

Seventh Plan under the Scheme. The Urban Development Ministry should instruct the State Government to immediately include in the scheme all slums development programmes. Urgent intervention of the Planning Ministry, and Urban Development Ministry in this regard is called for before final implementation of the Seventh Plan programmes.

I desire that this matter will be taken in the next week's business of the House.

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have very carefully listened to all the submissions made by the Hon. Members and I will convey them to the Business Advisory Committee.

13.45 hrs.

INDIAN ELECTRICITY (AMENDMENT)  
BILL—Contd.

[English]

SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI (Bellary) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Indian Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 1986. The main object of this Bill is to discourage theft at all levels and hence it seeks amendments to sections 39, 44 and 50 of the original Act.

Sir, electricity is the basic need for all-round development of this country. The progress of any country depends upon its capacity to generate power for the industrial and agricultural development. Sir, there are various sources of producing energy in our country. The main source is to produce electricity from the hydro electric projects. We produce electricity by thermal plant; we produce electricity by nuclear plants; we produce electricity by putting generators and captive generation also; and we produce electricity to some extent by non-conventional methods like solar energy and also bio-gas plants. But with all this, now various States are facing a lot of power shortage and it has resulted in almost closing the industries in the private sector, public sector and also small scale sector. More industries are going

to be closed in future for want of proper power supply. The States which are mostly depending on hydro electric projects like Karnataka are put to a lot of hardship due to failure of monsoon. Taking this into consideration, I would request the Government to take further steps to produce more power and see that the country's economy grows faster.

Sir, coming to the Bill, I welcome the amendment. I am glad that the Government has given a thought to it very seriously to plug the loopholes including theft of power and prosecuting them, either by asking them to pay fine or imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years. It has been stated in the Bill that the concerned State Electricity Board has been asked to initiate the prosecution. It is not clear whether the prosecuting authority is the State Electricity Board or the Government. In my opinion, it is advisable to vest powers of prosecution with the Government rather than with the State Electricity Board. State Electricity Board should be an advisory body. They can advise the Government, to what extent this prosecution should take place. Therefore, I would request the Hon Minister to look into this aspect and see that the Government only should be vested this kind of prosecuting powers.

I am surprised to go through the Bill because the penalty or imprisonment is not discriminated between a small farmer and an industrialist. I can understand that imprisonment may be given to an industrialist who indulges in this kind of theft or who is also involved in other kinds of malpractice. But there are small farmers who are having pumpsets to the extent of 1 HP to 5 HP. They have put irrigation pumpsets. If you are going to penalise these farmers also, I am afraid, that will certainly make the farmers' position very pitiable.

I would like to suggest that instead of meter charges, charges should be levied only on horse powers. Some of the States like Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have already taken a lead. They are charging on only horse powers and not on meter reading. So, the Government should take immediate steps to introduce this system throughout the

[Smt. Basavarajeswari]

country, so as to see that farmers should not come under this provision.

Instead of making a long speech I would like to give a few suggestions for the consideration of the Hon. Minister. The Government should instal sophisticated meters and monitoring equipment in order to detect the theft of electricity instead of prosecuting in order to get more revenue and also to conserve energy. Secoudly. I would like to suggest that some percentage of power should be reserved for the agricultural sector. Electricity should be treated as a national property and equal distribution of power and uniform power-cuts should be introduced throughout the country. A few States are having acute power shortage. Amongst them Karnataka is one. Long-term and soft loans should be encouraged by the Central Government for the entrepreneurs who have set up the industries in such deficit states. The amount which they are going to give for purchasing generating sets and to augment the production should be sufficient.

The Government of India should come forward to initiate a discussion amongst the deficit states and the surplus states and to negotiate to give sufficient power at a reasonable rate to the deficit states. Non-conventional energy should be encouraged at all levels. I would request the Minister to give due consideration to my suggestions.

Finally, coming to Karnataka I would say that due to variation of monsoon this year also we are having acute shortage of power. Power intensive units are having 80 to 85 per cent power cut. We had full hopes that this year monsoon will improve the position; but to me, I am afraid, the position has not improved. By August 15th, monsoon will be over; but still the reservoirs have not been filled in. So, I would request the Minister that all the mini hydel projects which are pending before the Government may be cleared as early as possible and also to see that the neighbouring States like Andhra, Kerala and Maharashtra give surplus power to the deficit States so that the persons who have set-up industries there are able to survive and no unemployment is

caused amongst those who are working in the existing units. With these suggestions I conclude.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir. India is a developing country with a large percentage of its population dependent on agriculture. For the development of agriculture now-a-days energy is an important factor. Of course, energy is required for other things also but in my opinion for the development of this agriculture-based country energy is a must.

Unfortunately pilferage is there in this sector. Who is doing this pilferage ? Is it the innocent farmers or the big industrialists who are doing this ? What I would like to say is that the farmers may be doing it out of innocence whereas the big industrialists are doing it intentionally. So, they should be punished. You are inserting Section 39 or 49 for increasing the punishment. I welcome it. But it alone cannot solve the problem. Until and unless you implement this legislation in true spirit you will not be able to solve this problem.

Sir, ours is a developing country. It is said that in our country the pilferage is of the order of 20-21 per cent whereas in developed countries it is of the order of 4-6 per cent. This 20-21 per cent is not a small thing. So we have to take firm steps to control it. You are proposing fine and imprisonment but I feel these industrialists are able to evade them. The present law is not suitable to deal with them. When we know some persons are doing this mischief intentionally then we have to deal with them severly. So, these Sections will not do. The provisions which are there in the Food Adulteration Act have to be inserted here.

Mr. Chairman, in India we are producing 46,000 MV and 20 per cent of it means quite a huge quantity. If you are able to minimise the pilferage by 1 per cent there will be a saving of Rs. 100 crores and if you are able to minimise it by 5 per cent then you can save Rs. 500 crores which is equal to one-fourth of our Budget. We can do it provided we are very strict. You have to deal with these big people with an iron hand.

Sir, coming to Andhra Pradesh we must compliment the staff working in the Andhra Pradesh Electricity Board. They are doing a good job. They have evolved a new technology. Mostly these problems are technical problems and commercial problems. First you have to control the technical problems. Technology is developing fast. In some of the States we are having old transformers, wires and conductors. We have to improve upon it so that the losses are minimised.

14.00 hrs.

This has to be taken care of. Though in Andhra Pradesh, they have certain proposals for some projects, but unfortunately, the budget allocation for the State Electricity Board is only Rs 200 crores. That is not at all sufficient. The State Electricity Board has asked for Central assistance for the construction of single transmission plant for a sum of Rs. 100 crores, but the Centre has paid a deaf ear to that. That request is still pending with the Centre. I hope the Hon. M'nister will consider it favourably.

Every State Electricity Board should strengthen its vigilance and intelligence wing. Concrete steps should be taken for that. Unless and until the State Electricity Boards really know the ways of pilferage of electricity, what they are doing in the industries and in the rural areas, no effective steps can be taken. Further, for this purpose, sincere official should be deputed. Though the action has to be taken by the State Electricity Boards, the Centre must give proper technical advice and guidelines to the States, as to how to control the technical losses, and then for the commercial losses, besides the law, goodwill of the people is also very necessary.

Further, if you implement this law blindly, certain poor people and the rural people, innocent people are likely to be put to difficulties. Before taking any action, one should actually know whether they are willingly indulging in pilferage, or unwillingly they are doing it. That should be taken into consideration, only then we would be fair and successful.

In India the per capita consumption of electricity is 165 units, while in Andhra

State alone, it is 175 units. 10 units more than the all India average. In the less developed countries, the per capita consumption is 1000 units, leave alone USA and other countries, where it is more than 10,000 units. When are we going to reach that ?

The allocation in the Central Budget, that is Rs. 2000 crores is very meagre. In fact, the Government does not consider the Energy Department as an important one. There is need to take up many more thermal power projects. As far as Andhra is concerned, proposal for the Maunugur project is pending with the Centre. Another proposal for Nagarjunasagar Atomic Energy project is also pending. Technical report is there, but the clearance has not been given. Besides Andhra Pradesh, what is the position of other States. Wherever it is possible, you should take up and give clearance to more and more projects.

One of our friends was saying that if education and energy are properly attended, and they are developed on proper lines, country's development will get speeded up. In fact, for any country's development, the development of these aspects is very important, but we are unfortunately lacking in that. I would request the Government as also the Planning Commission to allot more amount for speedier development of electricity and education.

Then, there should be proper decentralisation of power. The power should not be vested with the Centre for every thing. Wherever new projects are coming up, along with that power houses should also be constructed, so that we are able to solve the problem of shortage of electricity.

In the end, I would once again request that the Centre should help in regard to the Mannugur and Nagarjunasagar Atomic Power Project in Andhra Pradesh by providing them technical clearance as also funds. The Central Government may kindly sanction the amount of Rs. 100 crores asked for by the State Government.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA (Contai) :  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Bill to amend the Indian Electricity Act, 1910.

[Dr. Phulrenu Guha]

These Amendments are sought to be made to make a provision for taking more stringent action. In our country, in the rural areas as well as in the urban areas and even in the industrial sectors, the theft of energy has become more rampant and therefore, it is causing a national loss and really it becomes difficult for the country to develop further. Theft or misuse of electricity takes place throughout the country. You cannot say, it may be more or less, but it is taking place throughout the country. Why misuse is going on? Even in the villages, where the powerlines run from one village to another through the polls, there is a chance of stealing energy. The penalty being provided to the thieves is imprisonment from one to three years and the alternative is a fine of Rs. 1000 only. Sir, I would like to suggest that the thieves should be imprisoned because Rs. 1000 or Rs 2000 or any amount of money will not be anything for the thieves. So, unless they know that they have to undergo imprisonment, this menace cannot be stopped. The Government should realise that unless people know that theft of energy means nothing less than imprisonment, then the people will think 100 times to go in for theft of energy. Wherever the amount is due to be borne on account of extra consumption of power by the consumers of any type, have to be paid in addition to the fine. That should be imposed. There should not be any relaxation.

I would like to suggest that TV, Radio and Newspaper have to be utilised for the purpose of educating the people. The theft of energy is causing a menace to our people and to the nation as a whole.

And I would also like to suggest Sir, that the people of the locality are to be associated in some organisation or whatever method is found to be possible so that, they can protect the energy in their own areas. Unless, we involve local people, I do not think we will be able to stop the theft in our country as it is today. I know energy theft cannot be prevented upto the satisfaction, but if it is tried hard, it can be done upto a certain extent. I again say that the people once know that theft of energy means imprison-

ment, then they will be afraid of stealing it. In this connection, I would like to say that Police and the Departmental people must be vigilant. Sir, they are not vigilant. On the contrary, we do not know whether they are also hand in glove with the thieves. Whenever a theft is found, the person or persons concerned should be dealt with properly. There should be no such thing that he is a big person; he is this person; and he is that person. In our country one State has more power than the other State. How far it can be adjusted, is for the Central Government the different States to decide.

In our State, we are very much short of power. Not only in the city of Calcuttā, but in my own constituency of Contai, often for 6 or 7 days we do not get power. As a result, we do not get water also, because the pumps do not function. In West Bengal at least, there are difficulties because different political parties have different unions; and they are fighting. As a result, the full installed capacity is not being generated. Whatever be the case, something should be done.

Lastly, I would like to say that the Atomic Energy Commission examined the site at Datan in Midnapore district. After examining that place, they declared it unfit for establishing an atomic energy unit. Then they examined the Khejuri in the same district. It is more than a year since then, but the result of the examination of the site is not known. I request that the unit should be located in West Bengal, and Government of India should take a decision as soon as possible.

I only hope that people will not suffer due to shortage of power. I request Government of India to establish that unit, but I do not know how far the unit will be able to work properly, without interference. Still I suggest that Government of India should do something to establish more of power capacity in West Bengal. Because of shortage of power, many small scale units are not functioning. It is a pity to see that workers are suffering, and families are suffering, because the units are not working properly. Some of the units are closed. So, I request that something should be done. The different unions should also function properly, so that energy is made available in West Bengal,



[Translation]



**SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV** (Alwar) :  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the proposed amendment in the Indian Electricity Act, 1910. I congratulate the Hon. Minister that he has taken a courageous step through the amendment in consonance with the needs of the country.

Sir, through the present amendment, sections 39, 44, 47, 48, 49 and 50 of the Indian Electricity Act are sought to be amended with a view to specifically check the theft of electricity.

You will be astonished to note that the transmission loss at the national level has gone up to 21 per cent. The experts in the field of electricity are of the view that in no country the transmission loss should exceed 12 per cent. Should it exceed 12 per cent, the department of electricity should be held answerable for it and they must bear the responsibility. Therefore, this is a staggering fact for the entire country that 21 per cent of the electricity we generate goes waste. The State Electricity Boards which meet the electricity needs of the States are not able to tap enough income and at the same time the consumers too do not get regular supply of electricity. Today, we are able to get only 1/10th of the per-capita average consumption in the world.

At the same time, you will be astonished once again to know that the total loss of the State Electricity Boards by the end of 1990 will run into Rs. 12,000 crores. These losses amounted to Rs. 4100 crores by the end of the Fifth Plan but they are going to reach Rs. 12,000 crores by the year 1990. This in itself is a point which needs attention and the Electricity Department and the Hon. Minister have to give it a serious thought. Theft alone accounts for six to eight per cent of the total transmission loss of 21 per cent. This eight per cent theft of electricity causes loss of Rs. 8,000 crores to the country. Since it is a very serious issue, such a legislation should have been enacted a long back.

Today, we are short of electricity to the tune of 10 to 15 per cent as compared to

our total requirements provided we make full use of our installed capacity. Today, our Plant Load Factor at the national level is only 51 per cent. I am distressed to note that the average plant load factor anticipated by you in 1985-86 in your document—Annual Plan—is only 50 per cent. It is, therefore, heartening to note that it is picking up now, but still it is far from satisfactory. Therefore, you should also think about making full utilisation of our installed capacity.

The Amendment which you are going to make to check theft is a good step but at the same time the officials should also be made accountable. Is it not true that such cases are on the increase due to the connivance of the officers of the Electricity Department ?

If so, there should be a code of conduct for them too. This code of conduct should be framed on the basis of the assertion of the experts in the field of electricity that the transmission losses, in no case, should exceed 12 per cent. The Executive Engineer or the Junior Engineer in whose area the transmission losses exceed 12 per cent should be made accountable for it. For them also, you should enact a legislation. As long as a law for them is not passed and they are not made accountable, you will not be able to check such thefts. Therefore, you should re-consider whether they should not be made accountable for this ? If they are to be made accountable, let them bear this responsibility.

In the States like Haryana and Rajasthan, you have fixed minimum charges from the farmers and entrepreneurs of small scale industries, but you just see the record of the last five years during which the supply of electricity to them was not even 25 or 30 per cent. You realise minimum charges from the farmers but do not supply them electricity and as a result thereof their crops are destroyed or the industries become sick. Who is responsible for it ? Should the Department of Electricity not bear the responsibility as is the case in other countries under the Law of Torts, Law of Damages and Law of compensation ? All your officers whether they are Executive Engineers, Assistant Engineers or Junior Engineers do not make proper distribution of electricity even

[Shri Ram Singh Yadav]

when it is available, as a result of which electricity does not reach the tubewells of the farmers or the factories. You will have to make them accountable at some stage to check it.

Atomic Power Plant at Rawat Bhata in our State was set up in 1972. Its first unit was commissioned in 1973 but since then the plant load factor is only 31 per cent which is below average. No steps have since been taken to compensate Rajasthan from some other source. As a result thereof, the crops of the farmers worth crores of rupees wither away causing colossal loss to them and nobody is accountable for this. Thus, their first unit has already flopped for which the Atomic Energy Department could not find satisfactory solution.

Its second unit was commissioned in 1982. In regard to this unit, the Department of Atomic Energy in their report have admitted :

[English]

“Consequently, despite achieving a creditable capacity factor of 64 per cent in 1979, its overall performance till 1981 was far below the target. It could achieve an overall capacity factor of only 31 per cent during this period. In 1982, a very difficult technical problem arose on one of the end-shields, which necessitated the unit to be shut down.”

[Translation]

You have shut down the first unit and with regard to the second unit you say :

[English]

“After commissioning in October, 1980, the unit commenced commercial operation in April, 1981. Upto June 1984, it has experienced 52 outages over half of which were during 1982. Around 56 per cent of the outages are attributable to problems due to

grid problems and 22 per cent due to problems in the nuclear systems which are essentially akin to conventional systems, but are required to have a higher reliability.”

[Translation]

I would request that the process of setting up the third unit indigenously in place of the two that we already have should be geared up. At the same time, the work relating to the setting up a gas based plant at Anta should also be speeded up so that Rajasthan could get electricity from there. With these words, I once again thank you.

[English]

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS (Mavelikara) : I would like to pose a question before the Hon. Minister. A few days back, Mr. Sathe said here that he was going to allow for private production of energy. I want to know from the Hon. Minister as to how then you can punish a person who commits theft of his own property under the definition of Indian Penal Code or under the Criminal Procedure Code. If not what is your proposition? If the Government's policy is to make energy in private sector, then this Bill will become redundant. I am against it. My suggestion is that the energy source and energy should be treated as a national wealth. Anybody who commits theft of that should be punished severely. It should be taken like an offence of counterfeit currency or an offence against the State. This should be treated as a serious crime. It should be made a session's offence which should be triable by a Sessions Judge.

Here in this Bill what you have provided is three years imprisonment or Rs. 1000 fine. Here I am reminded of the labour laws. Even if there is a serious violation of the labour law like not depositing workers' provident fund or not giving gratuity to the workers, the law says that the punishment is for about six years imprisonment. But in lieu of that if Rs. 50/- is given, he will escape. This is not correct. Therefore, I would like to suggest that in the case of Food Adulteration Act or Customs Act there is a provision that he should be punished to im-

prisonment. Therefore, here instead of putting 'or' you should put 'three years imprisonment and Rs. 5000/- fine. The word 'or' should be substituted by the word 'and' That means, it will be compulsory for the Magistrate to award imprisonment. Therefore, he will not commit theft and there will be a deterrent punishment for it. Otherwise it will look very awkward, especially in the context in which I said that you are going to generate power in the private sector.

14.26 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

So, Sir, we have to view it very seriously. This is a heinous crime according to me. I have the experience in my own State. Even during the time when there is no power cut, I have found that the lights are dimming. They are not giving any light to read. Most of the students who had to go to the schools to write the examinations, in spite of the fact that the bulbs were lighting, they had to use candles or kerosene lamps for reading. I find that a number of students have either lost their eyesight or it has decreased. Why is this happening? This is being done in connivance with the staff in various areas by private individuals who are stealing electricity. Therefore, I say that it does not have only a small effect, it has got a very serious effect on our future generation, on the small children. For no fault of theirs they are losing their eyesight because of theft of power by the people and that too with the connivance of the Electricity Board officers. So, this has to be viewed from the point of view of its graveness and its gravity and deterrent punishment should be given to those who commit or abet this crime. You may get a scapegoat for stealing but the real thief will be one of the employees in the Electricity Boards. Without his consent it cannot be done. So, wherever the electricity is being stolen, the concerned official should be forthwith dismissed from service. He should also be treated as a person who is committing a heinous crime on the society. Therefore, my suggestion is that drastic punishment should be imposed on such persons.

Now I would like to say something about the Electricity Boards which are functioning in various States. The total loss of the

Electricity Boards in our country amounts to Rs. 2,845 crores. How does it happen? Electricity is a commercial item and is giving you money. Consumers are paying money for using electricity. When he pays the money, where does it go? This has to be investigated. I have an experience about my own State. After my being elected to the Parliament, the very first question that I asked was regarding the foreign collaboration for electricity generation and the reply was that there is no foreign collaboration for electricity generation. But I understand that the Kerala Energy Minister Shri R. Bala-krishna Pillai, alongwith the Chairman and other officers of the Electricity Board have gone to Canada more than once to get foreign assistance and collaboration. He was bombarding that he had achieved the collaboration and financial assistance. This story was coming everyday in the newspapers. I feel that they are also the abettors in the same way as those who are stealing electricity. Every time they go abroad, they waste the money of the Electricity Boards and finally the total loss comes to Rs. 2,835 crores. So, these people are also the abettors. It is not only the staff which connives for stealing electricity, but the people who are in power are also associated with it. They have all found a very good grazing ground for making money and for making their own way of approaching the life. So, my humble request is that the Government should bring a law to bring these people to book. When you are going to punish those people who are committing theft, you will have to punish these people also.

Another point which I would like to stress is that there is a power shortage in this country. The average energy consumption by an Indian citizen is one-tenth of the international per capita consumption. We are far below the average of not only the developed countries but other developing countries also. Our energy resources are very vast. Every resource is at our disposal. We can utilise our water resources. We can produce 3000 MW electricity whereas we are producing only 1000 MW. Like that we are not utilizing the national resources.

My submission in this regard is that Government should come forward with a national programme in the Central Sector for the purpose of generating energy as much as

[Shri Thampan Thomas]

possible and those who connive or abet should be brought to book.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : To-day is Friday. At 3.30 P.M. we are going to take Private Members Bill. Many members want to speak to-day itself. It can be possible to finish to-day, if each member takes only three to four minutes. I hope each member will speak for three to four minutes so that we are in a position to finish to-day.

Shrmtati Prabhawati Gupta.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI GUPTA (Motihari) : Mr, Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Indian Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 1986 which has been brought forward to amend the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, Sections 39, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49 and 50 of this Act are sought to be amended through this amending bill. This amendment is important and remarkable because as stated by the Hon. Minister of State in his introductory statement, this Bill has two main objectives. The first is to fully utilise the present installed capacity and the second is to put a check on electricity theft in the entire country. This is a welcome step. I hope that the Hon. Minister of State will bring forward, in the near future, a comprehensive Bill in this House through which each aspect may be discussed in a debate that may last two to three days so that the total requirements of electricity could be considered. Only then something can be done. All aspects cannot be covered in 2-3 minutes.

You know that electricity and generation of electricity have an important role in the economic development of the country. It is really pitiable that theft of electricity and loss in transmission is still continuing. Although the national average of this theft is 7-8 per cent, but the situation in Bihar is more deplorable. In Bihar, I think, the percentage of this theft is 20 to 25 per cent and even upto 50 per cent in some areas. A meeting of the National Energy Council was held this year in which some guiding principles were decided. The main guiding principle was to make the country self sufficient in the

field of electricity during the Seventh Five Year Plan. What constructive steps have you taken in this regard ? If it is done, it will be an achievement

The second point that I want to mention is that the Supreme Court has held that electricity theft is not a cognizable offence under the Indian Penal Code. This Bill has been brought forward to circumvent that judgement. The point to which I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister is that the shortage of electricity adversely affects agriculture, industrial sector, cottage industry as also trade and commerce. What steps are you going to take to meet this shortage ? There are 37 thermal power stations in the entire country and the number of atomic power stations is very small. You know that an accident took place in Chernobyle Atomic Station. We should take a lesson from this accident which occurred in U.S.S.R. I would also like to say that there is great potential for setting up of atomic power plants in Bihar. There are Uranium mines in Jadugoda. If you propose to set it up in West Bengal, you should shift it to Bihar because the State is facing great deficit in the matter of electricity and it is the second largest State in the matter of population also. The generation capacity of Barauni and Patratu Thermal Power Station at present is 700 to 800 M.W., but sometimes only 110 M.W. electricity is generated there as a result of which the entire village goes dark which prompts the villagers to say, "These poles illuminate the places alone, but it is the earthen lamp which will give me relief." How will you set it right ?

Besides, I would also like to say that you must differentiate between the electricity thieves and the small farmers and poor people. Do not goad all with the same stick. Serious thought should be given to make progress at a faster pace. There are three major objectives of our Energy Policy. They are to set up energy units, provide electricity at cheaper rates to the people and to remove environmental pollution that may be created as a result of setting up of power houses. I would like to know the quantum of electricity that is being provided to cottage industries. We have three methods of generating electricity i.e., the thermal power, hydro-electricity and atomic power. I feel that the Central Government should pay more attention to



hydro-electricity because it is very cheap. The hydro electricity generated in Geneva and Switzerland is sufficient to meet the requirement of the entire nation. Similarly, we have come to know through a survey that Himachal Pradesh alone can generate so much of hydro-electricity that it can cater to the requirements of the entire country. Serious attention should, therefore, be paid to it.

I would like to submit one thing more and then conclude. I had done a lot of homework and had written down many points but as you are not allowing me more time I would submit only those things which I can remember. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would urge the Hon. Minister to set up a national power grid which should transfer electricity from surplus States to deficit States where there is poverty and where there are cottage industries,

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is good that severe punishment has been proposed in this Bill for those who indulge in theft of the electricity. But here I would like to know as to what machinery the Government is going to create for implementing these provisions because pilferage is largely done in connivance with the employees of the electricity department. Today, the engineers of this department in Bihar have acquired wealth and assets worth crores of rupees and Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh has not been able to lay his hands on them. I would, therefore, like the Government to take effective steps to check this and thereby make the country's future bright.

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY (Gopalganj) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am highly obliged to you for providing an independent Member an opportunity to speak. I support the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 1986 introduced by the Hon. Minister. The economy of the country today is largely dependent upon electricity and the intention of this Bill is to check theft of electricity. I would like to know whether the Government will be able to check this theft at all through this amending Bill. If the Government is sincerely and seriously thinking of checking this menace then it should bring the employees of electricity department also within its purview, It is

common knowledge that the meter-readers of the department are in connivance with big industrialists throughout the country. The same is true of telephones also. Even if a Member of Parliament wants to call somebody in the other part of the country, he is not able to do so in time but these industrialists have their code numbers and they can make a call anywhere in the country in less than an hour. Similarly, the meter-readers of electricity department act in connivance and rewind the meters as desired by the industrialists and seal them again. This is the condition today.

75 per cent of India's population is poor and they cannot even raise their genuine demands. Their standard of living should be raised. Shrimati Indira Gandhi tried to achieve this by introducing 20 point programme, electricity and energy schemes and other schemes.

The situation of electricity supply in the rural areas is not satisfactory. Where there are electric poles, there are no cables and where both these exist, there are no transmitters. The Government will have to restore people's confidence. When the transmitters are not installed in spite of the availability of poles and cables, the people start stealing the cables. I belong to Gopalganj in Bihar. The people of eastern and western Champaran district had expected that the Kanti Muzaffarpur Thermal Power Station will be commissioned soon and the entire area will get electricity. But later that project was not undertaken. The Kanti Thermal Power Project seems to be in doldrums because it was to be commissioned in 1985 but it has not been done so far. One of the units was commissioned but that was only able to supply electricity to a few adjacent districts. Why was the Tarapur Thermal Power Station handed over to Nepal when there was acute shortage of electricity in Bihar? If the Koyal Karo Project is commissioned it would certainly increase Bihar's electricity capacity. But this project has remained on paper only. Crores of rupees have been spent on it so far but it has not been commissioned. When I was an MLA in Bihar and also a member of the State's Public Accounts Committee, I found that Bihar is a unique State. The engineers of Patratu Thermal Power Station, Rasia were

[Shri Kali Prasad Pandey]

removed and new engineers were appointed there, due to lack of expertise the production of Thermal Power Station, declined sharply. My suggestion is that the Central Government should take full responsibility of power generation in the country as is the case of the Railways and the Telephone department. Only then the situation can improve. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI VIR SEN (Khurja) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker. Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak

Sir, you know that almost all the public enterprises are running into great losses and they are under great criticism for these losses. Just a few minutes ago an Hon. Member on the other side of the House was saying that the losses amounted to about Rs. 3000 crores and these are the result of the losses in all the corporations or public undertakings. Now the question comes : How to cover these losses ? The problem is that they cannot reduce losses. They cannot reduce losses because they have no will to reduce losses. And the only thing that they can do is to find some scapegoat so that they can put the blame on any other party, and I think this is the case with this Bill also. This Bill is brought up only because the State Electricity Boards are not able to reduce their losses and therefore, they want to show that the culprits are the consumers and therefore, these consumers should be punished. I do not deny, of course, that the consumers are pilfering energy. But at the same time I would say that they are not the only culprits. The staff of the Electricity Board is also responsible for this pilferage. They are active participants, they are active collaborators. I think, it is not possible for the consumers alone to pilfer energy. It is they who teach and tell the consumers how electricity can be pilfered and how the meters can be made not to operate. As my friend on the other side said, every meter-reader is engaged for is in collaboration with the consumers and if thousands of units are used, only a few hundred units are shown and the difference is divided between the meter reader and the consumer. Now, all

the Electricity Boards are doing the same-thing. They use the same stratagem to show that the losses are not so great. One of the reasons which is generally shown and accepted by the layman is the transmission loss. My friend was referring that the transmission loss should not be more than 12 per cent. But as a matter of fact, transmission losses can be calculated. They are results of resistance specific to every metal. For example, copper has a particular resistance for electricity. In the same way, aluminium has the resistance. Now, this can be calculated with the diameter and the length of the conductor, and the layman are, of course, made to believe that transmission losses are because of some other reason. This is only a stratagem to cover up the losses and to cover up the Electricity Boards' inefficiency and their rampant corruption from top to bottom, before the people. I think, this is one thing.

Another reason is about the Plant Load Factor. Well, if the Hon. Minister tries to see technical book on the subject, she will also be able to know that the ratio that is shown for plant load factor is not the same as given by the Electricity Board, i.e. 50 per cent or 51 per cent. There are other things also which are responsible for the great loss and one of the reasons is the pilferage of coal, other materials, transmission wire and other things also. I think, there are corruption and inefficiency which, I think, are not necessary to mention because everybody knows these things.

There is another stratagem which the Electricity Board applies, and that is the horse power rate. There is a fixed charge, even if you do not consume electricity and everybody knows that the farmers use electricity a few months only. But for the whole year, they have to pay at the rate of the horse power. This is the stratagem, of course, adopted by them, in order to show reduced losses. But the real losses are very very great and I think, they may be more than double.

Now, these Electricity Boards are monopolistic organisation. There is no other organisation from which you can purchase this commodity. That result is that the consumer has to submit to any condition which they impose. And the result is, if they increase

the rate, the consumer will have to pay and if they levy sur-charge on electricity, the consumers have to pay. The only remedy, in my mind, is as long as you do not break this monopoly, you are not going to give succour to the industry or to the consumers. So, as soon as possible, give generation and distribution of electricity either to private agencies or establish more corporations or undertakings, which may compete together. That is the only way by which you can do certain things.

I would like to bring to your notice how the industry is suffering because of the mal-practices of the electricity Boards. For a number of days, electricity is not supplied to industry. From morning till evening, the labour is idle and the poor consumer or the poor entrepreneur who has very small money at his disposal has to pay to the idle labour with the result that within two or three months, the capital is extinguished and the unit becomes sick and the final result is that he is unable to pay the Bills and there is disconnection and what will be the result? After disconnection also, you will see the strange practice that you do not supply the commodity and still you charge the person for energy not supplied. Even after disconnection, the regular charges are levied and whenever the consumer gives application for connection, he has to pay for several months together during which period he does not get electric supply.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please wind up.

SHRI VIR SEN : If industry is to flourish, if the condition of this country is to be improved, you have to take certain measures. One of the measures is that you should break the monopoly of the Electricity Boards which are stuffed with bureaucrats. Secretaries put their names whenever there is a proposal for constitution of any authority. Finance Secretary, Industry Secretary, PWD and all these Secretaries are put there. I think these officers neither have the time nor the expertise. They are placed on these Boards. These Boards are not going to flourish. They are not going to give you good results. What should be done is that public men should be placed on these Boards and experts should be placed on these boards.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There is no time. If you have anything more, you give it in writing to the Minister.

SHRI VIR SEN : Distribution should be separate from generation and this distribution work should be given to separate organisation in the cities and at the block level. These things are very necessary.

I would like to say that thought stringent punishment has been prescribed but I am very doubtful whether this will be successful..... (*Interruptions*). You do not have the machinery to find out the pilferage and you do not have the machinery to prosecute and in the end the persons who will detect out some cases of pilferage are also likely to become corrupt and compromise the cases with illegal gratification.

[*Translation*]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Indian Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 1986. I like this Bill. I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to two or three things in this connection. Daga sahib is my friend but whenever I rise to say something he interrupts me. The Bill seeks to make the pilferage of electricity a cognizable offence but this should have been done much earlier. Once the Bill is enacted and this offence made cognizable, my only apprehension is whether we would be able to implement it properly because all of us are aware, the way powers pilfered on a large scale in Bihar. This is done in a most blatant manner. The condition of Bihar in this respect is no more a secret. The Mafia is active in Bihar and it commits large scale theft of coal openly and nobody is able to check it. Similarly, there is pilferage of electricity everywhere today. People run industries through unauthorised connections and indulge in other activities fearlessly and nobody is able to check them. It is clearly done with the connivance of the engineers and the officers. Every engineer of the electricity board owns property worth lakhs of rupees and nobody can touch them. Law has no doubt been framed and a good one, but who will implement it? If we take no further

[Dr. G. S. Rajhans]

interest in the matter on the plea that it has to be done by the State Government as it is a State Subject we would find ourselves helpless.

One of my friends came from America. He said that in our country one could get a glimpse of past several centuries as well. He further added that if one wanted to see the 21st century one should visit Bombay and visit Delhi to see the 20th century. Where as if one wanted to see the 5th or 6th century one should go to Bihar. Electricity supply is so erratic that it is not available even for seven minutes in a week! If at all power supply is restored it is merely to remind us that the villages are electrified, lest we complain that the villages have not been electrified. The power supply is so erratic in Bihar that the Government cannot even imagine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had raised a matter repeatedly in this House. I am happy that when President Zail Singh went to Nepal this time, it was the Nepalese Government which mentioned that they would conduct surveys and construct dams across rivers so that floods do not hit Bihar. On the other hand, so much power will be generated that both Bihar and Nepal will benefit from it. I was glad to hear this. We have discussed this matter many times in this House but this time the Nepalese Government has agreed to it in principle. This is a matter of happiness.

The rivers that flow from Nepal and cause floods in Bihar, have a potential of generating 83000 M. W power but we are not able to harness even one per cent of that potential. A serious view of this matter should be taken. If dams are constructed on rivers flowing from Nepal and power is generated through hydel projects, Nepal will become a paradise on earth and the States of Bihar and U. P. will benefit tremendously. As a consequence of this, there will be more industrialization and the large scale loss to life and property will be checked. The construction of dams will also check soil erosion. Reservoirs will be constructed and these will help in generating so much power that these

States will make tremendous progress. Therefore, serious thought should be given to this problem.

Secondly, I would like to say that at the time of setting up of the Katani Power Station at Muzaffarpur, it was said that there would be abundant power in North Bihar as a result of this project and it would bring prosperity to this area. But is the position of power there? When I put a question regarding this, I was told that it was not only for North Bihar but also for the whole of Bihar. It is gross injustice. It was promised at the time of setting up of the power station that power would be supplied to North Bihar, Muzaffarpur, Chapra, Madhubani and Darbhanga. But that power has not been supplied to North Bihar. It is proposed to supply power to the grid. Bihar is already short of power supply and when that state is connected with the grid system, the North Bihar and the South Bihar will gain nothing.

Sir, I would like to say one thing. We have great hopes from the Kahalgaon Thermal Power Station. But it has been reported in the Press that work on the Kahalgaon Thermal Power Station is going at a slow pace. This should not happen. The work on the Kahalgaon Thermal Power Station should be speeded up so that it is completed at the earliest. Besides, I would like to make request that power generated in this station should not be supplied to the national grid. The people of Bihar will not accept it. The power generated in Kahalgaon thermal power station should be first supplied to Bihar and it can be supplied to North Bihar by constructing pillars in the river Ganga. I would request the Hon. Minister to give an assurance today itself that the power will first be supplied to North and South Bihar and then it will be supplied elsewhere.

In the end, I would say that if there are deposits of good quality uranium in the country these are located in Bihar. We have been repeatedly making request that an atomic power station should be set up there but no attention has been paid towards it. It may be set up in North Bihar or in South Bihar. There is a great potential of an atomic power station there and you cannot set it up. In Bihar there is no dearth of



electricity and you can set up as may Thermal Power Stations as you like. If there is will, thermal power station can be set up there. Besides, atomic power station as well as hydel power station can also be set up there. Bihar is a place where all the three kinds of power stations can be set up.

15.00 hrs.

Let by gones be by gones. It is still not too late. A hydel power station can be set up in North Bihar in collaboration with Nepal. A thermal power station should also be set up in South Bihar. An atomic power station should also be set up in North Bihar.

A great injustice is being done to the agriculturists. Their transformers get damaged and electricity is not made available to them. It is not possible to undertake irrigation activities. I would request the Hon. Minister to take steps to supply power to Bihar which is facing a power crisis.

[English]

DR. DATTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central) : Electricity is a basic need and in such needs such type of strict legislation is not practically going to work in this country. I am going to ask the Hon. Minister. Does she really mean that 21 per cent pilferage of electricity is done by the poor consumer unless some of your lower officers, readers and vested interests people are also involved in such type of stealing of electricity ?

In this law you are leaving all these people. I know. In the industrial estates the meter readers are collecting more money. Meters are changed. They know how to manipulate. That is why we are losing a lot of revenue. But in this legislation we are just leaving these people to just go away. I know specially two electricity Boards in Maharashtra. These are dens of corruption and they are collecting a lot of illegal money.

Electricity is a need and taking advantage of the helplessness of these poor people these people go on exploiting them. I request the Minister. Let us first put our home in order.

First correct your Electricity Boards and those who are going to distribute and then go to the poor and small consumer.

There is an influx of poor people into the cities. In the Bombay city now 50 lakhs of people are staying in unauthorised slums. Hon. Sharad Dighe is not here. But if this Bill is implemented, the Police has to arrest about 25,000 people tomorrow or the day after. Dharavi is the biggest slum in Bombay and these slum-dwellers with the involvement of the Electricity Board Engineers take the electricity and steal electricity. Electricity is today a basic need and if you go on with such type of punishment, tomorrow poor people will be arrested.

Putting up an unauthorised structure is made a cognisable offence by the Bombay legislature I was a member of the legislature then. I opposed it. I said—you construct the houses. But nobody is constructing houses for the poor people coming from all over India. Now, what happened ? Nobody is arrested. If you want to put up an unauthorised structure, you pay Rs. 500 to the nearest police station and if you want to have electricity, you pay Rs. 500 to the municipal engineer. This is what is going on and this Bill is not going to make any change in your revenues as my Hon. friend said.

What care are you taking of the small villagers ? For the small man sitting in the cities and sitting in the hutments are you going to make provision to supply him electricity ? They cannot spend for this. They cannot bribe your engineers. They cannot make deposits for electricity because of their poverty. I have seen in Bombay. For one bulb they pay Rs. 25 Some illegal man is working hand in glove with your engineers and he collects the instalments. How are you going to define the 'abettor' ? The 'abettor' is very difficult to prove anywhere. After the law comes into effect, the abettors will be your electricity engineers or the abettors will be the vested interests people. They will go scot-free and the poor slum-dweller will be arrested with such type of Bill. Therefore, I again appeal to the Government. Your idea may be good, but it is not going to materialise. You are not going to collect even Rs. 20,000 by such type of

[Dr. Datta Samant]

Bills unless you come forward see that electricity is supplied to the remote places at a cheaper rate. The electricity rates in States like Maharashtra have become double in two years. So electricity is becoming a luxury. The poor are not using it much. Therefore, illegal transactions are increasing day by day. Unless we correct these things this Bill is not going to help us.

Sir, I cannot oppose this Bill but my support will be limited because it is the helplessness of the Government that they cannot correct these things.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK (Panaji) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are on the threshold of power when we have three major nuclear power plants, have a programme of building six massive pit-head super-thermal power stations and are vitalised hydro-programme. It must be admitted that our consumption per capita is one-tenth of that of the average world consumption of electricity. Although we have got 70 per cent population covered with electricity it is a fact that only 20 per cent of the house-hold have electricity in this country.

As far as my territory is concerned I will make a brief mention. We missed the first two Five Year Plans because Goa became independent on 19th December, 1961 and considering that we today do not have our own power resources. We either borrow electricity from Karnataka or Maharashtra. So special stress should be laid since Goa is a Union territory to make Goa self-sufficient in respect of power.

It will be seen that due to the vast experience of thefts which are committed in various States a State like U.P. had issued an Ordinance where they had imposed a fine of Rs. 500/- to Rs. 10,000/- and an imprisonment from 3 months to 3 years. It is the experience of U.P. State that upto December 1985 they had conducted 15,664 raids and detected 2,918 theft cases and recovered lakhs of rupees.

It is welcome that through this legislation theft has become a cognisable offence

and stringent punishment has been provided for but may I draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the working of Section 39 which is sought to be replaced :

“Whoever dishonestly abstracts, consumes or uses any energy shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine which shall not be less than one thousand rupees, or with both; and if it is proved that any artificial means or means not authorised by the licensee exist ..”

What does the words ‘not authorised by the licensee’ mean? In fact, licensor is the Government and licensee is the party using. Secondly I again refer to the words ‘not authorised by the licensee exist’. Now how the word ‘licensee comes into the picture here? Is it that if the instrument ‘exist’ at the given place through which a consumer commits theft that he is presumed to commit the offence? I think there is some sort of mistake in the wording or the meaning is overlapping.

Secondly I would like to submit that ‘abettor’ has rightly been made punishable in this especially because ‘abettors’ are those who are entrusted with the supply of electricity. It has rightly been done so. But if the abettors are engineers like Executive Engineer, Assistant Engineer, etc. who have collected huge wealth then they should not only be covered under this legislation but also under Prevention of Corruption Act as under this Act the first option given to the court is to impose a fine for the first offence. An Assistant Engineer who abets may get scot free by paying a fine of Rs. 500/-. Therefore, unless simultaneous prosecution under Prevention of Corruption Act is launched the things will not improve. Secondly, I have proposed a concrete amendment in regard to this.

When a prosecution is launched against a person for committing theft and if that is proved and he is convicted of imprisonment and fine, a certain percentage of that fine, when recovered, should go to the person on whose information or complaint that prosecution was launched. This will help the Govern-

ment in getting more and more cases detected in remote areas. Unless this incentive is given, nobody will come forward to report the theft of cases. But as I said, if a certain percentage of the fine is made available to the person, who gives information, this would be very helpful. This would be a sort of incentive, as is given in the customs cases. There, of course, it is a huge amount, but here it would be only a matter of a few thousand rupees. But if you make that provision, people will come forward and ultimately the objective of the legislation will be achieved.

[Translation]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I know whether our Hon. Minister, after presenting the Bill, has ever thought what is the condition of our power houses. The condition of the power houses is deplorable.

[English]

The fact is that State Electricity Boards function in a grossly unprofessional manner and are plagued by inefficiency, over-staffing, indiscipline, financial irregularities and poor maintenance.

[Translation]

If complaints are made to rectify the defective meters installed at our houses, no action will be taken to rectify them even after one to two months. Your linesman may be an honest person. But in order to shield the Executive Engineer, the Assistant Engineer or the Junior Engineer you entangle the poor in such cases who are otherwise innocent.

[English]

In answer to Unstarred Question No. 11010 the Minister of State for Energy stated in this House on 10th May, 1983 :

"During the year 1980-81, 48556 cases of theft of energy were detected. 245 cases ended in conviction. About 31189 cases of theft of energy were detected during the year 1981-82. Information for the year 1982-83 is not available."

[Translation]

You can see the figures. Out of 48556 cases of theft of energy... (*Interruptions*)... only 200 cases ended in conviction. Will the pilferage of electricity be stopped by the stringent measures which you propose to take after the enactment of the law? The transmission losses come to 21 per cent. The officers complain that the linesmen are not amenable to discipline and the linesmen complain that the workers flout their instructions. All the workers are victims of the union rivalry. The Power Boards in the country are running in losses. (*Interruptions*) I am the secretary of a union. Therefore, the trouble is caused by the unions and the leaders of the unions also incite the workers to create trouble. But the question is not that of unions. The point is that we are not able to utilise even 50.8 per cent power capacity because the management is not working properly. You have brought the legislation but it is a defective piece of legislation because it has failed to specify certain things e.g., which authority will take out the challan and who would be prosecuted and whether summary trial will take place or not. Only the poor will be arrested and the rich will go scot free. Therefore, I would like to say that things will only improve when the Electricity Boards are set in order.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL (Chandni Chowk) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, many things have been said about the Bill in this House. I support this Bill but alongwith it I want to say a few things about this den of corruption, where every room is filled with corruption. The theft does not take place here. See it from the beginning. The meters supplied by DESU go out of order two days after installation. But no one enquires as to who had supplied those meters and what is the defect in them? Besides, no one is held responsible for it. Similarly, you will find that the transformers get burnt after two days but no one goes into this aspect as to from whom they were purchased, who purchased them, who is responsible for their going out of order and why were they not tested?

Similarly, you will see that unauthorised constructions and unauthorised markets get electricity connections within 24 hours but

[Shri Jai Prakash Agarwal]

for residential premises it takes three months to get an electricity connection. Applicants' shoe soles wear out, they take leave from their offices to get connection for electricity but even then they are unable to get connection.

Similarly, electricity connections are given to squatters but shops in the commercial markets are not being provided electricity connections. If there is a division of a shop between two brothers and a partition wall is erected in it, they do not get a separate connection. They keep making rounds of the DESU office.

If you observe the criteria regarding supply of electricity to the industry you will find that supply is measured in term of money relised whereas the rule is to take into account the number of units produced and the number of units actually consumed? If you calculate all this you will see that there the pilferage is lesser as compared to the pilferage caused by DESU's officers, linemen of Executive Engineers. The big industries pay thousands of rupees to the linemen every month and that money is shared by all. They are the persons who pilfer electricity; small shopkeepers would not pilfer it. They do not have enough money even to pay the Bills. Wherefrom they will get the money to make extra payment? Your meters are defective; they jump thousands of units and linemen ask for gratification to get them rectified, otherwise they harass people.

Therefore, under this Bill you should pay attention to those dens of corruption also. If you get the working of DESU investigated by CBI you will come to know how much equipment and other material was purchased and how much was used? There will be no account of all this. Therefore, I feel that this Bill be of no use. What will happen is that people will be further harassed and the housewives would be threatened to pay money otherwise their husbands will be arrested. Police too will reach there. That it will be of no use. You must be seeing naked wires lying on the roads. No one is there to do something about them. There is no code of conduct as to whose responsibility is this and what should be done?

Therefore, I hope that alongwith this Bill, steps will also be taken to remove deficiencies and shortcomings and prevailing corruption.

\*SHRI R. JEEVARATHINAM (Arakonam) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I support the Indian Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 1986 brought forward by the Government and I would like to place before this august House some of my viewpoints concerning this Bill.

Sir, the Hon. Minister, Shri Vasant Sathe, has, at this juncture, brought forward this Bill with some amendments to the Sections 39, 44 and 50 of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910. Sir, it is really good that the Government is talking steps to put an end to power thefts and power pilferages. According to Section 39 of the Act, anybody indulging in consumption of power in an unauthorised or surreptitious manner, from the main supply lines or found keeping necessary equipments with the intention of drawing power from the supply lines in an illegal manner, will be dealt with and punished severely. But, Sir, at the same time, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what measures are proposed to be taken by the Government to detect power thefts. What machinery have they got to detect the power thefts? I would suggest that the Government should organise a special squad and make surprise checks.

Sir, big industries and factories, farm houses and even the small individuals draw power from the service lines in a surreptitious manner. Government should come forward with heavy hands to catch those indulging in nefarious activities.

Another point I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister is that any individual or the owner of a factory or an industry consumes power or tries to consume power from the main service lines or keep in his possession such equipments to draw power should be dealt with and punished severely. Sir, shortage of power in the country is also created due to conspicuous

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\*The speech was originally delivered in Tamil.



and unjustifiable manner of power consumption. In this connection, I need not lay much emphasis on the point that power is one of the prime necessities for the development of the country. Sir, it so happens that there is uncertainty of monsoon during the monsoon months in most parts of our country. Hence it is all the more necessary that Government need not depend on water source for power production. They should, therefore, think of producing power by installing more number of thermal power stations as also atomic energy power stations in various parts of the country. In this connection, I would like to inform the House that last week, on 26th July 1986, our Vice President, Shri R. Venkataraman, had also mentioned the need for going in for more number of thermal power station establishments and atomic power stations in different parts of the country.

Now, Sir, coming to power theft, the Hon. Minister should go into the matter thoroughly as to why power theft is taking place regularly. I would submit to the Hon. Minister that the Government should come forward and distribute power very generously to every industry and the factory as also individual consumers so that malpractice in power consumption would automatically get reduced to a great extent.

In this context, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister that in my constituency, in Ranipet, there are many big and small industries and factories. There is also the BHEL unit in my constituency. But due to shortage of power, the industries, both small and big, are forced to close down for six months in a year. On account of this, not only the production is affected but also the labour is affected and they are not able to get their livelihood. Therefore, my humble submission to the Hon. Minister is that the Government should establish a thermal power generation station in Ranipet so that the industries working in and around Ranipet would get power supply in sufficient quantity and without interruption. Not only that. The farmers will also get power for running their pumpsets for cultivation purposes.

Sir, in Tamil Nadu, after Tanjore District, North Arcot District comes next in paddy

cultivation with the help of electric pumpsets. Due to failure of monsoon and due to shortage of power, paddy production is affected. So, Madam, establishment of a thermal power station at Ranipet will go a long way in helping the poor agriculturists as also the industries in the District. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : I have all support for this Bill. In fact, this is a much more awaited Bill. This should have been introduced much earlier. I know that this Bill is going to be passed. But we have to consider as to what purpose is going to be served by this Bill. With the expansion of supply of power throughout the country, the transmission and distribution losses have also gone up abnormally mainly because of theft and pilferage of electricity. In the year 1979-80 the T & D loss was 20.44 per cent and in 1984-85 it has gone upto 21.69 per cent. So with the passage of time, with the progress and expansion in our electricity programme, power generation and distribution, the T & D losses are also going on increasing.

There are two types of T & D losses. One is technical and other is commercial losses or pilferage. To check pilferage or commercial losses, the Bill, no doubt, will help us to a certain extent but not to the desired extent. Why? Because the implementing machinery will be none other than the State Electricity Boards. About the State Electricity Boards much has been said by the previous speakers. They are absolutely in bad shape. They are full of corruption and anarchy is prevailing there. The administration and management of these State Electricity Boards need to be tightened. I would submit for the consideration of the Government that the worst managed State Electricity Boards should be put under the charge of some expert electric engineers drawn from the Army.

The punishment for pilferage should be stringent and there should be summary trial. And also the offence should be cognisable one.

I would put forward one more point for the consideration of the Government. By the

[Shri Sriballav Panigrahi]

end of the Seventh Plan we will be short of 10,000 MW of power. Power is the basic input for everything, for our economic growth. Without power we cannot move an inch forward on the path of progress and prosperity. Some States are very very bad in power generation. They are simply resorting to power cuts for 10 to 12 hours a day. Orissa is one of such unfortunate States. Of course, there are very good proposals with very good feasibility report. Lot of coal is also available there. But somehow, Orissa has been neglected so far. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister to give personal attention for the setting up of two super thermal power stations—one at Talchar and another at Ib valley.

While concluding I would again say that the State Electricity Boards require proper monitoring from the Centre and the CEA. There is need for regulation and tightening up administration in different State Electricity Boards.

With these words, I conclude.

15.30 hrs.

**COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS**

**Twenty-First Report**

[English]

**SHRI DIGVIJAY SINH** (Surendranagar) : Sir, I beg to move :

“That this House do agree with the Twenty-first Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 30th July, 1986.”

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER** : The question is :

“That this House do agree with the Twenty-first Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 30th July, 1986.”

*The motion was adopted*

15.31 hrs.

**CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL\***

(Insertion of new article 32A)

[English]

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI** (Howrah) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER** : The question is :

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.”

*The motion was adoption adopted*

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI** : I introduce the Bill.

**CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL\***

(Insertion of new article 29A)

[English]

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI** (Howrah) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER** : The question is :

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.”

*The motion was adopted ✓*

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI** : I introduce the Bill.

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