

an average during the past few months. Power is often restricted by D.V.C. to West Bengal State Electricity Board far below the allocated level, due to low generation.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal has already written to the Prime Minister in this connection, asking for the restoration of the position as was prevailing in October 1977. Recently, the Chairman of the D.V.C. has alleged that D.V.C. has no obligation to supply power to West Bengal State Electricity Board. It is clear that to embarrass the Government of West Bengal and create further difficulties such an unilateral and discriminatory attitude has been taken by the D.V.C. I call upon the Government to take immediate steps so that adequate power is made available from D.V.C. to West Bengal which has always been, and still is, the largest contributor in the investments of D.V.C.

(ix) CLOSURE OF SOME SMALL RAILWAY STATIONS ON WESTERN RAILWAY FOR BOOKING GOODS TRAFFIC.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINH (Suren-dranagar): From the 10th April 1982, the Western Railway have closed down 122 small railway stations for booking goods traffic in wagons. This has paralyzed all trading and economic activities. It has caused congestion in large stations, and considerably raised the cost of production of small industries and agricultural produce. Immediate redress is sought.

13.34 hrs.

DEMANDS* FOR GRANTS,
1982-83—*Contd.*

(i) MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS—
Contd.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We now take up further discussion and

voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Communications.

The Minister of Communications will reply. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI C. M. STEPHEN): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir: For the second year in succession, after a long period when this matter was never discussed, the affairs concerning the Ministry of Communications have come up for discussion before the House.

Last year when I replied I had with me my very valued colleague, the late Mr. Kartik Oraon. I cannot help placing on record the great dedication with which he worked in the Ministry, during the period he was working as Minister of State.

I am thankful to the many Members who participated in this discussion, for the suggestions they made, for the criticism they advanced, for the demands they put across, for the expectations they gave expression to, and also for the compliments they paid, in acknowledging that the Ministry is doing what best it can possibly do, under the circumstances. No Minister incharge of Communications can ever expect to be above criticism. I came across very recently a journal by name *Electronics and Power* published from Britain. The recent quotation which I thought I must place here is as follows: "It is a curious fact that telephone administrations are unpopular all the world over." (*Interruptions*) "Whether or not, we would now-a-days think the fact curious. It undoubtedly does seem to be the case that telephone administrations,

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.