

**Central Assistance to Maharashtra for Urban Development**

2408. SHRI ANNA JOSHI : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of central assistance given for Urban Development projects in Maharashtra during the last two years;

(b) whether the Maharashtra Government has spent all the assistance;

(c) if so, whether there is any delay in the disbursement of assistance; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI P.K. THUNGON) : (a) The total amount of Central assistance given for Urban Development projects in Maharashtra during the last two years is as follows

<u>Name of the Scheme</u>	<u>Rs. in crores</u>
1. Bombay Mega City Project	36.20
2. Integrated Development of Small & Medium Towns.	7.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>43.69</b>

(b) No, Sir.

(c) There has been no delay in the disbursement of Central Assistance;

(d) Does not arise.

**Development of National Highways in West Bengal**

2409. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Government for development of National Highways No. 6 and 41 in West Bengal during 1994-95; and

(b) the estimated cost of the work being taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) and (b) 8 number of works costing Rs. 9.41 crores were in progress on NH-6 and NH-41 in West Bengal during 1994-95.

**Cogentrix Project**

2410. SHRIMATI D.K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the agreement made by Cogentrix Company and Karnataka Electricity Board on cost of power per unit

which is exorbitant and costlier than other faster track power projects, proposals;

(b) if so, details of various fast track power projects, tariff per unit; and

(c) whether the Government propose to intervene and direct the State Government to review the tariff aspects and capital cost of the project and take action to renegotiate with Cogentrix Project in view of the exorbitant cost which is detrimental to the interest of the People?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILA BEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) and (b) The cost of the Cogentrix project has so far not been cleared by the Central Electricity Authority and no conclusion can be made about the cost of power from this project vis-a-vis other fast track projects.

(c) Does not arise.

**Incentives to Shipping industry**

2411. SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether in view of the tremendous potential for growth in the wake of opening of our economy and globalisation of trade and industry any steps have been taken/proposed to provide for adequate incentives to shipping industry to expand its fleet capacity to participate effectively in fast increasing transportation of goods from India to other countries of the World and vice-versa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the present and projected share of shipping industry in transportation of goods;

(d) the details of major problems being faced by the shipping industry; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to resolve the problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) and (b). In order to expand the fleet capacity for participating in the overseas sea borne trade, the incentives provided are as under :-

1. Automatic approval is now given for :

- (i) Acquisition of all categories of ships except crude tankers and Offshore Supply Vessels by private shipowning companies.
- (ii) Acquisition for replacement tonnage.

2. No Government approval is required for :

- (i) Sale of ships for further trading/scrapping to Indian company within India or abroad.
- (ii) Acquisition of ships from an Indian shipyard.

3. Shipping companies have been allowed to retain sale proceeds of their ships abroad and utilise them for fresh acquisition.
4. Shipping companies are allowed to acquire vessels through bare boat charter-cum-demise method.
5. Freedom to time charter out Indian ships to foreign shipping companies for employment in international cross trade.
6. Liner routes on which the existing shipping companies are not operating have now been thrown open to all Indian shipping companies.
7. It has been decided that Reserve Bank of India will permit foreign exchange for ship repair/dry docking and spares for imported capital goods without any value limits.
8. Age norms for acquisition of second hand ships have been relaxed to give more operational freedom for shipowners.
9. Merchant Shipping Act amended to permit foreclosure of mortgages without need to approach any court or other authority. Freight and passenger fares have been decontrolled in order to promote private sector in coastal shipping.

(c) The present share of shipping industry in transportation of goods is around 33.6%. The projected share is 40%.

(d) and (e) The major problems being faced by shipping industry in the matter of fleet expansion and ship acquisition are due to :-

1. Non-availability of concessional finance.
2. Non-availability of medium term loan to provide finance to shipping companies under self-liquidating Finance Scheme.
3. Need to provide adequate allocation of foreign exchange reserves for boosting up the national shipping tonnage.
4. Exemption from interest tax on domestic borrowings for acquisition of ships.

Action to form a Sub-Committee to look into the various requirements of shipping industry, including soft loan requirement etc. has since been initiated.

[Translation]

#### Regional Passport Office, Gujarat

2412. SHRI N.J. RATHVA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether several posts are lying vacant for a long time in Regional Passport Office in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of posts reserved for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes out of them;

(d) the steps taken/being taken by Government in view of the difficulties faced by the people as a result thereof;

(e) whether there is any proposal to upgrade the passport offices in Gujarat; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) and (b) Based on the input of applications for fresh passports during the period January-December 1994 and during the first seven months (January-July 1995) of the current year, the existing staff strength in the Passport Office, Ahmedabad is considered adequate.

(c) Posts are reserved for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes with reference to the total staff strength of the Central Passport Organisation; there is no reservation of posts for these categories in individual passport offices.

(d) The Passport Office, Ahmedabad is presently taking 58 days in issuing a fresh passport. However, subject to the applicant fulfilling certain prescribed conditions, which have been communicated to the Standing Committee, a passport can be issued on out of turn basis.

(e) and (f) Passport Office, Ahmedabad is a full fledged passport office and the question of upgrading it, therefore, does not arise.

[English]

#### Shortage of Housing

2413. SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated housing shortage at the time of commencement of the Sixth Five Year Plan and the percentage of increase in the housing shortage at the end of Seventh Five Year Plan period;

(b) the total homeless population living on pavements etc. and the percentage of it against country's entire population;

(c) the estimated percentage of rise anticipated between demand and supply of housing by 2000 A.D. (year-wise); and

(d) the extent to which the present rate of construction, the gap in housing demand is anticipated to be bridged by 2000 A.D.?