

be greatly benefited as waitlisted passengers are three times more than the reserved passengers in all South-bound trains from Chennai. So, I urge the Government to speedily sanction this train. Thank you, Sir.

**Need for alternative arrangements for transporting rice to
ease impending food crisis in Mizoram**

SHRI RONALD SAPA TLAU (Mizoram): Sir, I rise to state that my constituency Mizoram is on the brink of virtually facing a famine in two months as the only railway link from Assam to my State has been completely shut down. Since only 15 per cent of the total monthly rice demand of 1,23,310 MT is produced from the hilly State of Mizoram, the remaining 85 per cent comes from outside from the FCI through rail transportation. While I support the broad-gauge construction idea, it is very disturbing to know that there was no coordination between the Railway Ministry and the FCI whatsoever for an alternative arrangement to maintain this supply chain. If there was only a timely well-planned coordination strategy, this crisis could have been avoided.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI P. RAJEEVE): Please read from the text.

SHRI RONALD SAPA TLAU: Yes, Sir. The need of the Mizo people apparently did not occur in their calculation. With this, Railway service to be cut off for nearly two years, the people of Mizoram have no way of surviving with only 18,500 MT of rice locally grown. If there was only a timely well-planned coordination between the Railway Ministry and the FCI, this crisis could have been easily avoided.

Sir, the State Government had, all along, been trying its best to make alternative arrangements on its own, even met the concerned Ministers in Delhi, but only to find out its futility. The people of Mizoram are now insecure, worried, frustrated and feeling very alienated with the inhuman manner the Central Government is treating them. There is even a danger of unwanted atmosphere in the hill among the general public unless the Central immediately steps in to provide a viable alternative of transporting this rice supply. Hence, this very serious and pressing issue be resolved immediately by the FCI, by taking it up on a war-footing basis, to transport the required amount of rice through viable means to avoid escalation of crisis in Mizoram. Thank you, Sir.

**Need to take immediate steps to fill vacant
Government positions in the country**

PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA (Karnataka): Sir, it is a matter of urgent national importance that key positions in the Government have been lying vacant for a while, but suitable replacements have not yet been found and no succession plan has been put in place. Importantly, the key positions, which are lying vacant and where the incumbents are to demit office soon, are from the security establishments, transparency and anti-corruption bodies.