

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT (West Bengal): Sir, I press the amendments also because the amendments include an important point of our opposition to the disinvestment process which was mentioned in the Presidential Address and which the hon. Prime Minister also has not mentioned in his reply. So, I press the amendments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I shall now put Amendment Nos. 244 to 263 to vote.

Amendment Nos. 244 to 263 were negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Amendment Nos. 264 to 283 by Shri Tapan Kumar Sen. Not present. I shall now put Amendment Nos. 264 to 283 to vote.

Amendment Nos. 264 to 283 were negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I shall now put the Motion of Thanks to vote. The question is:

“That an Address be presented to the President in the following terms:—

That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which she has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on June 4, 2009.”

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we have admitted Special Mentions for today. Kindly read the subject and lay it on the table.

SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA (Maharashtra): Sir, you are not allowing us to read the text.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Just lay it on the table. Read the subject and that is considered as ‘laid’.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Concern over the delay in laying of railway line and financial loss being incurred due to shifting of the Katra-Banihal stretch of railway track in Jammu and Kashmir

SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA (Maharashtra): Sir, with the funding of Jammu and Kashmir Railway Line from the Consolidated Fund of India, Budgaon-Anantnag-Srinagar Rail link has been commissioned in October 2008. Now change in alignment of 34 kilometres (Katra-Banihal) stretch of the railway line to dispense with the mega arch bridge on Chenab, has dampened the enthusiasm. Was instability of the slope on the gorge in Himalayas for the foundation of the mega steel arch bridge discovered now despite expertise of Konkon Railway Corporation with back-up from an international consortium called Ultra Afcons VSL? Does this

not show that this much-touted bridge had been planned without any regard to its safety and durability? Apart from delaying completion of this first Railway Line for the Kashmir valley, shifting of railway track alignment from gorge to a wide valley two to three kilometres upstream, envisaging lesser height of the bridge and standing on pillars on Chenab's banks, will undoubtedly result in huge unproductive spending of more than Rs.800 crores. This unfortunate last-minute change obviously adversely reflects on the financial health of the Railway Ministry, which otherwise has beaten all records in substantially lowering the operational cost, and no increase in passenger fare had been made since May 2004 when Congress-led UPA Government assumed office. While experts may comment on this change in alignment for safety, but those responsible for this huge financial loss, must be identified and suitably dealt with. Could the technology adopted by China-Tibet Rail link be taken advantage of? Let us hope that safety factor, time-bound laying of newly aligned railway track, commissioning of Kashmir valley railway link project is executed on highest priority. Thank you.

**Demand to Stop Construction of 11 Barrages over River Godavari by
Government of Maharashtra**

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the Government of Maharashtra and the Government of Andhra Pradesh had agreed on 16-10-1975 over utilisation of waters of river Godavari. According to this, the State of Maharashtra can use 60 TMC of water for its new projects above Pochampad Dam and the State of Andhra Pradesh can go ahead with Pochampad project with FRL +1091 feet and MWL +1093 feet. The Pochampad Dam Project was constructed across the river Godavari by the Government of Andhra Pradesh to cater to the irrigation and drinking water needs of its seven districts.

The Government of Maharashtra has started constructing 11 barrages across river Godavari between Jaikwadi and Sri Ram Sagar Project. The entire stretch of about 430 kms of river Godavari would turn into a perennial source providing unlimited scope for drawl on both sides.

In this connection, the Central Water Commission had convened an inter-State meeting on 11-7-2005 wherein representatives of Government of Maharashtra had submitted a written account of 60 TMC of water. It was decided that the CWC will separately examine the account 60 TMC utilization by State. During the second inter-State meeting held on 5-10-2005, it was decided that Maharashtra shall provide details of 158 minor projects, but they have decided to go ahead with construction of barrage.

Sir, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Union Government to intervene and instruct the Government of Maharashtra not to proceed further and utilize their share as proposed. Hence, I urge the Government to take immediate steps in this regard.