

Sir, I would request the Government to extend a helping hand to this neglected lot who have great potentials like any other well-known citizen in the country. To address and redress the grievances of the transgenders, the Government may appoint a committee which would go into their manifold problems, identify their issues and suggest suitable remedial measures. Any further delay will worsen their precarious plight. The Government of Tamil Nadu has taken steps to do SRS free of cost for them in Government hospitals. The Union Government may give subsidy for their surgeries as a mode of financial assistance which would help them a lot. I urge the Government to take necessary steps immediately, with the utmost concern, to identify this emotional issue and redress the aggrieved transgenders.

### **Concern over the Acute Shortage of Cooking Gas in Mizoram**

**SHRI LALHMING LIANA (Mizoram):** Sir, Mizoram has been facing acute shortage of cooking gas for the last several months. There is no door-to-door delivery system, but at specified points, where consumers get their refilled cylinders, consumers have to stand in long queue at every point, and many of them have to stand for the whole night to get better chance in the next day. Still, they have to come home empty handed.

Mizoram receive supply of LPG refill from Borkhola Bottling Plant in Assam and Mualkhang Bottling Plant in Mizoram. While the Mualkhang Bottling Plant is very small and does not meet even one-third of the requirement of Mizoram, though it runs above the prescribed capacity most of the time, the LPG refilled supply of Mizoram from Borkhola Bottling Plant is very poor and irregular because the cylinders refilled in the Borkhola Bottling Plant were diverted and sold at the rate of Rs. 400/- to Rs. 500/- in the black market in the Barak Valley.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to solve the problem of shortage of LPG by taking this following actions without delay:—

IOC Marketing Division and Assam Oil Division be directed for strict vigil to stop diversion and black marketing of filled cylinders and also to give the due share of Mizoram through their agents.

Appoint more agents and give more connection of Mizoram as there are still sizeable number of families who do not have LPG connection.

Capacity of Mualkhang Bottling Plant be increased and enlarged.

The present age-old payment system of draft be discontinued and payment be made through the Core Banking system so as to avoid delivery of refilled LPG to the agents.

Thank you.

### **Demand for Early Clearance of Pending Proposals of Madhya Pradesh Government for Elderly People**

**श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण शर्मा (मध्य प्रदेश) :** महोदय, वर्ष 2004-05 में वृद्धाश्रम संचालन हेतु अनुदान के 14 प्रस्ताव, डे-केयर सेंटर संचालन के 2 प्रस्ताव तथा वृद्धाश्रम भवन निर्माण के 2 प्रस्ताव एवं मोबाइल यूनिट का एक प्रस्ताव, इस प्रकार कुल 19 प्रस्ताव स्वीकृति हेतु मध्य प्रदेश राज्य शासन के माध्यम से भारत सरकार को भेजे गये हैं। किन्तु खेद है कि आज तक वे स्वीकृत नहीं किये गये हैं।

अतः मैं केन्द्र सरकार से मांग करता हूँ कि इन सभी प्रस्तावों को तत्काल स्वीकृत किया जाये। धन्यवाद।

### **Need to formulate Special Schemes for Development of Tourism in Sikkim**

SHRI O.T. LEPCHA (Sikkim): Sir, Sikkim is a popular tourism destination for its culture, scenic beauty and bio-diversity. Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the State of Sikkim with the salubrious climate, natural beauty and the fine cultural heritage.

Sikkim has tremendous potential and immense possibilities for future economic growth with equity and employment opportunities. It is considered as the backbone of Sikkim's economy. Tourist industry provides adequate employment to all the people of Sikkim. It should be developed by giving additional financial assistance.

Sir, there are large number of places of tourist attraction, particularly the snow clad mountains, the lakes and unspoiled forest areas and valleys of flowers. The monasteries in Sikkim should also be developed to attract Buddhist tourists from countries like Japan and South Eastern countries.

Sir, Sikkim is a fast emerging tourist destination in the Eastern Himalayas. It is endowed with all the natural resources, adventure, pilgrimage, men and material that are necessary for making it a major tourist destination and it should also be developed as "Mini Switzerland". For this purpose, adequate facilities such as resorts, hotels, restaurants, surface and air transport, entertainment, souvenirs, etc. should be developed.

Sir, I earnestly urge upon the Central Government to formulate special programmes and schemes for the development, expansion and promotion of tourism sector in the interest of Sikkim State.

### **Concern over the Problems of Grameen Dak Sewaks of Postal Department**

SHRI S. ANBALAGAN (Tamil Nadu): I wish to draw the attention of this august House towards the problems being faced by the Grameen Dak Sewaks. As on 31.03.2004, the total number of Grameen Dak Sewaks was 3,10,269, which is higher than the non-gazetted postal employees. The total number of 1,26,866 Branch Post Offices in all over the country are being managed by them. Grameen Dak Sewaks such as Branch Post Masters, Mail Carriers, Packers and Delivery Agents are performing the same duty like regular postal employees. The minimum age limit for the Grameen Dak Sewaks is 18 years and the retirement age is 65 years. They have to travel thirty to forty kilometers per day to carry their mailbags either walking or by cycle. But their basic pay scales are fixed in between Rs. 1,220/- to Rs. 1,740/-

After putting in their sincere service, they are getting an ex-gratia of Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000 only, without any other financial benefits such as pension etc. They are not even provided medical reimbursement facilities or CGHS facilities, which are provided to other Government or PSU employees. Though they are working in Central Government department, their status is of 'rural poor'. Their position becomes pathetic after their retirement. I request the Government, through this House, to provide them the following facilities, namely, (a) fixation of salaries at par with the other Government employees, (b) provision of pension and GPF facility, (c) provide casual leave, earned leave and medical leave, (d) provision of HRA, CCA and TA/DA, (e) provision of LTC, and, (f) refund of Tuition fee and grant of children education allowance. Thank you.