

SHRI PETER G. MARBANIANG : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that the portion of the road which is owned and maintained by the GREF has become an example of wasteful expenditure of the Government through the contributions of the people of Jainthia Hills where one spade is held by three people. The road is being maintained by them there very shabbily and very badly. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the expenditure involved in this regard. Further, the GREF, when they take a new alignment of the road, do not even bother to go into the land system of the area. They just go and acquire the land without informing the District Magistrate of the area and without informing the owners of the land. They have created havoc in the Jainthia Hills. I would request the hon. Minister that he should reconsider handing over the road to the State PWD.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is : Is the Government going to reconsider it? He turned the suggestion into a question.

(Interruptions)

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR : Sir, it is a matter of opinion whether the construction and maintenance of the border roads by the State Government or by the Army is more efficient or not. We beg to differ from the hon. Member. As far as the Border Roads Organisation is concerned, all works are executed departmentally. We have a large work force on our pay-rolls. There are no contractors and very strict stipulations are enforced by the Army with reference to every single parameter in road construction. So, I beg to differ from the hon. Member as regards the quality of work which, he said, will suffer if it is handled by the GREF. The Government doesn't propose to reconsider its decision as of now.

SHRI BHUWAN CHANDRA KHAN-DURI : Sir, the fact is that a portion of this road is still with the State PWD. The hon. Minister has given the reason of security and operational requirements for keeping the main portion of the road with GREF. Is the operational requirement

and national security not applicable to that portion of the road which is still with the State PWD? What has the Government done to take over that portion of the road? Let him please explain.

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR : I have already explained in the beginning that this road was taken over by the Border Roads Organisation and a particular portion was left out and allowed to be maintained by the Government of Meghalaya because that portion is in the plains. The hilly portions and the more strategic areas start after this portion and that particular portion was maintained well by the Meghalaya Government. That particular portion, the Army did not consider necessary to take over in 1971. That is why it remains with the Meghalaya Government.

SHRI JITENDRA NATH DAS : Sir, perhaps, the hon. Minister may be aware that the people of our country who are in the border area bordering with Bangladesh are being severely tortured by the security forces.

MR. SPEAKER : This is a different issue. He may not have the information with him.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE TO STATE ROADS

*270 **SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH** : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the traffic on National Highway No. 3 was diverted to State roads because of damage to Ghorapachar bridge in Rajgarh district, Madhya Pradesh during the last rainy season;

(b) whether, because of this diversion, the heavy traffic damaged the State roads;

(c) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh has demanded any compensation from the Union Government for the damage to the State roads;

(d) if so, the amount of compensation demanded by the State Government; and

(e) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Due to diversion of National Highway traffic, State Government reported some damages to State Roads for which an estimate for Rs. 2000.794 lakhs was forwarded to Union Government for compensation. However, the request for compensation could not be acceded to as National Highway Funds cannot be utilised for any road other than a National Highway.

MR SPEAKER : Shri Digvijaya Singh, you should exchange your seat. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH : Sir, it is very unfortunate that the hon. Minister has treated my question with utter contempt and harshness which a poor Member of Parliament like me, my constituency and my poor State of Madhya Pradesh certainly do not deserve. A bridge on the national highway broke down and all the traffic of the national highway was diverted through my constituency damaging the State highways totally. When the State Government presented a bill of damages as a compensation to the Government of India, the hon. Minister feels that it is unjustified. Even in cases where army does its annual exercise in Rajasthan area or in Punjab area, they pay compensation to the farmers in a damage like this. The hon. Minister must reconsider the decision. I would like to ask, through you, would he reconsider this decision of paying compensation? I am not asking for additional funds. It is a compensation due to the damage of the national highways to the State highways. Would he reconsider it?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER : I have no such Head under my Ministry for paying compensation. Roads are a national pro-

perty. And only the national highways are under my Ministry. We make them; we look after them be it a damage through floods or by other means. But the States roads are the responsibility of the State Governments.

The second part is, the hon. Member is a very good friend of mine, he has been pestering me and asking me, "can I give him some kind of compensation?" I would like to inform him, in all humility, that I have no money to give him.

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH : My second supplementary is, would the hon. Minister propose to the hon. Finance Minister, the reconsideration on this point? If he does not have any Head under the Surface Transport Ministry to pay compensation, he cannot give any compensation. But the damage to the State property has to be compensated from the Consolidated Fund of India. It is a constitutional right. Would he consider my request and approach the hon. Finance Minister to do that from any other fund?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER : I will be very happy to do that. If the Finance Minister gives me money, your roads will be the first priority on my list.

[*Translation*]

DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEYA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the time by which the damaged bridge which was rendered useless a long back, would be repaired? My second supplementary question is whether the hon. Minister has informed the State Government that the Central Government would not be paying the compensation for the damages which the State Government has demanded? Besides, how much amount the State Government has demanded as compensation?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am happy to inform that the bridge has been reopened for traffic.

(*Interruptions*)

DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEYA : Some portion of it is yet to be repaired.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER : I have replied to his question. The bridge has been reopened for traffic. The State Government had demanded a compensation of Rs. 20.79 crore from the Central Government. They know it that we cannot pay it. I have already replied to rest of his points. Besides, I shall write a letter, if not already written to the State Government expressing our inability to pay compensation. We have requested the Finance Minister today in the House to allocate funds for this purpose. The hon. Member has also made his request to us through you. If we get funds, his State would be the first to get it.

[English]

LINKING OF KUAKHIA WITH AVADI

*273. **SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS :** Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has sought central assistance from the Central Road Fund or under the Centrally Aided Programme of State Roads of Inter-State or economic importance for linking Kuakhia on National Highway No. 5 with Avadi;

(b) whether the Union Government have taken any decision in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to a road link from Kuakhia to Aradi (Dist. Balasore). No Such proposal either under Central Road Fund or E & I Scheme has been received from the State Govt.

(b) to (d) : Does not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, according to information available with me, many years ago the

Government of Orissa had sent a proposal to the Central Government in this regard. I have also raised this matter in this House many times. The national highway no. 5 originates from Goalpara and runs upto Arau via Jatur. This area falls under my constituency. Its population is 15 lakhs. Though the area is small in size, it is densely populated. The traffic is heavy and the people will have to use a longer route. While going to Goalpara from Aradi one has to cross Baitarani river. There is also a rivulet, called Gudha on the way and a distributary of Brahmani river has also to be crossed. There should be a bridge over it. In fact, the construction work of the bridge has been started but the Orissa Government does not have adequate funds to complete the work immediately. I had also made efforts to press for the same and as per my information, my hon. friend (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please put a question.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS : It is just the background. I was going to say that Orissa Government had sent a proposal, but I don't know where it is pending. The hon. Minister ought to know it. If he does not know, will he please give clearance to the proposal?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER : It is very simple that no such proposal has come. The Chief Minister of Orissa met me only yesterday. I know that his question is stated for today and presuming that the proposal had come from the State Government. I made enquiries from the Secretary to the Chief Minister. He said that they had not sent any such proposal. I will request the hon. Member to ask his State Government that if there is so much difficulty they should send a proposal to us. We will consider it and see whether we can give it under the rules or not.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS : I am raising it time and again in the House, because I have been a member of this House for the last several years. It is a very important road of my area. Millions of people use this road to reach different locations and they experience a lot of