

Bankura-Mejia Line

551. SHRI BASUDEO ACHARYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is proposal to set up a new Railway Line between Bankura and Mejia in West Bengal; and

(b) if so, by when?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALIKARJUN): (a) and (b). Based on the survey report submitted to the Government of West Bengal in December 1977 as a deposit work and the observations made by the Union Ministry of Energy (Department of Coal), South Eastern Railway has already been asked to make a quick reappraisal of the earlier survey and submit the report. A decision will be taken on receipt of the reappraisal report and its evaluation.

National Highways in Madhya Pradesh

552. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quota of kilometrage for National Highways in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) what is the present kilometrage of existing National Highways in Madhya Pradesh and since when;

(c) whether the Madhya Pradesh Government has submitted proposals for declaration of National Highways; if so, the details of each proposal;

(d) how much kilometrage of Highways in Madhya Pradesh have been suggested to the Planning Commission by the Department in its draft plan; and

(e) the policy in general to extend the coverage of National Highways in

the country to remove bottlenecks of Transport and passenger traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI BUTA SINGH):

(a) to (e). There is no quota of kilometrage for National Highways by any State including Madhya Pradesh. Roads are declared as National Highways to meet national as distinct from local requirements, keeping in view the following criteria, availability of resources *inter-se* priority of individual roads on an all-India basis, etc:

(i) They should be the main highways running through the length and breadth of the country;

(ii) They should connect foreign Highways;

(iii) They should connect Capitals of States;

(iv) They should connect major ports and large industrial or tourist centres;

(v) They should meet strategic requirements. While taking into account these criteria, due regard is also given to the economic considerations as well.

While agreeing to these criteria, emphasis is also laid on economic considerations; and opening up of backward or under developed areas.

The total length of National Highways in Madhya Pradesh is 2,670 kms. since the Second Five-Year Plan (1957—62). Recently, the State Government sent a proposal for 17 new routes detailed in the enclosed statement for being taken over as National Highways.

No draft Plan, as such, for taking over roads as National Highway has been sent to the Planning Commission so far since such a general proposal can be sent for all the States put together including Madhya Pradesh only after allocations under 1980—85 Plan have been finalised.