

(2) Tumkur-Arasikere-Shimoga-Honsevar (from National Highway-4 to National Highway-7).

(3) Chikkanayanahally-Tiptur-Hassan-Arkalgud-Periyaptham-Virajapet to State border to Join Tellicheri in Kerala State.

(4) Bangalore-Bannergatta Road.

The State Government has been requested to furnish certain clarifications before the proposals can be posed to the World Bank.

Construction of Subways

1295. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to growing urbanisation alongside the national highways and growth of townships on both sides, there is a tremendous increase in the fatal accidents, particularly among school children;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering proposals for constructing under passes/subways on the national highways at densely populated townships;

(c) whether any privatisation proposals to construct under passes with permission to commercially exploit the land are being considered in view of the paucity of resources; and

(d) if no, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) Growing urbanisation alongside the National Highways and growth of townships on both sides is one of the several contributory factors for increase in total number of accidents apart from the growth of road transport, great heterogeneity of vehicle mix, preponderance of heavy commercial vehicles, hazardous and over-crowded passenger buses, increased congestion, tendency for higher travel speeds, unpredictable behaviour of road users and constraints of road geometry and capacity.

(b) Construction of underpasses/subways on National Highways is considered based on site requirements and volume of pedestrians crossing the National Highway.

(c) and (d) . At present no proposal for constructing underpasses under privatization is being considered.

[Translation]

Indo-US Relations

1296. SHRI DATTA MEGHE :
SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to strengthen further the bilateral relations with the US ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the

Government during the last one year to strengthen further the relations with that country ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) . In the Joint Statement issued during the visit of Prime Minister to Washington in 1994, the two countries agreed to a new partnership to face the challenges and opportunities of the post-Cold War world and to expand the pace and scope of high level exchanges on the full range of political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological and social issues. They also agreed on a variety of concrete measures to expand Indo-US trade and investment. In accordance with that decision, Indo-US relations continued to be intensified and expanded over a very broad front during the past year.

Mango Production

1297. SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be please to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to formulate any comprehensive scheme for increasing the mango production; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AYUB KHAN) : (a) and (b) . During Eighth Five Year Plan, the Government of India has launched a Central Sector Scheme 'Integrated Development of Fruits' being implemented in all the States/UTs under which assistance is being provided for producing quality planting material through nursery establishment, Areas expansion, improving productivity/rejuvenation through inputs supply, demonstration, training of farmers, publicity material to increase the production of fruits including mango. Assistance is also being provided for the demonstration and installation of drip irrigation system.

[English]

US Warning on Nuclear Test

1298. SHRI SRIKANTA JENA :
SHRI S.S.R. RAJENDRA KUMAR :
SHRI C. SREENIVAASAN :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Government have recently warned the Government of India that conducting of nuclear test by the country would provoke severe sanctions against it;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto ;

(c) whether the Government also propose to postpone indigenous missile programme; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) . In response to US

media reports of alleged preparation by India for a nuclear test, the US State Department in a press release stated, *inter alia*, that the US Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act, 1994 mandates severe sanctions on any non-nuclear weapon state which detonates a nuclear device. This was not conveyed in any official demarche by the US Government to the Government of India on this matter.

In a statement in New Delhi, the official Spokesman stated that the US media reports about the nuclear test were highly speculative.

(c) and (d) . Government remains committed to determining the course of India's missile programme on the basis of India's national security requirements.

Identification of Coal Mines for Development by SAIL

1299. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Steel Authority of India Limited, have identified some coal mines for development for getting better quality of coal ;

(b) whether Steel Authority of India Limited propose to set up coal washeries to get coal with less ash content; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (c) . Parbatpur, Mahal, Sitanala & Tasra blocks have been identified by the Screening Committee of Ministry of Coal for development by SAIL for its captive use. Action has been initiated for transfer of leases. After transfer of leases, the Feasibility Reports will be prepared when washeries for improvement in quality of coal will be considered.

[Translation]

Training Programmes for Members of Panchayats and Municipal Corporation

1300. SHRIMATI BHAVNA CHIKHLIA : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received representations from some State Governments specifically from Gujarat state seeking financial assistance to initiate training programme for newly elected members of Panchayats and Municipal Corporation;

(b) whether the Union Government have issued any special directive to the State Governments for imparting proper training to all the elected members under Panchayati Raj and Municipal Corporation laws; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI HARJIBHAI

PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. This Ministry has received proposal from some States including Gujarat for financial assistance for training of members of panchayats only. In respect of Municipal corporations, no such proposals have been received in the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment.

(b) and (c) . This Ministry has advised the States to impart proper training to all the elected members of panchayati raj institutions. However, no specific directives were issued in this regard.

Welfare of Rural Labourers

1301. SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have launched any scheme for the welfare of rural labourers working in the unorganised;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the benefits accrued by rural labourers through these scheme; and

(d) the funds allocated for this purpose during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR) : (a) and (b) . Apart from Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and Employment Assurance Scheme, the Government have started National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) during 1995-96 under which National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) are being implemented. These schemes *inter-alia*, also cover rural labour working in the unorganised sector.

(c) (i) *National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)* :

Pension of Rs. 75 per month of persons of 65 years and above, who are destitute, is provided.

(ii) *National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)* :

Lumpsum benefit of Rs. 5,000 in case of natural death and Rs. 10,000 in the case of death due to accident to households below the poverty line on the death of the primary bread winner. Persons in the age group of 18-64 years are covered under the scheme.

(iii) *National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)* :

Lumpsum assistance of Rs. 300 per pregnancy upto the first two live births to women above the age of 19 years belonging to households below the poverty line, are covered.