

adopted in the meeting included those regarding timely completion of priority roads identified for special funding during the VIIIth Plan period; approval of Annual Plan proposals for the year 1996-97 of Rs. 712.86 crores, the need for provision of sufficient resources through the Ministry of Civil Aviation for the development of an efficient network of airports in the region, timely operation of flights of Indian Airlines, connecting the State Capitals by air services to Guwahati and Delhi, the need for a special economic and industrial policy for the North East Region in view of the new Economic Policy of the Government, provision of necessary resources for the conservation of bio-diversity and development of such conservation projects which may also be economically viable in the regions etc. Proposal for Community Resource Management Project for upland Areas under the International Fund for Agriculture Development was also approved. Some other decisions were in respect of the funding of the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal, giving more importance to the agriculture and allied sectors by providing full-time Advisers in Horticulture, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry in the NEC Secretariat, and posting of officers for the NEC Secretariat to be made attractive by providing special incentives to attract talent from throughout the country. It was also decided to urge the Central Government to give high priority for early completion of the Jogighopa Bridge over River Brahmaputra.

(c) Between 1991 and November, 1995 nine meetings of the Council were held.

(d) During the course of the nine Council meetings a very large number of Agenda items have been discussed and decisions taken. The emphasis during the Eighth Plan period has been given on projects of regional and inter-State nature and importance as well as on projects for development of infrastructure, particularly with regard to development of power and construction of roads. Emphasis has also been laid on completion on ongoing projects. Further emphasis has been laid on the completion of 18 inter-State priority roads identified for special funding and for which the Central Government has been requested to provide additional funds. Three important projects in the power sector for which funding has been done by the Council during these years are Ranganadi (Arunachal Pradesh) and Doyang (Nagaland), both Hydro-electric projects, and Rokhia (Tripura) Gas-based power project. The Council has also during this period supported institutions for human resource development in the region. The schemes are under various stages of implementation. The Central Government has attached importance to the schemes approved by the NEC. An additional amount of Rs. 30 crores was provided in each of the two years 1994-95 and 1995-96 for the completion of 18 inter-State priority roads identified for early completion.

Also, additional funds were made available for completion of power projects. The implementation of the decisions and projects is an ongoing process.

[Translation]

Communication System in Maharashtra

1813. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any decision for strengthening the communication system in Maharashtra particularly in Vidarbha, Marathwada; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House, as soon as available.

Utilisation of LPG as Petrol or Diesel

1814. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any experiment has been made to ensure the utilisation of LPG as an alternative to petrol or diesel;

(b) if so, whether LPG is being used for operating cars; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA) : (a) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited had carried out prototype experiments in association with Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC), Kirloskar Company and Vehicle Research and Development Establishment (VRDE) on partial replacement of HSD by LPG, during the year 1983-84. No such trials/ studies have been carried out on petrol vehicles.

(b) and (c). As per LPG (Restriction on Use) Order, 1974, use of LPG for automotive purpose is not permissible in the country. At present demand of LPG in the domestic sector far outstrips the availability and therefore, use of LPG in cars etc. has not been permitted so far.

[English]

Flood Control and Soil Erosion

1815. SHRI PROBEN DEKA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Assam has sent any scheme to the Union Government to control flood and soil erosion for approval;