

(f) CRRI has provided consultancy services to five countries. Currently there are no consultancy projects abroad, in hand.

Lapse of Funds

3532. PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether a sum of Rs. 250 crores has lapsed out of the plan funds during the years 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) whether the development in various sectors has been affected due to this situation;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) whether the wide-ranging repairs of the National Highways from Baramulla to Handwara to Chokibal could not be undertaken only due to paucity of funds; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) During 1996-97 and 1997-98 an amount of Rs. 240 crore approximately was surrendered out of the plan allocation broadly for the following reasons :

(i) less toll collection from permanent bridges on national highways;

(ii) less demand/proposals from research organisations/states;

(iii) reduction in the allocation towards investment in the National Highways Authority of India as a result of review by High Level Committee;

(iv) Non-utilisation of funds in externally aided schemes by the executing agencies due to delay in opening of LOC; environmental clearance and problem of tree cuttings, etc.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) This road is not a National Highway and is being developed and maintained by the State Government.

(f) Does not arise.

Taj Hotel in Nagarhole National Park

3533. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH :
SHRI SITA RAM YADAV :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have denied permission for the Taj Hotel project in Nagarhole National Park in Karnataka;

(b) if so, whether the Government have directed the Karnataka Government to take over the hotel complex from the Taj group;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to stop such profit making concerns for operating in the protected areas such as National Parks, Sanctuaries and Reserve Forests ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) to (c) The proposal of the State Government of Karnataka for leasing of Murkal Complex and Cottages in Nagarhole National Park to M/s Gateway Hotels and Resorts Ltd. has been rejected under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 on 28.5.1998. The State Government's request for reconsideration has also been rejected on 17.9.98. Vide orders dated 17.9.98 of the Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), Regional Office, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangalore the State Government has also been asked to take the possession of all buildings and ancillary facilities at Murkal Complex immediately from M/s Gateway Hotels and Resorts Ltd.

(d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has issued detailed guidelines to regulate tourism in protected areas. No commercial tourist facilities are allowed to be established inside protected areas.

Wildlife Trade Control Bureau

3534. SHRI NADENDLA BHASKAR RAO Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to establish Wildlife Trade Control Bureau;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any award has been instituted for forest staff for meritorious service; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) No final view has been taken by the Government regarding establishment of Wildlife Trade Control Bureau.

(c) and (b) Provision of awards and rewards for specific cases of valour and outstanding performance has been made under the Scheme 'Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries'.