

**Development of National Highways
in Tamil Nadu**

1257. SHRI S. D. SOMA-
SUNDARAM:

SHRI P. S. RAMALINGAM:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken for comprehensive development of national highways in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government propose to consider the urgency of early development of the East Coast Road from Madras to Kanyakumari; and

(c) if so, the particulars of action taken in this regard and of the blue print; if any, of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHAND RAM): (a) The development of National Highways in the State of Tamil Nadu has been undertaken as part of the various Five Year Plans and is a "continuous" process. At the beginning of the Fourth Plan, the length of the National Highways in the State was 1680 Kms. One more road connecting Palayamcottai to Tuticorin (designated as National Highway No. 7A) was added to the National Highway system in 1972, increasing the length to 1729 Kms.

Since the beginning of the Fourth Plan, projects costing Rs. 37 crores were sanctioned, and an allotment of Rs. 35 crores for the execution of these works has been made so far.

In physical terms the following important categories of Works have been taken up since the beginning of the Fourth Plan:—

(1) Widening and strengthening of pavements to cater to present day traffic has been taken up on a large scale. At the beginning of the Fourth Plan, a length of 1100 Kms. was having a single-lane pavement and the balance length of 580 Kms.

was having a two-lane pavement. The present position is that a length of 1520 Kms. is two-lane. The strengthening of the pavement has also been completed in a length of approximately 520 Kms.

(2) The construction of eleven bye-passes in and around congested towns and cities has been taken up. Out of these, seven bye-passes have been completed.

(3) The replacement of nine railway level crossings by over-bridges has been sanctioned. Out of these, two have been completed.

(4) The construction of a major bridge across the Famban strait, including approaches, has been sanctioned and the work is in progress.

(5) The construction of another major bridge across Coleroon river at Trichy has been sanctioned and is under construction.

(6) The reconstruction of a large number of weak and narrow bridges and culverts has also been sanctioned.

(b) and (c). The East Coast Road is a State road and the State Government are concerned with its development. However, in order to help them financially in the development of this road, Central Financial assistance amounting to Rs. 2.95 crores has been agreed to be provided for this road so far. This would go a long way in the development of this road.

Comment about the Salt Commissioner's Office by the Former Industry Minister

1258. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a comment made by his predecessor in office appearing in PRAJNAN, journal of the National Institute of Bank Management, about the Salt Commissioner's office; and