

[Shri Om Mehta.]

As Members are already aware, the General Budget for 1973-74 will be laid at 6.15 P.M. on Wednesday, the 28th February, 1973.

MESSAGES FROM THE LOK SABHA

- (I) THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1972
- (II) THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE REGULATION BILL, 1972

SECRETARY: Sir, I have to report to the House the following messages received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary of the Lok Sabha:—

(I)

"I am directed to inform Rajya Sabha that Lok Sabha, at its sitting held on the 22nd February, 1973, has adopted the following motion further extending the time for presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee of the Houses on the Companies (Amendment) Bill, 1972:—

MOTION

"That this House do further extend upto the first day of the second week of the next session, the time for the presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on the Bill further to amend the Companies Act, 1956, the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 and the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969".

(II)

"I am directed to inform Rajya Sabha that Lok Sabha, at its sitting held on the 22nd February,

1973, has adopted the following motion further extending the time for presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee of the Houses on the Foreign Exchange Regulation Bill, 1972:—

MOTION

"That this House do further extend upto the 30th April, 1973, the time for the presentation of the Report of Joint Committee on the Bill to consolidate and amend the law regulating certain payments, dealings in foreign exchange and securities, transactions indirectly affecting foreign exchange and the import and export of currency and bullion, for the conservation of the foreign exchange resources of the country and the proper utilisation thereof in the interests of the economic development of the country".

REFERENCE TO STATEMENT MADE BY THE RAILWAY BOARD CHAIRMAN ON THE NEW RAILWAY PROJECTS IN MAHARASHTRA

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government and particularly the Prime Minister through you, to a statement made by Shri Naik, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, in utter disgust about the non-inclusion of four railway lines which were promised and announced by the Prime Minister at Aurangabad on January 7, 1973. I will quote what Shri Naik has stated:

Chief Minister V. P. Naik today lashed out at the railway minister for ignoring the projects for scarcity relief work in the State, and said it was not in the interests of national development to change the priorities with changes in the portfolios of union ministers.

He further said:

He told the Legislative Assembly that both the prime minister and the then railway minister T. A. Pai had openly talked of these projects. In fact while on a tour of scarcity areas, the prime minister had announced on January 7 at Achegaon in Sholapur district that the centre had taken a decision to undertake the Konkan railway and three other railway projects in Maharashtra.

This was stated by the Prime Minister. Now I will draw your attention to the utter irresponsible statement made by Shri Baliga, Chairman of the Railway Board, who says that the Railway Board was not aware of the Prime Minister's announcement of these projects. I take very strong exception to the utterances of Shri Baliga who has stated that he has not read that at all whereas Shri T. A. Pai, the then Railway Minister, had already initiated discussion. I want to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to this through you and the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs so that proper steps will be taken to take up these railway lines which were already announced by the Prime Minister. Otherwise, it will reflect very badly on the administration of the Government.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI OM MEHTA): I would request the hon. Member that instead of referring to the Statement made by Shri Baliga, he should refer to the speech of the hon. Railway Minister which he made on the floor of the House and particularly to paragraph 41 in which he said: "I intend to discuss with my colleagues, the Finance and Planning Ministers, how we can initiate new railway projects and new lines upto 60 kilometers".

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: What does it mean?

SHRI OM MEHTA: I am sure that the hon. Railway Minister will make a statement in the near future—most probably on Monday—about all these things.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Uttar Pradesh): I did not want to speak. What Shri Om Mehta has said makes the matter worse. In spite of the speech of the Railway Minister—Shri Baliga, or whoever he is, I do not know who he is—the Railway Board Chairman publicly makes a statement that he does not know anything about the assurance given by the Prime Minister. It is a very agonising situation. I do not know whether the policies are guided by the Prime Minister, or Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra or the Railway Board Chairman. Is he a super-Minister? I think the Railway Minister should make a statement on this. How can a Railway Board Chairman make a public statement against the statement of the Prime Minister or the Railway Minister? It is a question of decorum and decency and there must be some method of functioning in the Government and it is a matter of procedure and if these matters are not settled, I don't think that this Government would be going in the right direction. Mr. Deputy Chairman, we would like to have a clarification as to on what authority the Chairman of the Railway Board made this statement.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON (Kerala): Yes, Sir, this must be made clear.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. Now, let us take up the Resolution.

RESOLUTION RE SETTING UP A NATIONAL POWER FUEL AND FEEDSTOCK PLANNING BOARD IN THE STATES AND AT THE CENTRE

SHRI MAQSOOD ALI KHAN (Mysore): Sir, I beg to move: