
	Sub Total	0.08	0.07	0.865		0.42	0.41	0.34	0.29		
	Tripura										
36.	TSED, Rokha	0.6		0.6		0.42	0.5	0.46	0.47		
37.	TSED, Barampura	0.3		0.3		0.1	0.2	0.22	0.19		
38.	NEEPCO, R.C. Nagar	0.75		0.75		0.65	0.68	0.68	0.65		
	Sub Total	1.65		1.65		1.17	1.38	1.35	1.31		
	Rajasthan										
39.	RSEB	0.75		0.75		0.43	0.45	0.55	0.56		
	Sub Total	0.75		0.75		0.43	0.45	0.55	0.56		
	Total APM	31.78	6.82	36.61	13.6	25.11	25.91	25.97	23.13	5.24	2.49
	Grand Total									30.86	

Production Cost of Petrol, Diesel, LPG and Kerosene

2948. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the basic production cost of petrol, diesel, kerosene and LPG in the country is less than that of the cost of the imported one;

(b) if so, whether any assessment has been made by the Union Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the basic production cost of the above products from October 2004 to July 2005; and

(e) the difference of costs and average cost of these products in the international market during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Oil Refining is a continuous process and the cost of refining individual petroleum products is not worked out separately because all products are produced together.

(d) The total cost of production, refinery-wise, for the period October 2004 to July 2005 is given at statement-I

(e) The monthly average of the international product prices of petrol, diesel, LPG and kerosene during the period October 2004 to July 2005 is given at statement-II.

Statement I

Refinery-wise Cost of Production for the period October'04 to July'05	(Rs/MT) (Provisional)
1	2
Name of Oil Refinery	
IOC	
-Guwahati	20142
-Barauni	20276

1	2
-Gujarat	16803
-Haldia	18063
-Mathura	17820
-Panipat	18570
-Digboi	20290
CPCL	16352
BRPL	18567
HPC	
-Mumbai* ^o	16212
-Vizag ^o	17313
BPC-Mumbai	17093
KRL	16775
NRL ^o	19122
Reliance Industries Ltd. (Petroleum Division)	17108

Notes

*For the Period Oct'04 to June'05

^oIncludes Rs. 38 Crs. on account Turn Around Expenses on CDU 1 & 11, FCCU & DHDS

Statement-II

Monthly average of international product prices of petrol, diesel, LPG and kerosene during the period October 2004 to July 2005

	Petrol US\$/bbl	Diesel US\$/bbl	LPG US\$/bbl	Kerosene US\$/bbl
Oct-04	53.68	53.81	401.00	58.29
Nov-04	51.74	50.90	469.00	53.56
Dec-04	44.24	45.16	423.00	46.20
Jan-05	46.87	45.61	389.20	47.68
Feb-05	53.70	50.10	389.20	52.24
Mar-05	58.73	59.83	380.00	63.74
Apr-05	60.23	61.36	416.80	69.00
May-05	53.37	56.45	421.80	61.09
Jun-05	58.39	65.61	394.80	66.98
Jul-05	63.43	66.89	399.80	67.75

*[Translation]***Theft cases at Airports**

2949. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of theft cases reported from domestic and international airports in Delhi and other major cities during 2004 and 2005, till date;

(b) the action taken against the culprits; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure proper security at the airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel have been deployed at the airports. Close Circuit TV (CCTV) systems have been installed at all vital locations for surveillance. Surveillance during operational night hours have been increased. Procedures for movement of vehicles and materials exiting/entering the airport have been streamlined and regulated. Passengers/visitors/employees of various agencies at airports are being screened. Airport Security Committee Meeting is held once a month to review the security arrangements at the airports.

12.16 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE*[English]*

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Allahabad Museum Society, Allahabad, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Allahabad Museum Society, Allahabad, for the year 2003-2004.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 2483/05]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Railway Red Tariff (Amendment) Rules, 2005 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 479 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 19th July, 2005, under section 199 of the Railways Act, 1989.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 2484/05]

- (2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (3) of section 21 of the Railway Protection Force Act, 1957:-

(i) The Railway Protection Force (Amendment) Rules, 2004 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 313 in Gazette of India dated the 18th September, 2004.

(ii) The Railway Protection Force (Amendment) Rules, 2004 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 649 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 30th September, 2004.

- (3) Two statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 2485/05]

[English]

12.17 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**Third Report**

SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH (Karol Bagh): I beg to present the Third Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2004-05)

on the subject 'Economic Upliftment of Scheduled Caste Women through National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation'.

12.17 1/2 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Re: Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Ninth Report of Standing Committee on Information Technology

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Jaipal Reddy, item number 6. Mr. Reddy, if it is a long Statement, then you can lay it on the Table of the House.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): Sir, should I read the statement or lay it on the Table of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Actually, it depends on the length of the Statement to be made by you. Please read the first part of it.

*SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Ninth Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology (14th Lok Sabha) 2004-2005 pertaining to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in pursuance of direction 73A of the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha issued *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II, dated September 01, 2004.

The Ninth Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (14th Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on 14.12.2004. The Report relates to the action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations of the Committee contained in the Fifty Seventh Report (13th Lok Sabha) on the 'Working of Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP)'.

In the Ninth Report, the Committee made 10 recommendations in all. The Action Taken Notes on these recommendations/observations have been furnished to the Committee on 15.07.2005 (in English version) and on 22.07.2005 (in Hindi version). There recommendations

*Also placed in Library. See No. LT 2486/05.

mainly pertain to advance planning of the entire publicity programme, ERC Recommendation with to release of advertisements, reclassification of newspapers and DAVP advertisements to local newspapers of J&K.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations and observations made by the Committee is indicated in the Annexure to my Statement, which is laid on the Table of the House. I would request that this may be considered as read.

12.18 hrs.

ELECTIONS TO COMMITTEES

(I) **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): Sir, on behalf of Shri Kamal Nath I beg to move the following:

"That in pursuance of Sub-section (4) (d) of Section 4 of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act 1985, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves to serve as members of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, subject to other provisions of said Act."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That in pursuance of Sub-section (4) (d) of Section 4 of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act 1985, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves to serve as members of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, subject to other provisions of said Act."

The motion was adopted.

12.19 hrs.

**(ii) General Council of Indian School of Mines,
Dhanbad***[English]*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): Sir, on behalf of Shri Arjun Singh, I beg to move the following:

"That in pursuance of the provisions contained in clauses (ii) to (iv) of rule 4 read with clause (3) of rule 15 of the Rules and Regulations of the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves, to serve as members of the General Council of the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, subject to the other provisions of the said Rules and Regulations."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That in pursuance of the provisions contained in clauses (ii) to (iv) of rule 4 read with clause (3) of rule 15 of the Rules and Regulations of the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves, to serve as members of the General Council of the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, subject to the other provisions of the said Rules and Regulations."

The motion was adopted.

12.20 hrs.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, for your information, I want to briefly recapitulate the main items of business transacted by the House during the last week.

Normally, I do this on every Tuesday, but this Tuesday the House was adjourned.

Out of 100 Starred Questions admitted, only 15 could be answered orally. Replies to the remaining Starred Questions along with the replies to 1,074 Unstarred Questions were laid on the Table.

During the period, as many as 71 matters of urgent public importance were raised after the Question Hour. Also, 60 matters were raised under Rule 377.

The House also took up four Calling Attention matters: (i) "situation arising out of reported disinvestments of profit making public sector undertakings, particularly BHEL", raised by Shri Gurudas Dasgupta; (ii) "situation arising out of reported increase in the prices of medicines, particularly life saving drugs, in the country", raised by Shri Ajoy Chakraborty; (iii) "situation arising out of reported non-implementation of Special Economic Zone in Amritsar (Punjab) as announced by the hon. Prime Minister", raised by Shri Navjot Singh Sidhu; and (iv) "situation arising out of on-going economic blockade in Manipur resulting in non-availability of essential commodities, including medicines", raised by Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra.

The House also took up further deliberations on the Short Duration Discussion under Rule 193 regarding Natural Calamities in the country and completed its debate on the subject on 5th August, 2005. Besides, the House also discussed two more Short Duration Discussions under Rule 193, namely, (i) on the statement made by the Prime Minister on 29.07.2005 regarding his official visit to the United States of America, raised by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee; lasting for more than 5 hours and; (ii) Terrorism in the country including attack on Sri Ram Janam Bhoorni Complex at Ayodhya, raised by Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra. The matter was discussed for 4 hours and 49 minutes and the discussion is yet to be concluded.

The House also took up combined discussion on the Statutory Resolution moved by Shri Shivraj V. Patil, regarding approval of continuance in force of Proclamation issued by the President under article 356 in respect of the State of Bihar; and the Motion under Rule 184 expressing deep concern of the House over the "Deteriorating law and order situation in the State of Bihar under President's Rule and also on the situation arising out of the Chief Secretary of the State proceeding on long leave". After discussions lasting about 6 hours and 25 minutes, the motion was negatived and the Statutory Resolution was adopted.

As regards the financial business, the Bihar Budget 2005-06, Supplementary Demands for Grants (General)-

2005-06 and Demands for Excess Grants (General) 2002-03; Supplementary Demand for Grant (Railways)-2005-06 and; Demands for Excess Grants (Railways)-2002-03 were also presented to the House during the aforesaid period.

The House also discussed the budget for the State of Bihar, 2005-06. After discussing the Demands for more than 1 hour and 30 minutes, the Demands for Grants on Account (Bihar), 2005-06 were voted in full besides passing the Bihar Appropriation (Vote-on-Account) No. 2 Bill, 2005.

As regards Private Members' Business, the discussion on the Resolution regarding reservation of one-third of the seats for women in all the State Legislatures and Parliament, moved by Shri C.K. Chandrapan, remained inconclusive.

The Departmentally Related Standing Committee presented 14 Reports to the House.

While we lost 1 hour and 46 minutes of valuable time due to interruptions and forced adjournments last week, the House sat late and worked extra for as many as 8 hours and 49 minutes to transact essential items of business.

Out of the 8 hours and 49 minutes for which the House sat late, 1 hour and 58 minutes were devoted to the raising of matters of urgent public importance after the normal business of the House was over, as per the practice started by us with effect from 3rd August, 2005.

In this connection, I want to place on record my deep appreciation of the exemplary attitude shown by the hon. Members who patiently waited the whole day to raise their matters in the evening.

Once again, I wish to convey my thanks to the hon. Members for their cooperation in the conduct of the proceedings.

12.25 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation arising out of recent instructions issued by Government to Jute Corporation of India to stop procurement of raw jute in West Bengal resulting in closure of Mills and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No. 9, Calling Attention.

Shri Mohan Singh—Not present.

Shri Prabodh Panda.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Textiles to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he make a statement thereon:

"Situation arising out of recent instructions issued by the Government to the Jute Corporation of India to stop procurement of raw jute in West Bengal resulting in closure of jute mills being run by NJMC, rendering thousands of people unemployed and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

MR. SPEAKER: I do not know when this statement of the Minister was made available. This is a four-page statement. The procedure is that it should be submitted to the Table Office by 10:30 a.m. Was it submitted by 10:30 a.m. today? Have you got the statement?

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: We have got it, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, in the future this procedure should be very strictly enforced.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA): Yes, Sir. I would request that the statement may be taken as read.

MR. SPEAKER: Since the statement has been made available already, it maybe treated as read.

*SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: Sir, at the outset I would like to mention that the Government has never issued any instructions to Jute Corporation of India Ltd. (JCI) to stop the procurement of raw jute in West Bengal. As a matter of fact, the JCI is the nodal agency of the Central Government to conduct Minimum Support Prices (MSP) operation for raw jute. The Government has mandated the JCI to procure raw jute under MSP operations without any quantitative restrictions, whenever the market prices of raw jute touches the declared MSP.

The Jute Corporation of India Ltd. (JCI) was set up in April, 1971 primarily to protect the interests of the jute growers through procurement of raw jute at minimum support price fixed by the Government of India from time

*Also placed in Library. See No. LT 2487/05.

[Shri Shankarsinh Vaghela]

to time and also to stabilize the raw jute market for the benefit of the jute economy as a whole. In order to make the JCI financially viable to conduct MSP operation, the Central Government provides budgetary support to the JCI to compensate its losses in MSP operations. In addition, the Government also provides a Bank Guarantee to JCI to borrow adequate amount from the Financial Institutions to enable it to enter the market from beginning of the season. The Jute Corporation of India undertakes awareness campaign and also purchase of raw jute through its 171 procurement centres. In addition, the State level Apex Cooperative Societies and village level cooperative societies also undertake MSP operation in association with the JCI.

The Central Government announces the MSP for raw jute every year. There has been a constant increase in the MSP of raw jute over the last couple of years. The MSP for raw jute (TD-5 Grade) was declared by the Government in March, 2005 i.e. well in advance before the beginning of the current Jute season. The JCI has been instructed well in advance to intervene in the market to conduct the MSP operation. The Government has given a guarantee to the tune of Rs. 33 crore to the JCI to enable it to borrow nearly Rs. 100 crore from the Financial Institutions/Banks. The Government has released Rs. 20.50 crore as ad-hoc compensation against the likely losses of JCI during the current season. The Government has made a budget provision of Rs. 30 crore during the Financial year.

The JCI has opened 101 procurement centres in the State of West Bengal during the current jute season. As the current season started, the market prices of raw jute were prevailing higher than the MSP. Hence, the JCI could not procure any quantity of raw jute under MSP. However, in order to provide relief to the jute growers, the JCI preferred to do commercial operation and it has procured 2407 Quintals of raw jute till 8.8.2005. All these procurements have taken place in various districts of West Bengal. The MSP procurement of JCI in West Bengal is merely 35 quintals as the market prices are ruling above the MSP. Hence, any apprehension regarding stoppage of the procurement of raw jute by JCI in West Bengal is unfounded.

Sir, as regards the closure of the National Jute Manufactures Corporation Ltd. (NJMC) Mills, I would like to state that the Government has not taken any decision to close down the six jute mills run by the NJMC Ltd. The Government has approved the proposal of the

Ministry of Textiles on 24.03.2005 to reduce the manpower of the NJMC Ltd. by offering VRS to all the employees of the organisation, including the employees of the Head Office and to extend budgetary support to the extent of Rs. 978.00 crore for providing VRS, liquidating statutory arrears, gratuity and secured liabilities of NJMC Ltd. The competent authority has approved the above proposals with the direction that, the mills at Kinnison and Khardah would be referred to the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises and VRS offered to their employees, and VRS will be given to employees of other mills but these will be dealt under BIFR proceedings. The revival aspects of the two mills viz., Kinnison and Khardah jute mills, have already been referred to Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE).

The National Jute Manufactures Corporation Ltd., incorporated in 1980 is a Central Public Sector Undertaking in the Jute Industry. The NJMC Ltd. is incurring operating losses since its take over by the Government and was referred to the BIFR in 1993 under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies Act 1985 (SICA). The Ministry of Textiles has from time to time tried to restructure the organization to make it more viable. However due to inherent weakness of the Corporation in the form of bloated workforce, inefficiency in operation, obsolete machinery, etc., none of the efforts/schemes could help the Corporation to earn profit. The Corporation is unable to generate resources to pay salary, wages, statutory dues of employees and maintenance charges of the Corporation. Government of India is providing budgetary assistance for this essential maintenance expenditure of NJMC. All the six mills of NJMC have stopped production of jute goods since periods ranging from one and a half years to three years.

The Government of India has taken every care to protect the interests of the workers of the Corporation. During the current financial year the Government has provided a budgetary allocation of Rs. 128 crores for payment of salary, wages and other maintenance dues. As on today, Rs. 38.50 crores have been released to NJMC which will enable the Corporation to pay salary and wages till 15th July, 2005. As has been already stated, the Government will make budgetary provisions for payment of outstanding statutory dues of employees, including their retirement benefits. The workforce of the Corporation is being offered a favourable Voluntary Retirement Scheme, the best possible option available with the Government and the management of the Corporation.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Sir, though the statement has been made available late. I have gone through the statement made available by the Minister.

I have come to know from the statement that the Government has never issued any instructions to the JCI to stop procurement of raw jute in West Bengal. I drew the attention of the Minister to this because this view has been published in several Dailies particularly in West Bengal. However, it is not understood from the statement as to whether any instructions have been given to the JCI, particularly in West Bengal, to undertake commercial operations.

Everybody, knows, the Minister is aware of, and you know better than anybody else, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the problems of jute sector in West Bengal. After the partition of India, most of the mills remained in West Bengal and bulk of jute producing lands fell in East Pakistan now Bangladesh. Subsequently, in not less than 11 Districts of West Bengal they started jute production. The main cash crop of the jute producers is raw jute. For several years, the jute producers are deprived of the minimum support prices.

The statement of the Minister says that they are also undertaking commercial operations, but the figure shows a very miserable performance of the JCI. It shows that on commercial operation only 2,407 quintals of raw jute has been procured, and on minimum support price 35 quintals have been procured. This is a sorry state of affairs. This is a very miserable performance.

So far as procurement position is concerned, in 2003-04 it was 11.22 million bales.

Now, it will sell in terms of bales. The procurement for 2005-07 comes to the figure of only 20 bales. This is a very poor performance. It seems that out of 171 JCI units, as far as West Bengal is concerned, 100 JCI units have stopped procurement. The only intention of the JCI is to protect the farmers from the distress sale providing minimum support price. JCI had also undertaken the commercial operation. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister—this has been stated in his statement—whether he has given instructions to the West Bengal JCI to ensure that they come out for commercial operation in a large scale.

So far as the MSP is concerned, it is only Rs. 930 per quintal but the market price of the jute produce is above Rs. 1,500 per quintal ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Important business is being discussed.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: If the JCI is to run in that way, JCI has to purchase the raw jute from the market, from the jute producers at not less than Rs. 1,500 per quintal. If the JCI fails to procure, JCI will survive. By this time, a large section of the JCI stocks.
...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the place for mutual discussion.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: The substantial portion is going out of the JCI. JCI is in crisis. So, this is my request to the hon. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: I am very grateful to him that a few years back, I think, last year before that, we had a nice meeting in the chambers of the Defence Minister. After the meeting, hon. Minister has taken some good stand. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You need not refer to such discussions.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Presently, farmers are facing problem not only in West Bengal but also in almost eight jute producing States. Especially, the State Public Sector Undertakings of NJMC are facing the problem. On the one hand, it seems that it is an attempt to close down the JCI; and on the other hand, they are creating a situation, generating a situation to the jute producers so that jute producers are forced to go to the traders, and not to the JCI. So, if the Government has the intention to strengthen the JCI, then it should help JCI so that they can undertake commercial operation. This is my request. I think, the hon. Minister will address the problem. His statement has failed to understand the genuine problem. His statement is far from the ground reality and the problems faced by the jute producing States. With these words, I am making a request, and I think the Minister would reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Wait for the reply of the Minister.

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE (Serampore): Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I put my question to the hon. Minister,

[Shri Santasri Chatterjee]

I have got one humble submission for your consideration. Since the Calling Attention has been clubbed together, a message might go that the NJMC mills are going to be closed down due to the jute procurement policy. That is not the case. I have a deep concern for 22,000 NJMC employees. Their future is in jeopardy. Thank to the policy pursued by the previous NDA Government and the policy still continued by the UPA Government. I am concerned. I hope, you will share and the entire House will share my concern about these jute mills—five in West Bengal and one in Bihar.

So, the question of revival of these six units is all the more necessary. In this consideration I want to put some clarifications.

MR. SPEAKER: You are right. NJMC issue is separate. But it is a jute matter.

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE: Firstly, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how much of workforce, manpower, the Government is contemplating to reduce, out of these six mills.

Secondly, whether the problem of NJMC is pending before the AAIFR, the appellate authority, and what is the approach of the Government towards revival of these NJMC mills?

Thirdly, it is reported in the Statement of the hon. Minister that the revival aspects of the two mills viz., Kinnison and Khardah jute mills situated in the district of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal have already been referred to the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises. So, I would humbly want to know from the hon. Minister as to why only two mills have been referred and why not all these six jute mills have been referred to the BRPSE.

Fourthly, the Cabinet has approved a Jute Policy after holding thorough discussion. In the said Jute Policy, it has been emphasised that the Government will see to rejuvenate and revive all these six mills, particularly the NJMC. The hon. Minister has replied that there is no plan to close down the entire unit. But it has been reported in the Press that the Government is going ahead with a plan to close down the entire unit. So, would the hon. Minister clarify the picture before this august House?

Lastly, in view of the good market both domestic and foreign, of jute products, whether the Government

will have a new look for the revival of the entire jute industry? I also associate myself with what Mr. Prabodh Panda has said on the question of procurement of raw jute. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Shailendra Kumar. Please put a clarificatory question only.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chall): Mr. Speaker, hon. Member Shri Prabodh Panda has raised the issue of jute industry through the Calling Attention Motion. Jute is also grown in Uttar Pradesh. Approximately forty lakh farmer families of the country are jute growers. More than one crore people are engaged in jute business. Two lakh workers are directly associated with the jute industry. There is a very ancient domestic Cotton Mill in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh which is lying closed for 14 years. There are a total of 78 jute mills in the country, out of which 37 are lying sick. The hon. Minister has sanctioned only Rs. 460 crore for the Jute Technology Mission which is not adequate. It is a meagre amount to revive those 37 sick mills. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether employment opportunities are likely to be provided to crores of workers by reviving the big ancient mills.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Hiten Barman. Please ask only the clarification.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN (Cooch Behar): Sir, this situation has arisen out of the recent instruction issued by the JCI to stop purchasing raw jute in West Bengal at commercial rate. As per my information, in my constituency Cooch Behar, the JCI stated purchasing raw jute from the local market at commercial rate from 22nd July, 2005. But suddenly, the JCI issued an order on 29th July, 2005 to stop purchasing raw jute at commercial rate.

In this regard I would like to submit that I had raised the matter on 3rd August, 2005 in this very august House during the Zero Hour. Secondly, I had met the hon. Textiles Minister on 5th August, 2005 and submitted him a written letter to vacate the order which was issued by the Chairman, JCI.

Sir, first I would like to put this question. Why has the Chairman of JCI, West Bengal, issued that order?

Secondly, through you, I would urge the Minister to make immediate arrangements to purchase raw jute from jute growers at commercial rates.

MR. SPEAKER: You are right.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA): Mr. Speaker Sir, he has raised two questions simultaneously on JCI and MJMC. I would like to thank you for drawing everyone's attention by admitting the Calling Attention Motion pertaining to jute. The steps taken for the promotion of the jute industry during this one year are unprecedented in the history of the country. The UPA Government for the first time has brought Jute policy before the country. In regard to cent percent packaging order, Cabinet has taken a decision to make it 100 percent in regard to jute, sugar and foodgrains, Market price is above MSP. We are going to establish another jute procurement centre. JCI is an autonomous body. Hon. Burman ji rightly said that JCI made a total procurement of 2442 quintal at the rate of Rs. 1640 per quintal in his constituency. There was high percentage of moisture recently. Last time our MP Saheb visited us and that very day I had placed order for purchasing. The delay of one week is attributable to high moisturisation and price fluctuation. But procurement has begun again. I would also like to say that as soon as the Ministry/JCI is making procurement. I assure that JCI will purchase at MSP within 24 hours. We have started our commercial operations lest there should be any trouble for the jute producers. We may be approached for the redressal of any complaints. As submitted by Shri Chatterji, six jute mills have been revived in West Bengal and Bihar since I assumed the charge. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: A very important matter is being discussed. Future of thousands of workers is at stake. Kindly pay some attention. If you are not interested in listening, you please keep quite.

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: Everybody is aware that NTC mills of the country were destroyed and several NTC mills were closed down in absence of diversification. We are paying Rs. 128 crore as annual salary as on date. We have thought of reviving two mills and a high power Committee will be set up for the

remaining four mills. They have also suggested that there is no point in reviving rest of the mills. Yet, we will consider them after expert opinion. As of now, provision has been made to revive two mills.

As far as VRS is concerned, we have yet to take a decision in regard to wages of the labourers, fate of the employees in the event of closure of the remaining mills. Cabinet has passed the VRS proposal of Rs. 950 crores which has been ratified by the Ministry of Finance. That will also be given to volunteers at an opportune time. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It may be seen, they have written.

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: I have stated in regard to two mills. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah): Why it was not done in Bihar? ...*(Interruptions)* Why Bihar was ignored. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Why Bihar has been neglected. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: There is One Mill of Bihar. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute Mr. Minister. Please sit down. If you had made a request to me, I would have allowed you because it concerns the workers. But all the hon. Members are standing up without giving notices to me.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I said that I would have allowed you. This is the procedure of raising Calling Attention matters. Only three Members gave notice and all the three Members were given opportunity. You never bothered to even give a notice and you are showing your red eyes to the Chair. This is not proper.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: This is not correct. You have not even given notice.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Sir, I have given notice, I even conveyed you personally. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to you. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of your Party is here. Let us know if this is being shared by him. If the Leaders of different parties think that I am deliberately omitting one Party, what can I say, except to reject it with all the contempt it deserves? This is the way the Chair is being treated these days.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: But they are saying that I am deliberately ignoring one Party. I have said that I will not allow it.

...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Sorry for that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the way. Nobody can compel.

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: Mr. Speaker, you rightly said, when the Textile Ministry was constituted, all the MP's from West Bengal came. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is the way you are behaving here. Your prestige is being increased by this.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I would have asked the Minister to respond to you. But you never bothered to ask me.

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: I will reply, Sir, all the Members of Parliament visited there and holding a meeting at Bade Babu's premises, they deliberated upon what needs to be done in regard to jute industries of entire Bengal? We have tried to implement all the proposals in regard to Bihar, I would apologize to the Members since no proposal has been received from any of the hon. Members as on date, had any proposal been received from any hon. Member we would have gone in details but Shri Yuvraj who is former Member. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Will you please sit down?

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: Sir, in I have met with every Member of Parliament from Bihar irrespective of which party to they belong to including the former Member Shri Yuvraj Ji to whom I have met four-five times in regard to the textile especially the jute and using I discussed with him in regard to Katihar Mill, which is a private mill and is properly functioning in Bihar. There is no problem in it. In regard to any proposals for Kathiar Mill, I would request all the Members and Vaniji who belongs to that section that if there I would try to respond to any proposal regarding jute industry, whenever the hon. Members deem get to come and put them before me next week either on Thursday or Friday. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, have you finished or do you want to carry on?

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA: Sir, I am grateful to Shri Panda ji and Chatterji who drew our attention well in time. Last week we have given orders for beginning Commercial Operations again. There is a package of Rs. 950 Crore for VRS. Two Mills will be revived. The textile mills will take steps and necessary action for the Common Man.

12.48 hrs.

MOTION RE: FOURTEENTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): Sir, on behalf of Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Fourteenth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 8th August, 2005."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Fourteenth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 8th August, 2005."

The motion was adopted.

12.49 hrs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION UNDER
RULE 357

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Sir, during the course of reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 61 for 28.7.2005 regarding train accidents, a supplementary was raised by the hon. Member, Prof. Maha Deo Rao Shiwankar in which it was alleged that the figure of "44 dead in accident at unmanned level crossings and total of 64 in different accidents" as indicated in the reply was not correct. The hon. Member further mentioned that on 3rd May, 2005, 52 people including 30 women and 17 children had died in an accident at unmanned level crossing between Kanhan and Dongri Khurd stations, about 30 kms. from Nagpur and desired that the figure of those killed be revised. Hon. Member also commented that as I had not studied the question, the question be shifted to next Monday for answer. At this point, your goodself, Sir, had directed me to correct the reply and also apologize to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: I said that you correct the reply, if there is a mistake.

SHRI R. VELU: To comply with your goodself's directions, I have got the position re-checked and noted that the accident had actually occurred on 3rd February, 2005 and not on 3rd May, 2005. Therefore, this accident did not pertain to the period referred to in part (a) of the question, wherein "accident-wise details of train accidents occurred since March, 2005 till date" were desired. The details of accident which took place on 3rd February, 2005 could not have been included in the figures for the period March, 2005 onwards stated in the reply to the question. Thus, the information furnished in reply to the

Starred question was factually correct. The records need to be set right with this explanation.

Hon. Member of Parliament. Prof. Maha Deo Rao Shiwankar by quoting incorrect date of a particular accident questioned the figures indicated in my reply, went to the extent of alleging wrong reply and lack of application of mind on my part. The allegations were totally unfounded and have caused avoidable mental agony to me.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: There is no such procedure.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Prabhunath Singh, I have disallowed your notice of Adjournment Motion.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajan), Bihar: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please listen to me. *...(Interruptions)* The investigation of Fodder Scam in Bihar by the CBI has dominated the discussion for last two days.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing would go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Bihar has been fully discussed the other day.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot hear anything.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have not allowed him. It is not being recorded.

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Bihar was fully discussed. I cannot allow this.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Go to your seat. It will be a breach of privilege. It is not a matter of fun.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA: The Government of India, with the approval of the Parliament has recognized certain Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh as Scheduled Tribes. It includes ten castes from the only tribal district Sonabhadra of U.P. These castes are Gond, Khaarwar, Bega Panica, Agrica, Chero, Pathari, Bharotia, Pahia, Buiyan etc. After declaring them Scheduled Tribes, no action has been taken to provide them reservation on the basis of their population. After on-set of electoral process, on 24 July, it was ordered that these castes can contest election under the provision of previous reservation rules.

MR. SPEAKER: This relates to a Panchayat in Uttar Pradesh. It has nothing to do with the Central Government.

SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA: Then the order followed that recognized Scheduled Tribes cannot contest election against the seats reserved for Scheduled Castes. It is worth mentioning that out of 16-18 lakh population of Sonabhadra district tribals constitute 10 lakh population. ...(Interruptions) It touches Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Panchayat elections are stated to be held in U.P. If the Parliament approves, the Election Commission should ensure its compliance. Tribals of Mirzapur division would like to contest Panchayat election. Hence, the election should be postponed and a new date for election should be announced so that they can participate in it.

My submission is that the newly recognized Scheduled Tribes should be allowed to contest election under the existing provision of reservation and reservation benefits should be extended to the said tribes at the earliest.

MR. SPEAKER: You know that, everyone whose name appears in the list will get an opportunity.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ (Udupi): Sir, the residents of the villages of Yellure and Nandipura in my constituency have been agitating on the coming up of a coal-based thermal power plant promoted by M/s Nagarjuna Power Corporation Limited on the grounds that such a plant would cause irreparable and severe ecological damage by way of atmospheric pollution and also affect adversely the marine life through heavy discharge of effluents into the nearby sea. In fact, they have welcomed the gas-based thermal power plant that is coming up in the ONGC's mega petro-chemical complex which has been cleared by the Central Government.

The Nagarjuna Power Corporation Limited, in collusion with the vested commercial and political interests and backed by local police and district administration used force, on 10.08.2005, on the peaceful agitators comprising of the local villagers, community leaders and legislators and also detained them.

Sir, I would like to strongly urge upon the Central Ministries of Power and of Environment and Forests to intervene in the matter and direct the Government of Karnataka to ensure immediate stoppage of the project work being contemplated by M/s Nagarjuna Power Corporation Limited.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (Calicut): Sir, under the Free Trade Agreement between India and Sri Lanka, pepper can be imported without paying any duty. Pepper imported from Sri Lanka has registered a steep increase because of this exemption from import duty. These are the figures: In 2000-01 it was 1759 tonnes; in 2001-02, it was 1241 tonnes and in 2003-04, that is immediately after the import duty was removed, it was 6099 tonnes, which was a 600 per cent increase.

Sir, according to reports, Sri Lanka produces seven to eight thousand tonnes of pepper a year. The domestic consumption of pepper in Sri Lanka is 4800 tonnes. That means, Sri Lanka can export only around 3,000 tonnes of pepper a year. However, their export of pepper only to India is much higher than that. This shows that through Sri Lankan ports other countries are exporting pepper to India and because of this the price of pepper is crashing down. The quality of pepper being imported is also inferior.

Sir, we produce the best quality of pepper in the world and the Malabar pepper is one of the best varieties.

According to traders, each bag of 50 kg of imported pepper contains 1.5 kg of dust and moisture, which is 14 per cent. As per Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, the permissible limit of moisture in pepper is only 12 per cent. Unfortunately, pepper imported from Sri Lanka is mixed with our pepper and is exported to other countries and therefore, the quality of our pepper is also been challenged. Our trade name has been misused by others and we are losing our world market.

Sir, I would like to urge upon the Central Government to take immediate steps in this regard and stop the import of pepper to save our farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: The turn of those hon. Members who have already raised matters this week will come at 6 p.m.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN (Deogarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an important issue. Sir, through you, I would like to draw attention of the Government that the notification issued by the Ministry of Coal for acquisition of land for new coal-mines is in violation of existing rehabilitation policy of many a States. Particularly, I would like to mention the case of Orissa. Non-adherence of rehabilitation policy of 1989 has rendered 5000 displaced person in Orissa homeless. There has put a question-mark over their survival. Whenever, Hon. Minister of Coal has been asked to comment on this matter, then comes the reply that they would be accordingly rehabilitated. These development indicates the gross irregularities in the Ministry of Coal.

13.00 hrs.

On the one hand foreign multinationals are earning profit in Coal Sector on the pretext of outsourcing, whereas, the Congress says, "Congress Ka Hath, Garib Ke Sath". Congress, in its CMP, also claims the same. Therefore, my submission is that it should be checked and existing rehabilitation policy should continue and anti-poor policy should be withdrawn.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Kripal Yadav.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not think that I am allowing you because you are showing me your red eyes. Every challenge to the Speaker's ruling will be treated in future as a breach of privilege and I will take action.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have levelled a false allegation against me, whereas, I have always respected you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have called your name, you may speak if you want to.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Alright, I am speaking, but I would like to say that I have never disobeyed you, rather you are our custodian.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to raise your matter or not?

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav does not intend to disrespect you, However, sometimes, he is over enthusiastic and speaks out of affection.

MR. SPEAKER: I called his name and gave an opportunity to speak, but he can not even wait. Other hon. Members complain that Shri Ram Kripal Yadav and Shri Prabhunath Singh try to monopolize the issue of Bihar.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: So you want to punish me at their behest.

MR. SPEAKER: Please be polite.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that Bihar, including district Patna, produces onion at large scale. It is the main-source of livelihood of farmers. During NDA regime, surplus onion was exported abroad whereas the present Government has stopped it. The onion growers were getting good price since there was a demand from Bangladesh also. Now, since there are no buyers, their onion is getting rotten. Therefore, my submission is that the ban on its export to Bangladesh etc. should be lifted. I would urge hon. Minister of Commerce to pay attention to it and lift the ban on its export so that the onion can be exported and farmers can fetch good price.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, I would like to raise a very serious problem here.

For the last three decades, the issue of agricultural workers is being raised in this House. Sir, you know that about 15 crores of agricultural workers are there all over the country and they comprise the largest single section

[Shri Hannan Mollah]

of the working people in the unorganised sector. There is no law to protect them. In our country, there are laws to protect the animals and trees but not human beings. Unfortunately, this section of our population has no law, no identity, no registration, no working hours, no adequate wage, no pension, no social security benefit and other benefits.

In my earlier terms in the Lok Sabha, I have always raised this issue in the form of Private Members' Bill and in this Lok Sabha also, I have submitted it as a Private Members' Bill. I drew the attention of the House to this issue and the whole House supported it. But neither the previous Government nor this Government has yet decided to bring a law for them. This is included in the Common Minimum Programme. Though almost two years of this Government have passed, we have not yet got a law for them.

I would urge upon the Government to implement the Common Minimum Programme and bring in a central legislation for the agricultural workers in this Session itself so that the largest section of poor people will be benefited.

MR. SPEAKER: Rest of the admitted matters of urgent public importance will be taken up at 6 o'clock.

Now, the House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.05 p.m.

13.06 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at ten minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Item Number 12, Matters under Rule 377, listed for today may be treated as laid on the Table of the House. They will form part of the proceedings of the day.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

(I) Need to maintain full-fledged cattle farms in Ongole, Andhra Pradesh for breeding Ongole Bull

SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY (Ongole): Sir, I represent Ongole Parliamentary Constituency in Andhra Pradesh which *inter alia* is famous for world famous Ongole Bull. I would like to bring to the notice of this august House about the qualities that have made this breed world famous. Traditionally this breed resembles 'Nandi' of Hindu religion. This cattle is available in various parts of Andhra Pradesh and India. These cattle produce low birth calves which grow to massive size in a short period. Their calving is easy and uncomplicated due to their strong parental capability.

The change in agricultural scenario and combination of many other factors has led to a situation where the Ongole bull had become almost extinct in Ongole. Today Brazil has the largest number of this breed and supplies this breed to the rest of the world.

I would like to request the Government to maintain full fledged cattle farms in Ongole especially for breeding Ongole Bull to help Indian farmers and to earn foreign exchange.

(II) Need to take suitable measures to solve scarcity of drinking water in Theni district, Tamil Nadu

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (Periyakulam): Sir, in my Periyakulam Constituency, the residents are entitled to utilize 136 feet of water from Periyar Dam (Lower Camp). There is flow of water from Periyar Dam to Valgai Dam 60 Kms through Periyar River. In between these two dams more than 50 nos. of (infiltration) well and surface water off take wells are also set up and through these wells water is supplied to Town Panchyat/Villages/Municipalities in Theni Distt.

Originally the water flows during June to November every year for irrigation and domestic use. During non-flow season (December to May-summer) water scarcity continues. To meet this situation, the water is released from Periyar Dam once in fifteen days for drinking purposes. But the water does not reach the consumers due to seepage in the river. Water scarcity continues in

*Laid on the Table.

Theni District. To avoid this, my humble suggestion is to implement a new proposal to lay pipe line with treatment unit from lower camp to Vaigai Dam on similar lines as water is supplied from Vaigai to Madurai through 30" width pipe line which covers 60 kms distance.

I request the Union Government to look into the matter and send a team of experts to solve this water problem permanently.

(iii) Need to fill up the vacancies in Supreme Court and all the High Courts for speedy disposal of pending cases

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Sir, the sanctioned strength of judges in various High Courts in India is 668. Out of the 21 High Courts, number of vacancies are 147. Proposals received from the Chief Justice of various High Courts are 78. More particularly in Madras High Court there are 25 vacancies out of 49 Judges in Calcutta High Court 15 vacancies and in Allahabad High Court there are 17 vacancies.

The pendency position of cases in the High Courts as on 1.3.2005 is very alarming. In Allahabad High Court 5,44,655 civil cases and 1,75,993 criminal cases are pending. In Mumbai High Court total 3,25,784 cases are pending. In Madras High Court 2,75,730 civil cases, 23,029 criminal cases, totalling 2,98,759 cases are pending.

Even though this Government has taken effective steps to improve the judicial system in the country still large number of cases are pending in various High Courts are subordinate courts.

In Supreme Court the sanctioned strength is 26 and three vacancies are pending. Hence I urge upon the Government to take effective steps to fill the vacancies in all the High Courts and Supreme Court as early as possible and more posts should be created for speedy disposal of pending cases in all the courts.

(iv) Need to take steps to strengthen family welfare programmes with a view to mitigate poverty

SHRI S.P.Y. REDDY (Nandyal): Sir, the growth of population in the country is so phenomenal that it is affecting the development of the country adversely. The growing population in rural areas has been pushing millions of Indians into poverty every year. The Party has

been traditionally extending staunch support of family welfare programme and the party should not deviate from the legacy of Panditji, Indiraji and Rajivji on the matters related to population control. Currently the family welfare programme is facing a crisis in the country because of shift in the emphasis from population control to population stabilization. It must be remembered that the latter will only follow the former and not otherwise and wisely included population control in the CMP. I vehemently urge the government to review its decision and support of family welfare programme in full measure otherwise Government will be blamed for supporting the growth of poverty.

(v) Need to introduce international flights of Air India and Indian Airlines between Hyderabad and Hong Kong

SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI (Nizamabad): Sir, there are a large number of I.T. professionals from Andhra Pradesh working in the Silicon Valley, USA. Since Hong Kong is a gateway to the USA west coast from the pacific route I, therefore request the Union Government for introduction of International flights between Hyderabad and Hong Kong by Air India and Indian Airlines.

(vi) Need for construction of a Road over-bridge on National Highway No. 63 between Ankola-Gooty Section in Bellary city and a Road underbridge at Satyanarayanpet Railway Gate

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY (Bellary): Sir, Bellary city is thickly populated place having population of nearly 4 lakhs. One railway line (LC: 110) is crossing at National Highway No. 63 between Ankola—Gooty Section. Due to heavy mining activities, number of goods trains carries iron ore to different parts of country which causes frequent closure of railway gates. Due to this, vehicular traffic is frequently jammed. Most of the time, schools buses are also caught in jammed and students also suffered greatly. Road Over Bridge is required to be setup at this place. I am given to understand that his work is included in the Annual Plan for 2004-05.

The foundation stone was laid by the then Minister of State of Railways for construction of Road Under Bridge at Satyanarayanpet Railway Gate, Bellary city in early 2004, but no work has started till now.

As these are long standing demands of the people of Bellary city, I urge upon the Union Government that works on the above mentioned places should be taken up immediately.

(vii) Need to take speedy action for upgradation of road infrastructure in Gujarat

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara): Sir, 3 Coastal highways, 17 State roads, are yet to be upgraded as National Highway in Gujarat. So also the other works like upgradation of Road infrastructure to important parts of Gujarat. Improvement of remaining section of the Golden Quadrilateral and improvement of Ahmedabad Bypass (Narol Naroda bypass road) are yet to be upgraded/to be taken up.

I urge the Govt. for speedy action on the above works.

(viii) Need to provide diesel to farmers at subsidized rates

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH (Satna): The farmers are badly affected by diesel price like. It would result in increase of agriculture input costs. Farmers have been running in loss for years. He is not getting remunerative price for his produce. I mean, since he is debt-trapped, he is forced to commit suicide. Price of diesel have been increasing constantly. In view of it, farmers should be provided diesel at subsidised rates.

My submission is that the Union Government should seriously ponder over the issue of providing subsidised diesel to farmers.

(ix) Need for construction of an airport at Kayad, Ajmer, Rajasthan

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Ajmer is located in the centre of Rajasthan. The city is very important from historical, tourism, educational and religious point of view. The Shrine of famous Sufi Saint Khawaja Muinudhin Chisti is also located here. Lakhs of devotees from our country as well as abroad visit the shrine to pay respect. Pushkar, very famous pilgrim centre of Hindus and important tourist place is near Ajmer. Lakhs of devotees visit this place every year to pay tributes. Asia's famous marble trade centre Kishangarh is quite near to it and an old and famous cantonment centre, Nasirabad is also near Ajmer. Bhilwara, a textile hub and Nagore, a historically important city is also near Ajmer. Ajmer is also an important place from the point of view of Railways and CRPF. Ajmer houses thousands of Sindhi NRIs who carryout their business in African countries,

Singapore, Philippines, England, America and Dubai etc. They come here very frequently. In view of it, there is an urgent need for providing air connectivity to Ajmer.

Therefore, my submission is that the technical feasibility studies of the said project have since been completed, so there is a need to provide air connectivity to Ajmer, Pushkar, which is geographically located in centre of Rajasthan and very important in every aspect. Construction work for the airport at already identified site at village Kayad should be started expeditiously.

(x) Need to declare Jaipur Airport as an international airport and provide funds for its modernisation

[English]

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (Jhalawar): Sir, Rajasthan is a well known and popular tourist destination both for domestic as well as international tourists. The forts, palaces, fairs, festivals and several other places of tourist interests draw a large number of tourists to that State every year. One of the basic requirements of international airport.

The Government of India has allowed two international flights to Jaipur Airport. The Union Finance Minister, while presenting the Vote on Accounts for 2004-05 has announced in Parliament that the Jaipur Airport would be upgraded to an International Airport. But it is regrettable that neither the notification for the same has been issued till date nor any funds allocated for upgrading the facilities at Jaipur Airport.

The required runway for International flights has already been built at Jaipur. Once the Jaipur Airport is upgraded and declared as an International Airport, the tourists will get the benefit from the open skies policy of the Government of India. It will also help international flights in winter when the Indra Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi goes out of use on account of fog.

As such, I demand that the Jaipur Airport is declared as an International Airport without further delay.

(xi) Need to develop a rail link between Suri and Bolpur via Panrui in West Bengal

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (Birbhum): Sir, Suri is a very old district town in West Bengal having poor access with State capital. People from neighbouring areas of Jharkhand viz. Dumka and Jamtara come down to Suri

for different purposes. All commodities and essentials are brought to Suri directly by road transport due to lack of convenient rail link between Suri and Kolkata. This costs each item much higher compared to any other district headquarter. There is a railway station at Suri which falls on Sainthia—Andal single line route. The only train to Howrah via this line i.e. Mayurakshi Passenger takes a long distance and time. As a result people are dependent on road transport. The areas adjoining Suri and the districts of Jharkhand are rich in minerals, Panachami Stones, Kaolin. Fly ash from Bakeshwar Thermal Power Project is transported by road for want of rail link. Hence Suri—Bolpur rail link via Prantik is commercially very viable project.

I urge upon the Government to develop one rail link between Suri and Bolpur via Punrui. A few trains from Howrah/Sealdah be diverted on this Sainthia-Suri-Bolpur route. Apart from this number of Goods Trains too could be run profitably. Thus fulfil long standing public demand and certainly give a new lease of life in economic activities on Suri-Panrui-Bolpur sector.

(xii) Need for expansion of Haldia Refinery in West Bengal

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): Sir, Paradip-Haldia crude pipeline is in process of commissioning shortly. Location of Haldia Refinery is highly potential now due to Paradip—Haldia crude pipeline and presence of Port. Domestic as well as foreign market can easily be penetrated through Port, Road, Rail and pipeline. So Haldia Refinery deserves expansion with infusion of State of art technologies and production of diversified value added products. In view of the above the following programmes/projects for the interest of West Bengal and nation as a whole deserves due importance for implementation.

- (a) Expansion of Refinery capacity unto 12 MMTPA.
- (b) Expansion of crude unit capacity unto 7 Million Metric Tonnes.
- (c) Installation of Hydro-Craker plant.
- (d) Installation of new Crude Distillation Unit III of 3 MMTA capacity with capability of processing high sulphur imported crude.
- (e) Residue upgradation technology e.g., Residue Desulphurisation Units (2.5 Million Metric Tonnes).

(f) Aromatic Complex comprising of catalytic reformers and paraxylene production units with capacity of 7,00,000 tonnes.

(g) Distillate improvement units like fluidised catalytic cracking unit (2.5 Million Metric Tonnes) with other auxiliary units.

I would urge upon the Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas to take step for implementation of the project.

(xiii) Need to clear the proposal of the Government of Uttar Pradesh relating to Primary Health Centres in the State

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.): The proposal of Uttar Pradesh Government seeking Rs. 27.80. crore to purchase 813 jeeps for doctors working in 813 primary health centres at block level in rural areas of the State is pending with the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. Further, approval for opening 1944 more sub-centres in the State on the basis of census-1991 was granted in the year 2004. 18577 sub-centres were already functional and after new addition, their number works out to be approximately 20521. Presently, one sub-centre caters to the population of 8000-10,000. Whereas, for mother and child welfare and also for creating awareness in the public with regard to population control it is imperative to have a sub-centre in each Gram Panchayat. At present there are 52028 Gram Panchayats in the State. If we add existing sub-centres and the centres approved by the Government in February 2004, a proposal for opening remaining 31507 centers is also pending for approval of the Government of India.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to grant approval to both the proposals of the Government of Uttar Pradesh for opening of additional sub-centres.

(xiv) Need to take over construction of Mandal Dam in Chatra Parliamentary Constituency of Jharkhand by the Central Government with a view to provide irrigation facilities to tribal people in the region

DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL (Chatra): My Parliamentary Constituency Chatra is predominantly a tribal area and the tribal farmers living there depend on rain

[Dr. Dhirendra Agarwal]

for irrigation of their crops. The absence of rain fall leaves them with no choice but to struggle to sustain themselves. Mandal Dam in Mahua Dand block under my constituency is under construction for bringing their land under irrigation. Rs. 150 crores have already been spent on it and work involving Rs. 40 crore remains incomplete. The work of the said dam has been stalled since bifurcation of the State. Consequently, the equipments and other material used for the construction of the dam are getting rusted and people are deprived of irrigation facilities. Therefore, my submission is that the Central Government should take over the remaining construction work of said dam so that the poor tribal farmers get reprieve. On completion of said project Chatra, Palamu and other districts will get water.

Therefore, I urge the Central Government to take over construction work of Mandal Dam and get the remaining work completed expeditiously so that the poor tribal farmers may get irrigation facilities.

(xv) Need for construction of a fly-over on National Highway running through Meerut city in Uttar Pradesh

MOHD. SHAHID (Meerut): National Highway passing through Meerut connects it with various districts in the State. It is connected with rural roads on either side. Plying of very large number of vehicles on it results in traffic jam on main road of the district. It creates problems for rural people for hours daily. There has been a demand for construction of a fly-over at this point but no action has been taken so far. I urge the Government to sanction a fly over at this place in the interests of farmers and rural businessmen so that smooth flow of traffic can be facilitated.

(xvi) Need to ban donations being charged by professional self managed colleges from poorer sections of the society in Tamil Nadu

[English]

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Sir, in Tamil Nadu, most of the self managed Medical, Engineering, Dental and Para-Medical Colleges are extracting lakhs of rupees from the poor sections who want admission to their wards in their respective colleges in the name of donations. The poor people who are not able to pay the donations fail to get admission for their children.

While giving permission to these colleges, these colleges should be strictly advised not to harass the poor for donations, and also if any college violate to do so their permission should be cancelled.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government of India to save the students from poor sections by self managed colleges who make education as business in Tamil Nadu.

(xvii) Need to streamline the functioning of CGHS Dispensaries in the country

SHRI M. APPADURAI (Tenkasi): Sir, Central Government employees who are dependant on CGHS are put to great hardships as the prescribed medicines are not provided due to short-supply. Even common medicines for usual indispositions like fever, head-ache, cold and cough are not given to patients immediately after the consultation. After indenting for the same from private pharmacists, CGHS gives these medicines to patients even after two or three days. At times even the private pharmacists do not honour 'indents' as if CGHS do not pay for in time. Instead of ensuring medication these patients are made to wait patiently for medicines by CGHS Dispensaries. This affects further the health of the aged and the infants and thus they are forced to go to private clinics.

Diabetes is prevalent in India more so in Delhi. But CGHS do not deploy trained and qualified doctors for this killer disease. Required medical equipment and medicines to treat diabetic patients are not readily available. Doctors who can treat diabetic patients are available just once a week. Even MPs are not spared from this ordeal in the CGHS Dispensaries. Non-availability of doctors and medicines causes great heart burn.

Hence, I urge upon Hon. Union Health Minister to conduct surprise check-ups and streamline the functioning of CGHS Dispensaries to benefit the helpless Central Government employees.

(xviii) Need to solve the problems being faced by farmers in the border areas of Ferozpur Parliamentary Constituency, Punjab

[Translation]

SHRI ZORA SINGH MAAN (Ferozpur): Sir, my Parliamentary constituency, Ferozpur is a bordering area

of Punjab. It touches 300 kms long international border along line of control. Being a border area, it is very backward. It has neither factories nor good educational institutions. Unemployment, poverty and illiteracy are rampant here. People of this area have also undergone the scare of two Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. These wars had ruined Ferozpur. As Sutlej passing through my constituency has also been the cause of perennial floods. Consequently, the area has remained backward. Of course, the farmers have made some progress. Areas along border have been fenced and large number of farmers have their land across fencing. Farmers of my area are facing many a problems which I would like to bring forth.

The BSF gives them very less time for working in their fields across the fencing. It should be extended. As these farmers have very small land holdings, therefore, the Government should give them proper compensation. Gates have been erected for on the way leading to the fields across fencing. More number of gates should be provided so that the farmers do not have to walk long distances for going to their fields.

24 hours power supply should be ensured. Lady police should be deployed at the fencing gates for frisking of women going to their fields across the fencing.

I urge the Government to pay heed to these problems.

[English]

(xix) Need to upgrade schools run by Railways with CBSE affiliation

DR. K. DHANARAJU (Tindivanam): Sir, I draw the attention of Government through you, Sir, that provision of Education to the Wards or Railway Employees in general through schools run by railway is not satisfactory. Most of the schools in the country are up to 8th and 10th standard. Railways network is the biggest in the country but on the education side it is very small.

I request the Government through you that these 8th and 10th standard schools should be upgraded to the Senior Secondary level and should be affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education so that the children who

are the future of the nation may get better education in the same environment.

Buildings of the schools are also not in good condition due to the fact that these are very old and may collapse any moment. It is very risky to keep the children in such schools which need immediate care by constructing new school buildings. It is also worth mentioning that the vacancies, if any, after accommodating all the wards of Railway Employees are filled with outside students to the limit of 5% and the remaining vacancies are kept unfilled, as the rule is not relaxed. If the rule is relaxed then more outside wards will be admitted in the Railway Schools.

(xx) Need to provide better infrastructural facilities at proposed Indira Gandhi National Park and Wild life Sanctuary in Pollachi, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Sir, in my Pollachi Parliamentary Constituency the Indira Gandhi National Park and wild life Sanctuary in the Anaimall's range (TOP Slip) in Pollachi, Coimbatore District, is proposed to be set up which would be the second tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu.

The Combined area of the Wild Life Sanctuary is 95,860 hectares. This Indira Gandhi National Park is at an altitude of 1400 mtrs. above sea level in Western Ghats mountains. Here we have tigers, panthers, elephants, gaur, leopards, hog, bison, monkey, mongoose, rusty spotted cats, bonnet macaques, common langurs, Nilgiri langurs, giant squirrels and flying squirrels, apart from the endangered lion-tailed macaque.

I request to the Government of India that Anaimall area should be developed as one of the best Wild Life Sanctuaries so that it may attract domestic and international tourists.

I also request the Government to provide infrastructural facilities for the animal kingdom in the forest, water tanks should be spread over the forests so that the animals may not come down the dwelling areas of human beings in search of water.

Further, proper fencing arrangements must be planned first to protect the hill tribes and other human dwelling areas adjoining the forest.

14.11 hrs.

***DEMAND FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS
(RAILWAYS), 2005-06****AND*****DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS
(RAILWAYS), 2002-03***[English]*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, we will take up Item Numbers 13 and 14 together relating to Demand for

Motions moved:

"That the supplementary sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2006, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the second column thereof against Demand No. 16."

List of Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 2005-06 submitted to the Vote of Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Supplementary Demands for Grants submitted to the vote of the House (Rs.)
16	Assets—Acquisition, Construction and Replacement Other Expenditure	
	Capital	300,00,10,000
	Railway Funds	125,00,00,000
	Railway Safety Fund	30,000
	Total	425,00,40,000

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Motions moved:

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order

Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2003, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 14, 15 and 16."

List of Demand for Grants (Railways) for 2002-03 submitted to the Vote of Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demands for Excess Grants to be submitted to the vote of the House (Rs.)
14	Appropriation to Funds	211,15,37,616
15	Dividend to General Revenues, Repayment of Loans taken from General Revenues and Amortization of Over- Capitalization	18,29,78,566
16	Assets—Acquisition, Construction and Replacement Other Expenditure Special Railway Safety Fund	89,96,61,642
	Total	319,41,77,824

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Lakshman Singh to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the expenditure head of the Railway Budget, the maximum expenditure has been shown against repair and maintenance and as far the Appropriation Bill that has been presented by the Minister of Railways is concerned, one of the Bills amounts to Rs. 383.64 crore and the other Bill amounts to Rs. 425 crore, which is 320 percent more than the amount allocated in Railway Budget for repairing and maintenance. The hon'ble Minister has moved this Bill in the House for its approval. The repairing and maintenance of railway is important from the point of view of safety. However, if the modernization of railway is taken up, the railway may not need to spend and make budgetary allocation to the extent of 320 percent increase over the previous year's budgetary allocation on repair and maintenance and the hon'ble Minister will not have to approach the House time and again for its approval. When the hon'ble Minister was delivering his speech and was preparing about integrated railway modernization plan, he had recited a 'couplet'-'Sif Hangama Khada Kama Mera Maksad Nahin, Meri Koshish hai Ki Surat Badalni chahie.' The time will tell whether the image of the railway will be improved or not, however they have maligned the image of democracy by creating pandemonium in the House. They should ponder over it. They have strangled the democracy in Bihar. He should think over it. ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the Government should modernize the Railway and enhance its revenue. The Container Corporation of India was set up in 1998 in view of prospective increase in the export target after signing on World Trade Agreement by India. An amount of Rs. one crore was allocated to the Container Corporation of India. The importance of the said Corporation has further increased as our trades are increasing. The quantum of our import and export is increasing and in future India will emerge as a world power. We should pay special attention towards providing basic infrastructure to railway.

Today Dry Ports are required to be set up by the Government in backward areas and those areas in the country where there is immense potential for increasing agricultural production. Gujarat has 5283 Km. road, Maharashtra has 5497 Km. rail line and Madhya Pradesh

has 4850 Km. railway line and the all three above States have sent proposal for setting up dry ports in the respective States. The Custom Clearance facility should be provided to the entrepreneurs. The basic facility should be provided to them so that they may directly export from the dry ports. The Government proposed to set up special Export zone. The Central Government also proposes to set up Agriculture Export Zone. However, the Government could not do so because the Government is not able to provide basic facilities there. So there is need to pay special attention in this direction. All the above three States and the other States have sent proposals to the Government for setting up of Dry Ports. I hope that the said proposals will be considered seriously.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if we look at the North Eastern States we find that many things are required to be done in those regions. Till now only two Km. of rail lines have been constructed in Mizoram State. In Nagaland there are only 13 Km. rail lines in the State and in Manipur where hon'ble Minister of Railways and the Prime Minister had visited, the length of rail line is only one Km. The Minister has given assurance for the construction of rail line from Silchar to Ziriwang. The work should be accomplished on priority basis.

Sir, recently when there was blockade in Manipur our party had sent a one member parliamentary team to take stock of the situation there. I had also gone with them. There is an urgent need to construct a rail line there which can become clear from this fact that while the national highway was blocked during agitation and it was on account of this that one LPG gas cylinder was sold at Rs. 700. There were acute shortage of medicines as well and the people at the State had to face hardships for one to one and half months. Yesterday I read in the newspaper that the blockade has been removed. It is very essential to connect Manipur by rail line.

Sir, the previous Government had prepared scheme to produce bio-diesel and use it in railway. *Jatropha* plants were proposed to be cultivated on fallow land of railway. Can *Jatropha* plants is not the only source from which bio-diesel can be produced it can also be produced from maize and millets are used to feed to animals in rural areas. The Government can also produce bio-diesel from these things; however, the Government is not paying attention to it. I would like that the Government should pay attention in this direction as well.

[Shri Lakshman Singh]

Sir, the way, the price of diesel has been increasing these days, has adversely affected the life of common people. The economy of the Railways has also been adversely affected by it and it is likely to affect it further. The production has further decided on account of accident in Bombay High. So, in view of the above situation it is more essential the Government should pay attention to the production of bio-diesel. The Government should cultivate *Jatropha* on lakhs of hectare of fallow land in the country for using it as a source of bio-diesel production. The Government should formulate scheme in collaboration with the State Government to bring more and more fallow land under the cultivation of *Jatropha* plants and produce biodiesel from it.

Sir, the Hon'ble Minister had recited one more couplet—

Uthana Hai Aur Bhi Uper, Uchaina Pukarti,
Hai Apar shamtain, Ashain Tumhen Niharti.

An amount of Rs. 18,409 crore of the Indian Railway Financial Corporation is outstanding against the Railways. It would be needless to comment of the Railways seeks to finance its projects by increasing its debt burden. Unfortunately the hon'ble Minister did not say anything in his address as to how the railways will reduce its burden of debt. So it is essential for the Government to pay special attention in this regard so that the financial condition of the railway may be strengthened. Along with it, there is a need to stream line and the system of Railway and to adhere to the financial rules so that economic burden on railways could be reduced and the deficit of railways could be brought down.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Safety and Security of Railway is very important subject. 85 percent of the total accident in railways occurs due to human error so it is essential to pay special attention towards the training of staff and officers of the railways. The Government is providing free of cost training to the railway employees of the foreign countries. I have no objection for this. However, I would like to know from the Government whether the Railways has formulated any concrete programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Human Resource Development for providing trainings to its employees so that the incidents of accidents in Railway may decline. Though I do not know as to what is his (the Minister of Railways) aquarium with hon'ble Arjun Singh ji, however, as for my knowledge in this regard is

concerned, the Minister has not formulated any concrete programme to provide training to the staff and officers of railways in collaboration with the Ministry of Human Resource Development. If any such programme has been proposed then the Minister should mention it in his address in this regards. I hope that the hon'ble Minister will certainly mention in his speech if any such programme has been formulated by the Government.

A provision of Rs. 17 thousand crore has been made for Railway Safety Fund. It is an appreciable step. The Minister should spare some amount from the said fund for providing training to the railway employees as 85 percent of the total rail accidents have occurs due to human error. So the special attention is required for providing training.

The general perception in the railway department is that the hon'ble Minister is paying more attention to Bihar and is less interested in the department. It is the general prevailing notion and subject of common discussion which is really unfortunate. The elections are going to be held in Bihar, so it is natural for the hon. Minister to pay more attention to Bihar. I have apprehension that Railway Board may not start functioning from Chhapra instead the Railway Board must continue to function from the Rail Bhavan.

There is frustration and a sense of dejection among the competent officers of Railway on account of their transfers on political considerations. Several officers who were with hon'ble Nitish Kumar ji have been removed because they were with Nitish ji. It is not proper to act with such mentality. We will have to change our attitude so that the Railway may not suffer loss on this account. ...*(Interruptions)* The Railway Board should be made more powerful by making it more autonomous. The competent officers should be given more freedom for discharging their duties so that good results may be achieved.

At the end I would like to submit that next time when the hon'ble Minister comes with any proposal he should pay special attention as to how more and more dry ports can be setup to increase the export of the country. He should also demand fund for this. The Ministry should also seek funds for promoting the production of biodiesel. If the hon'ble Minister comes with all such proposals I believe that it will yield good result. Our colleague Shri Dushyant Singh ji was telling that the survey work of Ramganj Mandi-Bhopal rail line was conducted and some fund has also been allocated but sufficient fund has not been released. Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are two of the backward States through

which the said line passes. There is plenty of work along the proposed rail line and lakhs of hectare of fallow land will be developed once rail line is constructed there and as I have said 'Ratanjot' can be cultivated on those lands and the local people will be benefited by this.

As far Madhya Pradesh is concerned the people of Maxi Shajapur district of the State have given number of proposal for the construction of overbridge there. The overbridge should be constructed on national highway as in the absence of overbridge leads to obstruction in the movement of traffic.

I have some more suggestions; however, I will not take more time because other Members are also to speak. I believe that the Minister of Railways has listened carefully and he will give reply in this regard.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Members, for Item Nos. 13 & 14 the time allotted is four hours. I have a very long list of hon. Members who wish to speak here. Therefore, I would like to request all the hon. Members, who would take part in the proceedings, to be conscious about the time and speak for only five minutes. So five minutes each is sufficient.

SHRI K.V. THANGKABALU (Salem): Thank you Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for the year 2005-06.

Sir, at the outset, I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for playing a dynamic role in developing the railway system in the country. Also, he has given a new direction. After its implementation, the system will work in a very transparent manner. Though he is doing very good work all over India, yet we have apprehensions and anguish that Tamil Nadu is not given its due share as far as Railways are concerned.

In the Budget, the hon. Union Minister was kind enough to announce Rs. 410 crore for the various developmental works in the State of Tamil Nadu. We have made a request to the UPA leadership under the Chairmanship of Dr. Kalamangar M. Karunanidhi, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. All the forty Lok Sabha Members from the State submitted a number of proposals relating to their constituencies and also proposals about a number of important projects which we have promised to the people before we came to power. Dr. Kalamangar M. Karunanidhi has given a personal letter, and also—as

per the commitment made to the people of Tamil Nadu—all other political parties in the alliance of our UPA Government jointly gave the Memorandum. We, the 40-Member block, jointly met you, Sir, and discussed with you about various projects; but so far we are not able to get the justice which is due to us.

I would like to request the hon. Railway Minister to consider the projects, which we have submitted, in toto. These are the aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu. Particularly, there is a long-pending demand of the Salem Division. The demand for the Salem Division has been there for the last more than forty years. About nine districts, namely Salem, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Erode, Namakkal, Coimbatore, the Nilgiris etc. are an integral part of this area, but we are linked with Palakkad Division. These aspirations are not met by successive Governments. At this juncture, we would like to impress upon you that we are not against the Palakkad Division, we are not against our Kerala friends. We only want that the areas which are in the Salem range—as I mentioned about nine districts—should be carved out separately and be made a Division. This will fulfil the aspirations of the people of the Region. This is one of the most backward areas in the State of Tamil Nadu. At the same time, let Kerala have the Palakkad Division. We are not objecting to it; we are not asking you to divide or to totally close that Division. Let the Palakkad Division continue; let the Kerala friends enjoy that facility. We are not against that. It is very clear. At the same time, whatever they want extra in that area, we can give. For that also, we have no problem. Likewise, let them also not interfere in our area, in our jurisdiction and in our development. In fact, the Trivandrum Division has got Kanyakumari. Tirunelveli district is a part of that area. All these are there. We are not asking that. Let them be there only. Technically and academically a convenient Division has to be carved out, and for this, Salem is the only place. Salem is the right place to have the Division. This is the most important area of our request. All our leaders have prayed to you and all our forty hon. Members of Parliament have requested you; now I appeal to you to kindly announce this. All the forty Members are asking for only one Division. Our leaders have prayed to you, and all the Members have prayed to you.

This has not been met so far. For the last one and a half year, myself and my colleagues in that area were put under pressure by the people. All the people, irrespective of political parties, are of the opinion that we should get it. People have been asking us to come forward and lead the agitation. That is what their demand is. We have been telling the people that it is our

[Shri K.V. Thangakabalu]

Government, he is our Minister, he is a leader of backward class people and his concerns are for the backward class. That is what we have been telling the people. If this is not done immediately, then we have no other option except to go to the streets or to the railway platforms to start the agitation. Sir, this is the position. So, I request the hon. Minister to kindly consider this important matter.

Our hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, Shri Velu had visited Salem. In fact, he had seen the mood of the people over there. He also knows the demand of the various areas, that is, Bodinayakampatti underground bridge. Shri Velu visited this place and saw the plight of the people. More than 12,000 people are affected in that area. About 14 villages are affected. People have not been able to use this route. So, I request the hon. Minister to announce that bridge and it should be implemented at the earliest.

With regard to ROB programmes, we discussed with the hon. Minister. The State Government is not in a position to fund ROB programmes. The Railway Department of the Central Government has to fund these ROB programmes. And whatever share has to be taken from the State Government, the Central Government can deduct it from the fund which is going to be passed on to the State Government. That is the easiest way. Instead of asking the State Government to do this, the Railway Department can directly construct these ROB.

As regards Omalur bridge, our Minister has already visited this place and he has taken certain steps, for which I thank him. The work has to be completed at the earliest, and for that, a direction has to go from the Central Government.

The other one is Salem-Karur line. This is one of the neglected areas. The work is going on but a number of problems are there. I want the hon. Minister to convene a meeting of the Members of Parliament and the local people to sort out the pending problems with regard to Karur-Salem line. That is the only way.

For Salem-Virudhachalam line, the Railways have sanctioned Rs. 45 crore. I thank you for that. The remaining line, Attur-Salem, is a very important one. It has not been fulfilled. So, I request the hon. Minister to provide funds for this line in this budget or subsequently and fulfil the Salem-Virudhachalam broad gauge line.

Sir, in my constituency, there are three level crossings which causes a lot of concern to the agriculturists, who are compulsorily to go to other areas. They are: Kanavaiputhur, 110B-292/9-11; Uttamasolapuram, 115A/341/6-8; and Mettupatti M. Perumapalayam, which is 18 km away from Salem. These three crossings are causing great concern to the people in these areas. In each and every place, more than 30,000 people have to cross. Unmanned gates are there. You have very recently ordered to close all the unmanned crossings and people are suffering a lot.

Sir, the Minister has been kind enough to send a letter to me. Let the money be allocated out of MPLAD fund. The Central Government or the Panchayat can give Rs. 90 lakh for this purpose. You are aware about the State Governments and their position. No Panchayat would be having Rs. 90 lakh to pay. Panchayats are not in a position to meet the salary part. If the Members of Parliament have to pay this money from their MPLAD fund for one project, then what will happen to other works? This is the real problem. So, I request the hon. Minister to see that these three crossings are funded by the Railway Board itself and also give necessary orders.

We have asked for ROB at Mullavadi gate at Salem; Ayodyapattinam cross; and Mutampatti cross. The hon. Minister knows very well and also visited these places. These ROB have to be linked with the BG line proposal.

Along with that, stations should be established at Vazhapadi, Karipatti, Ayodhyapatnam, Pedhanaickan Palayam and Pudhrakottan Palayam.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI K.V. THANGKABALU: Sir, I will take only two minutes.

Work has to be stepped up. There is no station at the moment. We need stations there because a lot of people do travel there. Likewise, the Salem-Bangalore second BG line is also another important one. In this area also, a lot of commuters go from Salem to Bangalore and beyond that, up to Mumbai. This needs to be considered at the earliest.

The hon. Minister of State, Mr. Velu visited Mettur and Athur. He had seen himself the traffic between Salem and Mettur. The passenger train is to be immediately allowed to go. Likewise between Salem and Athur, let

the work of BG line go on, but the passenger train should not be stopped at the moment. That should be linked immediately. That will solve a major problem. I do not want to take much time of the House. Once again, I emphasise the Salem Division is the foremost request from 40 MPs of the State. I request the hon. Minister to consider this immediately and make an announcement.

I have only one request with regard to the reservation policy in the Railway Department. The Minister being a backwards' leader, I would like to tell him that though we have implemented 27 per cent reservation, the posts meant for the Backward Class communities are not filled up in the Railways. The SCs, STs and OBCs should be given priority. In implementing the SC, ST and OBC reservation policy, there should not be any lacking. I request you to announce a special package, special drive for the fulfilment of the obligation of the SC, ST and OBC categories. Kindly do this in your Department.

Sir, I do not have much time, but at the same time I thank you for giving me this opportunity. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to consider the Salem Division and announce it while he replies.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): I support the Motion moved by our respected Railway Minister. I support this because we have discussed the Railway Budget in detail. Some significant steps have been taken by our Railway Ministry.

While congratulating our Railway Ministry, let me talk about some problems which the Indian Railways now face. I do not want to go to any of the issues relating to my constituency. So, I think you may give some more time to me because I am going to say about the general things.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am helpless. I cannot give you much time. I am sorry.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: The most important issue that we face now is the safety of the railways. There are a number of reports about accidents. We have also some reports in regard to the action that the Government has taken.

Sir, there were 70 lakh workers in the Railway earlier. Now their number has reduced to 30.5 lakh. Of course, the reply may be that this has happened due to computerisation and modernisation. But we know that in

some sectors the reduction of the workforce would, of course, weaken the day-to-day administration of the Railways. Especially in the field of safety sector, the reduction should not be allowed. That has to be retained. We know that accidents occur due to the negligence of the officers, drivers and sometimes due to the guards, but we have to take stringent action.

There are a number of instances where the accidents have taken place due to the fall of infrastructure, especially for want of ROBs and FOBs which are most important as stated by other hon. Members. When we go to see the work of the ROBs, many of them are in the half way. Though we have given the amount in the last Budget itself, the construction of many of the ROBs and FOBs has not yet started. So, the Government has to take safety of the people as the responsibility of the Railways because the Railways is charging from each passenger. Take for example, for ordinary ticket, it is charging Re. 1. For second-class ticket, it is charging Rs. 2, Rs. 3, Rs. 5 and Rs. 10. So, this is the responsibility of the Railways.

Of course, it is good that we think about the huge plans but at the same time the preliminary issues like construction of ROBs, roofing of platforms and all other such issues are not at all given much importance, especially in the case of Kerala. So, I think, a plan should be made to make these things within a time period. I think, that is most important.

In order to strengthen our safety side, we have to take a modern methods also. The guards and station masters are not using mobile phones but when we travel by trains, we can use them. The drivers, guards and others concerned, who need to know the news and have information and also have to pass on information, have no facilities. So, in the railway stations and in the trains, we should implement such steps without any loss of time.

The Railway Catering Policy, I would like to point out here, is also very important. The Railway Catering Policy, 2005 has generated a lot of criticisms. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways has also criticised it. They have also suggested that a Joint Parliamentary Committee should go into the details and whatever defects are there should be rectified and then only should the Railways proceed with the Policy. This has become a very acutely important issue for the workers. There are about seven lakh workers in the catering sector; 50,000 of them are in the Southern

[Shri P. Karunakaran]

Railway and 7,000 of them are in Kerala. All of them are afraid of losing their jobs. I request the hon. Minister and the Railway Ministry to ensure that no worker loses his or her job. Even if new licences are going to be issued, if the existing licences are ready to continue, they should be given jobs.

The Railways has a history of 150 years in our country. When we think of Railways, of course, we think about our porters also. I congratulate our hon. Minister of Railways because when he came to Tiruvananthapuram, he appreciated the good work done by the porters when the porters came to receive and greet him. The policy that the Government has adopted is to reduce the number of jobs in this sector because they are giving loading and unloading work to private parties. As a result, porters who are poor people are suffering. About two lakh porters and their families are dependent for a living on their jobs in the railway stations. Sometimes, there is nobody to speak about them. So, the issue of porters and their families has to be taken care of and retaining them in their jobs has to be given due importance.

The Konkan Railway is an important rail system that the Indian Railways has brought about. I congratulate the Government for that. At the same time, if the purpose of the Konkan Railway has to be served, doubling of lines is very important. The doubling work is not complete from Calicut to Shoranur. It is not complete in the Kasargod side. The Nethravathi bridge is a very important bridge. It is not possible for Rajdhani and other express trains to ply on this line unless doubling work is completed. If it is delayed, we would be losing lakhs and lakhs of rupees every year.

We should think about the passengers in the long route trains. It is a glad piece of news that the reserved compartments have increased on these trains. Earlier, there were two general compartments in all the long route trains but it has now been reduced to one. Thousands of passengers are travelling by the KK Express from Tiruvananthapuram to New Delhi. Thousands of passengers travel by long route trains from Kurla to Nethravathi. There are a lot of passengers travelling by the Kanyakumari-Bangalore Express and the Jayanti Janata Express. When we think about ordinary passengers, if there is only one general compartment, it would be really a Herculean task for them to get into the train. I am sure, the Government would take this issue with serious concern.

With regard to parcels, earlier, in almost all the stations, the passengers were able to send their parcels. The Railways has taken a decision that parcels could be sent only from stations where there is a stoppage of five minutes. In most of the stations where the train does not stop for five minutes, people are not able to send their parcels. We, the MPs, have represented this issue to the hon. Minister and he has given the necessary order. But it has not been implemented so far. As far as the Railways are concerned, sending of parcels is very important. But we have to think about the convenience of the people also. In some cases, when they have to send their parcels, they have to travel three or four hours to get the train where it has the stoppage of five minutes.

Another most important issue is this. Earlier, the Railways have allowed to split rakes in accordance with the convenience and needs of the Food Corporation of India. But, now, it is being denied. Earlier workers were allowed eight hours for unloading a rake, but now within ten hours they have to unload two rakes. It means they have to work for 12 hours in the night.

As far as facilities are concerned, there are a number of reports of thefts and robberies in the compartments especially against women and children in the Railways. We have a number of complaints from Kerala in the Palaghat, Trichur and other stations. A number of times students and others are also attacked. So, the Ministry of Railways has to take special measures to give protection to the people, especially to the women and students. Nowadays, the last compartment is reserved for women. However, it would better if a middle compartment is reserved for women so that there would be some more protection for them.

Lastly, as stated by my hon. colleague, we, the MPs, the Government of Kerala and all the political parties, have been giving representations for the development of Kerala and for creation of new Zone at Trivandrum. It will not create any difficulty to any other person. So, I request both the hon. Ministers who are present here, to consider this issue and make a statement today in this regard. It is because we make a number of contributions at the national level also. So, the Ministry of Railways should give more importance in this regard, that is, about the creation of a new Zone at Trivandrum.

SHRI T.K. HAMZA (Manjeri): Sir, I associate with him.

SHRI P. RAJENDRAN (Quilon): Sir, I also associate with him.

[*Translation*]

SHR RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it would be of no use for me to speak unless the hon'ble Minister of Railways who right now, is, asleep, listens to what I say.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): I am carefully listening you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is not sleeping he is only pretending to sleep.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, for the first time I understood that this is called listening carefully.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You please speak. You have already lost one minute.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are discussing on the Supplementary Demand for Grants for Railways and the hon'ble Minister of Railways wants the approval of the House for a Grant of Rs. 425,00.40 lakh. Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the Railways Budget which is the economic statement for the entire year was presented in the House five months back. The hon'ble Minister of Railways has been seeking the approval of the House for the Supplementary Demand of Grants for Railways after so many days. Which implies that the estimate of expenditure proposed by the Railways was not correct and so I can submit that the financial management is not as good as it should have been.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, just now Shri Lakshman Singh has submitted about the security and safety of Railways. Rs. 0.30 lakh have been allocated for the Security of the railways. I would not like to go in this debate as to how many incidents of accidents occurred during the previous regime or during the present regime as the moot question is not about data. We should not enter into debate on data. Not once but many times I have reiterated it in the House that the perception and feelings of the Common people regarding the performance of any institutions or organization is more important than what is reflected by the data, So I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister of Railways that the credibility of Railway system is not as it should have been and there

is need to bring improvement in it. I feel that there is need to ponder seriously over the reasons behind the rail accidental time when the hon'ble Minister had delivered his speech he had said that he would fix responsibility against the highest officers like General Manager (GM) of the zone where the accident will occur. I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister of the Railway that while replying to the discussion he should tell us about the extent to which the actions have been taken against the higher officers responsible for the rail accidents occurred in the past.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the Supplementary Demand for Grants there is mention of the Capital expenditure of Rs. 300,00.10 lakh that includes the expenditures on engines and wagons etc. The most notable thing in it is that remaining amount of Rs. 125,00,00 lakh are proposed to be spent on the construction in various projects. There are 80 projects mentioned in it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to submit to the Minister of Railways that while launching the new projects, the railways should review the previous on going projects as to what extent the said projects have been completed. In this context it is noteworthy that all the previous projects which are lying pending are not being effectively implemented at the desired pace. If the new projects are taken up without completing the previous projects and if the projects are not completed within scheduled time limit, I feel that it will not bear positive result. For example the first point of the Supplementary Demand for Grants stating the expenditure in railways is-

"The operation of A and D cabin including the coaches of Amla Yard should be shifted to central place and there is a need to set up a R R I building in the Centre in place of existing four cabins to abolish central railway inter Cabin strolling. It will help in ending the restriction of speed of 30 km. per hour towards down direction of the station."

Besides this, there is a proposal of construction of one sided additional 550 metre long platform for handling of 24 bogies passenger train. The outline of the standards of station for the secured and proper operation of trains will also be prepared. Rs. 419.00 lakh are proposed to be spent on it. Rs. 1.01 lakh will be spent on this project during the year 2005-06. A Supplementary grant of Rs. 0.01 lakh is required for the early completion of the said project and the outstanding amount of Rs. 0.99 lakh will be arranged through the re-appropriation under the

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

Demand for Grants. Rs. 419 lakh is required for the project and the fund which is being released in this context is almost negligible. I doubt if the project can be completed even in the ensuing five to ten years going by the pace of the implementation of the said project. So through you I would like to submit that before moving any proposal for any project we should fix the target of the completion of the project that the project will be completed in three, five or seven years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, keeping time constraints in mind, I would like to make one more submission. Agra-Itawah rail project was sanctioned in 1999 with an estimated cost of Rs. 214 crore. This, 114.5 kms long stretch was to have 13 stations enroute—Bhadal, Karaudhnakalan, Shamshadbad, Ghimsri, Fatehabad, Manikpur, Bhadroli, Bateshwar, Bah, Jaitpurkalan, Guman Singh Ka Pura, H.S. Jaitpur and Junction Undi. Land of 92 villages was to be acquired for said broad gauge rail project. Out of it, land of only 80 villages has been acquired. The land of 6 each villages of Agra and Itawah district is yet to be acquired. The Ministry of Railways has paid Rs. 23.05 crore to the Government of U.P. In all, 67 small and large-sized bridges, including 2 rail over bridges and 2 rail under bridges are yet to be constructed on said line. Rs. 51 crore have been spent on the said Project, so far. Rs. 23.05 crore have been received for it including an initial allocation of Rs. 10 crore. Rs. 20 crore in 2002-03, Rs. 20 crore in 2003-04 and Rs. 10 crore in 2004-05 have been released. During current financial year, only Rs. 8 crore have been released. If the Ministry of Railways release funds for said Project in similar fashion, I can say that the Project will not be able to be completed in next 10 years. When a project is finalised and the Government fail to release adequate funds, suspicion arises over the project. Delay in construction of a project results in cost over run and the likely beneficiaries of the project remain deprived. Required funds have been released for the said project, while preparing a project, scheduled date for its completion should also be fixed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Agra-Itawah broad gauge project was sanctioned in 1999. If the Ministry wants the project to be completed as desired then there is a need to allocate adequate funds for it. Therefore, the Ministry should release adequate funds.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me

an opportunity to speak on Supplementary Demands for Railways. I rise to speak in support of said demands.

I would like to congratulate hon. Minister of Railways, who, with the help of efficient employees and officers of railway, has not only brought the loss making railways out of red but also has declared a surplus Budget. Railways has shown Rs. 8 thousand crore surplus in current year's Budget. It has never happened in the past. So, it is an historical achievement of hon. Minister of Railways. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You should follow the example of Shri Ramji Lal Suman.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I would like to tell hon. Members as to how there is a surplus Budget. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No running commentary please, Shri Yadav you should address the Chair and note the individual.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am looking at you only.

15.00 hrs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, earlier Railways used to present deficit Budget. To streamline the working, hon. Minister revamped the entire administration and took strong measures. In this regard, he got cooperation from all the corners. We are aware that rail fares were increased almost in all the Budgets, but current year's Budget spared the fares. Hon. Minister has presented the Rail Budget. But no burden has been put on common-man. Neither the fares for ordinary class passengers nor for upper class passengers nor freight rates have been revised upwardly. Hon. Minister has revamped the administration wherever it was required. Railways earn three-fourth revenue from carriage of goods. By tightening the administration, he has been able to garner more revenue through freight.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you are aware that hon. Minister conducted surprise raids. He found that the goods train were carrying more goods than they used to show on records. The loading being done earlier was increased several times by the hon. Minister resulting in increased income through freight. The Hon. Minister modified existing norms for loading increasing its limit specified earlier after conducting a systematic study. It resulted in increased carrying capacity. The trains already had much more capacity. But the authorities devoured this money. This way corruption was rampant in the Railways. Hon. Minister has made efforts to weed out corruption. This measure increased the income of the Railways.

Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the berths of upper class normally used to remain vacant. But according to the new policy these berths were no longer vacant. If the passengers travelling in AC II class demand then they would be adjusted in I Class at the same rate. Similarly, if there are more passengers travelling in Sleeper III Class, they would be permitted and adjusted in AC II. Likewise.

15.03 hrs.

[SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN *in the Chair*]

The passengers travelling in General Sleeper Class had to face disappointment due to non availability of space owing to heavy rush and a very long waiting list. The Railways would allow them to travel in A.C. II at the same rate. Today, the situation is that all the berths are full and passengers are not facing any difficulty. It is also increasing the income of the Railways. It has also enabled to make up loss suffered by the Railways. We are trying to increase our capacity. Hon. Minister has tried to weed out corruption rampant in the Railways. Today, it is earning large scale profits as a result thereof.

Madam Chairman, hon'ble Minister of Railways has not only provided benefits to the common man but he has also facilitated employment to the unemployed persons. He made arrangements for 'Kulhars' in trains. In this way employment has been provided to unemployed persons. Right now, Suman ji was submitting that efforts are being made to expedite the pending projects of Railways in the various parts of the country. I believe that Hon. Minister of Railways will fulfil his dream of making of the Indian Railways number one in the world. I understand, if this situation continues and continue to

get cooperation from the people then the Indian Railways will definitely become number one in the world.

I would like to draw the attention of the House towards some smaller issues, earlier there used to be heavy losses in catering. The losses which used to be upto Rs. 13 crore have now been converted into profits to the tune of Rs. 100 crores through the efforts of Hon. Minister. Earlier the income from PCO and STD Booths was poor. The profits which were Rs. four crore earlier have now soared to Rs. 40 crore owing to increased efficiency and proper management. They are not paying attention to it. Earlier, losses to the tune of Rs. 1300 crore per annum, were incurred in parcel but now owing to proper monitoring there has been 41 per cent profit, in four months. The deficit trade is being converted into profit and this is the reason that Railways is earning profit in surplus and because of that there is no need of central assistance to the Railways which used to be provided every year to it. If this pace continues then the income will definitely rise from Rs. 8000 crore to Rs. 14,000 crores. The Railway department would be able to complete all its pending projects and provide all facilities which were not being made available due to paucity of funds.

Through you, I would like to draw the attention of Hon. Minister towards those schemes which are pending particularly, in my constituency in Bihar for a long time. Hon. Minister had announced a survey in regard to a scheme which was very important in the budget of last financial year. A line for Anugrah Narayan Station, in Aurangabad via Bihta, Pali, Vikram, Arwal was sanctioned. He has given orders for its survey but the order has not been fully implemented as on date. That is why I would request him to give directions to his Department that Survey may be completed and railway line may be laid there at the earliest. It is a very long standing demand of the people there. If this project is executed it will fulfil the dream of the people. Hon. Minister had announced this scheme in this House on 14th July. I believe that Hon. Minister will pay special attention to it in near future and would direct the Department to complete this scheme.

Danvir Karan Express should be introduced from Bhagalpur to Delhi. Ang region has been named after Danvir Karan in Mahabharata. It will be a historical measure. Hon. Minister of Railways has paid attention to Jamalpur Coach Factory which is the most famous factory in Asia. I would like to congratulate him for it. Jamalpur factory has become operational, but its plant and

[Shri Ram Kripal yadav]

equipments are old due to which the working capacity is not that good. I would request to install new plants over there. A number of trains ply between Patna and Delhi. At present at least one Rajdhani Express is necessary between Patna and Delhi. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister to ply one Rajdhani Express daily from Patna to Delhi. Hon. Minister has sanctioned 34 overbridges in Bihar alongwith Patna but the work has not begun. Through you, I would request the Hon. Minister that work may be started there at the earliest so as to provide relief and facility to the people. I would like to submit that there are several such schemes which have been completed by him in Bihar. He has sanctioned some very important schemes which had been lying incomplete for several years. There are several such pending schemes particularly in North Bihar due to which the people there had to face enormous difficulties. What action has been taken by him to complete these schemes? Hon. Minister should take immediate action to complete several such schemes which are pending. There are three-four stations and halts within my parliamentary constituency, in which the passengers are devoid of requisite facilities. Hon. Minister Shrimati Kanti Singh is present here; Beehta and Sadasyonpur in her Constituency have a halt but have yet not been awarded the status of a full fledged station. Sadasyonpur is a very old station, so it should be awarded the status of a full fledged station. Passengers have to face a lot of difficulties are even at Beehta Station. It lacks so many facilities. It should be modernized and other facilities should be provided there. There is no alighting point at Pali halt. A platform and a ticket counter are required to be constructed there. Stoppage should be provided to many a train at these places. I had written to the hon. Minister in this regard. Danapur Railway station is in a very bad shape, it should be modernized and there are several such vital schemes in regard to which I have drawn the attention of the Hon. Minister through a letter. More schemes should be completed. I believe that the Indian Railways will become number one in the world under the leadership of the Hon. Minister and this railway budget which used to be deficit budget would become a profit budget. The Railways will not only serve the needs of the people by increasing its income through efficient and effective measures but will also reap benefits for the Union Government. With these words, I support the Demands for Supplementary Grants.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Madam Chairperson, I rise to discuss the Demand for Supplementary Grants of Railways. I would like to thank

you for providing me an opportunity to speak. The day since Hon. Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasad ji has assumed office, it is a known fact that the income of Railways Department has increased without there being an increase in either the passenger fares or freight. I would like to thank him for this reason. Several times I have urged upon the Hon. Minister during discussion and have requested him personally that we should think about the downtrodden and backward lot. The long distance trains which go from one part of the country to another, only one or two bogies are attached to such trains for common people, in which they are packed like hay. Hon. Minister belongs to Bihar while I belong to Uttar Pradesh; both the States are in poor condition. Poor people and labourers from these States travel on the roofs of the trains, at the time of harvesting and sowing. I have made requests to the hon. Minister on earlier occasions as well to make arrangements for increasing the number of bogies to facilitate the poor people who are the actual endusers. Our heart should bleed for them, for India is alive in their heart. The most vital issue during discussion in the House is safety aspect of Railways. The faith of the common man is jittering owing to the incidence of train accidents.

Madam, although there has been a decline in the number of train accidents, in the recent days but I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister of Railways towards the fact that if the recommendations of the Khanna committee set up to suggest the various remedial measures to bring down the number of train accidents had been implemented in toto then direct collisions of the trains could have come down considerably and this would have rekindled hope in the passengers that they would reach their destination safely.

Madam, another important issue pertains to the safety of the passengers. So far we have come across such incidents very often in which the police, C.R.P., army personnel or robbers have robbed the passengers or thrown them out of the moving train. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to make arrangements for security of passengers so that such types of incidents are fully prevented.

Madam, there are so many problems before us which I would like to bring to the knowledge of the Hon. Minister. Railway stations and the trains do not have adequate facilities for the passengers. At all, the railway stations be it in metropolitans like Delhi, Mumbai or of a village, benches on platforms are always full and passengers

can be seen dozing off like worms everywhere on land or on sacks in railway godowns. I request the hon. Minister that we should think about that downtrodden and backward lot of common man.

Madam, through you, I would like to make another request to the hon. Minister that by streamlining the Railway administration and taking stringent measures the income of the railways can be increased manifold. Hundreds of trains ply across the country. The ticket checkers of the railways allow the passengers to travel without ticket and pocket the money. If the Hon. Minister would take stringent action and pay attention towards it then the income of the Railways can be increased one and half times. I have witnessed it myself while travelling that T.C., Conductor or the railway officers charge half the fares from the passengers and allow them to travel in the reserved coaches without ticket and insist them not to buy tickets on the assurance that they would take them safely to their destination.

Madam, there are so many questions but the time is very little. Our Rajesh Vermaji is a Member from Sitapur. I had raised his constituency's issue even last time that all the trains plying from Lucknow to Delhi join the main line via Hardoi, Shahjehanpur and Sitapur is left at a side. If Sitapur is connected with the main broad gauge line then his constituency will also be connected with the main line and Railways will get an alternative route via Sitapur. Therefore, through you, I would request the Hon. Minister to connect Sitapur with the main railway line.

Madam, the demand of railway line unto Golagokarannath and Shahbad is a very long standing demand of hon. Member Ilyas Azmi and people of his constituency. Hon. Ilyas Azmi ji had asked me to request the Hon. Minister on his behalf that a new railway track may be laid for Golagokarannath and Shahbad. There are so many demands concerning our area but I think there is shortage of time. Therefore, with your permission I lay the rest of my submission on the table.

*Madam, I would like to tell that the district headquarters of State have facility for stoppage of Express Trains. But, due to lack of stoppage facility for express trains at district headquarter located in Unnao Railway Station in my parliamentary constituency passengers are facing a lot of inconvenience. Therefore, in view of passenger's inconvenience, it is necessary to provide stoppage of Gomati Express, Pushpak Express, Vaishali Express, Mandhar Express, Lucknow Bhopal Express and Chennai Express at Unnao Railway Station.

Sahani-Devra crossing on Kanpur-Lucknow rail route between Kanpur pul *via* Kinara and Magarwara station and closed railway crossing beneath overbridge near Unnao railway station on Lucknow-Kanpur rail route should be kept open for 24 hours in view of traffic congestion.

There is a railway station named Kanpur Pul Kinara *via* Kinara in Shuklaganj under my parliamentary constituency. The name of station at Shuklaganj should be Shuklaganj station and not Kanpur pul *via* Kinara.

Earlier, there was station at Achalganj, which has been converted into halt. Achalganj should again be given status of station.*

Unnao Railway Station earns revenue of approximately Rs. 12 crore. But at present, it has got the status of 'B' category status. The passenger in large number board and alight at this station and it is also a district headquarter. Therefore, keeping in view the revenue and other facts the Unnao railway station should be provided 'A' category station status.

There is a need to elevate the level of platform No. 4 and 5 of Unnao Railway station. The length of platform No. 2 and 3 of this station is approximately 553 meters. Therefore, there is a need to extend the length of the platform accordingly, there is also a need to construct more sheds. Water, logging taking place at platform No. 2 and 3 of this station due to lack of drainage facility, which causes damage to railway tracks and water enters into railway quarters also. Therefore, proper arrangement for drainage should be developed at platform No. 2 and 3 of this station. There is also a need to upgrade the announcement system at this station; which at present is not befitting the requirements of the modern Railway network. The dilapidated benches of waiting room should be replaced with new benches and number of benches should also be increased as per requirement and steps should be taken for modernization of Unnao Railway station.

In this regard, I would like to give example of capital of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow where people have got illegal possession of many railway properties. Goondas and Mafia are illegally occupying railway property, houses and bungalows and many complexes and shops have been constructed on railways land, today shops are being run on that land. The legal allottees do not live in Charbagh

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Brajesh Pathak]

rest camp colony of Lucknow. The whole colony has been living under the terror of Mafia and Goondas. People have migrated from there. Other people live there only on rent. Railways Bangalow No. 7 (A) Type IV, Jones Road, Charbagh, Lucknow and Bangalow No. L-67, Type-IV special, Grange road, Charbagh, Lucknow have not been allotted to the deserving employees. Bangalow No. 7A, is illegally occupied by Jaitley Bookseller. It is evident in voter list at serial No. 66 and 67.

Railway Quarter No. 165-A, 165-V, 164-G, Type-2, Rest Camp, Railway Colony, Charbagh, Lucknow have been illegally sublet by allottees, it's proof is given at 24 of voter list of year 2003, U.P. and Telephone No. 32399 and 3218042 and mobile No. 9415084398 are installed in quarter No. 165-A. It clarifies that persons other than the allottees are illegally occupying these three railway quarters.

I would like to know the names of railway employees along with date of allotment, to whom 64 railway quarters including 165E, 169V, 169F, 166V and 163-D of Type-2 have been allotted and the date from which these allottees have taken charge of quarter and electricity from IOW Estate, and whether the rent and electricity charges are being deducted regularly as per the situation of November, 2004? If not, the date from which the rent is not being deducted, and if inquiry at Central level is conducted, the fact will come to light. In Lucknow, dispensary, park, shops, which have been closed from outside, are being illegally occupied and illegal construction has been done over there. It has become a den of unsocial elements. from where they carryout their activities like coercion and threats. All these things are taking place in connivance with local railway officials. Local railway officers get bribe from unsocial elements that is why no efforts are being made to vacate the railway land from the possession of unsocial elements.

The facts mentioned by me during discussion on Supplementary Demand for Grants of railways on 8th December, 2004 are correct and the telephone/mobile No. and serial No. 9 of voter list and the locked up dispensary, park, shop, which are closed from outside and illegal constructions bears testimony to what I had said.

Through the House, I would like to demand the hon'ble Minister of Railways to give special attention towards it and to protect railway property by getting it vacated from the land mafia and take strict action against illegal occupants of railway property.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Your ideal sentence is very good. If any other Member also wants to lay his speech on the Table, he can do so.

[English]

*SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM (Krishtnagiri): Hon. Madam Chairperson, let me thank the Chair for my being given an opportunity to speak on behalf of my party Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam on the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways for the year 2005-06.

As this House is deliberating railway budget and before I could proceed further I would like to place on record my deep appreciations for the dynamism provided to the Railways by our hon. Minister for Railways Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav with his evolving of new schemes for enhancing the image of this great public utility service. Under his stewardship the image of the Railways is getting a boost and it is found raising. He needs to be congratulated for introducing two consecutive Railway Budgets as burden-free-Budgets without increasing either the passenger fare or freight rates. That way he has protected the interests of the middle class and the poorer sections of the society.

As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, it turns out to be a great revenue earner to the Railways because almost all are ticket buying passengers there. They are more there in Tamil Nadu earns more for the Railways, I am pained to say, the allocation for Tamil Nadu than many other places of the country. Though Tamil Nadu is much less this year. Tamil Nadu has got more of metre gauge railway lines and more metre gauge trains in operation. Due to the snag in gauge conversion in many parts of Tamil Nadu, we witness the economic activity stagnated and industrial development lagging behind. There is no economic development in certain areas in Tamil Nadu and they remain backward because they have not been put in the Railway map and no schemes have been taken up with adequate fund allocation. So there is an urgent need to increase the allocation to give a pep to the gauge conversion. I humbly request the hon. Railway Minister to look into this and convert all the metre gauge sections into broad gauge sections at the earliest because connectivity and communication is greatly affected.

Almost all the railway junctions in Tamil Nadu remain old and very old. They must be renovated, expanded, modernised and must be given a facelift. The railway junctions in Chennai, Madurai, Jolarpet, Salem, Thanjavur are crying for modernisation and expansion. There is also need to increase the rest room facilities. Public amenities at the railway junctions must be attended to with increased vigor.

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

Traffic congestion and snarl ups have become very common near level crossings both inside the towns and cities and also on the highways. It has become a common sight to find 2 to 3 kms long queued-up vehicles, buses, lorries and cars vying for space to cross the level crossings. This gives rise to several problems. Hence I urge upon the Railway Ministry to go for road over bridges across such congested joints.

As far as my Krishnagiri Parliamentary constituency is concerned rail traffic is nil or negligible. I humbly request the Railway Minister to consider completing the announced projects and schemes while positively considering the pending pleas. There is no railway station in that new district. A new district has been carved out recently and it is yet to find place in the Railway map. Jolarpet-Hosur rail line was contemplated 50 years ago. A rail link through Thirupathur, Bargur, Krishnagiri, Sholingar was there earlier and it is not operational now. Considering the overwhelming public demand from the people of Krishnagiri I urge upon the Railway Ministry to have a relook and reinstate its due place in the rail map. I have already raised this issue in this august House. I have also taken up this matter with hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and Shri Velu in person. They had agreed to take up survey work and to proceed further. Hence I urge upon the Railway Minister to give a start to meet the long felt demands of the people of Krishnagiri. This would greatly benefit thousands of agricultural labourers and workers in the area to ensure economic mobility and upward mobility in life with enhanced railway system. A rail link between Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri via Kaveri Pattinam and Karimangalam is also a long pending demand.

Salem Division is an important one. My esteemed colleague Shri Thangabalu who spoke ahead of me recalled our collective efforts to carve out Salem Division with Salem as its headquarters. He is a seasoned member who has been raising the issue for long. This demand is also there for more than 50 years now. Palghat Division must be bifurcated considering the need and the demand and Salem Division must be formed at the earliest. Krishnagiri, Nilgiri, Coimbatore, Erode, Salem, Dharmapuri, Namakkal, Karur, Tiruvannamalai, Villupuram, Cuddalore are the 11 districts that would greatly benefit out of this new division headquarters at Salem. I urge upon the Railway Ministry to consider positively this long stressed demand of Salem region.

Our leader Dr. Kalaignar has written two letters in this regard to our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and to our Chairperson of UPA Mrs. Sonia Gandhi. We request you to give your nod and concede to our demands. Our beloved leader Dr. Kalaignar who had ensured the victory of all the 40 members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry has made already a strong plea and I urge upon you to consider it.

Our leader Dr. Kalaignar has also insisted upon modernising the rail operations with the introduction of bullet trains in the fashion of foreign countries like Japan. We must increase the operational efficiency and we have the capability to overcome them in India. As such we are a leading force in the computer sector in the field of IT. We are a leading country as far as IT is concerned in this region. Important link route like New Delhi-Chennai, Chennai-Hyderabad and Chennai-Mumbai must have high speed bullet trains. Even after 50 years of independence certain felt needs have not been translated into action. Pollachi-Palghat rail line must be laid as per our much emphasized demand. Ambathur, Veppampattu, Minjur, Kadampathu railway level crossing must have railway over-bridges.

Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore stations must be directly linked at the earliest. Laying of double track upto Erode must also be taken up as these are viable and much needed projects. Similarly there is an urgent need to add pace to the completion of MRTS taking it out of its deep slumber. It needs to be completed without any further delay. Villupuram-Tiruchirappalli rail line electrification must be taken upon an urgent basis.

Salem-Karur gauge conversion scheme is also pending for long and it needs to be attended to immediately. Dindigul-Coimbatore via Pollachi, Palani gauge conversion project must also seen the light of the day. Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur gauge conversion must be taken up soon. Likewise, Valliyur railway station must have further extended platform. The pace with which Tiruchi-Manamadurai section gauge conversion work is going on is far from being satisfactory. It needs to be speeded up.

Jalarpet is an important station finding itself like a confluence between two or three districts and this important station has a stoppage when Kovai Express goes to Coimbatore from Chennai. On its return trip also that express train must have a stoppage at Jolarpet. Blue Mountain Express which had a stoppage for more than

[Shri E.G. Sugavanam]

25 years ceased to extend its service. It must be reconsidered and Nilgiri Express must be given stoppage at Jalarpet. Chennai-Erode Express must be given a stoppage at Chamaipet. The once-in-a-week express train between Bangalore and Kanyakumari must be reinstated. Hosur is not having direct rail link to Chennai. As of now passengers from Hosur have to go to Chennai via Bangalore. Chennai-Hosur via Palacode-Dharmapuri could be a viable alternative. Hence I urge upon the Minister for Railways to introduce a new train in this pattern to benefit the travelling public of that area.

There are many unmanned level crossings in rural areas and remote villages. Loss of lives and property has become a common occurrence. Live stocks are lost most often. Such level crossings shall be made manned level crossings. People travelling by bullock carts and tractors meet with accidents often. Railway level crossing near Kollampatti village and level crossing near Palacode in my constituency must be upgraded.

Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore Suburban train terminals are very much congested especially during peak hours. Those terminals must be extended and expanded and if need be relocated to help them handle huge number of passengers with ease.

IRCTC is now in your hands. The quality of catering needs to be enhanced further. Long distance passengers find it difficult to find insipid food supply. I urge upon you to look into it and better the quality and service.

In many of the stations we find foot over bridges. Elderly people and invalid find it difficult to use them. It would be better if escalators are installed in such big stations that handle a huge passenger volume. As part of modernisation installation of escalators must be carried out in many stations all over the country.

Sriperumbudur is emerging as a pilgrim and tourist centre because of the memorial established there in memory of our late Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Thousands of people from all over India throng Sriperumbudur. Hence a railway station there with better rail connectivity to Chennai and other places could be a viable one. I urge upon the hon. Railway Minister to initiate follow up action to lay railway line there as survey work has been completed.

Several long pending demands like this from Tamil Nadu are lying before the Railway Ministry. I humbly

request both Shri Lalu and Shri Velu to have a considerate and compassionate look at all the pleas pending before them to ensure a still better railway system in Tamil Nadu.

With this, I conclude my speech expressing my support to the Demands for Grants for Railways.

15.13 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad):
Madam Chairman, I thank you for giving me opportunity to speak on behalf of Shiv Sena about supplementary demands of Railways. I rise to speak in the capacity of the representative from the Capital of Marathwada. Sambhajinagar. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards the problems of Mumbai, Thane, Konkan, Pune and Nasik. Hon. Minister of Railways is present here. The freedom fighters from Marathwada including myself met him recently and apprised him of the problems of the region. I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that Marathwada which falls in Nanded division and is under South Central Railways right now should be brought under Central Railway. It has been our demand for the last 50 years that Nanded division which has been newly created is a Marathi speaking region, it should be segregated from South Central Railway and brought under Central Railway whose department is situated in Mumbai. We get all our works done from Mumbai, MLAs, MPs all the businessmen and officers get their work done from Mumbai. I have been speaking on the railway budget for last six years in the House. Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra. Special Nanded division, Mukhed-Dharamabad division should be brought under it. I would request the hon. Minister to bring this proposal before the Cabinet. I would meet the hon. Minister later on and give him the reasons why this region should be brought under it. It is a Marathi speaking region, great freedom fighters had launched movements from there. Hon. Govind Bhajji is no more with us. Several Members have made this demand. I would request to bring Nanded division of Marathwada under Central Railway soon.

Marathwada has not been given a new railway line for years. Rs. 301 crore were given to Marathwada for five projects during the NDA regime. I would mention them later on. Hon. Laluji allocated Rs. 120 crores in his first budget. Rs. 30 crores were allocated for

168 kilometers long Mukhed-Adilabad line. This line could be completed if an additional Rs. 57 crores are provided. Rs. 21 crores were provided for Secunderabad-Mukhed-Jankampet-Bodhal line, more allocation needs to be made for this line. This project could also be completed with the further provision of Rs. 35 crores. It has been lying incomplete for several years. Akola-Purna-Vidarbha have to be linked. Rs. 25 crores were provided for this purpose. Further provision of Rs. 181 crores is required in this regard. Meeraj-Latur line links western Maharashtra to Marathwada. Rs. 123 crores are required to complete this line. New line Ahmed Nagar-Beed Parasi is much in demand. The hon. Minister laid the foundation stone for it. Rs. 310 crores are required for this. Western Maharashtra, Marathwada and Vidarbha all would be linked once Ahmednagar-Beed Parasi line is completed. It is my submission to the hon. Minister that five projects of Marathwada could be completed if he allocates Rs. 709 crores. We have submitted representations also. He is a dynamic Minister. It was given in a newspaper and Ram Kripal ji has also said that Rs. 8000 crores are in surplus. I congratulate him for this. We would be grateful to him if he allocates the required Rs. 709 crores to Marathwada and if the five projects, which have been lying pending for years, are completed during his tenure. I would like to submit that we have demands for several lines with which Mumbai can be linked. Mumbai should be linked to Sambhajinagar-Aurangabad Shatabdi. A huge function of Sikh community would be held in Nanded in the year 2008. Mr. Deputy Speaker and the Governor of Bihar, Shri Buta Singh also visited this place. We put up this demand before them also that the train from Nanded where Gurudwara Sachkhand is situated to Amritsar which is plied five days a week should be run daily. We have made this request several times. It is my request to ply this train everyday. A train should be plied once a week from Patna Saheb to Nanded for the function of the Sikh community in the year 2008. I would be very grateful to him if he makes an announcement to this effect in this budget or the next one.

Last time, when I made this demand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who was in the Chair at that time, had also supported it. Several of our projects are lying incomplete even now. We have a long standing demand since 1965 which has been raised by several eminent political leaders, social workers and freedom fighters that a new rail route covering Sholapur, Tuljapur, Dharashiv, Usmanabad, Beed, Paithan, Sambhajinagar, Silaud, Ajanta and Jalgaon should be constructed. It has been our longstanding demand. A

survey has also been conducted twice-thrice in this regard. It is my request that he should get it commissioned after conducting another survey because it will reduce the distance to the Ajanta-Elora. The Government of Japan has offered us a loan of Rs. 350 crores for the development of Ajanta-Elora. The development of this tourist destination would also benefit the railways.

One of our demand relates to the Tirupati Express which was to be started but has not been plied yet. He has given us this assurance that it will be started from October. Krishan Express which is uptill Nizamabad should be extended till Manmad so that all the passengers may reach there. I want to draw your attention towards one more thing. Former MLA Late Shri Basaiye Bandhuji took up this issue of Rotegaon-Puntamba route with all the Ministers for ten years. Its survey has also been conducted. It is our demand that new railway line from Rotegaon-Puntamba and Puntamba-Shirdi should be commissioned because a number of people come to Shirdi from Andhra Pradesh for the 'darshan' of Sai Baba and many people from Maharashtra visit Tirupati. This railway line would connect the two holy places, therefore this railway line from Rotegaon-Puntamba and Puntamba-Shirdi should be commissioned. It would enable us to travel directly from Tirupati to Shirdi. It is my demand. I request Lalu Prasad ji to accord it priority. We would go there together.

A major accident took place between Karanjgaon, Rotegaon and Lasur railway station six months ago. The passengers did not come to much harm but that train has been discontinued. I put up the demand for the doubling and electrification of Manmad-Nanded line. The doubling of line would enable us to continue the journey through another line if something happens on one line. It is very old line and it was constructed by Nizam. Through you, I request the hon. Minister to pay attention towards it. If he pays attention towards this then trains could be started from Mumbai for the rest of the places. The railway line of Ahmedabad and Bangalore should be linked to Marathwada. It has been our longstanding demand. I said just now that the length of Rotegaon-Puntamba line is only 28 kilometers and it would only cost Rs. 33 crores. The hon. Minister has shown Rs. 8000 crore as surplus and it might increase to Rs. 18000 crores. I congratulate him for this. The public of Marathwada would remember him forever if he would shell out some of the funds out of the surplus money. The expenditure of Nanded Department is not much. I would talk about it.

[Shri Chandrakant Khaire]

Nanded division urgently requires Rs. 5 crores for the repair and maintenance of railway tracks as an accident took place recently. Our entire railway route was closed for at least 20 days due to the accident and the collapsed bridge. If he allocates Rs. 5 crores from the supplementary budget, then the Department would be able to take up these works immediately. There are other minor things like raising the level of platform to 5 feet at all railway stations about which I would discuss later on after consulting the GM but the hon. Minister would have to extend help for these works also. ...*(Interruptions)* Nitish Kumarji visited my area. Work had been started for the modernization of the railway station in my constituency. Now Luluji has taken charge in the UPA Government. He is also from Bihar like Nitish Kumarji. It is my request to him that the works that the railway department undertook to modernize the railway station should be completed during his tenure. The railway station of Sambhajinagar-Aurangabad is about to be modernized. One of our Members told us that there is no VIP retiring room in Parbhani. We have little problems like in Manmad in absence of a railway track at several places and lack of maintenance, we are facing problems there. Rs. 55 lakh are immediately required for the sake maintenance line of 21 coaches on Sambhajinagar Aurangabad railway line. If this amount is sanctioned then after sanctioning Rs. 45 lakh for CNW staff maintenance and other works, like BPC, HPCICH of Manmad-Mumbai, Manmad-Kurla, Manmad-Tirupati, Manmad Express trains can be carried out. Rs. One crore may be sanctioned immediately for that purpose. The extension of Pits line of 13 coaches here has become absolutely necessary so as to obviate difficulties in Manmad.

Through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister, who has affection for Mumbai that we have had heavy showers there which caused heavy floods and uprooted railway tracks. Approximately 60 lakh people travel by local trains in Mumbai and owing to the heavy down pour the people could not join their duty for 10-15 days. Through you, I would urge the Hon. Minister to make some provision for it, for relief fund make some provision out of the special budget. Similarly, he should try to make efforts for constructing route unto Murumad-Kalyan, Malshej Ghat and Nagar because this line is the terminal. ...*(Interruptions)* Our Prakash Paranjpe ji is also a Member. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: If another parallel line upto Kalyan-Malshej Ghat and Nagar is completed then this route cannot remain closed in the event of an accident. Train services can be restored. Lastly, if the route from Pune to Nasik is connected with railway route them. ...*(Interruptions)* Raghunath Jha ji, I am addressing my Hon. Minister. I would like to submit that if both the industrial belts are connected then our Western and Northern Maharashtra would be one belt. This is the reason why Maharashtra give highest revenue to Railways and the Union Government. Therefore, through you I would request the Hon. Minister to pay more attention to Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, Northern Maharashtra, Mumbai-Konkan and I also request Luluji to introduce a train for Tirupati in the first week of October and I will accompany Luluji in that train for going for Darshan with this hope I conclude.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: If every Hon. Member pays some attention to time, it would be possible to accommodate all the Hon. Members.

[English]

*SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (Jagatsinghpur): Hon. Madam Chairperson, I am thankful to you for allowing me to take part in the discussion. I rise on the behalf of the Biju Janta Dal to express my views regarding the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways. Orissa is a backward State. It is full of nature's bounties, it has a rich reserve of mineral resources like iron, manganese, bauxite, etc. Orissa has a beautiful long coastline. But after 57 years of independence Orissa still lags behind in many respects. One prime reason of this backwardness is negligence by the Railways. I express my anguish that Orissa which has a common border with Bihar from where the hon. Railway Minister hails, is a neglected State. We have so many things in common with each other yet we get a step motherly treatment from the railways. Industrialisation in Orissa remains in a sad state because Orissa's rail network is in dire straits.

Here I want to mention with pride about the comments expressed by late Shri Jayaprakashjee. Once he was invited to the centenary celebration of Ravenshaw College where he had mentioned that Orissa is so full of natural resources but the absence of proper railway infrastructure makes her anguish in poverty. As her resources are unexplored she is not at par with other

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Oriya.

Indian States. In last October MPs from Orissa had submitted a memorandum to the hon. Railway Minister informing him about our expectations and seeking his intervention. Only due to negligence Orissa, despite being richly endowed, lags behind.

Madam, in Orissa even now there are certain districts which remain untouched by the Railways. Phulbani is one such district where people are yet to see a railway track. With deep anguish I want to mention here that Orissa could get railway connectivity only because in 1947 railway lines were laid in Orissa mainly to connect the Presidency towns i.e. Calcutta, Bombay and Calcutta Madras and these railway lines touched only the outskirts of the State with a few exceptions. Otherwise the State would have remained cut off. Madam, I belong to the Biju Janata Dal—the party whose ideology stems from our esteemed leader late Shri Biju Patnaik. As a man of indomitable spirit, he had dreamt of an Orissa which is self reliant, strong and at par with other front ranking States of India. Unfortunately however his dreams are still unfulfilled. Madam, our memorandum of 26th October 2004 had mentioned about the pending projects which have been approved since last 2 decades. Survey work of different railway zones have been completed but nothing is being done. Many of the interior parts have no railway connectivity. This has given rise to popular discontent. In Malkangiri district Naxalism has cropped up. Other areas too are witnessing uprising.

Madam. I want to draw the kind attention of hon. Railway Minister to some extremely important demands which I hope he will given due weightage. The survey work in some areas has stopped midway. The laying down of railway line from Berhanpur to Phulbani, from Paradeep to Haridaspur, all should be hastened up. The Daitary-Banspani project, the Augul-Duburi line work should be completed quickly. Madam, as everybody knows 'Konark' is a famous historical place. It is a world heritage site. It has a lot of potential to attract tourists. But due to lack of railway connectivity to Puri and Konark, the State is losing foreign exchange. In several places the doubling of railway line is awaited. On river Mahanadi the railway bridge doubling work has started but we do not know when will it see completion. The Paradeep port which is a strategically important place also needs to have railway network.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Madam I am a new member. I should be allowed a little more time.

Hon. Railway Minister Sir, the Heerakhand Express should ply on a daily basis in order to provide connectivity

to Western Orissa. Rajdhani Express should run through Sambalpur, so that people of this area can benefit. It will also reduce the distance. Due to paucity of time I would conclude with a poetry which highlights the noble characteristic of Orissa and I am sure hon. Railway Minister will be benevolently disposed to us.

"Orissa is the land of peace where Chandrasoka became Dharmasoka.

In Orissa's war against Kanchi,

the Lord himself took part as the Commander-in-Chief.

Her womb is filled with diamonds, jewels, iron and mica.

Her flag of equality and fraternity flies high in heaven.

Her's is the land of harmony where there is no caste-feeling and no-enmity.

Orissa is the land of salvation and greatness.

I am proud to be an Oriya."

[*Translation*]

SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA (Hazaribagh): Madam Chairman today Demands for Supplementary Grants are being discussed. Five months back comprehensive budget was passed during Budget session, now Supplementary budget has been brought. I would like to thank Hon. Minister of Railways since the Railways has earned Rs. 8000 crore profit during its 14 month long tenure. It was normally seen that wherever budget was introduced there used to be some hike in fares which caused difficulties for the common man. He has presented budget two times but has not increased the fares at all, so he needs to be congratulated for that. Whenever passengers used to travel without ticket, large scale irregularities were committed, but the sudden inspection by the Hon. Minister has instilled fear in the minds of people and now they shudder to travel without ticket. Senior officers of the Railways used to travel with a huge paraphernalia, now they too are afraid of such surprise checks. Hon. Minister of Railways has taken some very commendable steps, and I congratulate him for that.

Madam Chairman, Hon. Minister has promoted private sector. But lakhs of poor workers who are engaged in catering will lose their jobs. If it happens their children would be on the verge of starvation. I have come to know that porters are also likely to become jobless since

[Shri Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Mehta]

the participation of the private sector has been allowed even in this sector. These poor people will not have any means of livelihood and their children will die of starvation. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that he should ensure that the people engaged in catering department do not lose their jobs and the participation of private sector should not be allowed in it. Alongwith this the employment opportunities of porters should not be curtailed otherwise lakhs of families of porters will be on the verge of starvation owing to private sector's participation. It is true that there has been substantial improvement in catering.

Madam Chairman, Hon. Minister of Railways has left the House, but I would like to request Hon. Minister of State of Railways that Jharkhand is a very backward and tribal State. Though the Hon. Minister of Railways has presented the budget twice but both the times the interests of State of Jharkhand has been fully neglected. Several Members met the Hon. Minister and made request in this regard but neither any scheme was launched nor and survey was conducted for our State. This kind of discrimination with Jharkhand would not be allowed. Jharkhand State has mineral reserves worth Millions of Rupees and it gives substantial revenue to the Union Government but this kind of discrimination of the Jharkhand State should not go on. I represent Hazaribagh District Parliamentary constituency. There is no railway line here. Two-three years back construction of a new railway line began but for the last one and a half year the kind of progress which should have been made, is not there. The work of Kodrama-Hazaribagh-Ranchi railway line should have been completed by the year 2006, but so far not even one-fourth of the work has been completed. There is no shortage of money for this project but due to negligence of officers and highhandedness of contractors this route is not going to be completed early. There was no progress on Kodrama-Giridh railway route. Had the Hazaribagh route been completed, thousands of people would have been benefited by it and the benefits would have accrued to the Union Government, but this work has not been started as on date.

16.00 hrs.

That is why, through you, I request the hon. Minister of Railways to convene a meeting with Chairman, Railway Board in Hazaribagh and get a survey conducted and expedite the completion of Hazaribagh railway line. I would like to tell you that there is one Rai station between

Kharari and Badkakana. Hon. Minister of State is sitting here. Rai is the fourth station of the country, which earns maximum revenue for the Railways Department but unfortunately only goods trains ply there. Only the railway wagons are loaded from there. No passenger or Express train stops there. Every two-three months there is an agitation in Rai in regard to this demand that passenger and express trains should stop there but a sense of anger and resentment has been prevailing among the people as no express or passenger train stops here. Similarly, there is one Digwara station further down Rapri road where Karmana station is situated, that area is totally cut-off. Every now and then, agitation is taking place there that a station should be constructed in Digwara in place of Karmana. Locals from nearby areas and we members of Parliament travel from Kodrama station. I met the hon. Minister several times and wrote him several times that Rajdhani Express trains ply for Bhuvaneshwar and Ranchi two days, but both the trains ply on the same day, there is no Rajdhani for rest of the week. If locals or we have to travel during rest of the week then we have to go either to Dhanbad or Ranchi. I also request for the stoppage of Saldah Rajdhani Express in Kodrama for at least three days. This way trains will ply there all seven days and will also facilitate the people and the Members but that work has not been done so far.

Madam Chairman, Hazaribagh station is very old one. The trains which used to stop over there earlier are also not being provided stoppage. Therefore, people are having a lot of inconvenience. I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister that he should take into account that Hazaribagh station is one of the oldest stations. Therefore, the trains which do not stop over there should be provided stoppage facility. Many people from neighbouring areas of Hazaribagh go to Mumbai and Surat in search of job. But due to lack of stoppage of trains there, people have been facing a lot of inconvenience. People of Hazaribagh have staged several agitations to start a new train from Dhanbad to Surat. I have made this request to hon'ble Minister many times in writing and discussed the matter with Chairman of Railway Board, but nothing happened. The hon'ble Minister of State is also present here. If the train is introduced between Mumbai and Surat, the thousands of poor people who go there in search of job and face a lot of inconvenience, will be facilitated.

Madam Chairman, through you I would like to tell you that Ministry of Railways should not ignore Jharkhand. At present, only old schemes are running over here. In the 14 months tenure of UPA Government, not even a single scheme has been introduced for Jharkhand.

Therefore, I would repeatedly like to tell the hon'ble Minister of Railways not to ignore the Jharkhand. Jharkhand State earns revenue to the tune of billions of rupees. Therefore, new rail lines should be laid in Jharkhand. Many districts like Hazaribagh, Chhapra etc. are lacking rail connectivity. The hon'ble Minister of Railways should also carry out the task of providing rail connectivity to those districts. With this, I conclude my speech.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Madam Chairman, one Urdu Poet has said—"Bulbul Ki Zindagi Hai Chaman Ki Bahar Par, Hindustan Ki Zindagi Hai Rail Ki Raftar Par".

In reality, railways are the veins of the nation, through which the blood of national integration flows. A short while ago, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav was expressing his views and it was mentioned by him that the revenues of Railways had increased by eight thousand crore rupees after the assumption of the charge by Minister of Railways, Shri Lalu Prasad. Through you, I would like to know whether it is a miracle or merely a jugglery of figures. That an increase to the tune of 17 percent has been registered despite no increase in passenger fares and freight charges. Though they may applaud themselves but coming generations will have to bear the brunt of these populist measures and they will appreciate the need to take tough decisions in the interest of the nation.

If the nation has to be put on the path of progress, the problems of railways have to be resolved, the railway bridges have to be built, security, safety and punctuality have to be maintained, which requires increase in the railway fares. But they have not increased the fares, and by jugglery of figures it is being said that profit of 8000 crore rupees has been earned. I would like to read out CAG report, which is enough to expose these tall claims. According to CAG report the Government is not increasing fare to get political mileage, but loss of 2345 crore rupees has been incurred between 1999 to 2003. It further says that if Ministry of Railways had increased the fares by accepting the recommendations of Fare and Freight committee, this loss would have been avoided. Madam, Chairman, the CAG report further says that traffic rules are being wrongly implemented, the goods are being classified into wrong categories the delay is being caused in Wagon Management, the land acquisition for laying of new lines is being delayed, the tracks whose doubling has been accomplished, are not being started, diesel is

being purchased at high rates, steel is also being purchased in surplus, scrap is being openly sold at scrap shops. The collection of license fee from lakhs of people is not being done. The system of suburban trains is not being streamlined. I am not saying this. It has been mentioned in the CAG report of Government of India which is recognized by all of us. In nutshell, the CAG report has pointed out towards several shortcomings and irregularities in administration of Railways. Still, if it is being claimed that Railways is running in profits. To me, it is nothing but the jugglery of figures. Still, if they want to praise themselves, they can do so. It is difficult to say whether these steps have been taken with an eye on the forthcoming Bihar's Legislative Assembly polls or is a part of routine exercise to take populist measures, but it is not hard to imagine as to in which direction this kind of Lalu brand economic policy or populist measures are going to take the country.

Today, Indian Railway occupies the fourth place in the world and first in Asia as the largest public sector transport network. I want that it should achieve new heights, but till we increase our resources or generate new resources then how could new railway lines be laid? Through you, I would like to say one more thing. The railway projects of 40 thousand crore rupees are lying incomplete due to paucity of funds. Many years have lapsed since they were announced. Last year, many announcements were made by Shri Lalu ji, now also it has been announced, earlier also it was announced. All schemes are lying incomplete. It would suffice to compare the status of the new projects with the old saying of being neither a fish nor a fowl. At present metre gauge is running between Ajmer and Chittor. The broad gauge has been laid Udaipur to Chittor. A small portion of line between Chittor and Neemach has been converted to broad gauge, but again metre gauge line is running between Neemach and Ratlam, which is neither fish, nor fowl. On one side, it is being said it will promote tourism. Earlier Madhya Pradesh was the largest State from point of view of total land area. Now, Rajasthan occupies the first place in this regard besides being a bordering State. However, this State has always been neglected from point of view of Railway facilities. Every State wishes that one of their representative may become Minister of Railways, so that development of railways in that State may take place. Today, many trains go to Bihar or pass through Bihar, or development of railway has taken place in Bihar, if the Railway Minister hails from U.P., then development takes place in U.P., but Rajasthan has been continuously

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

ignored. I would like to draw your attention towards the fact that projects costing 40000 crore rupees are lying incomplete in the entire country due to lack of funds, and many years have lapsed. Many projects have not been started due to lack of funds and the work at many of them has come to standstill. The Railways have not made any serious efforts to invite participation of private and public sector in these projects. The Railway has stopped increasing passenger fares and freight charges. It has stopped rationalization and still tall claims are being made that tough decisions are being taken. 250 people from Ajmer came to us. The moment passengers boarded down the train they started shouting slogans like 'Lalu Yadav Jindabad' and 'Sonia Gandhi Jindabad'; however, when, the train ticket Examiners asked them to show their tickets they replied that they were asked to travel free of cost from Delhi. They had gone to Delhi and now they are returning from there. Not once but many times such incidents have happened. I do not understand how the revenue generation in the railways can be increased if there is no increase in the fare. The hon'ble Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways is present here. I would like to request him that while replying he should elucidate on it. Rs. 40,000 crore is required for the execution of major Railway projects. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister since when the said projects are lying pending and by what time they are likely to be completed.

Last year, he had announced the introduction of Jan Sampark Kranti Express train. Through you, I would like to submit that the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Finance are incessantly stressing the need of increasing the train fare so that revenue can be generated for the said projects, however, the Minister of Railways is ignoring the suggestion of both the Ministries in the name of public interest and such populist measures are being adopted to gain cheap popularity. So, I would like to submit that the railways should at least make efforts to invite private sector participation or strive for public sector capital investment in the railways. We have to take harsh decisions in the national interest.

Many announcements were made regarding railway safety. We all applauded by thumping the tables in the hope that the railway passengers will be able to undertake safe journey and there will be no rail accidents. However, incidents like robbery, theft and dacoity take place in the railways frequently in every State. The maximum number

of such incidents occur in the State from where the hon'ble Minister of Railways comes. Now the incidents of bomb explosion have also started occurring in trains. Life and property of passengers is in danger. Whether it is the condition of the railway track or the security of the passengers, all the announcements made in this regard have not been executed. I would like to know from the Minister of Railways as to why all those announcements could not be implemented?

Madam, tall claims were made regarding sanitation in the railways and it was claimed that minimum basic facilities will be provided to the passengers. Such announcements were made during the presentation of the previous Rail budget. Now almost six months have elapsed since then. One can easily understand the condition of sanitation under the minimum basic facilities to the passengers. We all travel by trains. The toilets even in AC First Class Coaches remain too dirty to use. If the condition of toilets in First Class is so pathetic then one can easily understand the condition of general coaches in which common people travel.

More bogies should be attached in long distance trains for the general class passenger. Sitting arrangement and drinking water facility should be provided to general class passengers. Though such facilities are available at bigger stations, however, such facilities are not available at smaller stations. So, I would like to request that efforts should be made to enhance the efficiency and performance of railway employees. Better training should be imparted to them. New technology should be introduced in the operation of Railways. The basic structure of the railways should be streamlined. I will take two minutes more. Every year lakhs of people visit Ajmer. The people of all the religions and all the States visit that place. Four years back announcements was made by the Railways to lay broadgauge lines between Ajmer and Pushkar and the funds required for the said work were also approved by the Government, however, the work pertaining to laying of rail line has not yet been started. Till now, only land has been acquired in four years time. I would like to know by what time the work will be started. The Minister of Railways is not present here. Madam, through you, I would like to submit to the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways that pilgrimage to Pushkar ensures the welfare of all. Every body wants to visit Ajmer. Ajmer should be connected with Pushkar at the earliest. There is a metre gauge line between Ajmer and Chittor which should be converted into broadgauge line so that Udaipur and Chittorgarh can be connected in real sense of the word and the alternative

route between Delhi and Mumbai via Udaipur may be connected with Ajmer and Chittor.

Madam, if a rail line is laid up to Pushkar then Medhta will be connected. Shri Bhanwar Singh Dangawas ji is present here. His constituency will be directly benefited by this. The border area of western Rajasthan will be connected and as a result of this a very sound railway infrastructure could be developed in Rajasthan.

Madam, Byavar is a small station, however, its population is more than one lakh. The town has produced many freedom fighters and five-six members of every household of the town are serving the nation in armed forces. Every evening sisters see off their brothers by garlanding them and then welcome them when they return their home on leave. However, Ashram Express does not stop there even for a minute and it is on account of this that the Jawans have to face difficulties in commuting to this place. The hon'ble Minister of State in the Ministry of Railway, Shri R. Velu ji is present here and hon'ble Rathwa ji is also present here. I would like to request him that once Shri Lalu Prasad ji comes here, he should bring it to the notice of the Minister that two minute halt of Ashram Express must be provided at Byavar railway station.

Madam, I have been a Member of Parliament for the last 15-20 years. I am tired of writing to the railway officers and the Minister but have failed to convince them to provide at least two minutes halt of Delhi-Ahmedabad Ashram Express at Byavar even on a trail basis. Byavar is a very important town. Large number of Jawans of the town are serving the nation by joining the armed forces. While on the other hand traders of the town have to travel to South India for trading purposes. It is on account of absence of a halt of the said train at the station that they have to face many difficulties in this regard. So, through you, I would once again like to request the hon'ble Minister of Railway that he should provide at least two minutes halt of Delhi-Ahmedabad Ashram Express at Byavar railway station on a trail basis.

Madam, Ringus-Fulera-Rewari line is a metre gauge line. It should be converted into broadgauge line so that traffic on the said line can be increased. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to you for giving me time to speak.

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Hon. Minister, Mr. Velu, will you please tell us what is the dividend you paid this year, and what is the deferred dividend? I think there lies the trick of your showing the profit.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN (Tirupati): Tirupati is a very important religious and educational centre. This Tirupati railway station was started about 120 years back. When this railway station was started, about 1000 pilgrims used to come to Tirupati. Today, after 120 years, Tirupati railways have changed so much. About 75,000 pilgrims are coming everyday to the Tirupati pilgrim centre. The railway station and the platforms are not sufficient to take the load of the pilgrims.

Recently the UPA Government had sanctioned doubling of the railway track between Gudur and Tirupati. Also, Tirupati to Katpadi metre-gauge line was changed to broad-gauge line, and because of this about 35 trains are coming everyday. Seventy-five thousand pilgrims are coming to Tirupati to have *darshan* of the Lord Almighty. I made a request to the South Central Railway. They have forwarded their recommendations to the Railway Board. They have proposed a new railway station near Tirupati to take the load of the pilgrims. The name of the new railway station is Trichanur railway station. They have proposed six new platforms to take the load of Tirupati pilgrims.

I request the Railway Department, the Minister of State and also the hon. Minister of Railways, who is just now entering the chamber of Lok Sabha, to include this Trichanur new railway station. This is a very important place. This is a very important pilgrim centre in India. In the Supplementary Demand for Grants, this is not seen anywhere. But as a special case, I request the hon. Minister of Railways to see that immediate sanction is given for the new Trichanur railway station. This will go a long way.

I once again request you that when you are giving reply to the discussion on the Supplementary Demand for Grants, kindly mention about this Trichanur railway station and I will be grateful. Thank you.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): Let me say that the Railway is the most important mode of transportation. It is the cheapest and the safest mode of transportation. That is why, we welcome the expansion and extension of railway facilities. After installation of the UPA Government, I felt that we would find some spectacular change in the railway facilities. But we have been frustrated. We do not find any particular change in the railway facilities even after the change from NDA Government to UPA Government. Our Railway Minister is a dynamic personality in politics. He is associated with

[Shri Lakshman Seth]

two Ministers of State. Certainly we felt that they will do something so that our Railways will become a world class system of railway transport in the world. It can be possible.

Unfortunately, we have to state that before Independence, our total railway line network was about 85 per cent. After Independence, only 15 per cent new railway lines have been installed. It can be stated that we have not achieved much in this regard. However, we are supporting the Demands for Grants for Railways. We have to authorise and sanction funds for the functioning of Railways. We feel that the Ministry would provide more and more railway facilities.

There is a sorry plight of the sub-urban passengers. The condition of latrines and toilets is so deplorable that it is quite difficult for the passengers to use them. Railway platforms always remain dirty; even compartments remain dirty and uncleaned. I think the local passengers are not getting better amenities and facilities, which they deserve. Thousands and thousands of passengers are travelling in these trains. But facilities in these trains have not been updated, particularly in Sealdah-Howrah sub-urban train. Passengers of this train are facing so much of difficulties, and sometimes they feel embarrassed. However, I would request the hon. Minister to upgrade the facilities, particularly in the sub-urban trains.

At the same time, I would also like to bring an important issue to the notice of the hon. Minister. Haldia has emerged as an important industrial hub of our country. South-Eastern Railway is generating more than 50 per cent of its revenue from Haldia. Our Chief Minister has written several letters for doubling of line from Panskura to Haldia. Only 10 kilometres of railway line has been doubled from Panskura to Rajagada. On my Unstarred Question, I have got a reply from the Ministry. It states that Railway Vikas Nigam has been entrusted to undertake doubling of line from Rajagada to Durga Chowk. But this scheme has not been sanctioned. It has been mentioned that the Planning Commission or the Ministry has yet not sanctioned it. If it is so then how the Rail Vikas Nigam will undertake the doubling of line from Panskura to Haldia; Haldia means up to Durga Chowk. From Durga Chowk to Haldia, it is another 20 kilometres that remains to be doubled. In this case, my suggestion is that it should be from Haldia Station to Nandakumar Station on Tamluk-Digha rail line. If a new line is installed, Haldia will get a circular rail system.

16.24 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

I may request you to expedite the doubling of existing line from Panskura to Durga Chowk. I am also suggesting from Haldia Station to Nandakumar Station on Tamluk-Digha rail line. A new line can be installed, and we will get a circular train.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, long back the then Minister of Railways, Ms. Mamata Banerjee, laid the foundation stone for a new line from Krishnanagar to Karimpur but nothing has been done till now. There is a long pending demand for doubling from Krishnanagar to Lalgola but it has not been done. There are several promises but nothing has been executed. The Lokikantpur to Kagdip line has been commissioned and the Kagdip-Namkhana line has been installed but the train has not been introduced till now. This should be taken up for consideration immediately. The doubling of Baruipur-Diamond Harbour and Sonarpur to Canning is also very necessary. They have to be undertaken speedily. In our State, there is a huge population and it is felt highly necessary to have more and more of double lines.

The Government has announced the Golden Quadrilateral Project to connect Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata but I do not know what the Government is doing about it. The speed of the trains must be fast. We need more and more fast trains. We need bulk trains. So, this Golden Quadrilateral Project needs to be completed expeditiously.

There was a promise from the Government to see that the people have facilities and amenities. Our Railways has not increased the fares for the passenger but has been increasing the freight tariff on goods. The tariff for the goods are increasing. As a result, the people are ultimately shouldering the burden though they are not getting any additional facilities from the Railways.

Mechada is adjacent to Tamluk, the headquarters of the newly created Purva Medinipur district. On several occasions, I have made a request to the hon. Minister that express trains like the Gitanjali Express and Coromandel express should have a stoppage at Mechada but it has not been conceded by the hon. Minister so far. I request that at least now he should consider granting a stoppage for these express trains at Mechada, due to the lack of which passengers are suffering.

For the sake of booking parcels of betel leaves, earlier, people could have a direct booking of these items from Mechada and Panskura to the place of destination. Now, this facility has been withdrawn. So, they have to book their betel leaves from Panskura or Mechada to an intermediate station and book them again from that intermediate station to the place of destination. As a result, they have become victims of harassment. I want that the direct booking should be re-introduced immediately. With these words, I thank you once again for giving me this opportunity.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Sir, I want to speak, but, the Minister of Railways does not seem to be inclined to listen to me please ask the Minister of Railways to come in the House and resume his seat. I would like to give him some suggestions.
...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways is present here; you may give him your suggestions.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Sir the discussion is being held on the Demands for Supplementary Grants (Railways). I am also participating in this discussion. Since the Ministry of Railways is seeking grants and despite my opposition it will be approved so I will also want that it should be approved. I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister of Railways that if any grant is demanded, it simply means that some new works are to be taken up by the Ministry. However, the demands for supplementary Grants moved in the House do not seem to be made for taking up works. Even the pending projects are not being implemented. The construction works in the on-going projects have almost stopped. What is the use of taking up new projects if the work of the previous projects is not started? When discussion on this issue is held, the hon'ble Members refer to the statement of the hon'ble Minister. They also give some suggestions and make some demands for their constituency. I will not toe a different line; however, today, I shall make some demand for the parliamentary constituency of the hon'ble Minister himself. The reason being that my constituency and the constituency of the hon'ble Minister are adjacent to each other and the people of the area do not seem to be happy with him. I am his well wisher. Shri Ram Kripal ji was saying that I usually talk to him intimately. Shri Ram Kripal ji does not know that I do not talk intimately rather

when I was contesting elections, the ticket was given to the same candidate contesting against me whom I had recommended. So he should not remain in that illusion. I am his well wisher. As a well wisher I would like to advise him so that he can regain the confidence of the people.

I would like to remind the hon'ble Minister of Railways about two-four projects. His Parliamentary Constituency is Chhapra and his home district is Gopalganj. Earlier, Shri Raghunath Jha had also been the Member of Parliament from Gopalganj. The expansion of railway network in that area was being undertaken and metre gauge line between Chhapra and Kaptanganj was proposed to be converted into broadgauge. In between there is a stretch from Thawe to Siwan. Few days back the works were expeditiously implemented and the construction work of the bridge had started. The land filling work was also started. But now it seems that the works have been completely stopped. I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister of Railways that since he is demanding grants, however, there is not any mention of new projects. The work on the previous ongoing projects have also been stalled during his ministership. Then why is he seeking grants. If he is demanding grants then he should also complete the ongoing projects expeditiously.

It seems that Shri Sadhu ji is not available here at this moment. It is his area as well. Only seven km. area of my constituency falls in that area. That is Sadhuji's and Laluji's area. I would like to inform Shri Ram Kripal ji that the ongoing projects have also been stalled. He was singing their praises but never asked as to why the work in his constituency and home town was stopped. I would suggest that it should be completed immediately.

The previous Government had sanctioned the scheme of doubling of line from Chapra to Godda, but till then foundation was not laid. When the Minister of Railways visited Gopalganj, he laid the foundation by pushing a button from Gopalganj but nobody knows about the progress of work there. Six months have passed by since the foundation was laid. It is the constituency of the Minister of Railways' and the people there keep asking that since it is the Minister of Railways' constituency, the foundation has been laid by the Hon. Minister and yet, there is no sign of any work. It has generated a feeling of distrust among the people. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing you. Nothing submitted by you is being recorded in the proceeding Prabhunath ji, please do not get disturbed by their interruptions and address the Chair. These people are consuming your time.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as long as you are in the Chair, there will be no shortage of time.

Now, I would like to discuss the issue of railway factory. Ram Kripal ji would be surprised to know that the hon. Minister of Railways laid its foundation and a huge board was put up there but as soon as the Hon. Minister of Railways left after the inauguration, the railway officials dismantled the board and the work was also not started. ...(Interruptions) I am a native of that district. Someone must have told him or he must have read someone's statement in the newspaper. It is the route I use whenever I visit home from Patna. I would like to congratulate him for he laid the foundation. But it would not be a whole-hearted greeting. I would congratulate him when he will get the work started. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: The work is in progress. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: The railway officials have dismantled the board itself. ...(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the then Minister of Railways had sanctioned the scheme of constructing an over-bridge wherever the railway line crosses the road. Six over bridges were sanctioned between Sonpur from where the parliamentary constituency of Hon'ble Minister of Railways begins, and Siwan. In this regard the Hon. Minister had stated that there was no paucity of funds but the work was stalled due to some technical reasons. The Government had not been able to acquire some portion of land which fell under municipal area. Some of the area under acquisition plan belonged to NH, and he had not been able to acquire even that, due to which the work could not be started. I think it was announced lot many days back. It can be verified from the record of the Ministry of Railways. The Minister of State of the Ministry of Railways is present here. I am not talking about my own constituency but about the constituency of the Cabinet Minister. Merely paying lip service will not do while perusing the file he will come to know all facts. I

would like to submit that if this work has been sanctioned and the problems are cropping up due to non-acquisition of NH's land or some other technical reason then those problems should be addressed. If the Minister is facing problems at the municipal level, he can seek help from Laluji since the latter is the *de facto* head of the State Government machinery. Though you, I would like to submit that if there is no paucity of funds, the work may be started. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prabhunathji, please keep track of the time as so many hon. Members would like to speak on this issue.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had written a letter to the hon'ble Minister of Railways after speaking to him. There is no railway line from his constituency Tariyan to Pramanandpur. Lakhs of people are living between these two places. I had requested him to get a survey conducted there and if he finds it feasible get that railway line constructed so that the people who are commuting from Patna or Howrah and those coming from remote areas may be benefited. I have written him a letter in this regard but no action has been taken thereon. Through you, I would like to request that action may be taken after getting a survey conducted there. There is another issue relating to the constituency of the Hon. Minister of Railways. I would mention it first. Thereafter I will talk about my own constituency. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Why is he concerned about Laluji's constituency? ...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: I am concerned because I am his well wisher. ...(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, half of the area of Manjhi, which was earlier a Legislative Assembly constituency and the delimitation of which has been done recently, fall in Chhapra Lok Sabha Constituency. Approximately, 90 acres of Railway land is lying unused in Manjhi. The Railway department has set up a school there, which is a good step again setting up a school near Dehradun is also a commendable step. Children of the railway staff are studying there. The tourism department has sanctioned a scheme worth Rs. 1200 crore for constructing a tourist centre there. A new bridge has come up there which connects Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. If the department of Railway opens a school at such a place, then I feel it would be good for the development of that area. There

is not a single Railway school in that zone. Therefore, through you, I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister of Railways that a school of the Department of Railways may be opened there.

I would like to raise a small issue of my constituency. Although the work of laying a railway line from Masrakh to Maharajganj has begun but that soil work etc. not been started. This work was sanctioned during the regime of the previous Government. After I made repeated efforts, I was told that the survey work, would be completed which is at final stage after according approval. The survey work is complete and merely Rs. 3 crore have been released whereas the cost of the project is Rs. 104 crore. I feel with Rs. 3 crore no development work can be undertaken on a Rs. 104 crore project. Therefore, through you, I would request that the said work should be completed at the earliest after allocation of funds for that purpose.

A DMU train was running from Chhapra to Siwan via Maharajganj. It was a very good train. A sense of awareness and trust was generated amongst people for that train but, now, the train has not been running for the last one and a half months. The Department of Railways might have changed the route of that train. A small bus from Jharonda to Maharajganj has been provided on that route. On the one hand Ram Kripal ji asks everybody to congratulate the Hon. Minister for bringing about radical changes in the Railways and tall claims are being made about the achievements of the department of Railways but I would like to say that the train which was running there was withdrawn by the Railways and a bus was introduced; then what for are they asking me to congratulate him. If a new train is not proposed to be run then the earlier one may be restored. Even this much would help.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Do not miss to mention about the profit of Rs. 10 thousand crore earned by the Railways. He should congratulate the Hon. Minister for that.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: He is saying that funds should be given since a huge profit has been earned. Through you, I would like to say that such schemes and projects are already going on in Bihar-like the work of Ganga Setu bridge, Madhubani bridge and bridge in Monguer has slackened. The day the work will be completed, he is welcome to inaugurate it and I will put a big garland around his neck and another one around

the neck of the Minister of Railways. As long as he does not finish this work, I am not prepared to give him any credit.

Misappropriation of Railways funds is taking place these days. I would like to cite a couplet of examples in support of my claim. Once I narrate such instances, Ram Kripal Yadavji will be up in arms. But since it is a fact so I deem it fit to apprise the House about it. The Hon. Minister of Railways inaugurated a booth in Patna. This is just an example. The cost of construction of that booth should be less than Rs. One and a half lakh but a whopping Rs. 45 lakh were spent on its advertisement. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, perhaps there is a lack of information. A big hospital is coming up there wherein scientific equipments for heart and kidney will be planted. Such a big project worth crores of rupees has been proposed. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prabhunath Singh ji, are you yielding? He will be allowed to speak only when you allow him to speak? Prabhunath ji is allowing him himself.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ram Kripalji, please take your seat. Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Prabhunath Singh.

...(*Interruptions*)*

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: He was boasting a lot of Railways funds but when the Hon. Minister of Railways started making surprise checks a lot of goods were recovered. If the Hon. Minister has the courage he may explain in the House how much expenditure was incurred on conducting a series of surprise checks and how much income has been earned by the railways from these raids? Ram Kripal Yadav ji may try to find it out. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Raghunath Jha ji, your name is there.

*Not recorded.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah): Mr. Chairman, Sir, please give Sitaram Singh ji a chance to speak now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will allow him after his speech.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Through you, I would like to submit that the Railways has its own programme. In earlier days that programme used to be held quite gracefully but now political colour is being added to it. I had received an invitation card in Chhapra and I prepared my mind to attend that programme since it was my district's programme. It was scheduled to be held in his electoral constituency and my electoral constituency lies adjacent to it, but the way all the former and present officials of the Railways were invited, it marred the entire function. I don't know whether it was done with or without his consent. I feel programmes like that do not send a good message. Right now Ram Kripal ji was defending him. My submission is that if Rs. 40-45 lakh are spent on the advertisement of the inauguration by the Minister of a scheme of Rs. one and a half lakh, then it is simply misappropriation of funds. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Would he throw light on what Nitish Kumar ji used to do?

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: If Nitish Kumar ji did so, I would not appreciate even that. ...*(Interruptions)* He never did so. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: he used to inaugurate projects through computer. ...*(Interruptions)* Where was he when the then Hon. Minister of Railways spent crores of rupees. Now he is taking refuge in policies and principle. He should go in for some self introspection. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: As long as Lalu ji was not present he never protested even for once. Sir, with these words I conclude. If the kind of protest he makes in the presence of Lalu ji, is also made in the latter's absence, I shall understand that he has faith in Lalu ji. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: He needs no issue any surmons.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal): Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways). Right now, Prabhunath ji was saying that Ram Kripal ji did not speak in favour of Laluji in his absence but when Lalu ji came in the House. Prabhunath ji also did not speak a word in his criticism. He also criticized Lalu ji in his absence. They are hand in glove with each other and nobody should be under any illusion about that. A few days back, I read in the newspaper that the Railways has so much of surplus funds that it is biding time to spent that fund. ...*(Interruptions)* He may say what he feels. I am not playing politics here. One must call a spade a spade. ...*(Interruptions)* One must highlight veracity despite political leanings. ...*(Interruptions)* I am talking about the entire Railways here. If the Railways have earned a handsome profit, if money has been saved and there is a surplus fund. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (Dhenkanal): Is it a House of the State Legislature of Bihar ? ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav.

...*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: If a specialist in any field become a Minister, he is more competent, but it has been our belief all through that if a true administrator becomes a Minister, he is more effective. One may witness it across the world, be it Britain or elsewhere. Once, somebody asked Mr. Churchill as to what type of Ministers were more effective? He replied that experts can never be good Ministers, because they always signed on the dotted line. A specialist would sign on whatever draft is placed before him, he can not do anything beyond that. One who is a true leader, would issue orders and make amend in whatever comes to him for the implementation of his policy and would put his foot down saying that it is his policy and you will have to implement it.

When Lalu ji or Mulayam Singh ji became Chief Minister, people started saying that. Cow herdsmen and

*Not recorded.

grass cutters have become Chief Ministers, how would they run administration? When Lalu ji became the Minister of Railways then the same cliché was used, but I would like to submit that this is the only department in the country which has augmented its resources. I would like to congratulate Lalu ji for it.

Sir, I would like to submit that trains are the affordable means of transport for the common people, the poor people of this country. It is the most convenient and easy means of transport for the poor people. I have been constantly raising this issue in the House for the last 12-13 years that 20 per cent space is available in the trains for 80 per cent common men whereas 80 per cent space is available for 20 per cent passengers. There has been no improvement in this condition. Although, certain new trains have been introduced for the common man like Jansadharan Express etc. It originates from Delhi and stops at Etawah only for tea etc. for the staff. Nobody can either board in or get down from the train there.

I travel by Poorva Express. Two general bogies are attached to the train ahead of AC First class coach. We are not able to reach our coach because everyday there is lathi charge by the police. There are so many passengers that police has to use baton to queue them up. If I am wearing a Kurta then the Policeman can identify me that I am an MP. Otherwise, I have to wait for long till the people are seated in the general bogies. If two more general bogies are attached to this train, the load can be divided. I request him to pay attention to this because I travel mostly on eastern U.P.-Bihar-Howrah route. Sometimes women and children are left behind at the station. They miss the train and sometimes chain is pulled and at others men have to jump from the train to pick up their children which causes accidents, it has become the order of the day.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): I would like to make a request to Shri Ram Gopal Yadav ji. When people from my State travel via Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the people of his State forcibly enter the Reserved Compartments and turn our people away and occupy the seats. Will he do anything in this regard? My people travel after getting reservation but his people throw them out. It is a practice in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kharabela Swain, please take your seat.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: If there is truth in the Hon. Member's submission and his grievance is genuine, and if it has taken place in my State, Uttar Pradesh then certainly it is not right. I tender my apology to him. I would like the Department of Railways and Railway Protection Force to make such an arrangement that the people who travel with reservations are not forcibly removed by anybody. I would like to apologize to him if he has been hurt by the people of Uttar Pradesh. I will try that GRP which is under the State Government keeps a check on such cases so that there is no gate crashing in the reserved coach. I will try my best.

Sir, by the grace of the Hon. Minister the work on Etawah to Mainpuri line has begun. Our President H.E. Dr. Kalam laid its foundation. The then hon. Minister of Railways, Nitish Kumarji had given this assurance before lakhs of people that the inauguration will be done by the President H.E. Dr. Kalam only. That work has been started, bridges etc. have been constructed, land has been acquired and compensation has been paid. I request the Hon. Minister to expedite that work.

Sir, I have to make another submission. Sambhal is my electoral constituency. Sambhal is an important city from different points of view. Maintha is the biggest Mandi of Asia. Goods are transported by trucks to different places daily and large-scale export of various kinds of small handicrafts is carried out from there. There is no railway line there. A narrow line was in operation there which was closed. Last time also I had brought it to his notice and his officers had admitted that the passenger train which used to pass from there in the past halted near the crossing, the driver would come down to close the gate, then after crossing it the train used to stop again and the driver used to come down and after opening the gate of the level crossing the train used to leave. Earlier the train was discontinued now it has been restored but it is no longer important. I had requested the Hon. Minister last time to conduct a survey from Gujraula to Sambhal and he had agreed but now they are saying that by conducting the survey the Railways would incur losses. But if that train would be restored, there will be no losses. This is a long standing demand of the people. If 57, 58 or 60 kilometer long Gajraula to Sambhal line is connected it will definitely be a great obligation. This is precisely my request.

Sir, in addition to it I have a couple of more suggestions. The hon. Minister has obliged us. Etawah has been recognised as a Model Station. The work has

[Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav]

been started there and his officers had gone there for checking.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the condition of toilets of the waiting room at railway stations is very poor, so much so, that the people do not use the waiting rooms meant for AC First Class or First Class passengers. The toilets on platform are so soiled that people cannot use them. So, it is very necessary to clean them. I have not used the waiting room of Itawa Station for the last 10 years, rather I go and sit at the shop of A Wheelers. The doors of general toilet are broken, the womenfolk face many problems and a man has to stand there to take care of them. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to make arrangements to clean the waiting room. A lot of improvement has been made in the arrangement of drinking water at Railway Station. Earlier, empty bottles filled with water were sold but ever since sealed bottle of 'Rail Neer' has been introduced there has been a lot of improvement. The background of the Hon. Minister made several honourable Members apprehensive lest there should be any deterioration in the Railways, but there has been considerable improvement ever since he took charge of the Ministry.

SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN (Sonapat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the discussion on demands for Supplementary Grants of the Railways for the year 2005-06 is going on during which several hon. Members have highlighted the problems concerning trains in their respective States and areas. Trains are considered the means of transport for the entire poor community. Today, 80 per cent people travel by trains. It is an old cliché that "The vehicle like train, vegetable like potato and disease like Cholera" are available to fortunate people. That is why train is the vehicle of the poor. It is regretted that Haryana has been a neglected State as far as facility of trains for the last 35-40 years is concerned. No Minister of Railways has ever reckoned Haryana on the railway map. Every year Railway budget is introduced, I raise the issue of my State and constituency but no action is taken thereon; nothing is implemented.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Haryana is a small State but is contiguous to Delhi from three sides. 80-90 percent trains cross Haryana but the people of Haryana are deprived of any facility. There is no stoppage of any Express train. Even if the train has a stoppage at one or two places then it is so overloaded that our people do not get a seat in those trains.

17.00 hrs.

The NCR area of Haryana has expanded which has resulted in heavy traffic in Delhi. In view of rush in Delhi an NCR Zone was formed. 50-60 per cent area of Haryana falls in that NCR Zone. The Zone was formed in view of increasing population of Delhi and to clear the congestion and to provide facilities around Delhi. 40-50 percent area of Haryana is covered in that NCR, but nothing happened. I can say with certainty in the House that no new railway line has been laid in Haryana for the last 35-36 years. No new train, barring one or more small trains has been introduced. No foot over bridge, road over bridge, no electrification work and no doubling work of any line is being done in Haryana. This way nothing is being done from the point of view of Railways. When Hon'ble Nitish ji became Minister of Railways he sanctioned two lines. The first sanctioned line was from Jind to Sonapat, whose survey was conducted and Rs. 198 crore budget was estimated. Rs. two crore and Rs. three crore were given in the first and second year respectively. This way, how will the work be completed. Besides, another line, Rohtak-Jhajjar-Rewari was sanctioned. Its estimated cost is Rs. 178 crore. Rs. 2-3 crore were given for it as well. So, two lines were sanctioned and this is the condition of their budget. Besides, survey of Hissar-Hansi-Meham line was conducted on which no action was taken. I wish to submit that Haryana has been completely neglected as far as Railways is concerned. Hon'ble Laluji is sitting here. He is from a rural background. He has a lot of political interest in Haryana. Earlier, he became Chief Minister of Bihar, thereafter Minister of Railways and forgot Haryana completely. I would request hon'ble Laluji to pay some attention to Haryana as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sangwanji, please conclude now, several Hon. Members have to speak.

SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN: Hon. Laluji also knows that there are approximately 5-6 lakh passengers commuting daily from Haryana to Delhi and back. Some of them are milkmen others are vegetable sellers, some are students and there are lakhs of office-going people coming to Delhi. But these people are packed like herds in trains. It is requested that attention should be paid on increasing the number of coaches in all the trains and stoppage should be given to some of the trains. Attention should be paid to the demands, I place before him.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to raise the issue of Jind-Sonepat railway line. New budget is about to be presented. Kindly make provision for Rohtak-Rewari railway line. Sonepat is my constituency. Four lines are required for Delhi to Sonepat. But so far there are only three lines. Whenever we write about providing a new train they express transport constraint. No officer gives a positive response. Instead of helping us out with a positive response they think negative and think of ways to impede the issue. Electrification has been done all over till Rohtak. But Delhi to Rohtak electrification has not been done. Neither doubling nor electrification of Rohtak to Jind line has been done. I request that electrification of this line and its conversion into four lines be undertaken. There are so many passenger trains which are non-operational. I request that a passenger train from Delhi to Sonepat till Gannaur up-down should also be provided to us.

Not a single passenger train is running between 7.30 am to 3.00 pm on this entire route. One can imagine how the people are commuting there. A train should be run between Gohana to Nizamuddin via Rohtak. Besides that, an additional train should be introduced from Jind to Safindo, Panipat. We have requested you to increase the number of bogies in the trains as well as for some more stoppages. I am sure that hon'ble Minister of Railways will look into our demands. Otherwise Haryana has always remained neglected from the Railways point of view. With these words, I would like to conclude my speech.

*DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Khajuraho): Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussion is taking place on supplementary demands. Hon'ble Minister of Railways has demanded a huge amount as supplementary demands but he seems to have made some mistake in deciding the priority. The works which were most important were not considered at all. If attention had been paid to that then the target would have been achieved.

Sir, I have repeatedly requested him through speeches on budget and through letters about the backwardness of Bundelkhand but no attention has been paid towards that so far. The Lalitpur Singhrauli railway line via Khajuraho, Panna, Satna which is a project of approximately Rs. 828 crores has been sanctioned. The work on this railway line is in progress but the grant given for this project is like a drop in the ocean. Approximately another Rs. 300 crore should be granted to complete the work upto Satna Division.

Similarly, the Damoh Panna via Etah Railway line has been surveyed and now it should be sanctioned immediately. Sir, the work at Mahoba, Khajuraho is also proceeding at a snails pace. Sir, Khajuraho is a world famous tourist place. If the work is accelerated then it will draw more tourists.

It should not be deprived of the facilities being provided earlier. 12 stoppages of Bundelkhand Express have been withdrawn at once which has been a great injustice to Bundelkhand. Therefore, the stoppages withdrawn should be introduced again. Particularly arrangements should be made for connecting Oraksha from there.

If the Taj Express is extended upto Oraksha and if Oraksha and Agra are connected with each other then it would encourage communal harmony.

Bhopal Express should be provided a stoppage at Lalitpur. The Jabalpur Kota Express should be extended upto Ajmer Sharif via Jaipur. This would also increase the revenue if it is run upto the Hindu-Muslim pilgrimage of Pushkar and Ajmer Sharif. GM Allahabad and DRM Jhansi must be instructed to call a meeting of the Members and start addressing the problems of that area. No meeting has been conducted since last one and a half year.

Over Night Express train which has been proposed and approved, and the time table has also been announced for that, should be started immediately from Jabalpur to Bhopal via Beena.

*SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah): Sir, due to time constraint I am presenting a written statement supporting the second Supplementary Demands for railways, presented by the hon'ble Minister of Railways.

It is known to everyone that the Rail Budget presented and approved during the last two years has been welcomed by every sector. For the first time in the history of independence, Railways have increased their income without increasing passenger or freight rates.

The operating charges which were Rs. 98 during the tenure of NDA became Rs. 90 during UPA's tenure. In the previous budget Rs. 24,000 crores were to be spent on modernization by the Minister of Railways. The targets proposed in the previous budgets were to add another 1400 kilometers of metergauge line, 219 kilometers of

*Speech was laid on the Table.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Raghunath Jha]

new railway line, 935 kilometers of gauge conversion, doubling of 538 kilometers railway track, electrification of 350 kms. railway track, which is praiseworthy.

The hon'ble Minister of Railways on his Bihar visit programme got down at platform no 2. of Motihari, Mahatma Gandhi ji had also got down at the same platform before reaching Champaran. The Hon'ble Minister of Railways had announced to install a humanize statue of the Father of nation there. It was also announced to construct an ROB each at Motihari, Sugoli, Raxaul, Betiah, Narkatiaganj, Ramnagar and Vagaha. Besides that, instructions were issued to make the Sheetalpur Thala Gurmti of Sugoli Raxaul Section manned. I hope that the department will take immediate action for its implementation.

The laying of foundation of a washing pit at Narkatiaganj and the gauge conversion work at Narkatiaganj Bhikna Dhori via Bheetdarwa Gandhi Ashram, is praiseworthy.

I would request the hon'ble Minister to make a halt station at Chagraha Sugaon between Motihari Sugoli Section and Semra Sangauli. The people of the above mentioned areas face great difficulties in commuting to Semra or Sugoli.

The gauge conversion work at Jai Nagar Narkatiaganj via Darbhanga is moving at a snail's pace for the last 10 years. The work has not been completed even from Jainagar to Darbhanga. The amount of funds received every year is too meager, which is proving to be a hindrance in its progress. It is requested that if it is not possible to complete the work in a single phase then it must be completed in two phases within a stipulated time. Firstly, the work on Jainagar-Darbhanga-Seetamarhi line and secondly. Seetamari Raxaul Narkatiaganj line should be completed by providing funds.

The laying of 40 kilometer new railway line between Seetamarhi Muzaffarpur has been continuing for the last 10 years. This work is also progressing at a snail's pace due to the non-availability of funds. I would like to request that funds should be provided for completing this project within the set time limit.

The railway bridge at Patna, Munger and Kosi should be completed within the stipulated time period.

The survey work of Hajipur, Sangauli, Meeraganj, Panchdevari, Deveria, Chakia, Madhuban, Sheohar, Seetamarhi, Motihari, Dhaka Sheohar railway line should also be completed soon. With these words I would like to conclude my speech.

*SHRI ILYAS AZMI (Shahabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has been a long pending demand for construction of a new railway line from Gola Gokaran Nath in my constituency to Shahjahanpur via Mohammadi. In view of the public demand and requirement I have also made constant efforts in this regard since 1996. The survey was conducted with great difficulty but the survey costing Rs. 138 crore on 67 kilometer is a waste.

The next phase is to submit the survey to Planning Commission which has not been done so far. Through the House, I request the Hon'ble Minister of Railways that the said survey may kindly be submitted to the Planning Commission for further action and the process may be expedited.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Supplementary Grants of Railways. At the outset, I would like to thank this department, particularly the Minister of Railways and his two Ministers, our Sonia Madam and the hon. Prime Minister from the core of my heart for their efforts to start a train in my constituency Udhampur which the erstwhile Government could not do. I am thankful to them from the core of my heart. During a question in the morning today I had submitted that Laluji had announced the setting up of a cement sleeper factory in Kathua for the works of Railways going on in Jammu and Kashmir. In regard to it, I would like to remind the hon. Minister once again to start the work there and visit my constituency after sparing some time so that the development works could be carried out in a better way.

Sir, I would even like to submit that ever since Laluji has taken over the Department of Railways in his hands, it has been earning profit. No politics is involved in it and it is not that I am praising him for being a part of the ruling coalition but it is our duty that if a Minister takes interest in work and does it for the betterment of people then we should appreciate his work. But my senior colleague from the Opposition who is like my elder brother was expressing his apprehension that when the hon. Minister did not increase the fare, and did not take other steps in this direction then how could Railways earn huge

*Speech was laid on the Table.

profits. I would like to ask him as to what is his problem. With what kind of suggestions Members come out in the House? His suggestion of increasing the fare hurt me, as it is the poor who travel in trains like bundle of straw loaded in a truck. Even if such facilities are not provided to them, it would make things more difficult.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Lal Singhji, you have a total of four minutes time. You will not get more than five minutes.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: I will not take much time. I shall place four-five demands. Through you, I would like to request the Minister that a DRM office was set up in Ferozepur in the year 1926 during the time of Britishers and thereafter another one was set up in Haryana. Today, I can say that our area is more covered. He is extending the train up to Baramulla, but for minor problems or even for floating a tender one has to travel to Ferozepur, which is not a centrally located place. I would request that the people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir may be facilitated by setting up an office in Jammu which will be a big achievement. This will also benefit thousands of employees working in our area. I would request him to upgrade the Railway hospital in Jammu which is lacking in good facilities. He has also proposed setting up of Central Schools etc. where more than a definite number of employees are working and which is a bigger area. So, I request the opening up of a Central School in Jammu.

Sir, all the recruitments made by the Railway Recruitment Board here during the last 10-12 years have been from outside the State. He knows that our State is economically and industrially backward. The post of Chairman in the Board is political. My submission is that that post should also be filled from Jammu and Kashmir. That post should be reserved for the locals of that area and rest of the services should also be provided to them.

Sir, our people have to face a lot of problems while travelling to Haridwar on the occasion of Amavasya, Baisakhi and Lohri. An additional train is required to travel there.

Alongwith this, I would also like to submit that there is no train in the name of Vaishno Mata. It will be a great achievement of the Hon. Minister if a train plying from Delhi to Jammu is named "Shri Vaishno Devi Express". I would also like to submit that we have no railway industry, no divisional office of the Railways, no production unit, no railway workshop no traffic accounts and no railway coach factory. Timings of the train plying

from Haridwar, Rishikesh to Hemkund should be changed. This train plies from Jammu at 10 PM and from Kathua at 12-1 AM. It causes a great inconvenience to the passengers travelling in that train whole night.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: The timings of this should be changed. Rajdhani Express should be run daily and train plying from Jammu to Mumbai and Mumbai to Jammu should be run on a regular basis. Another Shatabdi Express should be started. We have one railway production Unit and we want one railway wheel plant in Kathua. It was assured by the erstwhile Governments and so we place this demand once again. We have a station there. An over bridge is required to be constructed there. There is no level crossing there. A small hospital may be constructed in Kathua and a platform is also required there. Chakdayala Station should be made a crossing station. All the trains, be it super fast train or any other, should have a stoppage in Kathua.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now. Please speak one sentence and conclude.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: In the end, I would like to submit that for all the crossings which are constructed, 50 per cent is financed by the State Government and 50 per cent is financed by the Railway Board. I would request him to release at least the funds due to be given by his Ministry, for crossings like Lakhimpur, Jagpur, Matani, Kharot, Jamlot, Logate, Durbar, Guddi, Jasauta etc. I request him to consider this request. With these words I thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

*SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (Calicut): Thank you very much sir for this opportunity and I don't take much time of the House. I just want to present some of the concerns of my State, Kerala, especially related to Malabar region.

Sir, time and again we have been demanding for the approval of Nanjagude-Wayanad-Gudallur-Nilambur railway link. The growing importance of this rail link need not be over emphasised especially in view of the huge volume of the container traffic anticipated when international container terminal at Valarpadom is completed in couple of years. Similarly, the LNG terminal at Cochin

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri M.P. Veerendra Kumar]

also will attract huge tanker traffic from North to South. With opening up of this new link the time and distance, rail transport from Bangalore, Mysore, Hyderabad etc. will be reduced by eight hours that is over 300 KM in distance. Moreover, this new link passes through the plantation area, such as Wayanad and Gudallur and connects Nilambur in Malappuram district. This link will also connect Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. I request the honourable Minister to take adequate measures to make this railway line a reality.

I would also like to remind the honourable Railway Minister regarding the assurance given by him about the modernisation of Kozhikode railway station. The Railway Action Committee of Calicut, comprising all the political parties and various organizations met the Minister and he had directed the Railway Board to hear us. We explained our problems to the Board and presented a C.D. highlighting the unfinished overbridges and the pathetic condition of the Kozhikode railway station.

Calicut was declared, as a model railway station in 1999 aimed at providing all required facilities. Unfortunately, nothing such has done in this regard. The condition of the station remains the same, without proper sanitation and other facilities. As per the plan, new platform suppose to build in the station but the work has not yet started. The station was to get new bogies and that is also remains only in the paper.

Now I come to doubling. Even though the Shomur-Mangalore line is almost completed, it is not extended to Kozhikode station. Just because of that, the benefit of the doubling is not really getting. Therefore, I urge the Minister to take necessary measures to complete the doubling as early as possible.

The doubling work of Eernakulam-Kayamkulam via Kottayam and Alappuzha, is also crucial as far as development need of Kerala is concerned. Sufficient fund should be allocated for this project. Additional fund also necessary for the completion of electrification work between Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam.

The gauge conversion of Palakkad-Pollachi and Kollam-Chengotta sector has to be taken up and completed for this more funds should be allocated. The work of Nethravathi bridge must be completed on a war footing.

Speedy completion of railway overbridges is another important factor as far as Kerala's railway development

is concern. Seven overbridges, i.e., Vengalam, Chengottukavi, Nadi in Calicut District, Muzhupliangad, Nadal, Thazhechovva, in Kannur District, Padannakad in Kasargode District are under construction. All these overbridges are between Calicut and Mangalore and I request the Hon'ble Minister to take necessary step to complete these overbridges as early as possible. With this, I support the additional demands for grants for the Railway.

*SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (Periyakulam): Respected, Sir, I am grateful for giving me an opportunity to participate in the debate.

The UPA Government has successfully completed one year in office and is making great strides in every field under the stewardship of Dr. Manmohan Singh and under the able guidance of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and Railways under the leadership of Shri Lalu Prasad Yadavji.

I would like to make a few points concerning my parliamentary constituency, in particular, and my State, Tamil Nadu, in general.

Railways is the lifeline of our nation and has a towering task of catering to transport needs of the whole country. The Railways is one of the most economic means of transport of our country. It is the prominent means for the poorest of the poor. Our Railway network is one of the largest in the universe. It is stated in the Press and Railway Ministry has increased its earnings by Rs. 962 crores during the first nine months, that is, April-December, 2004.

In the first place, Sir, there is a long pending demand for the conversion of Madurai-Bodi meter gauge into broad gauge. On both sides of this line, there are a huge number of poor families living in hutments. Before taking up this broad gauge project, Ministry of Railways should make alternate arrangements for these poor by making proper rehabilitation. I hope the hon. Minister would kindly take this request of mine in the right perspective and help the poor, SCs, STs, OBCs and minority people of my constituency.

Sir, coffee and cardamom is grown in abundance in Bodimetthu, Kambammettu and Kodaikanal Downhills in my parliamentary constituency and the same is exported to foreign countries. Coffee, cardamom and cotton growers at present have to either go to Madurai or Coimbatore for booking their produce resulting in not only theft on

*Speech was laid on the Table.

the way, sales tax and other problems but also incurring huge expenses and time consumption to go to Madurai around 100 kilometers to go to Coimbatore for booking 200 kilometres plus transportation. I had already placed a request for opening of booking offices of Railways in Bodimettu and Kambam but it seems no action has been taken so far. This is also a long pending demand and I hope the hon. Minister would seriously consider my request for opening of booking offices of Railways in the above mentioned coffee and cardamom, cotton, textiles and other spices and agri-products. I hope the hon. Minister would make an announcement very soon in this regard. My constituency is a valley with beautiful greenery.

Kambam Valley in my parliamentary constituency is prominently an agricultural area where thousands of labourers live for their livelihood. Even minimum facilities are lacking in this area as regards the Ministry of Railways.

Hundreds of thousands of devotees visit Iyyappan Temple in Kerala every year. At present, they have to go to the temple via Vattalagundu, Periakulam, Theni and Kambam as via uphill Vanqui Periar to the temple of Ayyappa. This is around about 150 Kms. route to reach the temple. There is a hill in between. If the Ministry constructs a tunnel, the length of the railway line can be reduced to mere 5 kms. This is not at all a difficult project for Railways to take up. By constructing the tunnel in between the hill, the distance can be reduced considerably. Moreover, devotees would save time and energy. Construction of this tunnel would bring laurels to the UPA Government under the able guidance of our Respected Madam, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, and leadership of our hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and the charismatic Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad. Hence, I would request the hon. Minister to kindly look into the matter with due importance and funds may be sanctioned for early completion of this prestigious tunnel in your tenure as hon. Railway Minister.

Sir, people from my parliamentary constituency have been pleading for the sanction of a number of level-crossing or bridge mainly on Theni Highway and gate near Theni Collectorate and at various points. Hope the hon. Minister would consider genuine requests of the people in my constituency.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for the creation of a Freight Corridor. This was never thought of by any of his predecessors. This is a unique

project. If this Freight Corridor covering 9.260 kms. is completed, Railways would earn more from freight traffic and can wean away freight from other modes of transport. I hope the hon. Railway Minister would make all-out efforts to complete this Corridor well in time and help common man to benefit out of it.

In spite of a provision of Rs. 222 crores for passenger amenities for 2005-06, I feel that enough is not done taking into account the wide network of the Railways covering the entire country. We cannot neglect amenities to passengers. Railways have to give funds. These facilities are not only very genuine but also natural. One cannot ignore it. I hope the hon. Minister would look into it and take special efforts to rectify this situation.

Sir, everybody appreciates your bold step for appointing a Commission for enquiry in Godhra massacre/carnage. Every individual and all minorities BC/SCs/OBCs from length and breadth of this country appreciates your bold initiative. Some say, Sir, the Railway Minister, Laluji is champion of minorities. You have to give first reservation of seats to minorities at least ten per cent in all Railway jobs. It will definitely be a role-model to all other Departments of other minorities in this country. I also request Railways to open schools in all important Districts to cater the poor railway employees. In them also, reservation should be given to SCs/STs/OBCs like Central Government's Kendriya Vidyalaya schools.

We would like to point out here that in this year Tamil Nadu has been neglected lock, stock and barrel. Discussing this issue has become a sort of ritual every year. The outcome is now worth appreciative for reasons known to everyone. We take up issues piecemeal and go about sorting out the immediate problems but forgetting about chalking out a well-thought out plans and programmes to cater to the needs of each and every impending issue that come up often and in every year. We have to fix our aim in resolving issues that crop up every year on a permanent basis.

Sir, I conclude my speech with the hope that the hon. Minister of Railways would give topmost priority to the problems mentioned in my speech concerning my parliamentary constituency as they are long-pending issues concerning the genuine demands of the people of my constituency. I request him to implement them as early as possible.

[Translation]

SHRI SITA RAM SINGH (Sheohar): Sir, I support Demands for Grants presented by the hon'ble Minister of Railways. I congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways. Perhaps you will not give me sufficient time to list the works which he has done in Bihar and at national level during his tenure of 14 months. Railways is a symbol of national unity. It is for the first time in the history of railways, that without increasing passenger fare and freight charges the Railways has earned a revenue of more than Rs. 8000 crore and the Department of Railways is being run on the basis of this revenue which is really an amazing thing. Though fares have not been increased yet while presenting the CAG report it is being asked as to how the Railways has been functioning. However everybody has his own outlook. One gets catapulted to power by a stroke of luck and at the predestined time and the administration taken its own course.

Sir, whatever one gets is good for him or her. I congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways not once but many times. I would like to mention his achievements in a minute. In the year 2004-05, a stretch of 1400 km. broad gauge line was constructed and in the current year, it is proposed to construct 1892 km. line. 205 km. new railway line has been constructed and 219 km. is proposed. Similarly gauge conversion of 885 km. was done and that of 935 km is proposed to be undertaken. The doubling of line was done upto 307 km and 538 km is proposed to be done. The work of electrification was done upto 375 km and 350 km is proposed. Besides this, work of modernization of Railways is being done about which I would like to mention in brief. Super fast trains with a speed of 150 km./hr. have been introduced on Delhi-Howrah-Patna and Delhi-Chennai route which is very commendable and important work. ESP trains, which are goods trains, are being run on major routes at the speed of 100 km/hr. Not only this, ever since Shri Lalu Prasadji has become the Minister of Railways, huge quantity of goods are being transported but freight charges have not been increased. Similarly, no increase has been made in the passenger fares.

Sir, the entire country knows that the hon'ble Minister of Railways, Shri Lalujji has provided several facilities for the poor in Railways. The Railways has provided free passes to the candidates appearing for interview in State Government jobs. The hon'ble Minister of Railways has given several concessions to milk producers, farmers and

rural boys and girls. He has also provided concession in transportation of relief material during national calamity. The children of poor families were facing lot of difficulties in getting Group 'B' jobs. Now they will be recruited at local level. The hon'ble Minister of Railways has launched a special recruitment drive to fill the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe backlog. It is a very important step.

Sir, the hon'ble Minister of Railways has been prompt in getting some of the factories started. Railway wheel factory has been started in Chhapra. Such work has been started in approximately 12 places like Sitamarhi, Chak Sikandar, Madhepura etc. The work of approved schemes, which came to a standstill, has also been started expeditiously. We should always accept good things and harp on the positive aspects. We should praise all good works and when discussion on supplementary Demands for Railways taken place, we should not try to politicise it. Since I have a limited time, before concluding my speech, I would like to mention about Bihar. Our several members have said that Bihar is lagging far behind. I would like to say that unless Bihar is developed our country cannot progress. It is a fact that there are many shortcomings in Bihar even today.

Sir, since the place of work is not good, I request hon'ble Minister that more funds should be given for expediting the construction work of 32 ROBs sanctioned for Bihar. In Patna, a bridge is being constructed over river Ganga. Similarly, in Monghyr, a bridge is being constructed over river Ganga. There is a need to allocate more funds and expedite the pace of this work. Besides, the work of laying the foundation stone has been started at Nirmal near Kosi which I fail in words to appreciate. That area is cut off from entire Bihar as well as from the capital. Therefore, this work would prove a boon for this area. This work is important for that area from social, economic, geographical and all other points of views. Therefore, it should be done as early as possible.

Sir, the hon'ble Minister of Railways visited Motihari district. Motihari is known as the workplace of Mahatma Gandhi. During his visit to Motihari, he made an announcement that the statue of Mahatma Gandhi will be erected at the railway station. I would like the officials to pay attention towards this and make arrangements to get the statue erected on that station at the earliest.
...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI SITA RAM SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I respect the Chair so much that if you ask me to resume my seat I will do so. So far I have only praised the Railway Minister, I have not started my speech as yet. Let me speak for a minute. I would like that the work should be started in this direction.

Second thing which I would like to say is that during the tenure of the previous Government it was decided that a railway line will be laid from Hazipur to Sugauli but this work has not been started so far. It would be very good if instructions are issued for getting the survey conducted. My area links all the three places—Sheohar, Sitamarhi and Motihari.

I would like to say that though survey work for laying the railway line from Motihari, Chiraiya, Dhaka, Sheohar and Sitamarhi has already been sanctioned yet the funds allocated for this purpose are very less. I feel that its progress is very slow. More funds should be allocated to expedite this work. The pace of work on gauge conversion of Darbhanga, Sitamarhi, Narkatiaganj line is very slow. There are around 15 such bridges whose construction is essential but its work has not yet been started. I want that its work should be started.

Similarly, the construction work of the three important bridges on the railway line linking Muzaffarpur Commissionary and Sitamarhi is not being done. Hence I would like to request that more funds should be allocated to expedite the construction work of these bridges. Besides this, Shri Prabhunath Singhji was mentioning about Kaptanganj. Work on the link line from Kaptanganj, Gopalganj, Chhapra to Siwan via Thave should be completed at the earliest as Thave is an important place where people visit very often and face a lot of difficulties. I want that the work on the railway line from Mirganj to Deoria via Vijaypur which connects U.P. with Bihar should also be completed.

People were facing lot of difficulties in the local train which was running from Patna earlier. I would like to say that DMU trains should be run between Patna-Gaya, Patna-Buxar and Patna-Mokama for the benefit of the people as they are facing lot of difficulties. Similarly, Saptkranti Express, which is an important train for north Bihar, has been extended upto Darbhanga and it comes to Delhi via Muzaffarpur. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that a second class AC Coach should be added to Saptkranti Express from Muzaffarpur. At present passengers are facing lot of difficulties. I am

talking about adding only one coach and it would be better if a coach is added to Saptkranti Express.

The doubling work of Patna-Gaya railway line should be expedited and this line should be extended further. I would like to say that Fatuha-Islampur line should be extended upto Gaya. Since Koiswar bridge is very old and whenever a train passes from this bridge it trembles. Therefore, I request the department of railways to dismantle Koiswar bridge and construct a new bridge in its place.

[English]

*DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool): Sir, in the regular Railway Budget there was no increase in fares of passengers and freight in goods. Concentration was on safety measures and passenger amenities. Though it was a welcome budget it was lacking the Action Plan to complete the Projects which were proposed with huge Budgetary provisions for more non-remunerative projects and very meagre funds, allocation for the some of the important projects all over the country more so in AP. Though north-eastern States were given priority, the priority was not given to the backward areas of other States like Telangana in Andhra Pradesh.

Though on paper the measures to make rail travel more comfortable and safe, number of accidents are going on increasing. Old bridges which are more than ten years old at many places have either been repaired or reconstructed or new bridges are constructed in place of them. The only one bridge of Brahmaputra at Guwahati is causing lot of problems. So immediately second rail bridge on Brahmaputra at Guwahati is very much needed to reduce the strain on the only bridge and for its safety. There are numbers of gates which are unmanned and number of accidents are taking place at those gates causing loss to human lives and livestock.

As far as my State Andhra Pradesh is concerned, though the budgetary provision in cases of new lines, gauge conversion or other infrastructure are the same as it was in the previous year and no proposal of any remarkable extent had been proposed for Andhra Pradesh and South Central Railway in the Supplementary budget for grants also. In fact, very meagre or small works have been taken up. No new track is proposed for laying and no proposal for electrification was proposed in any line in South Central Railway.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. M. Jagannath]

I doubt the way the budgetary allocations are made for the new lines like Gadwal-Raichur (Rs. 4 crore). Nalgonda-Macherla (Rs. 1 crore) and Peddepalli-Kareem Nagar/Nizamabad (Rs. 30 crore). In my life time, I may not see a train rolling on the new track. My great grand children might also may not see the train rolling. No provisions have been made for the works in Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh in the Supplementary Budget. Even the Budgetary allocations made for SCR Andhra Pradesh are merely around Rs. 10 lakh only.

In many of the prestigious trains, bogies are not well maintained. The toilets in bogies and at the stations are stinky and need good maintenance. The eatables on platforms and the so-called purified drinking water are not hygienic and safe water is not available. Steps are to be taken to provide hygienic eatables and safe drinking water on platforms at stations and in the train.

Budgetary allocation to complete the new lines required is Rs. 1607 crore and allocation for 2005-06 is Rs. 49 crore. For gauge conversion, from Rs. 133.96 crore in 2003-04 it has come to Rs. 87 crore in 2005-06. For doubling from Rs. 155 crore in 2003-04 it is Rs. 135 crore in 2005-06.

If we look at the above allocations, it is a day-dream that the above projects will be completed as per schedule.

For Naupada-Gunupur gauge conversion, the allocation was Rs. 15 crore in 2003-04. But this time, it is reduced to Rs. 5 crore. I request the hon. Railway Minister to increase the allocation.

Now coming to my own parliamentary constituency, I was demanding for laying of new line between Macherla-Raichur. Only Macherla-Nalgonda and Raichur-Gadwal have been sanctioned. I request you to include the remaining part of the line between Gadwal and Macherla.

My request for construction of RUB at Jadcherla Station of Secunderabad-Dronachalam section is long pending. I request the hon. Minister to sanction RUB at Jadcherla railway station gate.

An ROB at Gadwal Railway station gate is very essential. I request the hon. Minister to sanction one ROB at Gadwal Railway station and at Yenugonda railway gate.

I request the hon. Railway Minister to sanction the following trains—Secunderabad-Kurnool intercity express;

Rajdhani Express between Hyderabad and New Delhi; a day train between Hyderabad and New Delhi; a super-fast train between Vizag and Hyderabad; and doubling of Secunderabad-Dronachalam section as it is becoming more important route for south-bound trains from Secunderabad/Hyderabad.

*SHRI FRANCIS FANTHOME (Nominated): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I speak to support the Railway Appropriation Bill No. 3 of 2005.

The Railways have shown remarkable progress despite the increasing demand and enhanced public usage of the Railways over the last few years. Whether it be transport of goods or passengers, the Railways have met the challenge of development in the country.

The Railways have been under pressure because of natural causes resulting in grave tragedies. There needs to be greater effort to improve the monitoring system so that grievous tragedies due to natural causes are not encountered.

There is also pressure from anti-social elements that disrupt the smooth flow of traffic for personal reasons. The Railway Protection Force should be more alert to ensure that such people are caught and suitably punished.

One of the other concerns is the repeated disruption due to accidents particularly because of human error. There needs to be better training of railway personnel so that grave human tragedies are avoided.

The country is proud of its Railways and the services it renders to the poor and needy, at costs that are the lowest in the world.

There is however need that there be better cleanliness of the platforms and railway compartments.

The quality of the facilities needs to progress in accordance with the technologies now available. The people of the country need to get the best available facilities.

Once again, while complimenting the Railway Minister for the services being rendered, I would like to say that security, safety and quality services should be the commitment to the people.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my views.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

DR. R. SENTHIL (Dharmapuri): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I rise, on behalf of Pattali Makkal Katchi, to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants for expenditure of the Central Government on Railways. The Railways is the biggest employer in this country and perhaps in the world.

Railways is no more a loss making company, but a profit making one and that too, the biggest money earner in the country, combining both private and public sector companies. This has been achieved without hurting the common men. For this, I wholeheartedly congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Laluji, the hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Velu and his team.

The Supplementary Demand has actually given 80 new proposals for approval. So, the new Demands for Grants is for Plan expenditure rather than for Non-Plan expenditure and hence, it is totally justifiable. The 80 new Demands are for development works all over the country, without any regional disparity.

There is one very big disappointment for the people of Tamil Nadu because they were very eagerly expecting the announcement of the Salem Division in the Supplementary Demands for Grants. Unfortunately, this has not been done. I just want to present a few facts and figures with regard to Salem Division. The now-demanded Salem Railway Division is not against the already formed Palghat Division.

17.25 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

I very humbly submit to the hon. Members from Kerala that the demand for Salem Division is not against the interests of the people of Kerala. It is not based on any territorial considerations though 75 per cent of the area of the Palghat Division is within Tamil Nadu.

The higher rate of growth of Salem district and other adjoining districts has caused more demands and necessities that could never be fulfilled by Palghat Division alone. Salem and other adjoining districts have seen very phenomenal industrial and economic growth in the recent past. This has caused very significant increase in the freight in the Jolarpet-Coimbatore broad gauge route. Apart from this, Jolarpet-Coimbatore broad gauge route, Salem is the meeting hub for the Salem-Bangalore route, the newly constructed Tuticorin-Karur-Salem route and also

the already existing Cuddalore route. Salem is a very central place.

I once again assure the hon. Members from Kerala that bifurcating the present Palghat Division into Salem and Palghat Divisions will not have any adverse effect on the Palghat Division. Even after the division, the Palghat Division will have 703 kilometres of route which is higher than the Trivandrum Division.

The Railway Reforms Committee has already recommended this division as early as 1985. During the NDA regime, the then Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar announced the formation of the Division on 13.3.1999. This is due for a long time. I urge upon the Government to immediately announce the formation of Salem Railway Division which is very important for the people of Tamil Nadu.

As I mentioned, the Railways is the biggest employer in the country. Since it is a Government owned company, Railways has got an obligation to be a model employer. The Railways should be the best example of employee-employer relationship and for the best employees benefits. When I visited the Perambur Carriage Works—the maintenance depot in Chennai—I was really shocked. The workers amenities are very bad. They do not have toilets, proper drinking water facilities, enough soaps and towels for cleansing. During the rain, they have to walk through waterlogged passages. No parking facility for their bicycles. Women employees do not have a separate rest rooms. There are so many deficiencies.

I request the hon. Minister to take this issue seriously and commit to develop Railways as a model employer. The workers working conditions need a lot of improvement.

I have a small list of works to submit. First is the electrification of Villupuram-Trichy line. It is about 167 kilometres only and would cost only about Rs. 80 crore. Another electrification work is required on the Salem-Bangalore broad gauge route.

With regard to gauge conversion, I have three projects to submit. They are Virudunagar-Manamadurai section, Dindigul-Madurai Section and the Dindigul-Pollachi-Coimbatore section.

We need additional funds for the following gauge conversion works. They are Tiruvarur to Nagoor-Karaikal-

[Dr. R. Senthil]

Nagapattinam-Velankanni route; Manamadurai-Mandapam route and finally Katpadi-Villupuram route.

Sir, I request the hon. Minister to consider new lines between Pondicherry—Dindivanam—Chingi—Tiruvannamalai—Vandavasi. Another line is Krishnagiri—Dharmapuri—Jolarpet which would be connecting the district headquarters of Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri to Salem.

I request the hon. Minister of Railways to give top priority to these routes. I once again reiterate that the Railways have done very well with their budgeting and hence done their contribution to the development of our nation. Therefore, the Pattali Makkal Katchi wholeheartedly supports the Supplementary Demands for Grants.

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR (Chandrapur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the Demands for Supplementary Grants of the Railways. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to give due consideration to my suggestions.

Sir, Indian Railways play an important role in making the Indian economy constantly dynamic. I consider trains to be comfortable and pollution free means of transport. More the expansion of Railways, more it would be in the interest of the country and its people. But this expansion should be executed keeping in view all the States of the country. Uniform development of Railways in all the States becomes the responsibility of the Ministry of Railways. I have seen it during the last Budget and the Supplementary Budget that very few provisions and demands were made in regard to the development of Maharashtra. I hope that the hon. Minister of Railways will make efforts to do equal justice in the country.

I had read the reply of the Minister of Railways that "it is our policy to accord priority for providing train services in inaccessible tribal areas where mineral reserves are available." In Vidharba area of Maharashtra, the Chandrapur-Garhchirauli district is heavily dominated by tribal population. Even after 58 years of independence, the Garhchirauli district is not linked with railways. I made repeated demands and raised questions several times but the railway facility has not been provided so far by the Ministry.

I had putforth a demand for running train service from Vadsa to Garhchirauli. Its survey has also been

conducted, as per which an estimate of Rs. 77 crore has been made. But unfortunately, as Rs. 77 crore have not been provided for in the current Budget the work of laying the railway tracks has not begun. I demand that provision should be made for it in the current Budget. Various kinds of mineral reserves are available in huge quantum in the Garhchirauli district. The difficult area is a naxalite region inhabited by tribals where mineral reserves are available. The Ministry of Railway intends to develop that area. There are rich reserves of high quality iron ore in Surajgarh area of Garhchirauli district. If we wish to use them for nation building then railway lines should be laid there. If railway lines are laid from Surajgarh to Ballarshah or Surajgarh to Garhchirauli then those mineral reserves can definitely be used for the development of the country. There are Beladilla mines further down Surajgarh. Surajgarh Beladilla iron ore mines are in the same area. I had written to the hon. Minister and he had stated that Rs. 350 crore will be spent on the work of laying a railway line from Beladilla to Surajgarh. I would like to request the hon. Minister that if a provision of Rs. 350 crore had been made in the current budget then we could have reaped its benefits for tribal dominated areas and could have utilized the mineral reserves for nation building. I demand a train from Chandrapur district which is the last district of Maharashtra, to Mumbai. By introducing a train from Chandrapur to Mumbai the people of that district would be benefited. There is an urgent need to run a train from Kajipet to Mumbai via Chandrapur. Its demand is being made for several years now. The Chandafort-Gondia narrow gauge has recently been converted into broad gauge. Crores of rupees have been spent on this line, but only two or three trains are being run on this line for the last three-four years. I demand the introduction of more trains on this line. If a train is plied on this line from Howrah to Hyderabad or Bangalore, Chennai then this line will definitely be used and the locals of that area would be benefited. The train which plies from Bangalore, Chennai or Bilaspur to Trivendrum, plies via Nagpur, in order to use this line. I demand that this train should be plied from Chandafort-Gondia line which would benefit the passengers and would also reduce the distance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will not take much time. I would make more submissions in addition to these. A provision of Rs. 24 crore has been made in the budget for the modernization of Railways. We have made a provision of Rs. 24,000 crore for the modernisation of Railways but have not provided a penny for the Nagpur

zone. For the modernisation of all the stations, particularly, Chandrapur station which has been awarded A class status the funds which are required to make it a model station are not available due to which the renovation or modernization work has been discontinued. I demand funds from the Hon. Minister for that purpose.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I also demand computerized reservation system at Bhandak-Varora and Manikgarh (Rajura) Railway Station and Chandafort Railway Station. There are certain railway lines on which over bridges are required to be constructed. There is a demand for construction of an over bridge on Ballharshaha-Rajura line. There is a demand to construct an over bridge in Varoda city. Alongwith this there is a demand to construct an over bridge in Babupeth area in Chandrapur city. I have written letters to the Ministry of Railways in this regard and as per the reply they would make provisions for it in the Railway budget if the State Government gives it share. In reply to my correspondence with the Chief Minister I was told that the State Government has made necessary provisions for it. I request the Hon. Minister that provisions should also be made from his side for this purpose.

Chandrapur is a prominent industrial town. I demand that justice should be done to this city. There are small cities adjacent to Chandrapur town where in view of industry a railway line has been laid from Ballharshaha to Gadchandoor for transporting cement and coal. I demand that a passenger train should be run on that line. Alongwith this a passenger train from Ballharshaha to Dhugus should be started. I demand that these requests should be incorporated in the Demands for Supplementary Grants. I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul): Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demand for Grant for the year 2005-06.

At the outset, I would like to thank and congratulate our Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and the Minister of State for Railways, Shri Velu for going over to Madurai on three occasions to inaugurate new services from Madurai to various places which were our long-felt needs.

Under the able leadership of our UPA Chairperson, Madam Sonia Gandhi, and efficient guidance of our Prime

Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Railway Ministry, headed by our leader Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav, is doing commendable service to the nation. Indian Railways are committed to economic development and unity of our country.

Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav has presented two popular Railway Budgets without enhancing both fares and freight charges. Sir, I learn that there is a proposal in the Railways to construct separate tracks exclusively for the transport of goods, in coalition with a Japanese firm. If implemented, this would be an illustrious chapter in the history of Indian Railways and I would like to hail this effort.

I understand that two lines are proposed to be laid between Delhi and Mumbai and Delhi and Kolkata. I urge upon the Railway Minister that while formulating those lines, he may kindly add Delhi to Kanyakumari line also. We, the people of Southern India, particularly people from Tamil Nadu, have to get pulses and grains from northern States, especially from States around Delhi.

Hence, a separate line between Delhi and Kanyakumari for goods traffic will be highly helpful and economical for poor and middle class people to get their share of grains and pulses at cheaper rates.

I have been addressing and pressing again and again for the completion of doubling of Dindigul and Madurai line. There are already two lines between Madurai and Dindigul, one is broad gauge and the other is meter gauge. The total conversion cost will be only around Rs. 96 crore and the distance is less than 60 kms. If it is completed, ten more new express trains can be introduced in this line. I urge upon the hon. Minister to bestow utmost care with a commitment to complete this project before March 2006, by allotting the needed sums.

The Railway Budget 2005-06 presented by the hon. Minister of Railways contains many salient features. But re-classification of food grains and pulses from the existing Class 90 to Class 120 has resulted in the increase of 33 per cent freight hike. Common people who are already finding it difficult to make both the ends meet will be burdened further as the prices of essential food commodities will shoot up. So, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to revert back the classification to Class 90 in his reply.

[Shri N.S.V. Chitthan]

Madurai is the second largest and a very important commercial city in Tamil Nadu. Generally, it is a gateway for other cities in the southern part of the State. The intensity of the traffic of the city has increased day by day. In view of the persisting heavy traffic problem and ever-increasing traffic, the ROB construction work may be taken up immediately on top priority basis by the Railways. Immediate completion of ROB will enable the public in Madurai and in Tamil Nadu to utilise the ROB and ease the traffic congestion in the city to a large extent.

Here are some of our demands: As regards Kudal Nagar Road Over Bridge, the State Government has completed the work, but the Railways has not yet completed its work. For more than two years it is incomplete. Speedy efforts should be taken in this regard. As regards Ellis Nagar ROB work, the State Government's work is in full swing, but even the plan approval of the Railways has not been done so far. After obtaining the plan approval, they have to All for the tenderer, which will take two years' time. As regards Thathaneri (Sellur) Palam Station Road, the State Government has completed its work, but the Railways' portion of the work is to be completed. It has remained inoperative for more than two years. As regards Karur ROB, for more than two years the ROB has not been opened for the public use due to non-completion of the Railways' portion of the work. I urge upon the Minister to speed up these works. Early and effective steps should be taken for early completion of these ROB's. Dindigul-Coimbatore meter gauge line should be converted into broad gauge line.

Last but not the least, I am talking about my home town Tirumangalam. It is a growing town. So many *jawans* hail from Thirumangalam. They are serving the nation in so many areas. In the interest of *jawans* I urge upon the Minister to open a computer reservation centre as early as possible. It will facilitate not only the *jawans* but also the general public.

[Translation]

*SHRI LALMANI PRASAD (Basti): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Supplementary Grants. I would like to express my gratitude for giving me an opportunity to speak. The hon. Minister has not increased railway fare and there has been marked improvement

*Speech was laid on the Table.

through holistic changes which has benefited the people. So, I would like to congratulate him. Gorakhdham and Jammu Tavi have been given a stoppage in Khalilabad. For this I would like to congratulate him. I would like to draw his attention towards the shortage of water in toilets of general bogies which are packed with people of poor sections of society. It should be ensured that water is filled in general bogies at big railway stations and toilets at railway stations are properly cleaned and the number of general bogies should also be increased. Two AC I and Two AC II and three AC III coaches should be attached to Gorakhdham. Pantry Car should also be attached and Saptkranti should be given a stoppage at Basti Railway Station which is the Divisional Headquarter. Basti railway station should be developed as a Model Railway Station. The reservation quota in the Railways for scheduled castes and tribes and backward classes should also be filled.

[English]

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you very much. I am supporting the Supplementary Demand for Grant and the Demands for Excess Grants on behalf of MDMK, which is under the eminent leadership of Thiru Vaiko.

My first and foremost request is conversion of the meter gauge line of Coimbatore-Dindigul via Pollachi to broad gauge line. Also the Pothanur-Pollachi line, and Pollachi to Palani and Dindigul line. Furthermore, the Pollachi-Palakkad line should also be included in the broad gauge conversion. This is a good old request and it is pending ever since Independence. Nothing has turned over ever since Independence. Something should be done in the form of converting it into broad gauge.

Sir, we have a very few road overbridges to be made—one at Mulluppadi, one at Pollachi-Valparai road and another at Udumalpet-Thalli Road. Mulluppadi is between Kinathukadavu and Pollachi. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not disturb.

DR. C. KRISHNAN: An underground passage for two-wheelers should be made at Rudrappa Nagar near Udumalpet.

Sir, Udumalpet station is a very big station. It is my native Taluka. That station should be made into a computer reservation station. Pollachi is a very big tourist centre. That is why, I am asking that it should be converted into a broad gauge link. Pollachi has four big

dams, namely, Tirumurthi Dam, Aliyar Dam, Solyar Dam and Amaravathi Dam. Annamalai is a wildlife sanctuary and it is attracting a lot of tourists. So, these dams are also attracting a great number of tourists, and more than that, Palani is a pilgrim centre further South, and Tamilians from all over the world come there and worship the God.

The bypass broad gauge link, if it is made, will connect Kerala and Dindigul via Pollachi. This way, this bypass is a link to Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It not only goes up to Chennai but anywhere to South and Delhi. So, it is going to be a very big bypass if the broad gauge is made. Sir, if broad gauge conversion takes place between Coimbatore and Dindigul, which is only a very short distance of 160 kilometres, and between Pollachi and Palghat, a distance of 40 kilometres—thus making a total of 200 kilometres—it will help a lot. This is a long pending demand.

Sir, the present stage of broad gauge conversion, as I know, is that they have allotted rupees one crore twenty lakh for updating the project. Sir, updating shall be concluded in one year period. Let us not wait for some more years. Let us not prolong the period. Let it be completed in the stipulated time of one year. The conversion project shall be taken for the convenience of my constituency people. With this, I support the Bill on behalf of MDMK headed by Mr. Vaiko.

[Translation]

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV (Faizabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to extend my thanks to you for giving me time to speak. The Railway Department is the biggest department of the country. The railway network should be developed in various areas in accordance with the population and the economic condition of the areas and funds should also be allocated accordingly. Uttar Pradesh is the biggest State of the country, however, I feel that the proportionate share of the Railway Budget that should have been given to Uttar Pradesh has not been provided. The hon'ble Minister of Railways is not present in the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon'ble Minister is present in the House. You please carry on.

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Sir, through you, I would like to submit that Ayodhya in Faizabad district is a pilgrim centre of almost all religious communities of the country except Christians. Though the Railway department has

declared the railway station of holy city of Ayodhya as a model station, however, it has not spent sufficient funds as per the requirement, so much so that only one train running from Gonda and Navabganj passes through the bridge on river Saryu constructed with the expenditure of Rs. one billion. The main objective of constructing the said bridge was to connect Ayodhya from Gorakhpur, Bihar and further extend the said line to connect pilgrim places of South India. I demand that the purpose for which the bridge was constructed on river Saryu should be met and the said rail line should be developed.

The rail line between Faizabad and Ayodhya divides the city into two parts. When any train passes through this line bound for Faizabad or Mahoba, the traffic remains disrupted due to closure of railway crossing and often school students going to appear in examination are not able to do so. Besides this, sick persons fail to reach hospitals and many of them die on their way. Often people also fail to appear in the courts. After enormous efforts a proposal to construct an over bridge on the railway crossing with a cost of Rs. 9 crore was approved and for that I would like to extend my thanks to the Minister of Railways and the Railway Department. However, the Government of Uttar Pradesh deliberately did not issue NOC for the said bridge costing Rs. 9 crore and the bridge could not be constructed because the State did not provide its share of Rs. 4 crore for the said bridge. Consequently, Faizabad remained divided into two parts in the absence of an over bridge.

The Government are aware that there is a double line from Kanpur to Lucknow and Barabanki rather upto Delhi. The rail line that goes upto Gorakhpur or Jaunpur from Faizabad-Barabanki is neither doubled nor electrified. The section of rail line ahead of Barabanki upto Faizabad-Jafarabad, where work of doubling and electrification has not been carried out, should be provided both these facilities only then the said rail line can be developed and the traffic facility will improve. The trains passing through Faizabad like Marudhar, Kaiphayat and Saryu-Yamuna Tata-Amritsar Express bear train Nos. 4853-4854, 4025-4026, 4650-4649 and 8103-8104 respectively. All the said trains pass through Rudauli but do not halt at Rudauli station. So, whenever trains pass through the station they slow down their speed and the people try to board and get down from the trains. Many times casualties have occurred there and several passengers have died. Earlier Saket Express-1068 running between Faizabad and Mumbai ran once in a week and now it is being run twice in a week as Tahir Bhai has made efforts in this

[Shri Mitrasen Yadav]

regard. The poor people of the nearby districts go to Mumbai, Navsari, Baroda and also Ahmedabad. I would like to request the Government to run Saket Express thrice in a week instead of two days. It would be convenient for the poor people of the area.

For a long time we have been demanding a new train from Faizabad-Ayodhya to Delhi. The Minister of Railways has accepted our demand and for this I would like to extend my thanks to him. However, the said train terminates at old Delhi railway station instead of New Delhi railway station. The problem is that the said train operates only twice a week and starts from Faizabad at 11 o'clock in the night. I would like to submit that the said train should start at six, seven or eight p.m. so that people from rural areas may conveniently board the train and reach at right time. So, first of all the departure time of the said train should be changed and secondly it should be operated thrice instead of twice a week. The said train remains idle for four days from Saturday to Tuesday. If the frequency of the said train is increased by one day more, it will not only provide travelling facility to the people but the train will also be utilized.

This is our demand to the hon'ble Minister of Railways. The common poor people are happy with the induction of the hon'ble Minister in the department. Bihar is a poor State and there are two Ministers from this backward State. Hon'ble Raghuvansh Prasad has also got a Department through which he can work for the welfare of the poor people of the country along with the people of his own State and can serve them. Presently people are talking about Laluji all over the country—in streets and fields and people get pleased at the mention of his name.

I am also a villager and the poor people in villages and towns and slum dwellers remember Laluji with respect. He has got opportunity to serve the poor people so he should do good work for the poor people so that they may become happy. Our colleagues in opposition party flared up the Ayodhya issue in Faizabad and captured power in Delhi. With these words I support the supplementary demand for grants.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing to be recorded. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

*SHRI SUGRIB SINGH (Phulbani): I shall be thankful to you that if my demand will be accepted in the "Demand for Excess Grants (Railways)" Discussion held today.

That my constituency Phulbani under the State of Orissa is a very neglected area which is till now the Rail line is not been touched. Before so many years ago there was proper for construction new line from Khurda to Bolangir, is under land survey process and the Hon'ble Minister Sir Lalu Prasad Yadav declared during the March Budget to look into the matter specially and sufficient allocation will be provided shortly to call the tender. But till now it was not done. So I request the Hon'ble Minister through you, Sir, sufficient allocation may kindly be given to start the new Rail line work. Secondly, even if being Khurda—Bolangir Rail line has been done, then also the populated area Phulbani will not touch the Railway line. So the new Railway line from Berhampur to Phulbani may please be included in the new proposal and survey work may be started in the interest of the most backward, SC & ST people of my Phulbani Constituency.

*SHRI VANLAL ZAWMA (Mizoram): In support of the Supplementary Demand for Grant (Railways), I would like to raise some points for my Constituency, Mizoram.

Mizoram a small State of the North East India has only one small Railway Station Balradbi on the Border of Assam (Cachar District).

But the people of Mizoram came to know the importance of Railways day by day. I want to raise few points which may be small for some States, but it is not so small for me and for the people of Mizoram.

1. PRS location at Lunglei: Mizoram have only one PRS location (Computerized Booking Counter) at Aizawl, which is very useful for the State, but it is not enough. For the Southern part of the State, Lunglei is the headquarter if PRS location is set up, this will serve three districts—Lunglei district, Saiha district and Lawngtai district—and three autonomous district councils—Mara, Lai and Chakma. Sir, I would like to request the concerned authority to consider opening up of PRS location at Lunglei. According to my information, N.F. Railways have already forwarded the proposal to the Railway Board for consideration.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

2. **Upgradation and renovation of Bairabi Railway Station:** My next point is upgradation and Renovation of Bairabi Railway Station. This small station was constructed long back, now it needs upgradation and renovation for the passengers as well as for the staff who are working there.
3. **Conversion of Meter Gauge to Broad Gauge from Katakhal to Bairabi:** Conversion work from M.G. to B.G. is going on from Lumding to Silchar. If conversion of M.G. to B.G. from Katakhal to Bairabi is not taken up simultaneously it will be very inconvenient for the N.F. Railways. I therefore kindly request the Hon'ble Minister to look into the matter and take necessary action. From Katakhal to Bairabi is only 89 K.M.

*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNAIAH (Tumkur): Mr. Deputy Speaker sir, first of all I would like to thank the hon. Minister and his Ministry for releasing money for the construction of over bridge at Tumkur. The State Government of Karnataka has also released its share. Now the construction work has to start. I request the hon. Minister to kindly start the construction work of this over bridge without any further delay. Construction work of new rail line between Tumkur-Sira-Chitradurga and Davanagere has to be taken immediately as it is a very important line. This is a very high traffic route and people of these areas are demanding for this line for the last 10 years. Similarly, construction work of a new rail line between Tumkur-Hullyurdurga and Mandya should also start without any delay. These towns are big business centres and a new railway link between these important places is an urgent need of the people.

A railway station at Ramapura is a must as it is an important and central place. It is about 6 kms. from Sampige. Nittur is 6 kms. from Ramapura. The people of these areas are facing lot of problems in the absence of a railway station at Ramapura. I request the hon. Minister to take up this work immediately.

The construction of a double line between Kyatasandra and Gollahalli via Tumkur is pending for the last 15 years. We are demanding for this double line time and again. I hope the hon. Minister would take interest about this genuine need of the people of Tumkur district. At present the work is going on at snail's speed.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

There is a demand for shifting the railway station from Tumkur to Kyatasandra. Godown and other facilities can be provided at Kyatasandra.

Railway Ministry deserves all commendations for providing various facilities to the physically challenged persons. Concessional rate tickets are available in some trains only. Why is this disparity? My humble request to the hon. Minister to provide concessional tickets to the physically challenged persons in all trains including Rajdhani Express, Shatabdis and others.

The railway stations at Mallasandra and Tiptur are in bad condition. There are no seating arrangement for passengers to sit. Waiting room does not exist in this station. There is no drinking water facility and therefore urgent steps have to be taken to improve the condition of these railway stations.

The construction work of double line between Tumkur and Yeshwantpur should be completed quickly as there has already been an inordinate delay. Shri Jaffer Sharief, the then Railway Minister, had laid the foundation stone of this double line 10 years ago. Hence, this work should be completed during 2005-06.

There is a train at 5.30 PM from Tumkur to Bangalore. The next train is only at 9 PM. More than 3,000 persons, particularly the Government employees travel from Tumkur to Bangalore daily. Hence, one more train must be introduced between Tumkur and Bangalore and this train must leave Tumkur at 6 PM as this is the most convenient time for the State Government employees and other businessmen.

Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak and with these words I conclude my speech.

18.00 hrs.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA (Etawah): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise the problems of Etawah parliamentary constituency and make the following demands during the present discussion on supplementary Demand for Grants (Railways) for the year 2005-2006.

After the construction of loop line along the railway crossing trains remain stationed at Balrai railway station

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Raghuraj Singh Shakya]

for six to eight hours and people have to cross the road from under the train. Several inter colleges and holy temple like Brahmani are located there. Lakhs of people visit these places. They have to face several difficulties. So the railway crossing should be shifted in the east so that the loop line may not affect the movement of trains and people may be saved from inconvenience.

Railway crossing No. 24 C/D Ekdil is situated in the middle of BHMM between 1150/11-13 km. In 1962 a gate was constructed 10 metres away from the road. At that time the road was non metalled. However the new metalled road that connects Mugal road and Bhanthona Etawah is 10 metres away. So the gate should be shifted in east direction so that movement of people may be smooth.

The roads on the other side of the Etawah railway station where there is railway colony and Manoranjan Sadan should be repaired.

The condition of waiting room for First Class passengers at Etawah railway station is very bad. The toilets of the waiting room remain very dirty. So air-conditions should be installed in the first class waiting room and the toilets should be repaired.

Unchahar Up train halts at Jaswant Nagar railway station however the Down train does not halt there. The up and down trains should be halted there. A halt of up and down of Muri Express should be provided at Jaswant Nagar station for the convenience of the passengers going to Delhi and Kanpur. Presently people of Jaswant Nagar and nearby areas have to go to Etawah to board the trains.

EMU passenger train halted at Etawah railway station. The halt of the said train should be provided at Fafund railway station to provide facilities to the passengers of Fafund and Oraiya districts, who intend to go to Agra as presently the passengers and traders of the area have to face difficulties. It will also be profitable for railway and the Government.

I would like to request the Government to consider the above demands.

[English]

MS. INGRID MCLEOD (Nominated): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

Sir, I rise to take part in the discussion on the Supplementary Demands or Grants for Railways for the year 2005-06. I would like to place before the hon. Minister the requirements and necessity for setting up of a Railway Recruitment Board at Bilaspur City in Chhattisgarh which would enable the local population to secure employment and livelihood.

Sir, Bilaspur City is a renowned Railway Colony in Central India. It is known for its vast and varied infrastructure providing every conceivable opportunity for public use. This infrastructure at Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh is over 100 years old and still considered the most important railway facility in Central India providing a lifeline to the entire country. The infrastructure is regularly upgraded to meet the demanding standards of the Indian Railways. In light of this background a matter of concern—that the most suitable city that is Bilaspur is not being considered for constituting a Railway Recruitment Board. It is surprising to note that there are only 19 Recruitment Boards in India. Though Bilaspur City can provide optimum and far-ranging facilities to provide recruitment by Railways has not yet been included in the list of Recruitment Boards.

At the local level in Central India, the transport routes, modes and distances are not conducive for the youth of Central India to appear for their exams. The mental stress and physical energy required to cover great distance weakens their ability to compete at the prevailing examination centres.

Bilaspur City presently is the Headquarters of South-Eastern Central Railway Zone which is another argument in support of its existing enhanced infrastructure to be able to conduct recruitment for the Railways.

The Railway Minister should, under all circumstances, seriously consider to lend weight to this issue of opening a Railway Recruitment Board Office in Bilaspur City.

With these few words, I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants.

[Translation]

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the supplementary demands for grants for railways. I would like these demands to be voted in full. The manner in which Railway Ministry has taken steps to increase the income of

railways under UPA Government, it is a major achievement. On my behalf, I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways, Shri Lalu Prasad ji, his both colleagues the two State Ministers and all the senior and junior officials.

I had given a number of suggestions for the development of my constituency. Many of them have been accepted. I had requested that a train should be started from Alipurduar Junction to Kolkatta. My second demand was to run a train from Alipurduar to Delhi and to introduce a new rail service from Ranchi to Alipurduar Junction. Considering my demands, the Railway Ministry has approved the same. Now a train named Kanchankanya has been introduced from Alipurduar Junction upto Kolkatta. Mahananda train which was earlier running from old Delhi to New Jalpaiguri has now been extended upto Alipurduar Junction.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You must thank for that.

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: A train has been introduced from Alipurduar Junction to Ranchi. I am very glad that our demand of converting metergauge line into broadgauge was also accepted and gauge conversion was carried out. After that, a new demand for Intercity train from Alipurduar Junction to New Jalpaiguri was also accepted. At the time of inauguration of this train, ex-Minister Nitish ji was also present. In his presence, we had demanded that this area should be considered from tourist point of view and a chaircar should be provided there. Our demand was accepted but I do not know why the officials withdrew the chaircar boggies. That train was running from Alipurduar to New Jalpaiguri via Siliguri. People from far flung areas used to visit this place and enjoy the facility since it was an important tourist spot from tourism point of view. It acted like an attraction to the place but the withdrawal of boggies has adversely affected it. I would request the Minister of Railways to immediately issue instructions so that those bogies could be attached to the train. An agitation was started for Newmainagudhi-Jogikoba train. Our demands were also met in view of that movement. The work to run a train between Newmainagudhi to Guwahati via Jogikoba, is still pending. I want the Railway Ministry to pay due attention to this and to complete it at the earliest.

Rajabhatarbaba is an important place from tourism point of view. It is a small place and not many modes of transport are available there. The route remains closed for three months during the rainy season because of the

Deema river. Earlier, Intercity train was available at Siliguri for the students who commuted to school, college and University or the patients who went to hospitals for treatment but now after gauge conversion, the stoppage facility of Intercity has been withdrawn from there. The common people numbering around 20 to 25 thousand have to face a lot of difficulties due to this. This facility is not available to the students who commute to school or the patients going to hospitals for treatment. When I wrote to railway officials, they replied that a passenger train is being there. It is very strange because passenger train goes there in the evening, it reaches Siliguri in the evening. That does not solve the purpose of students and patients. Therefore, I request that Intercity should be given a stoppage there. A protest is being staged for stoppage of Kanchankanya Express over there. Some arrangement should be made for the stoppage of Kanchankanya Express at Dalgaon too. I would like to submit that if Duwas in West Bengal has to be developed from tourism point of view, then it is possible through railways only. Railways do not break, infact it connects. I hope that Railway Minister would take effective measures to boost the development of this area. With these words, I conclude my speech.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Chandra Mani Tripathi—Absent

Shri Sanjay Dhotre—Absent

Shri Subash Sureshchandra Deshmukh—Absent

Shri Punnu Lal Mohale—Absent.

[English]

*SHRI T.K. HAMZA (Manjeri): I would like to bring to the Railway Minister regarding some of the issue I have highlighted during my speech in the Railway Budget.

The Nilambur-Wynad-Nanjangud Railway is a must after the landing of the Vallarpatan project. The container traffic from Tamilnadu, Karnataka to Cochin Port will have a tremendous increase. This railway line which I am proposing Karnataka—Tamilnadu and Kerala. Moreover this line will be passing through the plantation area, I need not stress upon the volume of traffic which this line will generate. The study conducted earlier seems to have been based on wrong notion. The demand is not only from Kerala MPs but also from Karnataka MPs demand was raised during the last session. This inter state

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri T.K. Hamza]

proposal must be taken with all seriousness and I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to take fresh initiative.

There are many issues waiting for solution in Malabar area. It is very painful that the railway authority pays scant attention to this area. We were neglected and will be neglected in future also. This is our experience. Kerala State do not figure in the railway map. It is our strong demand, it is the only solution to have a separate railway zone for Kerala. We have been raising this just demand. But unfortunately never found favour with the Railway Ministry.

I request the Hon. Railway Ministry to reconsider the old decision and sanction the separate Railway Zone for Kerala.

[Translation]

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR (Chimur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Railways is an organization connecting the entire country. Sir, I will conclude in five minutes. The Railways have done a brilliant job of connecting the backward areas during previous years. I would like to submit that in the previous budget the hon'ble Minister of Railways had announced that a DMU train would be started at the Gondia Chandrapur railway line. Now a DMU rake has reached there and it had reached Gondia Chandrapur more than one and a half months back but there is no time for its inauguration. Therefore, I would request that instructions may be issued within a day or two for starting the rake which has been lying at Gondia Chandrapur since last one and a half months. Similarly, the railway line has been converted into broadgauge at Gondia-Chandrapur but the platform still remains at a lower level which causes accidents. There is an immediate need to raise the level of that platform so that no casualties take place due to accidents over there. The Gondia-Nandbeed and Nagpur line has already been surveyed. It is a narrowgauge line. According to a letter received the estimated cost of this railway line is Rs. 114 crore. I would like to suggest that the Government of Maharashtra should complete the earth work and the rest of the work should be done by the Railway Department. But, unfortunately, that file has been put on the backburner. I would request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to grant some token amount for starting the broadgauge work of the railway line between Nandbeed to Nagpur. Besides, there is a large chunk of railway land of more than one hundred acres between Nandbeed and Nagpur, which falls under the South

Central Railways. For utilizing this land, I would like to suggest that if the oil and diesel factory located on both sides of Jatropa railway line are shifted to Nandbeed, that place could be utilized better. Similarly, the railway workshop situated there would also be utilized. Nandbeed is a junction and computerized railway booking has not yet started at Gondia-Chandrapur and Gondia-Nandbeed-Nagpur Junction. I would like to request that arrangements should be made for computerized reservation at this junction as well as the Nandbeed junction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to tell a few more things to the hon'ble Minister of Railways. Vadodara-Valsad-Garhchirauli is an important place where coal mines and iron ore reserves are found. I would request him to conduct a survey for a new railway line for Valsad-Garhchirauli. Gondia-Balaghat has become broadgauge and DMU rakes have been installed for Gondia-Chandrapur. Similarly rakes have been kept at Balaghat-Gondia since last one and a half months. I have come to know that a Minister of the Government is trying to sideline the project work. I would request the Minister of Railways to visit this place and inaugurate this train. We are waiting to welcome him. He must not delay this further. If the Balaghat-Jabalpur broadgauge work is not completed then it will not be used. Since the Gondia-Balaghat broadgauge work has been completed, Jabalpur-Gondia Rail line must also be made broadgauge so that the people can avail maximum benefit from this. This is a backward and hilly region. A railway line is must for the development of this area. I am aware that it will not be possible in this Budget but in the coming Budget funds must be sanctioned for Gondia-Nandbeed broadgauge line so that the pending development work can be completed and the region is developed. I would request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to re-open the file and start the work.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri V.K. Thummar—not present.

Now, Shrimati K. Rani.

[English]

SHRIMATI K. RANI (Rasipuram): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I stand here to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants of the Railway Ministry presented by the hon. Railway Minister last week in the Lok Sabha.

I do not want to go into greater details now because my speech on this year's Railway Budget is already on record and I hope that it is receiving the fullest attention of the Railway Minister.

Sir, Salem-Karur broad gauge line project, running to about 86 km, was started in 1997 with an estimated initial expenditure of about nearly Rs. 225 crore to Rs. 250 crore, which was revised to Rs. 375 crore in 2002. Till now, the Railways spent only about Rs. 92 crore towards land cost and project cost. The Ministry of Railways paid a meagre compensation towards land cost whereas the landowners demanded Rs. 1,000 per sq. ft. The Namakkal Sub-court and High Court have fixed the rate as Rs. 211 per sq. ft. for Namakkal town land and Rs. 80 per sq. ft. for the nearest villages.

Due to the problem, the landowners have with the Railways, the project is not going forward and the landowners approached the Court for higher compensation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you have a written speech, you can give that speech and that will form part of the proceedings.

SHRIMATI K. RANI: Sir, kindly allow me four minutes.

Now, there is a fear that this project may not see the light at the end of the tunnel. We hear only repeated adjournments in the court on the one side and we have the half-laid railway track lying idle on the other side.

I demand that the Railway Ministry should look into this matter in all seriousness so that this project is completed soon and that the landowners are paid adequate compensation. I would request the Minister to reply to this point while he replies to this debate.

Regarding Chennai-Erode Yercaud Express, recently we find that this train is used more and more by the Ministers and MPs, apart from former Ministers and ex-MPs. So, I would request that at least a few coupes of AC coaches be provided in that train.

The third point is that the railway reservation counter at Namakkal, which is in my constituency, works only for half-a-day, and I demand that it should be kept open for all full day, that is, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. as in all other reservation counters.

Namakkal railway reservation office lacks POET, that is, Passenger-Operated Enquiry Terminal facility. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to provide that facility immediately.

Regarding the lack of mobile cell-charging facility in the trains, nowadays, 99 per cent of the passengers use mobile phones even while travelling, and the railway coaches do not have the facility of charging the cell phones. I feel that the cost involved in providing such a facility would be very meagre, and I would request the Minister to provide such a facility at least in AC coaches of long distance trains. It seems that this facility is available in some trains. But I would request that it should be provided in all the trains, especially in long distance trains. This is my fervent appeal to the hon. Minister.

18.21 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

I want to mention another point on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu residing in Delhi. It is about the Nizamuddin-Chennai Rajdhani Express, which is plying two days in a week, that is, on Friday and Wednesday at 1530 hours. It is impossible for the personnel in the Government service to travel in this train. Hence, the days on which this train runs have to be changed to Saturday, and the time at which it starts has also to be changed. Increasing the frequency of this train is also necessary.

I would like to remind the hon. Minister of a proposal, which was mooted out by the Railways, when Shri Moorthy was the Railway Minister earlier. The proposal was to provide some cradles in the railway coaches to enable the children to travel without any problem. That proposal is not implemented so far. I would like to request the Railway Minister to consider this proposal in all seriousness and take steps to provide at least four to five cradles in each coach.

I have another appeal to the hon. Minister, that is, to consider the request of the people of Tamil Nadu to grant a separate Railway Division with Salem as its headquarters. This will solve many of the problems of the people of Tamil Nadu, and I would request him to concede to this request at an early date.

My last point is about provision of mineral water in all the coaches. The provision of water in all the coaches

[Shrimati K. Rani]

is awfully inadequate and no one uses it presently. So, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to provide mineral water in all the coaches.

Sir, with these words, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

*SHRI HITEN BARMAN (Cooch Behar): Hon. Chairman, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants on behalf of my party All India Forward Bloc. It seems that every year the Railway Budgets are presented with a political objective in mind. I don't fully agree with the outlook of the Government. Many new projects are being taken up and without completing these, some more projects are being picked up as a result of which not a single project is being completed. As for example, Purulia is a backward district of West Bengal. In 1998 the survey of Jhargran-Purulia railway track was started. But soon, survey was stopped. Again an order was issued to restart it. But actually when the line will be constructed is still unknown. I urge upon the Government to complete the construction work as soon as possible.

Secondly, the Sealdah-Bongah railway line is very important. From Sealdah upto Habra the track has been built, but nothing has been done after that. In 2000-01, 22 kms. have been completed. To construct the railway track of Habra-Chandpara official estimate in Rs. 40 crore, but only Rs. 2 crore have been allocated in this Budget. For Chandpara-Bongah Rs. 27 crore are required, but the allocation is of Rs. 50 lakh only. I think that the pending projects should be completed first, after that, new projects should be taken up.

Five years ago, for gauge conversion in New Cooch Behar-Bamanhat route, rail transport was stopped. But gauge conversion work is still incomplete. I don't know how long it will take to be complete.

After much deliberations, Maynaguri-Jogikhaba railway track has been taken up for completion. But the pace is very slow. There are certain problems regarding the acquisition of land. People are not being properly compensated also. I would like to draw the attention of the Government in this regard. For doubling of track in New Jalpaiguri-New Cooch Behar-Bongaigoan route many charters of demands have been placed.

Guwahati Rajdhani after reaching New Jalpaiguri does not reach New Bongaigaon on time. As there is single

track, the train stops very frequently. So I demand immediate doubling of the track in this year's Budget for survey of Haldipari-Chandraganda track, Rs. 50 lakh have been allocated. But to date survey has not been done. The survey work should be undertaken immediately.

One more request I would like to make. We have railway links with Pakistan. Bangladesh is also our neighbour. Till 1965 Haldibati Chilahati railway track was operational. This 4 km. track was made non-functional in 1971. If this line is reopened then more than one crore people of North Bengal will benefit. They will have easy access to Kolkata. Much time will be saved resultantly.

Hon. Minister of External Affairs has visited Bangladesh recently but this issue was perhaps not discussed there. In the coming November month, there will be SAARC summit. In that meeting this issue should be raised.

Once again I support this Railway Budget and end my speech.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (Dibrugarh): Sir, I am very sorry to say that while preparing the Railway Budget, the Ministry of Railways have totally isolated the map of the North-Eastern region. I want to cite some of the examples in this regard, and show how the people of North-East have been deprived of.

As you know, there is a commitment on the part of the Government of India to construct of rail-cum-road bridge over Brahmaputra in Dibrugarh.

The total estimated cost of that project is Rs. 1,767 crore but for your information, in the Railway Budget of 2005-06, the amount sanctioned is only Rs. 12 crore. It was promised earlier by the Prime Minister along with the Chairman of the Railway Board that the construction of this project would be completed by March, 2009. If allocation is made at the rate of Rs. 12 crore a year, this project would require another 40 years to get completed. That is why I want to draw the special attention of the hon. Minister of Railways through you and ask him to release the amount that is required. For 2005-06, there should be an estimate of Rs. 450 crore; for 2006-07, the allocation should be Rs. 450 crore; for 2007-08, it should be Rs. 450 crore; and for 2008-09, it should be Rs. 117 crore. Altogether, it would add up to Rs. 1,467 crore while so far the Department has spent Rs. 300 crore approximately on this project. This is my

*Translation of speech originally delivered in Bengali.

sincere request to the hon. Minister. This is no ordinary project. This project has come out of the Assam Accord. This is the promise given by the Prime Minister of India in 1985 under the Assam Accord; and for this Accord, as you know, 855 lives have been sacrificed. So, I want the hon. Minister to give certain weightage to this particular point and get the construction work done within a stipulated time frame, that is, March, 2009.

As we all know, the North-Eastern region is very much backward in terms of communication network. That is why we have made a submission that there should be a separate zone. Now, it is called NF Railway; instead, it should be called North-East Railway Zone. Considering the need for special treatment, the Government of India has opened a separate Ministry for the North-Eastern States and established the North-Eastern Council, giving the region a special category of States in India. Similarly, the Ministry of Railways should also give special attention to this part of the country and there should be a separate zone called the North-Eastern Railway Zone.

There is no double track broad gauge railway facility in Assam and the North-East. Considering the increase in number of passengers using railways and to cater to the service needs of the region, there is need for providing double track broad gauge railway lines covering all the eight States of the North-Eastern region.

The construction of double track railway line from Rongia to Murkongselek has started but it is going on at snail's speed. The need of the people of the region is that the line from Rongia to Murkongselek should be converted into a double track broad gauge line. It is still in the metre gauge.

When Dibrugarh, as we know, was connected by rail by the British about 150 years ago in the 19th century, it was only the second line in India after the Mumbai-Thane line. So, the people of Assam have demanded that it should be made a heritage centre.

There should be better rail communication between Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and also from Assam to the rest of the country. There should be a separate project for a rail-cum-road bridge and Sadiya in Tinsukia district. There was a proposal of the Government to develop Rongia into a full-fledged railway division but the work is moving at snail's speed. So, it should be expedited.

Now, I come to construction of railway over bridges (ROBs). In most of the railway crossings in Assam,

namely, Shantipara (Dibrugarh), Changchari (Kamrup) and Thekeraguri (Nagaon) etc., considering increase in accidents, it is very urgent that in all such railway crossings, railway over bridges are to be constructed and thereafter those over bridges are to be maintained by the railways only.

Now, I come to Inter-City Railway Service. Considering the need of the people of the region, there is an urgent requirement of introducing the railway linkage of all the major towns of the region, by the inter-city railway services in adequate form to cater to the genuine need of the people of the region which is inclusive of Barak Valley and Brahmaputra Valley.

Now, I come to granting of special concession in railway fares. We have to pay special attention to the fact that most of the students of the North-Eastern Region come out of the region for pursuing higher and professional educational courses in different parts of the country. Like-wise because of lack of suitable medical facilities, thousands of patients from the region come out for adequate and special medical treatment in other parts of the country. Most of the students and the patients are economically poor who could avail only railway services. Considering these hard realities, there is an urgent need of granting special concession in railway fares to these two categories of passengers travelling in all trains to any destination.

Now, I come to giving hundred per cent job reservation. Considering the genuine demands of the unemployed youths of the region, there is an urgent requirement of keeping 100 per cent job reservation in Grade 'C' and Grade 'D' posts of railway services, only to the unemployed youths of the region, who are born and brought up in that region, irrespective of the place of origin. I mean only Assamese-speaking people. I am not demanding this reservation facility only for Assamese-speaking but also for Bengalis, Biharis, Marwaris, Punjabis, Nepalese etc. who have been born and brought up in Assam.

Now, I come to increase in the number of goods trains. Most of the industries running in the region are suffering from many angles, including lack of suitable railway goods trains coming into and going out of the region. In the interest of the industries, which have a direct bearing on the economy of the region, there should be sufficient goods trains provided for bringing in the raw materials from different parts of the country and sending

[Shri Sarbananda Sonowal]

out the finished products to different destinations of demand within and outside the country. The railway freights, especially to the regions should be given sufficient concessions or freight holiday.

Now, I come to regional coach making industry in Assam. As the number of goods and passengers trains has to be increased, it necessitates sufficient number of coaches which could be supplied by establishing a locally regional coach making industry for the North East which will pave the way for generating direct and indirect employment opportunities in the region. This may kindly be taken serious note of and included in the Budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Now, I come to electrification of railway routes. At present, the North-East Frontier Railway does not have any electrified route. The Ministry of Railways should urgently take up the route electrification project in the region.

There is an urgent need for modernisation of railways workshop at Dibrugarh.

Now, I come to proper settlement of people who have sacrificed their land for bridge construction. There should be job security and proper settlement for the people who have sacrificed their land for the construction of Bogibeel Bridge and Railway line from Dibrugarh to Moran.

Lastly, the selection of 20 Assistant Sports Officers has recently been finalised, but not even a single eligible candidate from Assam and North-East has been taken. So, this is clearly a violation of norms of equality and an example of deprivation.

Sir, with these few words. I conclude.

[Translation]

*SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara): Through you, I would like to convey the most important schemes of my constituency to the hon'ble Minister of Railways. I would request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to start the following schemes in my constituency, Vadodara.

[English]

I request the Hon. Railway Minister to take up and sanction the following proposals.

- (1) Over bridge on the way within Mukarpura and Vudsur.
- (2) Under-pass of Navayurd is to be taken up.
- (3) Under-pass on Blijwa-crossing is a necessary plan to be taken up promptly.
- (4) Extension of train no. 6045 Navjeevan Express from Chennai to Pondicherry is another most important demand of my area people as devotees of Maharishi Aurobindo use to travel frequently faces many difficulties in reaching Pondicherry.

Through you Sir, I urge the Government and specially Railway Minister to fulfil all my demands.

*SHRI RAMSWAROOP KOLI (Bayana): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would urge the hon. Railway Minister that:

1. Bayana Jn. and Dhaulpur station falls under my parliamentary constituency Bayana. Trains from Bayana Jn. run to Agra, Mumbai and Delhi. There is an urgent need to provide stoppage of intercity at Bayana.
2. Dholpur station lie at the end of my constituency. A 2 minutes stoppage of GT Express, Mangla Express be provided at Dholpur. Earlier also I had made a request in this regard.
3. There is no canteen at Dholpur station, so a canteen should be opened there and a tin-shed should be provided for passengers.
4. Computerised reservation facility has been sanctioned at Bayana Jn. So, it should be provided at the earliest. Further, Seedpur level crossing number 3 on Bayana-Agra line should be opened so that the movement of patients is facilitated.
5. Since Dholpur is the last station under my constituency. So, I would urge the hon. Minister to start Agra-Jaipur train from Dholpur in place of Jaipur.

6. There was a proposal to connect Dholpur, Badi, Sarmathra, Gangapur via Karoli to Mumbai line. Dholpur-Gangapur line should expeditiously be converted into broad gauge. Shri Kailash Devi's temple is located at Karoli. Devotees from across India come to this place. A survey has already been conducted for laying a line at this place.
7. A meter gauge train has been running from Dholpur since it was a princely State. Dholpur should be connected to Vadi, Tatpur and Sarmathra upto Rupwas.
8. An over-bridge at Bayana railway crossing and at Rupwas station and also at Hindon city railway crossing is required to be constructed.

*SHRI PRADEEP GANDHI (Rajnandgaon): The following works at Dogargarh and Kavardha under my parliamentary constituency Rajanandgaon should immediately be taken up:

1. Rajnandgaon station should be expanded and all facilities should be provided there. Stoppage of Superfast trains should also be provided.
2. Pit line and washing yard at Dogargarh should be renovated. It would entail an expenditure of approximately Rs. one crore. It would help in cleaning and washing of trains and would also facilitate originating of trains from this station.
3. Dogargarh is a pilgrim centre and lakhs of devotees visit the temple of Devi every year. So, Gondwana Express should be provided a stoppage at this station at the earliest.
4. A survey for laying a new line between Rajnandgaon, Khairagarh, chuikhadan, Kavardha, Jabalpur should be conducted and a new line should be laid.
5. Survey for Bilaspur, Kavardha, Mandla, Jabalpur line has been completed. Laying of line on this route should be sanctioned so that it can facilitate carriage of minerals like coal and bauxite from there.
6. Dali Rajhara-Jagdapur rail line should expeditiously be sanctioned and work started so that more and more iron ore from Ravdhar could be extracted.

*SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH (Farrukhabad): Sir, through you, I would like to submit that the work of replacing railway line alongwith sleepers was undertaken. In the absence of earth work on the track, sleepers are not getting properly spaced resulting in slow progress of work. Therefore, I urge the hon. Minister of Railways to first get the earth-work done on priority basis so that further work is completed expeditiously.

*SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora): Though hon. Minister may be boasting of his successful functioning as a Minister of Railways but there has been unabated increase in the number of rail accidents mainly because of human error and mechanical failures rendering train journey unsafe.

Slow progress in execution of Railway Projects has been a matter of concern. Barring a few sanctioned projects, work on almost all the projects is at standstill. The quality of service, in the Indian Railways, especially in sleeper class has declined sharply.

In addition to mobilizing additional resources, the Railways should strengthen its network. It should be modernized and passengers should be provided with proper amenities and their safety should be ensured. Early warning system should be installed and arrangements should be made for arrival of trains in time.

Hilly areas of the country are deprived of train service. No concrete action plan has been prepared in this regard so far. In hilly terrain, tunnel system can be adopted for laying new lines. For avoiding cutting of rocks, tunnel system can be adopted. Laying of non-circular tracks would shorten the distance. Thus, valley areas can be connected to the main railway routes. Konkan railways has successfully experimented with this system. Rishikesh to Srinagar, Pauri Garhwal and Ramnagar to Chankhutia, Yogeshwar etc. are successful examples. People of this area have been demanding it for long. Therefore, my submission is that the said action plan should be approved.

I represent Uttaranchal, Train service in three last railway stations, namely, first Ramnagar, second Kathgodam and third Tanakpur connect my parliamentary constituency. Out of these, Tanakpur is still having a meter gauge line. I urge upon the hon. Minister to convert it into broad gauge. As has been demanded by local public for long, a new line from Tanakpur to Bageshwar and Ramnagar to Chaukhtia should be sanctioned at the earliest.

[Shri Bachi Singh Rawat 'Bachda']

I would like to demand from the Ministry of Railways to introduce a direct train i.e. Shatabdi Express from Delhi to Kathgodam and from Delhi to Ramnagar and First class A.C. coach should be attached to the presently running Ranikhet Express on this route. This demand of the people is pending since long.

On behalf of the local people I would like to demand introduction of a new Express train from Kathgodam to Jammu Tawi via Ambala. This train would be economically beneficial. The traders, soldiers and pilgrims would be benefited from this.

It is necessary to transfer Ramnagar Railway station and its neighbouring areas from the jurisdiction of North-East Railways Muradabad to Northern Railway, Izzatnagar. Due to double jurisdiction, railway services are not operating properly over here.

Sir, I would also like to demand that in view of the needs of residents of hilly areas, tourists and pilgrims a direct Express train from Kathgodam to Mumbai and Ahmedabad should be introduced.

The people of the hilly areas of Uttaranchal are employed in different parts of the country as well as in the Ministry of Railways. In view of the convenience of tourists and these people, computerized reservation centres should be sanctioned at Gangotrihar, Veribhag, Didihar, Dharchula, Munsairi, Kapkote, Choukhatia, Mimiasan and computerised reservation centre of Kasanri sanctioned during NDA's regime should also be made operational at the earliest.

I am sure that Ministry of Railways would seriously consider these demands and make provision for them and would also consider the issue that if Delhi Metro can successfully maintain cleanliness, safety and punctuality, then why can't Indian Railways do so?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose the supplementary demands for grants of the Railways. I have gone through the Supplementary demands presented by the Ministry of Railways in the House for approval. In North-Central Railways, except Kanpur, no work has been taken up anywhere.

Sir, we have been demanding for years a new line from Bihand to Urai and from Urai to Mahoba, costing

Rs. 422 crore. Our demand for this new rail line is pending since 1966, and even today we are making this demand. I do not understand as to why attention is not being paid towards the untouched areas like Chambal, where people have to go to Chitrakoot to board train. If a rail line is laid, it would definitely benefit the people of this area.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a new train by the name of Udyog Nagari from Kanpur to Mumbai has been introduced in North-Central Railway. The train has been introduced by the name of Udyog Nagari, but it has not been linked to industrial city Urai. It has not been provided any stoppage over there, which is very much needed. There is a small line from Etah to Kotch in North-Central Railway. The discussions are always held to discontinue it, because it is running in loss. The Railway officers want to discontinue it on this pretext. I would like to request the Government and Ministry of Railways not to discontinue that line but to include Kotch station in main line. If Kotch station is brought in main line, then revenue of train running between Etah and Kotch would be permanently absorbed in it. If passenger trains running from Jhansi to Pirona is extended upto Etah via Kotch, and a stretch of 10-12 kilometres is added to it, the line of Kotch would never be discontinued and Railway would also earn more profit from it.

Pooja Intercity-Express runs in my parliamentary constituency. Many passengers board on the train, but after reaching Kanpur at 10 a.m. it starts its return journey at 6 p.m. Most of the offices of Uttar Pradesh are located in Allahabad and if this Intercity Express is extended upto Allahabad, the people of this area would be benefited. There is not even a single direct train from my area for Delhi, which may go directly to Jhansi and Urai and may provide rail connectivity to hundreds and thousands of villages. I would like to urge upon the Government and Minister of Railways that 2-3 trains out of trains running towards North-East should be run from Delhi to Jhansi, Jhansi to Kanpur and Kanpur to Allahabad on trial basis, so that those people of Jhansi who want to travel to Delhi or who want to travel from Urai to North-East may get direct connectivity. A couple of trains coming from North-East should go via Kanpur and Jhansi, so that people over there may get rail connectivity.

There is a single line between Jhansi and Kanpur, All trains coming from Lucknow and heading towards western region pass through Jhansi. The stretch of 200 kilometres between Kanpur and Jhansi is having a single

line. If it's doubled and electrified, the trains will take lesser time and passengers will also be facilitated. Sabarmati Express runs in my area. It has one 2 AC coach, but if 3 AC coach is also added to it, the people of this area, Bhopal and its neighbouring area would be benefited.

If computerized Reservation Centre is opened at Kotch Railway station, as lakhs of pilgrims visit the temple of Rawatpura Maharaj located over there, the people would definitely be benefited and Ministry of Railways would also earn profit out of it.

With these words, while opposing Supplementary Demands for Grants of Railways, I conclude my speech.

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amreli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants and the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) presented by the hon'ble Minister of Railways. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri V. K. Thummar.

...(*Interruptions*)*

[*Translation*]

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is the second Railway Budget of the Ministry of Railways. There is mention about the welfare of the people of the country in the Railway Budget. The Department of Railways is heading on the path of progress. The Indian Railways is going to become the best railway of the world. I am of the opinion that the Indian Railways is the second best railway of the world. I would like to extend my thanks to the hon'ble Minister for this.

Sir, I have been elected from Gujarat. Narainbhai is from Gujarat and he is also the Minister of state in the Ministry of Railways. Many works are being done for the development of Gujarat. I would like to give two-three suggestions in this regard. Gujarat is a state that is continuously developing. Maximum ports of the country are located in Gujarat. There are many major ports like Kandla etc. which are being developed. Presently, connecting ports by rail lines has become essential. These days majority of goods are being transported by sea route. So, I would like to demand that the sea ports should be

connected by the railways. I belong to Saurashtra. The biggest diamond industry is located in Surat and maximum people who commute to Surat are from Saurashtra. It has become essential to connect Bhav Nagar to Tarapur. Survey of the said work is being concluded. I would like to demand that the survey should be conducted at the earliest and broad-gauge rail line should be laid for Bhav Nagar and Tarapur. The railway connectivity has become essential also for Bhav Nagar and Khambhat. Ahmedabad has become a Metrocity. Suburban railways are required to be introduced in Ahmedabad on the pattern of local trains being run in Mumbai. Ahmedabad to Mumbai is the biggest traffic zone of the country. However there are only two railway tracks connecting the cities. One more rail track is required to be laid there. The construction work of Express Highway between Mumbai and Ahmedabad has commenced. It is the second highway of the country. This track has been completed upto Baroda. Shri Lalu ji is not present here, still I would like to request him to give more power to our Naranbhai also. I would like to raise the problem of my area. The train service from Rajula to Mahuwa was not being started and could not be started during the NDA regime. However after the present government come to power, the train service has been introduced between Mahua to Dhaula. The introduction of the said trains has led to an increase in the profit of the Railways. I would like to demand that the train which has been introduced from Rajula to Dhaula should be extended to Ahmedabad. A train should be introduced between Porbandar, the birth place of Mahatma Gandhi, and Dhaula. Rajdhani Express that runs from Ahmedabad does not operate on Tuesday. Instead of Tuesday it should be on Saturday as on Saturday there is a holiday and the rest are working days. Like Ahmedabad the train departs from platform No. 8 in Delhi as well. It originates from platform No. 8. When the train departs from Ahmedabad, platform No. 1 of the station remains vacant. I would request that the said train should depart from platform No. 1. The survey work that is being conducted for the conversion of metre gauge line from Jaitisar to Dansa in my area into broadgauge should be completed at the earliest. The work for connecting four 'Dhams' from Som Nath has been started. I would like to demand that the said four 'Dhams' should also be connected by railways as well. An additional third track should be laid in the maximum profit area. The old train that originated from Somnath runs on a metre gauge line. The said line should be converted into broadgauge.

I would like to extend my thanks to you that you gave me time to speak.

*Not recorded.

*SHRI SHANKHLAL MANJHI (Akbarpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to make following demands concerning Akbarpur parliamentary constituency during the discussion on Supplementary Demand for Grants (Railway) 2005-06.

1. Akbarpur is the district headquarter of newly carved out district, Ambedkar Nagar and is the centre of national level powerloom textile industry. Traders visit here from all over the country, however, there is no stoppage of any fast train at Akbarpur railway station. I demand that a stoppage of Kalfiyat Express 4025/4026 be provided at Akbarpur railway station.
2. At the time of construction of the railway bridge at the cost of crores of rupees on Ghaghra river in Ayodhya, it was announced to connect Ayodhya with Gorakhpur, the headquarter of Eastern Railways by way of constructing new railway track so that Gorakhpur may be directly connected to Allahabad via Ayodhya. So, a railway track should be constructed to provide direct connectivity from Ayodhya to Gorakhpur *via* Chhawani Kalwari Dhanghata linking world famous Magahar Kabir Math.
3. There is 100 per cent increase in the volume of traffic of trains between Lucknow and Gorakhpur and the work of doubling of railway track has been almost completed upto Gonda. So, the said doubling work should be completed upto Gorakhpur at the earliest and the railway track from Lucknow to Gorakhpur should be electrified.

[English]

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (Nagercoil): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I express my gratitude for the opportunity given to me. I would utilise this opportunity to echo the voice of the people of Tamil Nadu, especially, of Kanyakumari district in the matter of development in the Railways. The Railway in my district started commissioning in 1989, and despite the passage of more than a quarter century it is still in its nascent stage.

The people in Kanyakumari district, in particular, and in Tamil Nadu, in general, crave for urgent development in all areas, namely infrastructure, passenger amenities, introduction of new trains, and extension of running trains. The present level of traffic, the number of crossing trains, frequent disruption in the existing single-line due to

landslide and other natural calamities, etc. have caused havoc. Therefore, it calls for doubling of the lines from Trivandrum to Kanyakumari and Kanyakumari to Tirunelveli.

The signalling system is to be improved commensurate with the fast developing technological advancements. The century-old existing system has to be replaced by the Route-relay Interlocking System. The shunting-neck, the pit-lines, and the expansion of the additional and existing platforms at the Nagercoil Railway Station is an urgent need of the hour.

Computerised Reservation Counters at Kuzhithurai and Eraniel, and full utilisation of all the Computerised Reservation Centres at Nagercoil are also essential and immediate need of the hour.

We are also expecting to get a night train from Nagercoil to Coimbatore. There is a train named Nagercoil-Kottayam passenger. I would request that it should be reintroduced. A connecting train to train number 6731, that is, Tuticorin-Mysore should also be made available to us.

The Madurai-Delhi Sampark Kranti Express should be extended up to Kanyakumari. The Netravathi Express should also be extended up to Kanyakumari. I would like to say that it would be justifiable if all the long-distance trains are to depart and terminate at Kanyakumari as Kanyakumari is acclaimed as one of the tourist centres of international importance.

In addition, in view of the increasing passenger traffic at Nagercoil, it will be more convenient if, at least, two more coaches are exclusively earmarked for reservation at the Nagercoil junction. It will be economically viable, and also passenger friendly if a new station is opened at Parvathipuram. A proposal of approximately Rs. 65 crore for immediate developmental needs of that line was worked out. It is with the Trivandrum Division, Southern Railway. I would request that this also should be included in it. ...*(Interruptions)*

Before I conclude, I would like to narrate an event that averted a major train accident on the Trivandrum-Nagercoil line in my district. Shrimati Amala Mary, a coolie and a hutment dweller near the railway track saw rubble and debris on the tracks due to landslide from the nearby hillock. She also saw a passenger train coming towards that direction itself. Realising the danger, she tore a portion

of saree—which was accidentally red in colour—and dared to wave it in the air while standing in the middle of the track. This alerted the driver of the train to see the danger, and immediately stopped the train. This action on her part averted a big accident, and saved the lives of hundreds of passengers. Of course, her altruistic adventure was duly recognised and rewarded by the Government of Tamil Nadu. I expect that our Government would also adequately appreciate her actions by giving her son or daughter a suitable job in the Railways.

Lastly, I would request for a referral hospital to be set up at Nagercoil to cater to the medical requirements of the railway staff residing in the staff quarters.

I earnestly request for sincere consideration of my pleadings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are 20 more speakers. If any hon. Member has written script with him, with one sentence, he can place it on the Table and that will form part of the record. That will be a very good cooperation.

Now, I gave the floor to Shri B. Mahtab.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): I come to the point right away. The Railways own 2,16,717 wagons, 39,236 coaches, 7,739 locomotives and runs 14,444 trains daily. It is a unique achievement. I should express in unequivocal terms that invariably today the trains are running in time. But at the same time, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister and his colleagues, through you, Sir, that Railways is the second largest land owner in the country with 4.23 lakh hectares of land under their control. You want to commercially exploit 43 thousand hectares of vacant land. You have identified 61 major sites and 54 smaller sites. Though it will not generate that much of funds, you want to fully utilise the unused land and the encroached land for the greater interest of the public.

You want to create a Rail Land Development Authority. You want to commercially utilise this land and want Parliament's sanction. Are you coming up with any Bill in this Session? The Committee has suggested that you should return the land to the respective State Governments from whom you have acquired free of cost to lay the railway line. What is your opinion on this suggestion? I think, you can express yourself while answering this point.

You want to keep some land for your use, that is, to establish new railway lines, and you also want to establish production units and other facilities. You have also identified the vacant land which you do not want to use. On this point, we would like to know the details from you.

I would like to draw the attention of the Minister, through you, Sir, to the cumulative effect of years of apathy and neglect by the Railways towards Orissa. A number of things are happening today in Orissa. As rightly mentioned, it is the 'happening State' of the country today. A lot of mega industries are coming to Orissa. If you invest in Orissa today, you will enable the Railways to earn more revenue.

What do you intend to do with the large tracts of vacant land lying in Orissa. *Malgodown* near Cuttack, the oldest Railway Station which is more than 100 years old. A lot of land is lying there. *Malgodown* had been erected there for more than 100 years. You can utilise that land through cooperatives and through different avenues. Do you intend to utilise this land which you do not require?

19.00 hrs.

At the same time, there are a few other major points which I would like to draw your attention to. One is regarding the trains and the second is regarding the development activities like track renewal and erection of new bridges. I know you cannot make new declarations in the Supplementary Budget. Allocations which have already been made, and the assurance which was already given to us by the Minister himself when all-party delegation had met him, has not been kept. It has saddened us. We expected that the word which the Minister has given to the Members of Parliament representing Orissa would be kept.

Talcher-Paradip second line is under construction for a long time. Second bridge over Mahanadi is taking quite a long time to come up. Second line from Cuttack to Paradip has been delayed. I will just give one instance. We need a level crossing from one part of Rajhans to the other side which also has a population of more than 5000. I have been pleading for that level crossing for the last three years. I have met the Minister and personally requested him. I do not know why it has not materialised. Unless that level crossing comes up, the second line connecting Paradip I not going to be constructed. For the second opening in Cuttack Railway Station, money is there. I do not know why that thing is not progressing.

[Shri B. Mahtab]

I would like to draw your attention to the name of an Express train, the Hirakhand Express, which plies from Nizamuddin to Puri. However, the ticket which you purchase from Delhi shows it as Hirakund. There is no place, no area, or no locality named as Hirakund. It should be either Hirakud or Hirakhand. There is no such place called Hirakund in Orissa. ...*(Interruptions)* I do not know whether it is there in Uttar Pradesh or not, but there is Hirakhand in Orissa. There is no meaning for Hirakund. So, either 'n' should be deleted in Hirakund to make it Hirakud, or 'u' should be replaced by 'a' and 'h' should be added to make it Hirakhand. That signifies a large tract of western Orissa which is called Hirakhand. Apart from that, Express train should run daily. That is a very popular train connecting Puri. So, it should run daily.

I would also like to mention about Puri Express. ...*(Interruptions)* These are certain things which need a little bit of elaboration. Since the '70s, bogies of Puri Express have not been changed. This is not just about the Puri Express, this is about the passenger amenities and a year was devoted to passenger amenities. How do you select the trains for change of bogies? What is the criteria you have fixed for changing the bogies of trains?

I would like to bring to your notice about undivided Koraput District which is a virgin District. It needs development. Industries are coming up. Networking of Railways in Koraput will not only bring in dividends for the State of Orissa but it will bring in dividends also for the Railways. Railways will be richer if Koraput is provided with more railway lines.

The West Coast of this country should be connected to Orissa with faster trains. We have hardly two or three trains now. One Kurla train is there, one Konark train is there, and one Okha train is there to Gujarat. But we need more trains.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All other things you can give in writing.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: I have just mentioned. ...*(Interruptions)* We have been giving it in writing. Irrespective of party affiliations, all the hon. Members from Orissa have met the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are many more Members to speak. You can lay it on the Table. It will form part of the record.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI B. MAHTAB. We met the hon. Minister in his office. We also met the Chairman of the Railway Board. But I am sorry to say that nothing has happened. We always hope for the best. Let us expect. ...*(Interruptions)* We need a direct train to Bangalore. Please consider. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri D.K. Audikesavulu.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: I am concluding within one minute. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: However, I hope good sense will prevail and the suggestions which we have given will be considered with fuller strength. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have taken 11 minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY (Katihar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to participate in the discussion on the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways). I would like to associate myself with the statement of hon'ble Shri Ram Gopal Yadav in which he submitted that the people of rural background and having been elected for the House are serving the nation through railways. I am happy that I also come from the rural background. Earlier too I used to take cattle for grazing and even now whenever I get time, sometimes, I do the same. I am sorry to submit that though there is uniformity between the Minister of Railways and myself in this matter however the facilities that we had in railways have been withdrawn. I am aggrieved for this. I come from the rural background and belong to Bihar. Though the Minister of state for Railways does not belong to Bihar but our Minister of Railways certainly belongs to Bihar and so I have objection that our facilities have been withdrawn. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav ji is sitting here. He submitted that the railways have earned profit and I am proud of that. However, earlier the Railways was not in loss. When the railways are running in profit then welfare scheme should be continued and I am sorry to say that the schemes that were launched during the ministership of Shri Nitish ji have been stalled. I would like to start from my parliamentary constituency Katihar. Katihar which is a divisional railway headquarter is in itself a strategic location providing connectivity to other areas. Katihar is located close to Bangladesh and also to Nepal and Bhutan and

the trains to those destinations pass from here. The conversion work of Katihar to Joghani metre gauge line was started during the ministership of Nitish ji. At the same time the gauge conversion work on metre gauge line from Katihar to Radhikapur which is located along Bangladesh border was also started. I am sorry to inform that the work that was started during the ministership of Shri Nitish ji has not been completed on account of lack of railway line though the entire project is ready and the earth laying work has also been completed. The Railway authorities say that they can make the line operational within four months if Rs. 200 crore is released.

I would like to submit that the work on gauge conversion should be started at the earliest. Katihar is being connected by railway. The work for connecting Katihar by rail line is going on. However the said work is being done from Barsoi to Raiganj via Radhikapur from where our minister Shri Dasmunshi ji comes. I do not have any objection if the work is done there. However, the gauge conversion work from Katihar to Barsoi and from Katihar to Jobni should also be taken up. I would like to submit that earlier there was double line from Katihar to Barauni. However, after the gauge conversion the said line has become single line. I am noticing that in the present Demands for Grants, it is mentioned that work on Begusarai, Tilarat, Mansi and Maheshpur was started. I would like to demand that the work on Katihar and Sewapur which was started earlier should be taken up at the earliest. Similarly, there is mention in the Demands for Grants, that funds have been sought for starting the work on Begusarai and Tilarat line. Funds have also been demanded for Thana Deejpur in Pursawa. I want to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for this. He has shown keenness towards the doubling of lines in the neglected and backward areas in Bihar for their development. They should be converted into broad gauge soon.

I would conclude after raising two more points. Our neighbouring state is West Bengal. The trains starting from Guwahati go to West Bengal traversing the long route of Bihar. They no longer stop at Barsoi. It is my demand and Darjeeling Mail should be given stoppage at Barsoi. The number of this train is 2343-2344. Barsoi Railway Station is quite a big station and several trains pass through this station. Trains from Assam, Bihar and Delhi pass through this railway station. Moreover, Chennai and Trivendrum bound trains from West Bengal also pass through this station. Nitishji gave stoppages to some of the trains. But at present several trains do not stop at

Barsoi. New Jalpaigudi, whose number is 2509-2510 and Sealdah Express should be given stoppage at Barsoi.

I am not rendering any speech. I am just stating the requirements of my area. I request the Minister of Railways to provide stoppage to Jodhpur-Guwahati Express, Dwarka Express, Lohit Express, Dibrugarh Express, New Jalpaigudi Express and Amritsar Express at Barsoi.

I want to give a few suggestions. A train namely Janshatabdi Express used to operate from Katihar. From Katihar it used to go to the capital of Bihar, Patna. That train has been withdrawn and Intercity has been plied in its place. The speed of that train is so slow that passengers are never sure when they would reach their destinations. It is my request that it should be ensured that the train sticks to its time table. It would not require any additional expenditure. Janshatabdi Express should also be plied, if possible. Similarly Mahananda train has been withdrawn.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are a number of papers with you. You can lay it.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: I have given all the papers to the hon. Railway Minister.
...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

**SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as you must be aware 4083 up and 4084 down used to ply between Katihar and Delhi. A few years ago this train was extended to New Jalpaigudi. The major part of the train would terminate at Katihar and some of the coaches would go to New Jalpaigudi under the name of Link Express. Public agitated against it for several

*Not recorded.

**This part of the Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary]

days. He must be aware that Mahananda is known as the train for the labourers of North-Eastern Bihar which includes Katihar, Purnea, Araria, Kishanganj, Madhepura, Saharsa and Supaul. Thousands of poor labourers of this area travel from Katihar to Delhi everyday in search of livelihood. But, now this train has again been extended to Alidwar. The public of Bihar is very agitated over this. If this train continues to go till Alidwar then it would be very difficult to travel in this train. Therefore, it is my request that Mahananda's schedule may be reverted to the original one otherwise it would be very difficult for the poor public of the area to travel in this train.

Sir, I have requested several times to start Haate Bazarre Express from Katihar again. I have personally made this request a number of times to run this 3163 up and 3164 down train from Katihar again because this train is the only means of carrying out business transactions in Kolkata for the passengers of Katihar, Araria, Purnea, Kishanganj and Nepal. But the traders of these areas are suffering heavy financial losses since the train has been extended to Barauni. Moreover very few passengers board this train from Barauni which is why perhaps the decision has been taken to start it from Saharsa but even then the situation would remain the same, the number of passengers boarding the train would be below expectation.

Therefore, it is my request to start 3163 up and 3164 Down Haate Bazaare Express from Katihar again so as to ensure that the traders of this area do not face heavy economic losses.

Sir, regarding operation of Tata Link Express again, I would like to say that Tatalink Express is the only train for the passengers of northern Bihar for travelling to South Bihar and Jharkhand. Financial loss has been stated to be the reason for discontinuing this train, whereas reservation in this train always extend to waiting list. It is beyond understanding why this train has been running into losses. There is much discontentment among the public of this area for discontinuing this train. It is, therefore, requested to revive the operation of Tatalink Express again in larger public interest.

Sir, regarding stoppage of 2509-2510 up and down trains at Barsoi railway station, I would like to say that New Jalpaigudi-Sealdah Express passes through several major stations of Bihar but it does not have stoppage at any of the railway stations while Kolkata is the main commercial centre of my area, Katihar. Moreover, the

zonal office of NF Railways is situated in Katihar whose main linking railway station is Barsoi. But it is regrettable that the said train does not have a stoppage at Barsoi while it stops at a small station namely Rampur Halt in West Bengal.

It is, therefore requested to give necessary instructions in this regard for providing stoppage of the said train at Barsoi railway station so that the passengers of Katihar district can travel to various districts of West Bengal particularly Kolkata. I believe that there would be expected rise in the earnings of the railways by giving stoppage of this train at Barsoi railway station and the people of this area will also be benefited.

Sir, regarding stoppages of trains at Barsoi railway station, I would like to inform that Barsoi railway station of Katihar Division in North East Frontier Railways is quite important from the strategic and political points of view. This railway station links Bangladesh, Assam and Bengal to Bihar. But I am constrained to say that in changing scenario of the railways, the Ministry of Railways on the one hand is identifying such railway stations which are strategically and politically important and on the other hand the Government has not paid any attention towards this railway station which links three states and one international border.

It is my personal request that all the mail and express trains, Jodhpur-Guwahati Express, Dwarka Express, Lohit Express, Dibrugarh-Amritsar Express, New Jalpaigudi-Sealdah Express and Darjeeling Mail should be given stoppage at this railway station and it should be developed into a modern railway station.

While drawing your attention towards the stoppage of train No. 2343-2344, Darjeeling Mail at Barsoi Railway Station, I would like to say that this train runs from Guwahati to Sihalda and passes through many railway stations of Bihar. Earlier, this train had a stoppage at Barsoi Railway station of Bihar. Now the stoppage at this railway station has been withdrawn. Due to this the people of Bihar State, particularly of Katihar District are facing a lot of inconvenience. Earlier, the reservation quota of this train was available at Salmari Railway station, North-East Frontier Railway, which has now been withdrawn. Because of this there is resentment among the passengers.

Therefore, I would like to request you to restore the stoppage of train No. 2343-2344, Darjeeling Mail of North-East Frontier Railway at Barsoi Railway station and reservation quota of Salmari Railway Station.

Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards 2065-2066 Jan-Shatabdi Express running between Malda and Howrah. This train is running in loss because at present Intercity Express is running between Malda and Howrah. As I have made a personal request to you many a time that there is no direct train between Katihar and Howrah. The Hate Bazare Express is the only direct train between Katihar and Saldah, which now runs via Barauni, due to which passengers of those areas are facing lot of inconvenience. If 2065-2066 Janshatabdi Train is introduced between Katihar and Howrah, then the train which at present is running in loss will start earning profit and the passengers coming from Katihar, Purnea, Araria, Kishanganj and Nepal will get direct train facility upto Howrah.

Therefore, I would like to make a personal request to you to issue orders for running this train between Katihar and Howrah, for the benefit of the people of those areas.* ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has a number of papers with him. He can hand them over here and lay the same.

Now, Shri Surendra Prakash Goyal.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SURENDRA PRAKASH GOYAL (Hapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the supplementary demands for grants of Railways while expressing my gratitude towards the Minister of Railways. I would like to say one thing that the profit shown in budget will not reach the people till the train services are improved in Uttar Pradesh.

Sir, the opposition parties may oppose the budget and at the same time make demands. Therefore, they should learn to support the budget to get funds.

19.16 hrs.

[SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL *in the Chair*]

Ghaziabad comes under NCR. Therefore, Dehradoon-Shatabdi Express should be provided stoppage at Ghaziabad station. Sahibabad station and new Ghaziabad Station should have Computerized Reservation Centres.

Shramjeevi Express should be provided stoppage at Hapur station. Hapur has the biggest grain market of the country. A small underbridge should be constructed, as it is an industrial town, so that people may safely cross the road. Foot over-bridge should be constructed at Simbhavali and Modi Nagar. I would like to thank the State Government for agreeing to give its 50 percent share. For ROB from Hapur to Meerut, remaining work has to be executed by the Ministry of Railways, therefore, the Ministry of Railways should start construction of ROB from Hapur to Meerut. On behalf of Ghaziabad Development Authority, I would like to say that Ghaziabad Development Authority is ready to bear 50 percent of its cost with State Governments approval. Sector 23 connects Meerut Road, Kavinagar connects Bulandsahar, NH-58 connects NH-24, and the approval should be granted in such a way that the people may get benefit of it. The State Government is ready to give its contribution. Funds can be provided by GDA or the State Government, and they are ready to give funds for Ghaziabad.

Further more, Ghaziabad Development Authority and State Government are ready to give funds for Metro also. The work in regard to providing Metro facility should also be started.

Only one train stops at Simbhawali, which is an industrial town. I would like to request that stoppage of more trains should be provided at this station.

The hon'ble Minister of Railways has presented supplementary demands for grants, and Members of the opposition parties should also pay attention to this and pass this budget. The electrification of Ghaziabad-Meerut line should be done, so that people may get its benefit. All trains should be provided stoppage at Ghaziabad because Ghaziabad is a developed city. All people residing in Noida, Ghaziabad, Hapur, Dadri, and Pilkhua will get benefit of it. I support the budget and once again appreciate the Ministry of Railways and the Minister of Railways.

*PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL (Jalesar): Sir, I rise to speak in support of supplementary demands for grants. I would also like to draw the attention of hon'ble Minister of Railways towards local problems related to Railways in my Parliamentary Constituency, Jalesar.

Sir, followers of Jain religion live in Tundla, Etmadpur, Awagarh, Firozabad city and in rural areas of my

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel]

parliamentary constituency, Jalesar. They go on pilgrimage to shikharji. The demand for stoppage of Neelanchal Express at Tundla Junction is being made for a long time. I, myself, have been demanding stoppage of Neelanchal Express at Tundla Junction station for long time. I request that Neelanchal Express should be provided stoppage at Tundla Junction so that followers of Jain religion may go to pilgrimage to shikharji. Kafiat Express and Delhi-Reeva Express should also be provided stoppage at Tundla.

Sir, Tundla Junction is just 20 kilometres away from Agra. Delhi-Lucknow Shatabdi Express passes through Tundla Junction. Agra is very important city from historical and tourism points of view. Many tourists visit Agra and like to go from Agra to Lucknow. Tundla Junction station is the central point of Agra, Etah, Ferozabad and Hathras Janpad. Therefore, Shatabdi Express running between, Delhi to Lucknow should definitely be provided stoppage at Tundla Junction. Agra is located on Delhi-Bhopal route, Delhi-Bhopal Shatabdi stops at Agra. Tourists coming to Agra also like to visit Lucknow. Tundla Junction is very near to Agra; therefore, it is necessary to provide stoppage of Shatabdi Express at Tundla junction. Agra bound tourists go to Tundla to board Gomti Express. Therefore, Delhi-Lucknow Shatabdi Express may be provided stoppage at Tundla Junction.

Sir, Sangam Express should be provided stoppage at important junction Jalesar Road station of my parliamentary constituency Jalesar, because Sangam Express runs from Meerut to Allahabad and UP's High Court is located in Allahabad. Local people visit Allahabad in connection with court cases. Jalesar station is the focal point of Aligarh, Hathras and Agra district. Therefore, Sangam Express should be provided stoppage at Jalesar Road station.

Sir, similarly Barhan Junction is an important station of Jalesar parliamentary constituency. The people over there have to visit Delhi. Local people are demanding that Muri Express and Mahananda Express should be provided stoppage at Barhan Junction. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to provide stoppage of Muri and Katihar (Mahananda) Express at Barhan Junction.

Sir, the eastern and western gates of Tundla railway station remain closed for hours at the time of crossing of trains. The people have to face difficulties and hundreds of villages are also affected on account of this. These

villages are located between rail line and Yamuna River. They have to cross these gates to go to Tundla. So, railway overbridge or under bridge should be constructed at eastern or western gates of Tundla Railway station.

Sir, one rail line goes upto Etah from Barhan junction and there is only one train on that route. I request him to introduce a rail bus on Barhan-Etah route. Kasganj is only 35 km. away from Etah and Barhan is connected to Etah by rail line. If Etah is connected with Kasganj and the meter gauge line is converted into broadgauge, the people of Etah will be connected with Bareilly, Lucknow and Kanpur.

Sir, Agra fort railway station is an important railway station of Agra which remains very dirty and is in undeveloped state. There is lack of civic amenities. Platform is in a very dilapidated condition. It is full of filths and tourists all over the country visit here. So, the beautification of Agra fort Railway station should be done. The Delhi-Trivendrum and other trains passing through Agra should be provided halt at Agra Cant Station, as Agra is a tourists spot and the people from all over the country and abroad come here to see Taj Mahal. There is no train from Agra to Lucknow in the morning. A train should be operated from Agra to Lucknow in the morning at 5.00 'O' clock from Agra and one intercity train should be introduced between Lucknow and Agra originating from Lucknow in the afternoon.

Sir, one 1-EVT, 2-EVT operates on Tundla-Barhan-Etah line. The Railway officials are not available at Rajarampur, Tehu, Cuswa etc. stations for issuing tickets. The ticket counters should be set up at the said stations. Beautification of Firozabad, Tundla, Barhan junction and Jalesar road station should be done.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Shri Chhewang Thupstan—Not present.

Shri Francis George—Not present.

Okay, Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan.

Shri Radhakrishnan, you may make your own judgement now!

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I rise to support the Demand for Supplementary Grant and also the Demand for Excess Grants for Railways.

Before I deal with this, I may first submit that there is a general feeling in my State of Kerala that the Railways are neglecting that State. That feeling has changed recently, but it is not fully over.

The main question that I wish to submit to the House through you is that we are greatly in need of a separate Zone. If the Railways in Kerala are to be developed, we must be given a separate Zone. Now, we form a part of the Chennai Zone and it is not a position to help us. Among the various Divisions, two Divisions are there—Palghat Division and Trivandrum Division. The Chennai Zone with the headquarters at Chennai, is not in a position to look after the demands of the State of Kerala. Two Divisions are given, as per schedule.

My friends from Tamil Nadu were demanding here, some time back, for a separate Salem Division. It is a good suggestion. It will have some portion of Palghat Division; that is justifiable. That very same reason is applicable for giving us a separate Zone. If Salem Division is created, some portion of Palghat Division will go; I have no objection to that and it is a good one. In future case, there may be Madurai Division or Kanyakumari Division and so, they will demand some portion from out of the Trivandrum Division. It is allowable and I have no objection.

But the only question is that Kerala must be provided with a separate Zone. That is the only solution and I strongly demand that a separate Zone for Kerala must be sanctioned. The Railway Board and the Railway Ministry should take immediate steps for sanctioning a separate Zone for the State of Kerala. At the same time, I also demand that the Salem Division, as demanded by my Tamil Nadu friends may be sanctioned along with a new Zone for Kerala; both the things should be sanctioned together—firstly a separate Zone for Kerala and so also, a separate Division for Salem with a portion of Palghat Division. This is the first demand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may conclude now.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I do not want to go into the details. There are demands for several trains and I am not going into those details.

In the long distance trains, thefts are taking place recently. Even there was an attack on woman during night time in the long distance train. That is our experience. So, I request the Railway Administration to

take immediate steps to prevent robbery, theft and also personal attack on women in Railways. At the same time, I may also point out that two passengers died day before yesterday without medical attention. The Railway Administration is negligible in giving service to the passengers who are travelling in long distance trains.

Then the work of doubling of tracks is also lagging behind. It must be completed at the earliest. I would request the Railway Administration that the doubling work of Mangalore-Shoranur section, which is lagging behind, must be completed. With this speed we may not be able to complete it even after 20 years. The Railway Administration should allot sufficient funds for all the doubling projects of Kerala.

With these words, I support the Demands for Supplementary Grant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those hon. Members who want to lay their speeches, can do so.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Zero Hour will be stands after the supplementary demands for grants for railways.

[English]

*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA (Taran Taran): Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you that you have allowed me to speak on the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways).

In India, Railways play a vital role. It is one of the biggest railway network in the world. But Chairman, Sir, after independence, from 1947 to 1997, not a single inch of railway track was laid in Punjab. After 1997, proposals for laying of new railway tracks were made, but even these have not been completed. Chandigarh is the capital of Punjab but the scheme for linking it directly with Punjab has also not yet been completed. Chairman, Sir, I want to appeal to the hon. Minister that this work should be expedited so that the people of Punjab can travel directly to their capital. This work has been going on since long.

Chairman, Sir, the Taran Taran-Gondwal route is there. Although, Railways have agreed to laying of track on this route, it has not yet seen the light of the day.

*Translation of speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

[Dr. Rattan Singh Ajnala]

So, I appeal to the hon. Minister that this work should also be started. Goindwal Sahib is an important town. When Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, he had taken interest in this scheme. But as no railway line was laid, it could not become an industrial center. The Government has already acquired the land. But I don't know whether money has been allotted or not for this purpose. So this work should also be expedited.

Chairman, Sir, in the last session, Laluji had assured us that money has been allocated for the Qadian-Beas railway line. But work has not been started on this line too. The people of Gurdaspur district are cut off from the rest of Punjab in the absence of this line, so, work should be expedited on this line also.

Chairman Sir, ours is a border State. For linking Amritsar to Ferozepur, the railway track from Amritsar to Khemkaran is already present. River Sutlej flows into Pakistan at some distance. If a bridge over river Sutlej is constructed, it will benefit the people. There will be a difference of 50 to 60 kms and the railways will also earn a lot of revenue. The Khemkaran-Ferozepur Railway line is vital for people of area as well as the Defence Forces.

When Railways was started by the British, a lot of rail lines passed from the outskirts of cities. But later on, population increased and these lines became part of populated areas. But at several places there are unmanned railway crossings. As a result, a lot of accidents take place and lives are lost. So, I appeal to the hon. Minister that in Khemkaran and Taran Taran, wherever they are needed, manned railway crossings should be there and railway over bridges should be constructed.

Chairman Sir, Jalandhar-Nawanshahar railway line is there. But from Nawanshahar onwards, there is no railway line. People of the area have been demanding that Nawanshahar should be linked by railways to Hoshiarpur. It is a small distance. If this is done, people of 5 or 6 districts will be able to avail the facility of railways.

Chairman Sir, Amritsar is a sacred city. It had been announced earlier that a new railway station will be made at Amritsar. But I am sorry to say, things have remained only on paper. I asks of devotees visit Amritsar. But the condition of the railway station over there is miserable. So, a new railway station should be constructed at

Amritsar. Foreign tourists and devotees visit Amritsar. The condition of existing railway station is very bad. The needs and requirements of Punjab have not yet been fulfilled. These need to be fulfilled so that the people of Punjab gain out of it.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): The time is for the discussion on the Supplementary Demands for Grants. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please come forward.

[English]

You have only three minutes. He is the only one MP from the RPI and so I am allowing him to come to the front row as an exception.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to extend my thanks to you that you invited me to the front row and gave me time to speak. Tomorrow if I come in the front row the hon'ble Speaker will ask me to go back to my seat in last rows. ...*(Interruptions)* This discussion on the Supplementary Demands for Grants of Railways. I am proud of the railways Department as it has made such progress. When the country was under the British rule, the railway service was introduced for the first time from Mumbai to Thane. The railway is a means of transportation which is used by the people of all the classes, castes and religions. People belonging to separate strata of society travel in the same compartment. The railway is the means of transportation for poor, middle class and higher class people. We have railway department, the railway board and also the hon'ble Minister of Railways. Today, Shri Laluji, Shri Velu ji and also Shri Balu ji are the Ministers in the Cabinet.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, deliberations are going on to introduce double decker train between Mumbai-Pune. Similar experiment should be made between Mumbai-Delhi and Delhi-Calcutta routes as well. The second thing is that at present sky bus are being operated for 3-4 k.m. in Goa. Similarly metro trains are being operated in Delhi. Laying rail line of one kilometre squlres an investment of Rs. 350 crore. The experiment of Konkan railway is being repeated in Delhi. The similar experiment can be made in Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. Similarly,

the container service in Konkan railway from Mumbai to Goa and beyond can be extended. It provides revenue to the railway department. Transportation by lorry taken more time than the railway. Such efforts can be made in the Central Railways, Western Railways and South Eastern Railways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, till now, Railway Board does not leave any member from SC/ST Community. The appointment of a Member belonging to Scheduled Castes/ Schedule Tribe which present to comprise 25-26 percent of population, will go a long way to serve the interests of belonging to the said communities. Baba Saheb Ambedkar was the Minister of Law and the Minister of labour of the country. At that time the number of Scheduled Caste was more and they played a major role in laying the rail lines. There is decline in rail accidents these days on account of the fact that more people belonging to Scheduled Castes are being appointed as train drivers. What I mean to say is that ever since they have been inducted as drivers, the number of accidents has declined. When the representation of the people belonging to Scheduled Caste was less, the frequency of rail accidents was higher.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the gauge conversion work of 324 k.m. long railway tracks from Pandharpur-Latur to Miraj is going on Rs. 50 crore has been sanctioned for the said construction work, however, Rs. 100 crore was demanded. When we are supporting the Supplementary Demands for Grants then the fund must be released. As long as I am with the Government, I am supporting the demand. However, once we are out of the power then there is no need to support it. I have to support it for five years. Presently Shri Lalu ji is conducting the business of railways quite efficiently. He has managed the railways well. So, I would like to request that Rs. 100 crore should be allocated for the construction of Pandharpur-Latur-Miraj rail line.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the rail workshop at Kurdhuvadi should be improved. Besides this Chandrabhaga Express that operates upto Mumbai-Pandharpur should run daily. There is need to provide first class AC coaches in the train. Mahalakshmi Express which runs between Mumbai and Kolhapur. There is need to recruit more officials for the sanitation of railway stations and trains. If more persons are recruited in the railways, the station will remain clean. The railway station should be clean. I have visited Bodh Gaya many times. However, I have found much filth on the railway station there. The officers and

officials of the railway department are efficient. However, I can not appreciate them unless they clean the stations. So the Government should pay more and more attention towards the sanitation of stations.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, without taking much time of the House, at the end I would like to submit that Pune-Mumbai Shatabadi Express has been discontinued. I would like to request that the said train should be started at the earliest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please also request the Government to complete doubling work of Pune-Sholapur rail line at the earliest.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: I would like to request the Minister of Railways that doubling of Pune-Sholapur rail line should be completed at the earliest. Along with that I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants moved by hon'ble Lalu Prasad ji. Since he too travels by train so he should ensure that trains run on time. And if he does not travel by train he would lay behind. We all would travel by these trains.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: Both the State Ministers are noting down his speech.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Both the Ministers of State are my friend. Therefore, they should be given rights and we should be allocated funds.

My last suggestion is that the officers of Railways should take decision on our suggestions. For 5-6 years I had been demanding for a stoppage of K.K. Express at Kurvadi Station. At present the stoppage has been provided there. I had declared in Kurdwada that if the stoppage is not provided here. We will resort to 'Rail Roko' agitation. Therefore, my submission is that the Railways should act upon my suggestions. I am grateful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak, that too from front seat.

[English]

SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA (Machilipatnam): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to deliver my maiden speech today.

I would like to mention a few points concerning my parliamentary constituency in particular and my State, Andhra Pradesh, in general.

[Shri Badiga Ramakrishna]

Railways being the lifeline of our country, has a daunting task of catering to needs of the whole country. But we could not find a sizeable improvement in the railway network in our State. I hope the Ministry of Railways would fulfil our demands by making all-out efforts by taking into consideration the genuine demands of the State of Andhra Pradesh, especially within the South-Central Railway Division.

The Railways is one of the most economic means of transportation in our country and it is an important vehicle for the poorest of the poor. There is no denying the fact that our railway network is one of the largest in the universe. I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for increasing the earnings of the Railways by Rs. 962 crore during the first nine months, that is April-December, 2004. There is also a pick up in the freight traffic.

In the first place, Sir, there is a long-pending demand for the introduction of a new express train from Machilipatnam to Tirupati. As everyone is aware, Tirupati is one of the very important religious places in the South. Introducing an express train would make a lot of difference to the people in this area as they now have to spend a lot of money for changing trains or for using road transport to visit this holy shrine. I hope the hon. Minister would take this request of mine in the right perspective and help the people of my constituency.

There is another demand for the introduction of a new railway line from Machilipatnam to Repally. This is also a long-pending demand and I hope the hon. Minister would seriously consider this request as a survey has already been done. What is the result after doing the survey is not known. This is a very important railway line as it is in the coastal area and across Krishna river. This area is frequently affected by floods and cyclones. Very recently, the rains have caused havoc in that area and thousands of people had to be evacuated. As such, it is very essential for the introduction of a new railway line from Machilipatnam to Repalle. This rail connectivity will be a boom to the thousands of poor people living in these backward areas.

Sir, I would like to add one more thing. The surveys for doubling and electrification of Vijayawada to Guduwada, Guduwada to Machilipatnam-Bimavaram and Nidadavolu railway lines have been conducted and proposals have already been sent to the Railways Ministry. These lines have adequate railway traffic. But funds have not been

allotted for the implementation of doubling and electrification of these lines. I would also like to request of take up the work relating to Krishnapatnam Port connectivity by the Railway Ministry, and similarly, linkage to another important port, Kaklnada which was sanctioned in 2000—approximately 21.5 kilometres. A positive of ROR project has already been sent and this project needs budget allocation immediately.

Sir, people from Aktur village in my constituency have been pleading for the sanction of a level-crossing gate at Aktur village on Vijayawada-Waltair railway line or for shifting Gate NO. 325 or building a bridge. A number of high schools and orphanages have come up on both sides. The people while crossing without a proper railway gate or something like that are meeting with fatal accidents. I request the hon. Railway Minister to consider it on priority.

I once again would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for his vision in creating a Freight Corridor. Completion of this Corridor covering 9,260 kilometers would help the Railways to earn more freight traffic. Railways should make all-out efforts to complete this Corridor in time as this will result in maximum increase in earnings by which maximum benefits accrue to the general public.

One of the last points is that there is a provision of Rs. 220 crore for passenger amenities for 2005-06. I feel that this is not enough keeping in view the wide network of the Railways covering the length and breadth of the country. There is a lack of toilets and waiting halls, benches, etc., in the major and small railway stations. Upgradation of stations in an emerging economic power like India is a prerequisite. One cannot neglect amenities to passengers by citing shortage of funds. Funds have to be generated. As these facilities are very basic in nature, we cannot ignore them. I hope, the hon. Railway Minister would endorse my views on this.

Sir, while speaking on the subject, I would like to mention that it has come to my knowledge that funds meant for providing passenger amenities in the south Central Railway have been reduced to a large extent. If this is the case, how can the Railways improve the passenger amenities? I would request the hon. Minister to assure that he would considerably increase the funds for providing passenger amenities in the South Central Railway. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Sir, as time is short, I would like to cut short my speech.

Sir, very often surveys are conducted but none of them take the shape of implementation. My only request to you is that taking into consideration the needs of the people and the facilities which can be provided to help the people at certain localities, the surveys which are done are to be implemented also. That is one of my requests.

Lastly, I would like to say that there are a number of backward areas in my State. The funds that are allotted are insufficient in terms of its areas and demands. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please cooperate.

SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Sir, just one minute. The hon. Minister being interested in helping the poor and neglected sections of the society should increase the railway network in Andhra Pradesh. We the people of Andhra Pradesh request and plead with the hon. Railway Minister to ensure that injustice, which was meted out to the people of Andhra Pradesh in the past, is rectified immediately by way of launching new lines and by introducing new trains and carrying out surveys for more trains in Andhra Pradesh. With these words, I support the Demands for Supplementary Grant.

[Translation]

*SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA (Barh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would urge hon. Minister of Railways to consider following points. These are relating to Danapur division.

In view to problems being faced by daily passengers, a new train from Buxar to Mokama (Danapur Dn) should be introduced.

Waiting Room should be provided at Mokama, Barh, Bakhtiarpur, Athmal Gola, Pandarak and Fatuha stations including quarters for Railway Protection Force and civic amenities. Also, the stations should be beautified.

A railway over bridge on NH-30 A near Barh railway station and also on Barh Sarmera Approach Road should be constructed.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Railway line on Islampur-Bodhgaya, via Manpur should be extended. Lemumabad, Aura, Manjholi, Jaiprakash Nagar, Kanhaipur halt stations (Danapur Division) should be made full-fledged stations.

New railway crossings should be constructed on Hathidat-Poorab Bharochi gram, Jaiprakash Nagar station to Pashchim Ganj and Savnima and Poorb Budhliyak village adjacent to Bark station (under Danapur) so that accidents can be avoided.

A new rail line should be laid between Barh Pandarak railway station to Pandarak, under Danapur Dn, for carriage of coal meant for NTPC from Barh. In the interest of farmers and the common-men, there is a need to lay a railway line for NTPC from Hemumabad station.

Hundreds of dilapidated bridges on Patna-Kiul Junction, under Danapur Dn, should be renovated.

Patna-Delhi Jansadharan Express should run between Mokama to Delhi.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri A. Ravichandran.

Please conclude within three minutes, because there are already 15 speakers. Otherwise, it will go beyond ten o' clock.

*SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPIPARAI (Sivakasi): Hon. Chairman, I thank the Chair for giving me this opportunity to speak in this august House on the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways 2005-06 and express my support on behalf of the party Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

Indian Railways the third largest railway system in the world handles 600 million tonnes of goods and transport about 1 crore and 40 lakh passengers everyday. Ably guided by Shri Lalu and Shri Velu, Railways are effectively functioning now.

Southern Railway which has Tamil Nadu in its service ambit renders a significant service way ahead of others in whole of India. They have been completing projects and schemes in record time and have increased their operational efficiency on every such occasion. Mayavaram-Kumbakonam, Madurai-Manamadurai, Thiruvavur-Thanjavur

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri Ravichandran Sippiparai]

gauge conversion works were completed within 90 days. They had also completed in 90 days track strengthening work between Chennai and Dindigul to enable Railway to run fast trains at a speed of 110 kmph. But such a better performer and revenue earner is not rewarded commensurately. Unfortunately our Tamil Nadu gets a raw deal and are often ignored. Tamil Nadu is continuously sidelined. If you take the All India average only 20% are yet to be converted to the broad gauge. But in Tamil Nadu of the total 4200 kms of rail line 1700 kms are still metre gauge. 40% of rail lines in Tamil Nadu are yet to have gauge conversion. Though Tamil Nadu has given all 40 members to be on the treasury side, we are still put in a quandry to insist upon our legitimate needs as pointed out by the press and the public. Tamil Nadu is lagging behind always in comparison to the All India average be it gauge conversion, be it electrification or be it double tracking. About 27% railway lines have been electrified all over India but Tamil Nadu has been left in the lurch way behind. I would like to point out that ticketless travel is very less and almost all the train passengers purchase tickets and travel. Still only 24% of lines have been electrified in Tamil Nadu in spite of better revenue earning. Villupuram to Kanyakumari railway line is a vital route with 18% rate of return. But that important stretch is yet to be taken up for electrification. Certain newspapers have come out with a news item that electrification may be taken up only between Villupuram and Tiruchirappalli. Hence I urge upon the Railway Ministry to go for electrification in full swing to electrify the entire stretch between Villupuram and Kanyakumari as it is a very important route.

As far as my constituency Sivakasi is concerned Virudhunagar to Manamadurai via Aruppukottai gauge conversion is yet to be taken up. I urge upon you to commence the work at the earliest.

Virudhunagar-Thenkasi and Madurai-Mandapam sections are broadgauge but just a stretch of 65 kms in between them remain as metre gauge. This causes great hardship to the people there without a better transport facility. It would cost a mere 95 crore of rupees of complete gauge conversion of this incomplete stretch and hence I urge upon you to go about it as early as you can. I request the Railway Minister to give due consideration to complete it.

At the instance of our leader Vaiko, Virudhunagar-Thenkasi railway line was laid at a cost of Rs. 150 crore.

But it is lying underutilised. There is just a biweekly train and needs to be augmented. It must be made a daily train plying on this route. Podhigai Express train must be made a daily train. I also request you to give a stoppage for Podhigai Express at Thiruthangal. Hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav made an announcement in Rajapalayam and gave an assurance to the public there that a road over bridge would be constructed there. But even after one year it has not been completed. I would like to draw his attention. Tamil Nadu has not got any new train announced this year.

'Bharat Darshan' train called "Village on Wheels" originating from Madurai is running for the past one year. Right from day one all the 504 seats are always filled. It is a record that it is cent percent full throughout the year. Hence you must contemplate introduction of more such trains from there.

Expressing my support again to the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways, let me conclude.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (Jhalawar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for the opportunity given to me to speak on the Demand for Supplementary Grant in respect of Railways.

The UPA Government has drawn ambitious plans and all the plans are completely utopian. I come from the State of Rajasthan. I would draw your attention to my State, especially to the *Hadoti* Region of Rajasthan. During the tenure of the former Railway Minister Nitish ji and the former Member in the House—presently she is the Chief Minister of Rajasthan—they had worked together for the construction of the Ramganj Mandi-Bhopal railway line. It was during Nitish ji's tenure that he sanctioned the construction fund of about Rs. 27 crore for the first year. When our present Minister Lalu ji came to power, he gave us only Rs. 15 crore. So, I would urge upon Lalu ji—while he sits in the House—to assist the common man, the *aam admi*, to help the people get the interconnection between Ramganj Mandi, which is one of Asia's largest *Mandis*, and Bhopal in order to help the agricultural producer to sell his produce.

Sir, I would like to say that the cost for the total line is about Rs. 700 crore, of which we have got only a meagre sum of Rs. 27 crore and Rs. 15 crore. The electrification of new line of Kota, Bara and Guna is still pending. I would urge the hon. Minister to look at it and give us a better option by linking Kota, Bara and Guna.

The hon. Minister has mentioned about '*Bharat Niman*'. For providing linkage of agriculture between the Centre and the States we need to link train lines, especially, from production areas to markets where farmers can be benefitted. I would like to thank you for giving us Jaipur-Bangalore Express stoppage in Bhawani Mandi and Choumela. I would urge while the Minister is here that Dholpur, Sarmathura and Gangapur linkage should be made. Lalu Ji has mentioned. I have not come here to raise my issues not making noise. I would urge the hon. Minister who is sitting here in the august House to work for the people. In your demands you have mentioned that your repayment for loans is amounting towards Rs. 18 crore. That is a large chunk of revenue which you require, and for which you have come to take assent of the Parliament. So, your operating cost and repair cost is a larger chunk. We need to streamline the operating cost to increase the revenue so that other sectors can get funds to build railway lines like Hadoti region of ours. I would also like to say that we need to have a Nagda-Kota shuttle train.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: I am just concluding, Sir. I have requested the Minister an umpteen number of times. In your Grants you have asked for the staff and welfare fund only Rs. 14,231. The staff makes or breaks the Railways. They work very hard and they toil very hard. We need to work with the staff. We need to create proper amenities. You have been given the opportunity for giving better amenities to the staff. You have great assets in the form of malls. The malls are your money ventures. We need to recoup the money and send it to centres where we can develop our train lines. Once again, I urge you to help us.

The Railways use diesel engines. We, in the Hadoti region of Rajasthan, are having Jatropa plantations. We urge you to take bio-diesel from us and use that a fuel in the Railways. I would end by saying that we should have other train lines which you have talked about. You have given us train lines only after gauge conversion. Rajasthan is the biggest State in India. You need to look at it as a prospective where you have to interconnect people and interconnect with heart and affection. You are toppling your idea as you have no heart and no affection. You should reconsider the Demands and work for the people of India.

[*Translation*]

*SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): I would like to express my views on Demands for Grants of Railways.

Effecting no hike in train fare has given much needed to the relief common man. Despite this, revenue collection has increased in an unprecedented way. It remains a mystery. Railway is the life line of Indians.

There have been long standing demands of people of Indo-Nepal bordering areas, especially Madhubani, Darbhanga, Samastipur, Sitamarhi, Motihari, Eastern Champaran, Supaul, Saharsa etc. There is an urgent need to fulfill the demands of these people so that development in these areas can take place. Also, adequate funds should be immediately released for expeditions completion of gauge conversion work of Jainagar-Narkatiaganj rail line into broad gauge.

There is a need to take up the work of construction of rail bridge on Nirmali-Bhaptiyahi-Saraigarh and laying of new rail line on said route. Steps should be taken for conversion of Jhanjharpur-Laukaha meter gauge line into broad gauge. A new rail line should be laid on Jainagar-Ladniyan-Laukaha-Laukah-Nirmali line. The work on Sakati-Hasanpur rail line should be speed up. Chikna Flag Station should be made a full fledged station.

A new railway halt is required to be constructed at Pijorgarh and Mangarpatt Ghogadiha and Jainagar stations should be beautified and computerized reservation facility be provided there.

I conclude with these words.

[*English*]

*SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN (Adoor): Respected Chairman, Sir, Kerala is a coastal State of India. It is known for its landscapes and lush green scenarios. This State is very rich in natural beauty. Every year millions of national and international tourists visit this part of India but this is very disappointing that Kerala has very poor railway network and its remote areas are not well-connected with the railway lines. So, there is an urgent need for establishing a separate railway zone in Kerala with its Headquarters in Trivendrum. A separate railway

*Speed was laid on the Table.

[Shri Chengara Surendran]

zone in Kerala will promote a number of railway activities in Kerala and the State can be well-connected with railway lines in Kerala—one from Chengannur to Thiruvananthapuram via Kottarakara and other from Kayamkulam to Trivendrum via Adoor and Kottarakara. These two railway lines are very important for the people residing in the middle part of the Kerala. These lines will also connect Sabrimala temple which is the most famous pilgrimage of South India. Every year, from November to January, crores of people from different parts of India visit this shrine. So, there is an urgent need of connecting it with the railway network.

Sir, there is one Kollam-Chengotta railway line in Kerala. It is a meter-gauge railway line which is being converted into a broad-gauge railway line. The conversion work of this railway line should have been completed by last year itself, but it is being delayed. So, my earnest request is that, by all means, the conversion work of this line should be completed by this financial year itself. It should not be delayed on the pretext of the shortage of funds. I urge the Government that adequate funds should be released for this purpose. On Kollam-Chengotta railway line there is a railway junction Kottarakara. This is also very important railway station. This railway station needs to be upgraded because every year thousands of devotees visit Ganapati temple of Kottarakara. It is my request that the Government should sanction more funds for the upgradation of Kottarakara railway station. In the outer part of the Kottarakara, there is a halt station in Ezhukone but this is far away from the junction. So, it can be shifted to the Ezhukone junction side for the convenience of the passengers. There is also need of running more trains on Kollam-Chengotta railway line so that the rush in trains can be minimised. Jadayupara and Thenmala are two major centres or eco-tourism in Adoor constituency. They should be connected with the railway network to facilitate the tourists visiting Kerala.

Sir, trains running between Delhi and Tirvendrum are always packed. So, my suggestion is that some more trains should be introduced between Delhi and Kerala. Similarly, some more trains are required between Bangalore—Trivendrum and Madurai-Trivendrum. Madurai-Trivendrum trains should be connected by the Kottarakara. The famous Meenakshi temple of Madurai can be connected with the Ganapati temple at Kottarakara to promote and facilitate the religious tourism. I also request that Government should improve catering facilities in Express trains and other trains bound to Kerala. If Kerala

is well-connected with the railway network, it can help a lot in promoting tourism in Kerala. A developed tourism industry can well reduce the problem of unemployment in the State. So, my humble submission is that Government should pay attention towards these demands and try to fulfil them.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demand for Supplementary Grants for the Railways.

Sir, we are discussing the railway network comprising of more than 70 thousand kilometers long rail tracks and more than 60 thousand major and small railways stations in India.

20.00 hrs.

All the hon. Members have said that their states are being neglected. I would like to say that Uttar Pradesh is the heartland of India and the entire country can not develop unless Uttar Pradesh is developed. Most of the Railway Ministers have happened to hail from Bihar and it sounds strange when hon. Members from Bihar put up their grievances. Almost all the points have been discussed and I do not want to go into them but I would like to give some suggestions.

It is unfortunate that multinational companies are being invited for catering services, it is my submission to the Hon. Minister that he might have noticed poor people belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes running stalls at railway stations serving food, "puri-sabji" and tea etc. and if he would make them shut their stalls, it would add to the problem of unemployment. It is my request that multinational companies should not be engaged for these services.

Secondly, he has formulated a scheme of Central Road Fund for the construction of road. The main road leading to all the railway stations are in a dilapidated condition at present. The roads of the colonies near the stations where officers reside are in a very bad shape. Those roads need to be repaired. While traveling in a good express train when it is at halt at the outskirts or it is before scheduled time, we have noticed that many stations are without any proper lighting facilities and they even lack the facility of drinking water. As the respected leader, Prof. Ram Gopalji has said that the waiting rooms, be it first class or second class, at many of the major stations, are in a very bad condition. There is a need to pay attention towards them.

He has announced to start 50 food plazas. I would request to give this chance to the people of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward class so that they can start their business by setting up food plaza. We declared to celebrate the year 2002-03 as the year for passenger's amenities to commemorate the 150th year. When we search our soul as to what facilities we have given to the passengers, we do not find satisfactory results. I would say that special attention needs to be paid towards this.

Secondly, I would conclude after giving two-three suggestions about my area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not into details, give suggestions only.

[English]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Sir, you should ask him to lay his speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Earlier, I have already requested thrice to hon. Members.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: I have not yet taken three minutes. Northern Railways have earned Rs. 188 crore by transporting food grains. I would like to thank the hon. Minister and the Government and make this request that it would be better if this money is utilized for development of railways.

Since time is running out, I would conclude after giving 2-3 suggestions. There is a district named Kaushambi in my constituency in Uttar Pradesh for which we have got almost Rs. 12 crores sanctioned under Shram Vikas Yojana. It has been sanctioned by the Planning Commission. Last time too, I gave it in writing that he should give approval for the construction of floor over the railways and sanction some money for it. The other roads would be taken care of under Shram Vikas Yojana.

My second demand is that a computerized reservation centre should be opened at the main station of the newly created district Kaushambi. People come to this place from all over the country and abroad. Kaushambi is an important tourist destination from the religious point of view. It is the capital of Raja Udayan, Gautam Buddha

stayed there for 9.5 years, there is a big temple there, therefore there is a need for the maintenance and beautification of that station. Secondly, all the good trains should have stoppage at Harware station.

I would conclude with just one suggestion. One of our hon. Colleague has demanded for doubling and electrification of line from Gorakhpur to Lucknow which is the capital of Uttar Pradesh. Even I support this demand for doubling and electrification of this line between Gorakhpur and Lucknow.

With these words, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my views.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me opportunity to speak on the supplementary demands of the Ministry of Railways. I support the supplementary demands of the Railways. I would begin my speech with the lines quoted by the hon. Minister while presenting the railways budget for the year 2005-06.

"Jivan ke har path par mali pushp nahin bikhrata hai
Pragati ka path aksar pathrela he hota hai
Pa he lenge akhir manzil rahon ke mohtaz nahin
Sath ho ummeedon ka kal hoga wahl jo aaj nahin."

The hon. Minister of Railways, the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways and his department of Railways has lived upto the expectations and delivered the goods as expressed in the said lines, there is no doubt that. As far as Ministry of Railways is concerned, the Railways have earned the profit of Rs. 8 thousand crore for the first time which would be used for the development of the country. It is a matter of pride and joy. He has said that he would endeavour to take the country and the Railways on the path of progress. Moreover, he has stemmed corruption prevalent in the Railways. He has launched several schemes for the welfare of the people which are particularly laudable. He has never increased railways fare and freight charges and yet made the Railways move on the path of progress, it has never happened before. He has done a good job in the interest of the public by starting special trains for the farmers. He has provided trains for traveling all over the country for the people living in rural areas, farmers and poor people. He has provided train services for traveling all over India. He has made the provision for free journey for the students going for interviews. For the first time, a thought has been spared for the porters at

[Kunwar Manvendra Singh]

the stations and he has made provision of pension for them and their widows. This step is particularly praiseworthy. Hon. Minister has offered the facility of free journey to the patients suffering from incurable diseases and their companion. It is also laudable.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): You have not mentioned the facility of free journey for the students.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Hon. Minister has drawn attention towards this. I have already mentioned it but I would reiterate it at the instance of the hon. Minister that he has made the provision of the free journey for the unemployed boys and girls to any place all over India for appearing in interviews. He has also made the provision of free journey for the patients suffering from incurable diseases and God forbidding if the person dies, there would be no charge for carrying the dead body and the family member accompanying it would be entitled to travel free. It is a very significant thing.

I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister on behalf of myself and my countrymen.

Time is short. I would like to draw the attention of hon'ble Minister towards some problems. Last Saturday, I visited Kota. Rajdhani Express is a very good train and it has its own importance. The hon'ble officers of Railways are present here. I would like to inform him that there were many flies and cockroaches in the First A.C. of the train. There is an urgent need to maintain cleanliness in the coaches of the train. I called up the Railway officers and registered complain. There were many flies in the served soup. If this is happening in a train like Rajdhani, it means, special attention on this aspect is needed. The improvement in the system is required. There is a need of improvement in other trains also.

Besides, there is another longstanding demand. I have represented Mathura many times; even today I am doing so. I would like to submit that only one train Toofan Mail runs for Kolkata since British period. I have been continuously making a demand in this regard. Again, I would like to submit that there is a need to connect Mathura to Kolkata by some other train, because Mathura is the birth place of Lord Radha-Krishna and crores of people go there for pilgrimage. The upgradation and beautification of that station should be done, the stoppage of more trains should be provided and facilities to pilgrims should be provided. ...*(Interruptions)*

As hon'ble Minister was saying, Lord Krishna was his ancestor. Therefore, it is his duty to pay special attention towards Mathura. I will meet hon'ble Minister later on and discuss those problems.

I hail from birthplace of Lord Krishna and hon'ble Minister is also descendant of Lord Krishna. Therefore, with these lines I conclude my speech.

"Meri Bhav Badhz haro, Radha Nagri Soi,
Ja Tan Ki Parchai Pare, Shyam Harit Duti Hoy"

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this discussion is supposed to be concluded at 8' o'clock. Now, please conclude and let hon'ble Minister speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have told all the hon'ble Members many a time to lay their speeches but all hon'ble Members want to speak.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: When there is a set order as per which if an hon'ble Member lays his speech on the Table, it is considered to be read. I do not understand if there should be a problem even after this. We are not going to sit for the whole night. ...*(Interruptions)* You should expedite the reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If all hon'ble Members agree, then I do not have any problem.

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA (Banaskantha): Why has he delivered the speech; even he could have laid it on the table. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants for Railways.

At the outset, I must congratulate the hon. Railway Minister Shri Lala Prasad for his consistent approach to bring the Indian Railways to world-class level. Railway is the main mode of travel and transportation of the common man. Indian Railways has got a fine network of rail to meet this demand. Still, more and more places have to be brought under rail connectivity. Despite all the developmental activities undertaken by the Railways, still

deficiency is there because of the increasing demand from the people.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to some of the very important long-pending demands of the people of Kerala for your kind consideration and further action. Most of the railway lines in Kerala are over-utilised. There the utilisation is up to 150 per cent or 160 percent. For any further improvement in the rail traffic doubling of the line is essential. Doubling of lines from Manglore to Shoranur, from Ernakulam to Trivandrum *via* Alappuzha and Kottayam is a must. Works have been intiated but they have to be expedited to complete the wok on time.

The second point is about electrification work. I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister and I would be very much grateful to him for completing the electrification work from Ernakulam to Kottayam *via* Alappuzha.

Electrification *via* Kottayam route and from Kollam to Trivandrum has to be completed. Level crossing along the National Highway has become a curse for the people of Northern Kerala.

Construction of ROBs has been started but the portion over rail line, which has to be constructed by the railway authority, has to be constructed in many ROBs. I also thank the hon. Railway Minister for sanctioning five more new ROBs in Kerala.

In case of new trains, Kerala was severely neglected initially but later on, considering the sentiments of the Keralites, Lalu ji has sanctioned two new trians, Bangalore-Ernakulam weekly train and twice weekly Trivandrum-Mangalore train into thrice weekly.

20.16 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

Sir, there are so many students from Kerala who are studying in the professional colleges and nursing institutions in Karnataka, mostly in Bangalore and Mangalore. Many private buses are plying daily on this route. These two trains—Bangalore-Ernakulam train and Trivandrum-Mangalore train—should be converted into daily trains as well as Bangalore-Ernakulam train should be extended up to Trivandrum or Kochivelli *via* Alappuzha.

In Kerala, employees are the daily commuters of the Railways. Railways have given a great blow to these

commuters by converting Alleppey-Madras Express train into a superfast train. But it was withdrawn later on considering the mass appeal. This status quo has to be maintained. Without improving the efficacy of the train, simply converting into a superfast train is nothing but pickpocketing of the travellers.

Sir, there is a Jana Shatabdi Express plying between Trivandrum and Ernakulam. Season ticket holders are not permitted in this train. Sir, either season ticket holders should be permitted to travel in this train or some ordinary compartment for season ticket holders should be instituted. While changing the train timings of the trains within the State convenience of the commuters should be given due attention.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude your speech now.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: The decision of the Railways to withdraw the parcel booking services in stations where stoppage time is less than five minutes is highly objectionable. This has created a great hardship to the small and marginal farmers and also merchants who depend on these trains for the transportation of their agricultural produce. This was also a blow to thousands of porters working in the Railways. Sir, since Lalu ji is a man very much concerned about the working class and the common man, I hope that he may reconsider this decision.

Now, I would like to submit some of the demands pertaining to my constituency.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude your speech now.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Sir, pit line and stabling facilities should be provided for Alappuzha railway station. Even though the second platform and foot overbridge for Haripad railway station have been sanctioned, that work has not yet been started.

Restoring the Parcel Booking. Service for all long distance trains at Alappuzha has to be reintroduced.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. Now, I call upon Shri Haribhau Rathod to speak.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Just a minute please.

Shoranur-Ernakulam train should be extended up to Alappuzha.

Please allow me thirty seconds more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I am not allowing you any more time.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Please allow me thirty second more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I have already called the next speaker. Please take your seat. Nothing will go on record except what Shri Haribhau Rathod says.

[Translation]

*SHRI VIRCHANDRA PASWAN (Nawada): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants presented by the hon'ble Minister of Railways. I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways for achievements made by Indian Railways under his leadership. The hon'ble Minister of Railways had promised doubling of Kiul-Nawada-Gaya rail line in the Railway Budget of the year 2004-05. The people were very happy and hopeful about it. But, till now, nothing has been done in regard to doubling, due to which people are disappointed.

Therefore, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to complete the doubling of Kiul-Nawada-Gaya rail line without any delay.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government provides financial assistance for the development of Railways. There are many such people in my constituency who have never seen Railway. They have seen it in pictures, but have never seen rail in reality. Through you, I would like to submit to hon'ble Minister that the work initiated in Vidarbha of my parliamentary constituency for the development of Railway is lying incomplete. We have to start a new struggle for the development of Railway. The hon'ble Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad also agrees with it, it has also been observed, that the Government may not have increased the fares of railway to get political mileage, but the Railways have suffered huge losses due to it. Many things have been observed, many hon'ble Members have recommended that the rail fares should be increased. On one hand the Government is not increasing the rail fare, while on the other whenever any proposal for sanctioning a project is submitted by us, it is disapproved on the

plea of scarcity of funds, and it is said that rail connectivity cannot be provided to Yavatmal in absence of funds. The hon'ble Minister shall see that a lot of improvement is required. I would like to congratulate you and all hon'ble Ministers for fulfilling one of my demands. It is a good step. I would like to thank Shri Lalu Prasad and other Government officers for carrying out survey for laying of rail line from holy place of Mahatma Gandhi, Vardha in Maharashtra to holy place of Sant Sajkhan Nanded, and Shri Hazoor Saheb Gurdwara is also located there.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: His work will be done, now he may sit down.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Thank you, I would like to tell you in this regard the importance of Nanded Gurudwara. Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji had given holy seat to Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji in 1708 over there. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why are you going in history? Please make demand.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: 300 years would be completed in 2008. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Government listen to it.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Tricentenary is being celebrated and pilgrims from the entire world will visit Nanded to take part in this programme. When Dr. Manmohan Singh had visited Nanded for pilgrimage, we had discussed this issue in detail with him and he said that the Centre will definitely provide some assistance in this regard. I would like to say that if Ministry of Railway is facing the scarcity of funds, the Prime Minister should definitely provide some help in this regard. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your speech is over. Now please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

[Translation]

Nothing is being recorded Gangwar Saheb, please control your Member.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI MOHAN JENA (Jajpur): Sir, I want to lay my speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, you can lay your speech.

[Translation]

These hon'ble Members who want to lay their speech on the Table can do so.

[English]

**SHRI MOHAN JENA: I would like to ventilate my views through you in this august House regarding the problem of Railways of my State. For the last 57 years Orissa has not progressed satisfactorily as far as Railways are concerned. Railways is the lifeline of a nation. It is the important indicator of a State's progress.

Sir, Orissa is a backward State consisting 90 per cent people belong to STs., SCs., & OBCs. Categories. There are 30 districts in Orissa, among which 7 districts are unconnected by the Railways; they are: (1) Boudha, (2) Kandhamal, (3) Nayagarh, (4) Deogarh, (5) Kendrapara, (6) Malakagiri & (7) Nawrangapur. So, I would like to request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to take appropriate steps to make these districts connected to Railways.

The East Coast Railway Zone is a prestige issue for Orissa. But the same does not cover all the areas of Orissa. The Railway lines at Jharsuguda, Bandha Munda, Rourkela come under the South-eastern Railway. From Ranital to Jaleswar the zone also comes under the South-

Eastern Railway. The areas like Ib Valley, Brajaraj Nagar and Belphad are industrial belts, they come under the South-East Central Zone. The Railway line at Koraput and Rayagada district falls outside the jurisdiction of the East-Coast Railway Zone. So, I would like to request the Hon. Railway Minister and the Central Govt. to take steps to bring all these areas under East-Coast Railway Zone.

The trains which run through Orissa lacks quality. The service must improve. The Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express excludes the people of West-Orissa. Hence another Rajdhani Express should be introduced which should start from Sambalpur-Angul and go to Delhi. Similarly, the Lokamanya Tilak Express which connected Bhubaneswar to Mumbai once a week, should be made daily. This train should pass through Sambalpur and Titilagarh. Berhampur one of the important city of south Orissa has no direct railway connection with Delhi. This should be made possible. The international tourists who visit Goa should also be encouraged to visit Orissa. Sir, the Jajpur district which is; my constituency is one of the developing district of the country due to ongoing industrialisation. The district has several Buddhist monuments which will definitely attract foreign tourists. This will be possible only if Bhubaneswar and Panaji are directly connected.

Sir, J.K. Road Railway Station and Dhanmandal Railway Station of District Jajpur are the two important Railway Stations of Coastal Orissa from the business as well as tourists point of view. So. The Minister of Railways should give proper attention to the development of these two Railway Stations. The people of my districts are demanding the stoppage a Rajdhani Express at J.K. Road Railway Station since long. Sir, Jajpur is an ancient religious place to our country. Once upon a time it was capital of Orissa. But there is no Railway link to Jajpur. So, I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister to take immediate steps in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA (Banaskantha): Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Laluji. We have seen it over the last several years that Madhu Dandvate ji. ...*(Interruptions)* the speakers before me were given half an hour for making submission. What is the problem in awarding me time? Please give some time to me as well. Laluji is the only person after Madhu Dandvateji who has made efforts to provide best of the facilities to the poor and common man. I congratulate him for this and alongwith him I would extend my felicitations to all

*Not recorded.

**Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Harisinh Chavda]

those thousands of senior and junior employees of the Railways who are highly alert while performing their duties. Once I visited Lajuji, there I read something about Kulhar "we get an opportunity to kiss the soil of our motherland several times when we use Kulhar." How ... are the sentiments of Hon. Minister!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alright, please submit your demands.

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Sir, along with this work, Rajdhani was given a stoppage in our area, I thank him for that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, now please conclude.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Sir, I have certain suggestions. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alright, please sit down.

Shri Bhanwar Singh Dangawas.

20.26 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chavdaji, please sit down.

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Sir, this is not fair. I should be given some more time to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Alright, Shri Chavdaji, please take your seat now.

...*(Interruptions)*

*...*SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Lajuji has brought Demands for Supplementary Grants in the House. I extend him my heartiest support. Lajuji has taken extremely good measures for providing railway facilities in the country. Be it the work of laying a new railway line, gauge conversion, introducing new trains, providing employment opportunities, or any rural development work. Like he introduced Kulhars in the railways. Thousands of unemployed people got employment. It is commendable. In addition to it, he has taken a decision to use khadi in railways which will provide employment to thousands of people.

Once I went to meet Lajuji and was waiting for him in the waiting room. There I read a quotation "we get an opportunity to kiss the soil of our motherland repeatedly, when we use kulhar." It portrays the sentiments of Lajuji. He has taken a revolutionary measure by taking a decision of giving pension to porters.

The army jawans protecting the country have to remain alert all the 24 hours. Similarly, all the junior and senior employees of Railways have to remain alert all the time. I thank such employees from the core of my heart who have worked day and night for the development of Railways.

I would like to draw the attention of hon. Minister towards certain points while extending my support to the budget.

1. There is one unreserved bogie in each train which is not sufficient. It is my suggestion that two or three boggles in place of one unreserved should be attached to a train to facilitate the common man.
2. The Palanpur station in my constituency which is our district headquarter is a very old station. The platform is not sufficiently covered with a shed. So, sufficient budget allocation should be made to modernize Palanpur railway station.
3. An overbridge on the national highway from Palanpur city to Ahmedabad is required to be constructed. I request him for making a provision for it as well in the budget.
4. One DMU Train which plies form Abu road to Ahmedabad is not sufficient. Most of the passengers are denied this facilities. Therefore, I request that two DMU trains should be plied.
5. Thousands of people travel from my constituency to Mumbai-Surat-Nav sari-Baroda. Therefore, I request that a direct train from Palanpur station to Mumbai should be introduced.
6. The gauge conversion of Palanpur-Kandla line which is linked with meter gauge, is taking place. There is a problem of railway crossing at three places in that line. A railway crossing is required before Piprala station. The railway crossing on the metalled road near Chandisar station remains closed during night which causes great difficulty.

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

I request that arrangement should be made for opening Chandiear railway crossing and the railway crossing near Dhanakwada railway station.

7. The food available in First AC in Delhi-Ahmedabad Rajdhani is of sub standard quality. It should be on the lines of the food served in Mumbai-Delhi.
8. I congratulate him for launching the scheme of village on wheels which has given an opportunity to common man for 'Bharat Darshan'. I request him to give more concession in the railway fares so that the poor people can draw benefits from that scheme.
9. There is Shri Aurobindo Ghosh Ashram in Pondicherry. A lot of people travel from Gujarat to Pondicherry. There is one Navjivan Express from Ahmedabad to Chennai. I request to extend this train upto Pondicherry.

I hope that hon. Minister of Railways would accede to my demands with these words. I support the demands for supplementary grants brought by the Hon. Minister of Railways.

SHRI BHANWAR SINGH DANGAWAS (Nagpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways in his reply to the debate on Rail Budget had assured me that a new rail line would be laid from famous pilgrim center Pushkar (Distt. Ajmer), the city of staunch devotee Mira to Merta Road. It was followed by an oral assurance also. This is my only demand. ...(*Interruptions*) Now, I would lay my speech on the Table.

*I would like to express my views on demand number 13 and 14 mentioned in serial Supplementary Demands for Grants. I would like to thank hon. Minister for sparing hike rail fares but providing facilities to the passengers by introducing new trains. My submission is that this supplementary demand for grants which are of urgent nature should be expeditiously be passed by the House. I fully support it.

The Hon. Minister of Railway, in his reply to debate on Rail Budget had assured me that a new rail line will be laid from Pushkar to Metra Road. It was followed by an verbal assurance also. Survey of said route was

completed last year. Laying of this line will not only provide connectivity to Northern part of Rajasthan with Bikaner but will also facilitate direct link to Haryana, Punjab from Jodhpur station of Jodhpur division and also to South and Western India. Now, for going to Ajmer from Bikaner, one has to change train at Phulera Junction and similarly, for going to Ajmer from Jodhpur, one has to travel via Marwar Junction. Laying of said line will shorten the distance by 50 Kms. There is big market of oil seeds, such as mustard and jeera, so laying of line will facilitate carriage of these products whereby railways would earn revenue by way of freight. At present, bus and truck owners make hay. I again request hon. Minister to consider my demand for the said line. Earlier, I had demanded for approval of gauge conversion of Degana-Ratangarh line. I had also urged for stoppage of at least a super fast train at famous religious centre Ren.

At the end, I request hon. Minister to provide stoppage of South bound trains to Hyderabad-Secundrabad from Bikaner and back at Marwar-Mundwa station. Another rail over-bridge should be constructed at Merta Road Junction. Recent change in timings of Jodhpur-Hawrah/Hawrah-Jodhpur trains is not suitable. Old timings may please be restored.

[*English*]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): As you all know, in a developing economy, infrastructure is vital. Here, I am sorry to say that I cannot support this Budget. I collected the Annual Report 2004-05 from the Publication Counter. In that Report, you have compared the Indian Railways with the Chinese Railways. In the early 90s, Indian Railways was bigger in terms of total route kilometres as well as route kilometres/square kilometres. In the period 1992-2000, the Chinese Railways extended its route kilometres by 13,797, that is, 24 per cent; double track by 9,400 kilometres; and electrified tracks by 8,975 kilometres. In comparison, Indian transport grew by 682 route kilometres. It is very sad that a publication by UPA Government is comparing Indian Railways with Chinese Railways. China is far ahead of us. What have you been doing? Through an Annual Report, they are telling us that Chinese Railways are better than Indian Railways.

The hon. Minister is a very able leader. You please guide the Railways so that it comes to its proper track. If it does not come to its proper track, we are going for

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

the doom and we would never achieve our growth target of eight per cent, which our Finance Minister has set for us.

Here, I would like to say one thing. You started the National Rail Vikas Yojana. You have three programmes in priority. One is strengthening of Golden Quadrilateral and its diagonals. I would like to know how it is going to benefit my State of Orissa. Secondly, there is a programme for strengthening of rail connectivity with ports and development of multinational corridors with hinterlands. Orissa in a coastal State with rich mineral resources. I would like to know as to how many programmes your Ministry or the Government of India has kept for Orissa.

You have proposed some five mega bridges. You have proposed a bridge on river Brahmaputra; you have proposed a bridge on river Ganga. ...*(Interruptions)* How are you going to complete these projects?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please try to conclude now.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: I come from Orissa, from the KBK area. My area is an underdeveloped area with a lot of mineral resources. If the railway infrastructure is developed, my area can become one of the richest areas of the country. So, I request the hon. Minister, through you, that proper attention should be paid to my Sambalpur Division under the East-Coast Railway.

I thank you once again, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I may please be permitted to lay on the Table the rest of my speech.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are permitted to do that.

*...*SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, Transport and communication are vital elements of infrastructure and key elements not only for global competitiveness but also for creating an integrated national market.

High transaction cost arising from an inefficient transport sector and poor communication can prevent in economy from realising its full growth potential regardless of progress of fronts.

The Tenth Plan identified certain thrust areas in the railway sector—Capacity expansion through modernisation and technological upgradation, improvement in the quality

of service railway safety and rail reliability. Freight movement targets are being achieved but the question is this. Is it the pace at which it is being achieved? Investment of Indian Railways from 1992-2000 comes out to around \$17.3 billion in contrast to Chinese Railway's \$85 billion. While the two railway networks are comparable in size, the Chinese railways' output in traffic unit is 2.5 than times that of Indian Railways. Between 1992-2002, the two railways carried almost exactly the same volume of passengers per kilometre but Chinese railway carried four and a half times the freight per kilometre than carried by the Indian railways. The average passenger tariff in India is 55 per cent lower than that of China. The average freight tariff in India is almost 66 per cent higher than in China. The requirement of funds during the remaining two years of the Tenth Plan has been estimated at Rs. 39,765 crore. Railway output for the Tenth Plan is Rs. 60,000 crore. There has been a trend of increasing on GBS and declining contribution of IEFR since Ninth Plan. The Railway was provided with about 70 per cent of the total Tenth Plan GBS in the first three years of Plan period. The contribution of IEFR was only 55 per cent of the total Tenth Plan IEFR. The Railways is behind schedule in achieving target set for the first three years of the Plan in respect of new lines, doubling and acquisition of Electrical Multiple Unit coaches.

Sir, I would like to say something about the survey of Kantabanji-Jagadalpur Railway via Khariar Sinapali and Deobhog. The entire region embracing portions of Orissa and adjoining Jagadalpur in Chattisgarh is a tribal dominated belt wallowing in abysmal poverty. But, as a silver lining in the dark clouds, the region is extremely rich in mineral resources, granite mines, gem stones like diamond, ruby, cat's eye, and garnet etc. Abundance of forest produce including teak, sal, tendu leaf and food grains have added a new dimensions to its wealth. It is, therefore, in national interest to take up comprehensive survey of this region to assess its viability.

At present a sleeper coach is attached in Tapaswini express and thereafter in Sambalpur-Rayagada Express. This is grossly inadequate. You may kindly consider attaching one AC-III tier coach from Bhubaneswar to Rayagada in aforesaid trains. The present sleeper coach is in a bad shape with broken toilets and torn berth covers. Water is also a problem. What is worse, the coach becomes an easy prey to unauthorised passengers for want of adequate supervision. Quality of coaches and maintenance needs attention.

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

I would also urge you to consider running a Rajdhani Express via Sambalpur to New Delhi. This will benefit the Steel belt of Rourkela and a sizeable portion of Western Orissa. An inter-city train to Bhubaneswar and Puri.

As you are aware, Khariar, situated at a distance of 35 kilometres from Kantabanji and about 60 kilometres from Khariar road railway stations, is the most important town of Nuapada district. Besides, being the capital of erstwhile Raja, it has an important Evangelical Hospital and many important government offices, college NAC, High Schools etc. Khariar also caters to tribal blocks of Sinapali and Bodan. This needs special consideration and it is in people's interest that a computer booking office is opened as a very special consideration and it is in people's interest that a computer booking office is opened as a very special case. Boudh being a district Headquarters also deserves a computer booking center.

Mancheswar railway station is situated in the vicinity of Infosys city, Sailashree Vihar, Utkal University and other important areas. This station can be developed so as to reduce the pressure on Bhubaneswar railway station on the lines of Visakhapatnam and Simanchalam.*

Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

[Translation]

*SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Indian Railway is that symbol of connectivity and harmony for crores of Indians. It is imperative to stress upon certain points in Supplementary Demands for Grants. There is a need to improve catering services in trains. Also, cleanliness of bed-sheets and pillow-covers in AC coaches needs to be ensured. Railway crossings, where traffic congestion is more, need to be provided with rail over bridges on priority for ensuring safety.

The demands relating to railway of my constituency should be addressed. Utkal Express should be given stoppage at Ganeshganj station. Stoppage should be provided to Jabalpur-Nizamuddin Sampark-Kranti at Khurai, Jhelum and Shipra Express at Banora, Pathankot Express at Karaunda and Sachkhand and Pushpak Express at Bina. Besides on overbridge be constructed at Jhansi railway crossing in Bina.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

YOGI ADITYA NATH (Gorakhpur): The House is discussing Supplementary Demands for Grants of Railways for the year 2005-2006. I will speak for 3-4 minutes and rest of my speech I will lay on the Table.

MR. SPEAKER: It will be better if you lay it right now.

YOGI ADITYA NATH: I find that supplementary Demands also reflect political narrow-mindedness like the Rail Budget. Therefore, I would like to oppose the resolution moved by hon. Minister of Railways on the ground the Supplementary Demands for Grants nowhere reflects any innovative approach leading to Development of railways.

No provision has been made for modernization of railway tracks, repair of dilapidated bridges, modernization of signal systems, connectivity of level crossings with interlocking system. My submission is that the Government should rise above political narrow-mindedness and take steps for comprehensive development of railways by removing regional disparities reflected in the demands for grants. Protection of railway property and safety of passengers are two very crucial issues before the railways today. Very recently, terrorist struck a blast in Shramjivi Express killing dozens of passengers and injuring over 150. Therefore, safety has become a challenging task.

Trains often run late. It has become a common-feature since present Government assumed office. If railway can't ensure timely arrival of passengers at required destinations then it should refund some part of train fares to passengers. The railways should change fare commensurate with the facilities provided.

Despite the fact that Uttar Pradesh has a population of 16 crore and headquarter of North-Eastern Railways is located in the state, the state has been neglected in both Rail Budget 2005-06 and Supplementary Demands for Grants. Gorakhpur is worst affected. North Eastern railways are being met with all sorts of discrimination, rather it was bifurcated, and then the post of Deputy General Manager including that of Chief official language officer was abolished.

The various divisional offices of Gorakhpur Railway Zone were shifted from there and attached to other divisional zones. I would like to request the Hon. Minister

[Yogi Aditya Nath]

of Railways that the matter of shifting all stations from the Gorakhpur zone and dismantling the zone itself should be taken very seriously. If Bihar is to be developed then Gorakhpur can not be ignored. I would like to put forth certain suggestions for developmental schemes of the North-Eastern Railways.

The gauge conversion of Gorakhpur-Nautanva-Gonda loop line be taken up. The work of doubling of Gorakhpur-Gonda Section of Gorakhpur-Lucknow railway line. The electrification of railway track between Lucknow and Gorakhpur should be undertaken. At present a railway over bridge is required at four places in Gorakhpur, namely Kudaghat of NH-28, Char Fatak, Humayunpur railway crossing and Suryakund railway crossing.

The proposal of laying a railway line from Anand Nagar to Gughli via District Headquarter Maharajganj should be sanctioned and Gughli Railway Station should be upgraded. Gorakhpur-Basgaon-Dohrighat should be linked with a railway line.

Sir, the Hon. Minister of Railways has introduced a new train from Gorakhpur to Lucknow via Ayodhya, the birth place of Shri Ram and from Gorakhpur to Allahabad via Ayodhya alongwith making provision for the Gorakhdham Express to run on a daily basis. I would like to thank him for these efforts and would request for the revision of its time table as well. The time table should be revised as per the proposals made here by me.

I would once again request the Hon. Minister to work in the interest of the whole country by rising above political parochialism and not allow the Indian Railways, which is the symbol of country's growth to deviate from its objective of development. I would like to 'lay' my speech on the Table of the House.

*...*Sir, today, the House is discussing the Demands for Supplementary Grants of the Indian Railways for the year 2005-06. The Indian Railways, considered to be the life-line of social and cultural unity of the country is becoming a victim of political bias and prejudices of the UPA Government. The race amongst political parties to gain cheap popularity, the tendency to take the increasing terrorist extremist activities and the anti-national mindset of naxalism lightly and to give priority to political vested

interest has led to grave security crisis of crores of passengers of the Indian Railways. The recent bomb explosion in Shramjivi-Express plying from Patna to Delhi at Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, in which dozens of passengers were killed and more than 150 passengers were wounded, the recovery of dangerous explosives like RDX and the refusal of the Minister of Railways to admit that it was a terrorist activity, the age old railway track, approximately 1000 bridges in dilapidated state, more than 8000 railway level crossings without interlocking facility are some of the examples that substantiate the above said mindset of Railway administration. The neglect of developmental works and schemes of the Indian Railways, launched during the regime of the previous Government is not at all in favour of the Indian Railways.

All the schemes relating to the modernization of railway tracks, repair of crumbling bridges, modernization of signal system alongwith linking the railway level crossing with inter locking system have either been slowed down or dropped. The Demands for Supplementary Grants of the Railways are a pointer in this direction. It displays political narrow mindedness and partisan approach of Railways. All the important areas and projects of the country have been ignored in these demands as they were ignored in the Railway Budget.

Sir, the entire Uttar Pradesh including Gorakhpur under the North-Eastern Railway has been ignored in these supplementary Demands on the lines of the Railway budget. On the one hand, the Minister of Railways talks of making the Indian Railways of International standard and on the other hand, the state in which 16 per cent of the total population resides, is being neglected from the point of view of Indian Railways. It would only create a situation of lopsided development of regions. No mention has been made of the projects of North-Eastern railways, including gauge conversion of Gorakhpur-Nautanva-Gonda loop line, doubling of Gorakhpur-Sahjanvan railway line, the proposed scheme of Anand Nagar Maharajganj-Gughli railway line, the proposed scheme of laying Gorakhpur-Basgaon-Dohrighat railway line, the scheme of electrification Lucknow-Gorakhpur railway track and the construction of four proposed over bridges in Gorakhpur that includes Koodaghat, Char Fatak, Hamuyapur Railway crossing and Suryakund. If schemes and projects important from point of view of revenue alongwith regional development will continue to be ignored then it will neither be in the interest of the country nor it would fulfil the dreams of providing services of International standard. At the time of bringing Railway budget. Hon. Minister of

*...*This part of speech was laid on the Table.

Railways had given the assurance of setting up of Railway Land Development Authority, the demand in regard to which is being made of the last five-six years. Had it been implemented in right earnest then the unutilized land of the railways which has been encroached by land mafia could have been given for commercial utilization. It would have not only increased the revenue of the Railways but the opening of commercial institutions and shopping complex would have provided employment to lakhs of unemployed youth. But the assurance of the hon. Minister has only been verbal because I had myself sent a proposal to this Ministry on behalf of Gorakhpur for opening a shopping complex of Municipal Corporation out side. Gorakhpur railway station but no action has been taken thereon so far which shows as to how far serious of Hon. Minister of Railways towards the implementation of the assurances he makes. Sir, the availability of new means of transport has led to the emergence of competition in the Indian Railways. In such a situation when every passenger wants to reach his destination on time, would the Indian Railways be able to take care of the facilities of the passengers of Indian Railways when all the important express trains are running three to five hours late. I had given two suggestions to the Hon. Minister of Railways in this regard even in the last Railway budget.

1. If the passengers of Indian Railways fail to reach their destination on time despite paying a high fare then a proportionate deduction in fares should be made.
2. Seats should be allotted to every passenger traveling in the Indian Railways and if the passenger does not get a seat despite paying the fare then it should either be refunded or adjustments should be made in the fare accordingly.

Sir, there should be uniform scale of development for the entire country. We will not be able to do anything for the welfare of anyone with lopsided development. The Railways should accord priority to ongoing projects aimed at national security and oriented towards revenue earning. Otherwise, whenever a new Minister of Railways assumes office he will formulate new schemes to draw political mileage abandoning the schemes implemented by his predecessor. As a result, the ongoing projects worth Rs. 1.5 lakh crore of the Indian Railways are pending as on date. That is why, I request the Hon. Minister to clear all the pending projects belated to areas under North

Eastern Railways Gorakhpur having highest density of population from the view point national security. Injustice, such as abolition of the post of General Manager, Chief Official language officer, withdrawal of the bogies attached to Vaishali Super Fast Express for Gorakhpur, and efforts to transfer the Divisional offices of North Eastern Railway connecting Chhapra and Bihar from Gorakhpur after the division of Headquarter of North-Eastern Railway, should be stopped. Immediate arrangement of funds should be made for ongoing projects, important from revenue point of view and should be completed on time. Important projects of North Eastern Railway Headquarters are as under:

1. The gauge conversion of Gorakhpur-Nautanva-Gonda loop line—this railway line passes bordering areas of India and Nepal. Therefore, keeping in view anti-national activities of ISI in bordering areas and Maoists activities in Nepal, this project should be completed immediately for the development of this area and the security of the country.
2. Doubling of rail line of Gorakhpur-Gonda segment of Gorakhpur-Lucknow rail line. The previous Government had given approval for doubling of 15 km rail line between Gorakhpur-Sahjanwa in 1999-2000 after the severe rail accident at Domingarh in Gorakhpur in 1996. Out of which Six k.m. line from Gorakhpur to Domingarh has already been completed. The fund should be released for the completion of the remaining work.
3. The electrification of Lucknow-Gorakhpur railway track. At present it takes five to six hours to reach Gorakhpur from Lucknow. If the said rail line is electrified, the above distance can be comfortably covered in 3 to 4 hours. Besides, there will be a 17 percent saving in the revenue of Railways.
4. The traffic movement remains disrupted on account of Gorakhpur being headquarter of North-Eastern Railway, doubling work of rail line between Gorakhpur-Domingarh and heavy traffic centre railway line. At present railway over bridges are required to be constructed at four places in Gorakhpur.
5. The time table of Gorakh Dham Express running daily between Gorakhpur-Delhi should be changed and its departure time should be fixed

[Yogi Aditya Nath]

at 4.30 PM that is, half an hour before the departure of Vaishali Express from Gorakhpur and it should depart from Delhi at 7 P.M. Pentry can and other facilities available in super fast train should be provided in the said train.

6. Railway service should be provided from Gorakhpur to Lucknow and Allahabad via Ayodhya.

Sir, once again I would like to request the Minister of Railways that he should rise above the political prejudices and should not distract from the objective of development of the Indian Railways which is the symbol of development of the country in the larger public interest.*

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thousands of passengers commute between Alwar, an NCR town and Delhi every day, Therefore, there is an urgent need of starting EMU on this rack.

Earlier, Marudhar Express used to run from Jodhpur to Varanashi *via* Alwar, now the route has been changed and, now it runs *via* Bandi Kui. People of Alwar have been deprived of this facility. Only one passenger train runs on Alwar-Mathura broadgauge line which indicates about under utilization of said line. Therefore, I would urge hon. Member to extend any train from Mathura to Alwar as passengers bound to Kanpur, Lucknow, Banaras cities of Uttar Pradesh from Alwar do not have train service.

Bhiwadi is a big industrial town. Over one thousand units are located here including a container depot. There has been a long pending demand for setting up a broadgauge line from Rewari to Bhiwadi. So I would urge the hon. Minister to kindly consider the said proposal.

I request for a stoppage of Ashram Express at Rajgarh and Khairtal. There is a big grains-market at Khairtal. Agri-bussinessman from across the country come to this market. On an occasion when hon. Minister visited this area, thousands of people had placed their demand before him, requesting him for stoppage of said train. But, officers of Railways say that super-fast trains can't stop at smaller stations. But, if the Government do not care for common-man, who shall care for them. Further, I request hon. Minister to extend 7RD/4RD; plying between Delhi-Rewari-Hissar upto Patwal or Bandi Kui. Railway officers say that since there is neither a pit line nor an

extra track, so it is not possible to do so. So my submission is that first of all a pit-line or an extra line should be laid. I congratulate hon. Minister who without any administrative experience earned revenue of Rs. 8 thousand crore by ensuring optimum utilization of resources. Therefore, I support him.

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH (Aligarh): I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on important department such as Railways. With a view to check influx of large population to Delhi, hon. Minister has introduced many local trains, EMUs which will cover an area of 150 kms. ...*(Interruptions)* Aligarh is a historical city. About 12 thousand students from Bihar are studying here. Heads of States and dignitaries keep visiting the city. The city has a student population of 36 thousand. Aligarh is connected with a double line. Express trains are delayed to give way to EMUs which results in problem for passengers. Thus, I would urge the hon. Minister to lay third track at Aligarh route. Survey in this regard has been conducted twice and the work is about to start any time. I would urge upon the hon. Minister to sanction laying of third line upto Aligarh so that movement of Express trains do not get delayed.

Sir, my second point is—several Bihar bound trains do not stop here, whereas large number of students travel from here to Bihar. Earlier also, during debate on Budget, I had placed my demand before hon. Minister and he assured that trains like Shramjiwi Express, Sampark Kranti Express, Shahid Express etc. will be provided stoppage. Since it concerns students, therefore, I would request hon. Minister to provide stoppage of all Bihar bound trains at Aligarh.

Further, I would congratulate hon. Minister, who, despite financial constraints, did not hike passenger fares whereas rates of diesel and steel have risen four-fold. It reflects the thinking of the Government.

With these words, I congratulate hon. Minister that their approach towards common-man is good. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

*SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU (Berhampur-Orissa): I rise to support the Budget on Railways (Supplementary) for 2005-2006. Sir, Hon'ble Minister Railways, Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav in this budget has

*Speech was laid on the Table.

brought a revolutionary changes regarding giving lot of concessions to farmers, students, retired defence person, at the outset to the common people (Aam Admi). Sir, under the leadership of our UPA Chair-person Smt. Sonia Gandhi and by the direction of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, our Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav had brought a visible development in respect of railways throughout the country. In comparison with the last Government, the UPA has given more attention to the State of Orissa. Still Sir, through you I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister to give more funds for the ongoing projects to be completed very soon.

Sir, keeping in view the time constraint, I am going to mention some of the problem of my parliamentary constituency for immediate steps in brief:-

1. The ongoing broad gauge line construction from Naupada to Gunpur has to be completed by the end of March, 2006. The amount given is very meagure so I request the Hon'ble Minister to give more funds.
2. The announcement made in the budget regarding the extension of Nizammudin to Bhubneshwar (Hirakud Exp.) up to Vishakhapatnam to be immediately run without any delay.
3. Stoppage of Falkunam Exp at Chattarpur.

Regarding other demands I had expressed in my railways main budget speech. So I don't want to take much of the time. I once again support the Railways Supplementary Budget for 2005-2006.

*PROF. CHANDER KUMAR (Kangra): I support the Grants of Railways. The railway is the means of communication in the country and it links the North to South & from West to East of the country and it also shows our heritage of the country.

I want to give some suggestions and also some demands of the people of Himachal Pradesh. The oldest narrow gauge railway line from Pathankot to Joginder Nagar which was made functional during the year 1913. It requires improvement. In this budget proposals of 2005-06 the gauge conversion has been reflected in the budget. The narrow gauge railway line may be converted to broad

gauge so that it can cater the demand of the people of the area.

There is a lot of tourism potential on this area.

The Jawala Shahr railway station requires improvement.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now I request the hon. Minister of Railways to reply to the debate.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, in protest, we stage a walk-out.

20.42 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Kharabela Swain and some other hon. Members left the House)

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): Sir, they all thanked the hon. Minister in their speeches; but when the hon. Minister starts to give a reply, they have left the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you think I can stop them?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to 52 Members who took part in the debate and gave us good suggestions. Hon. Members highlighted problems of their respective constituencies and drew attention of the House. I am grateful to all those hon. Members and I would like to assure them that action would be taken on their suggestions and they would be apprised of the action taken with regard thereto. Hon. Members of BJP, who do not dare facing us, have walked out. ...(Interruptions) Supplementary Demands of Grants for 2002-03 after recommendations of Public Accounts Committee, have been placed before the House for passing.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Lalu Prasad]

Supplementary Demands for Grants for current financial year has been placed in the House for approval of Central contribution of Rs. 300 crore for funding Udampur-Srinagar-Baramulla project with additional expenditure of Rs. 125 crore under Fund for Railways and for undertaking out of turn construction of 80 works. I do not want to say anything about NDA Government.

The Expert Committee on Indian Railways headed by Dr. Rakesh Mohan has submitted its report. The attention of the NDA Government was drawn toward certain points in 2001. The Expert Committee had stated that during 2001, Indian Railway was in the grip of a financial crisis. It was categorically stated that if the present trend continues, the day is not far off when Indian Railways will become bankrupt and in the next 16 years, it would entail the additional financial liability of Rs. 61 thousand crore toward the Government of India. If we look at it from operational point of view, Railways is in debt-trap. The Expert Committee of 2001 had stated so. We were not in power at that time, nor had we constituted the Committee. I reiterate that the condition of Railways was bad during NDA's regime. Today we are in power and we have presented two Budgets.

In the year 2001 the total amount remaining in all the funds including DRF was Rs. 350 crores only and the operating ratio had declined 98 percent. The Indian Railways could not utilize the sums appropriated for revival and modernization of its movable assets. Which is why the Government had to constitute a special Railway Safety Fund of Rs. 17 thousand crores. Sir, such was the condition of Railways during NDA regime. We have converted the railways, from a huge loss incurring organisation into a profit making organization.

Sir, when I became the Minister and took the responsibility, I had promised in the House that we will not increase passenger fares for any class nor the freight rates would be increased. We were criticized a lot for that. People were saying, where would the money come from? We were mocked at by referring to our rural background cattle rearing traits. When I was entrusted with the responsibility of having Indian Railways efforts were made to malign my name and create a flawed public perception by tarnishing my image. I do not want to claim anything. These people are responsible for running the condition of Indian railways. They claimed that Lalu Yadav would ruin the railways entirely. I have brought it to the knowledge of Hon'ble Prime Minister

that I have been accused of being involved in a fodder scam and people call me a tainted person. Indian Railway in the biggest empire of the world. It is a separate empire. People from all walks of life including army personnel travel by train. Indian Railways is the focal point of attraction of all. I have been given the responsibility of such an exalted office. I have asked hon'ble Prime Minister that every step that keeps track of the performance of the Railways is welcome so much so that even intelligence Bureau could be asked to keep an eye on the performance of my Ministry. The eyes of entire world are set towards this. Delhi has a cosmopolitan character and people from all walks of life live here. Efforts were made to make fun of me. Certain high families of Delhi who wield control over the media, are responsible for it. You might have seen what kind of remarks were made in India Today. You must have seen that I do not claim that I am the most able Minister as well as the most intelligent person. They have tried to demoralize and spoil public perception about me and have also tried to lower my image among the people. Whenever people have asked me about my place in political arena, I have always maintained that I do not harbour much ambition for the top. Though there are elite class people living in the country, but what Shri Lohia ji used to say is also true that, the right to vote also ensures that rule of the common man. If there had been no power of vote the people like me, and the likes of Mulayam Singh Yadavji, Sharad Pawarji and other people belonging to backward class would not have been sitting here, which also means the oppressed and downtrodden would not have been sitting here and had an opportunity to be a part of the political set up. But an organized conspiracy is being hatched to abolish the power of vote? When people like me are given some responsibility then we are continuously called tainted. Who are tainted in this country? I would request that the property of all these people must be assessed. This is an example of how we people are harassed, ruined and demoralized. Only those who have seen the Taj Mahal and heard about it can know about it.

People used to ask as to how money would be mobilised for this purpose. I would like to tell how we have curbed our expenditure in railways. The guiding principle of the previous Government to improve the condition of railways was to increase the passenger fare and freight rates whereas, our strategy was to curb the expenditure and improve business. We did not beg for anything at all. The same railways which was facing financial crunch until very late is making internal accrual

of revenues. Now our concern has shifted to as to how utilize the income earned so that we can further earn profit by investing this amount. Going by the trend of our revenue generation balance carried forward by the end of this year is likely to be more than Rs. 10,000 crores. I would like to thank all the railway employees and senior officials for this. Indian Railways which is a golden bird, was brought to the juncture of financial ruin and it became customary to present deficit Rail Budget. I believe that the Railways also failed to take care of and provide adequate facilities for the common poor people and passengers, who as the record speaks itself, were the major source of revenue generation for Railways. The frequent accidents that took place during the NDA Government's regime gave rise to such a sense of insecurity among the people that a mother would not allow her son to go alone through Gujarat. If at all her son was to go then she would be worried for his safe return. Today they talk about UPA. Our Government and the people of different ideology are adamant over one question that they will not allow the fascist and communal forces to interfere at all. Conspiracy is being hatched and it is being publicized that the Government is going to lose majority and that party is withdrawing support. Laluji is threatening to withdraw support and Shri Ram Vilas Paswanji is in the process of withdrawing. Sometimes contrary to truth it is also said that Shri Sharad Pawarji is also not happy, whereas he is never angry. These people do not know how much we are united. Rs. 10,000 crore of Indian Railways are for completing the long pending important schemes. I had said that we want to complete the ongoing projects immediately as per the calendar.

Sir, you hail from a village, I also come from similar class and section of people. In villages the farmers say that if a cow is not milked properly then it affects her health and the costlier the cow is, the more sick it becomes. The same things has happened to our trains. For a freight carriage of 70-80 tonnes, that revenue of only 60 tonnes used to go to the coffers of Railways. Such was the situation prevailing earlier, and such kind of loot and evasion was taking place. We ourselves looked into the matter and checked the irregularities that were taking place and also increased the carrying capacity of goods train wagons. Goods train wagon is the milch cow of Indian railways, we have taken some steps towards reducing the time taken for loading and unloading of goods and the trains which were stationed for long on the routes, the turn around time has now been reduced

from 7 days to 5.5 days to achieve the target. This has shown an increase in our balance. In my budget speech when I said that the time would be reduced to 5 days, one of the hon'ble Member while participating in the budget discussions termed it as day dreaming. I am happy that day dreaming is becoming reality and this lays the foundation stone for the financial changeover of the Indian Railways. We have reduced the per unit cost of goods loading and have registered a historic growth of 13 percent in the same.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, when I took over the charge of Railway Ministry these were a number of quotas and restrictions on the movement of goods trains. It is a matter of pride and joy for us that we have made the movement of goods train easy and smooth in every corner of the country by nearly removing all types of quota and bans. Today we have come to a position where except the Iron ore circuit we can make rakes available on a short notice as per the demand of consumers in the country. I propose to constitute a Railway—Industry coordination committee. This Forum will include one representative each from the organizations of ASSOCHEM FICCI, CIL etc., as well as all the major freight customers of Railways.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have proved that the hike in passenger fare is not the only mean of increasing the revenues. We did not increase fares at all but still we have registered a growth of 10 percent in the first quarter. To achieve this growth we have strengthened the system of Passenger Profile Management, rationalized various types of reservation quota and replaced the boggies of trains going vacant to other such trains where there were long waiting lists. This change on the one hand facilitated the waitlisted people to reach their destinations as well as filled the railway Coiffers. New airlines are giving attractive offers to lure the passengers. Someone is offering travel from Delhi to Bangalore at the rate of Re. 1 and other one at the rate of Rs. 1100. Nobody knows how many people get these tickets, but this is an offer. We do not want to give any offer but want to increase the occupancy of higher classes under a well defend strategy. A vacant seat is the lost seat. We have taken a decision in principle that some seats are left vacant in higher class then the list of passengers of lower class will be upgraded automatically by computers on random basis at the time of charting. A software is being developed in this regard. As soon as this software is developed, it would be tested on pilot basis and if found successful, then would be launched in the entire

[Shri Lalu Prasad]

country. By this we will not only get the goodwill of the lakhs of passengers, but Railways will earn extra income by filling vacant seats.

At present, the passengers having waiting list tickets have to cancel their tickets, if their seats are not confirmed. Now we have decided to give facility of changing journey date, train, class etc., to the waiting list passengers. I am sure that by these measures overall occupancy of our passenger trains will increase and without increasing passenger fares, our passenger earnings will increase.

The House would be happy to know that the work in regard to construction of four big bridges has been initiated which includes bridges at Patna, Monghyr and Kosi in Bihar and Bogibeel bridge in Assam. Enough funds would be provided to complete construction of these bridges at time and bridge on Ganges river near Patna would be developed as Rail-com-road bridge. In addition to surveys announced in the budget, the survey of Purnea-Kishanganj via Putti-Dalmailpur-Lohardaga-Simdega via Gumla, Chhata-Aligarh Kiangulam-Katarkara via Adoor new lines are also being carried out.

The special attention is being paid towards execution of announcements made in the budget speech and progress made in throughput expansion works. I am happy to say that the gauge conversion of Mansi-Saharsa, Ranchi-Lohardaga, Bharatpur-Agra Fort and Kabakaputtar-Subramanya Road have been completed and new trains have been started on those lines. The gauge conversion of Chittorgarh-Udaipur and Gondia-Balaghat have also been completed and new trains on these lines would be started very soon. In view of demand of local people, the rail service from Kishanganj to Ajmer Sharif will be started very soon.

Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav has demanded sanction of rail line from Gaujrola to Sambhal in his speech. I assure him that after carrying out survey of this route, an action in regard to obtaining its approval from Planning Commission would be taken. I am happy to announce that all major stations of the country including Bihar-*i.e.* Mathura, Medhpura, Darbhanga, Patna Sahib, Kishanganj, Tirupathi, Nayagaon, Arouria, Motihari etc., would be developed as model stations.

21.00 hrs.

In addition to passenger facilities, pft lines would also be constructed on these stations as per need, we have

decided expansion of UTS facilities in the entire country for increasing passenger facilities and sale of tickets. Now, we are earning profit. Therefore, we have improved the financial condition of railways due to strategic planning and hard work of lakhs of railway employees and it is continuously getting stronger. I and my UPA Government are always conscious about problems of common people. I move the motion to decrease the daily passenger fares on second class tickets of passenger trains, mail, express by Re. one in view of providing relief to the common people.

Sir, I have taken cognizance of all the matters raised and suggestions given by hon'ble Members and I will apprise them of the progress made in regard thereto by sending written information. I again thank the hon'ble Members for giving support to the Railways and request the House to approve Demands for Excess Grants (Railways)—2002-03, Demands for Supplementary Grants (Railways) 2005-06 and Appropriation Bills related to it.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall now put the Supplementary Demand for Grant (Railways) for 2005-2006 to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"That the supplementary sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2006, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the second column thereof against Demand No. 16."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall now put the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) for 2002-2003 to vote.

The question is:

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year

ended the 31st day of March, 2003, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 14, 15 and 16."

The motion was adopted.

21.04 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 4
BILL, 2005*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No. 15. Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Sir, I move that leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2005-2006 for the purposes of Railways.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2005-2006 for the purposes of Railways."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Sir, I introduce** the Bill.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Item No. 16. Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav.

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary. Part-II, Section-2, dated 11.8.05

**Introduced with the Recommendation of the President.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2005-2006 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2005-2006 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to Bill.

Clause 1, The Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister may now move that the Bill be passed.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

21.06 hrs.

**APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 3 BILL,
2005***

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No. 17

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Sir, I move that the leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 2003 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 2003 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I introduce** the Bill:

"That the Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 2003 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year, be taken into consideration."

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund

of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 2003 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister may now move that the Bill be passed.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shall we take up Special Mentions now?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

21.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, August 12, 2005/Sravana 21, 1927 (Saka).

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary. Part-II, Section-2, dated 11.8.05

**Introduced with the Recommendation of the President.

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Member-wise Index to Starred Questions

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Published under Rules 379 and 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha
(Eleventh Edition) and printed by Jainco Art India, New Delhi.
