

**THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT AND TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA):** (a) No, Sir. The position is as under:—

	Road length (Kms) per lakh of population	Road length (Kms) per 100 sq. km. of area
Meghalaya .	348	16
All India .	260	48

(b) and (c). Road communication system in the State is being improved under the Central Sector Road Programmes as also under the State Plan. Development of about 890 kms of roads is covered by Central Sector Road Programmes *viz.*, National Highways etc., and several improvement works are proposed on these during 1978—83. This programme is over and above the work being taken up by the State Govt., as part of State plan. Out of a total length of about 580 kms. a continuous road already exists along the international border in Meghalaya from Mankachar (Western-most point) to Balat. There is also a road in existence from Balat to Sonapur (Eastern-most point) except for some missing sections aggregating to about 135 kms. The end points of these missing sections are however accessible through alternative routes.

#### **Diversion of Cargo from Bombay Port**

475. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the marked fall in callings by Conference Lines during 1979 at Cochin Port;

(b) whether the recommendations of V. R. Mehta Committee for diverting cargo from Bombay Port has been implemented; and

(c) if not, the action taken thereon?

**THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT AND TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA):** (a) It is true that the number of calls of Conference Lines' vessels at Cochin Port decreased during 1979 as compared to the earlier years. Several Conferences' vessels have been calling at Cochin Port and the concerned Conference Lines decide on their own in respect of frequency of calls at a particular port keeping in view commercial considerations. This being so, the precise reasons for reduction in the number of calls are not known. Possibly, it could be due to better coordination among various Conference Lines.

(b) and (c). For implementing the recommendations of the Mehta Committee regarding diversion of cargo, an Inter-Ministerial Committee (Empowered Committee) was constituted by the Ministry. These recommendations were considered at an Inter-Ministerial meeting held in March 1979. These recommendations have been implemented to the extent possible.

#### **Islamic Conference**

476. DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Islamic conference was held in Pakistan in May, 1980;

(b) if so, whether Kashmir question was also discussed in the conference;

(c) if so, whether India objected to this;

(d) whether India has taken up this question with the other participant countries and got clarification from them in regard to the stand taken by them in the conference about Kashmir question;

(e) if so, what were their views and reaction; and

(f) whether Pakistan has been informed that such action will not help in improving the relations between the two countries?