

newsprint custom free under O.G.L. consequent upon this newsprint manufactured in India is gathering dust in the Mills.

I demand that protection should be given to the Indian Newsprint Manufacturers as recommended by the Kelkar Committee.

[English]

(ii) Need to exempt Kerala State from the purview of Coastal Zone Regulations

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Mukundapuram): The Coastal Zone Regulations being implemented by the Ministry of Environment is causing great hardship to the States like Kerala. Kerala, a coastal State, having 700 kms. of coastal line as its border, finds it impossible to comply with the restrictions being imposed for construction in the Coastal Zone. According to a recent court decision, 500 metres from the High tide Zone only is permitted for any construction. Kerala coasts are so thickly inhabited by the fishermen housing colonies and commercial constructions attached to fishing and fisheries industry, the restriction for any construction along the coastal line and also on the banks of backwaters and rivers will affect the tourism potential of Kerala to a great extent. Backwater tourism is considered to be the most potential thing of the future for the economy of Kerala. Due to present restriction, no construction is possible within 200 metres from the backwaters.

The Ministry of Environment may formulate appropriate policy leaving out coastal States like Kerala from this restriction and regulating the constructions keeping in mind problems of the States like Kerala instead of mechanically implementing the so-called policy which will hamper the economic growth of the State.

(iii) Need to sanction more funds out of Central Road Funds to Andhra Pradesh

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Visakhapatnam): Sir, the Ministry of Surface Transport in their letter dated 3.1.1989 to the State Governments informed that as per the revised resolution of Parliament passed on 13.5.1988, a sum of Rs. 202.86 crore is to accrue annually to Andhra Pradesh under Central Road Fund. The Ministry of Surface Transport had requested the Andhra Pradesh Government to draw up a list of works to be included under the programme for a period of six years from 1989-90 to 1994-95. The Andhra Pradesh Government as per guidelines communicated by the Ministry of Surface Transport, forwarded 25 items of work to the Government of India for the release of funds under the Central Road Fund.

Sir, the Government of India sanctioned only six items of work to the tune of Rs. 20.09 crore so far. The Andhra Pradesh Government had urged the Central Government to release Rs. 80 crore in 1995-96 for repairing the road system in our State which has been severely damaged but this

amount has not been released so far. Further the remaining 19 items of work have not been approved by the Government of India so far which shows that the directive of the Government of India that Rs. 202.86 crore to be released annually to Andhra Pradesh Government under the Central Road Fund is not being adhered to. This has created a great problem in the State for development of roads. I, therefore, urge the Government that they should immediately approve the remaining 9 items of works which have been sent to them by Andhra Pradesh and also release the amount regularly for the development of roads in Andhra Pradesh as per the resolution of Parliament.

(iv) Need for Action Plan for regular dredging of the silt and sand deposited in the catchment area of Durgapur Barrage, West Bengal

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Sir, in order to save thousands of acres of agricultural lands in the districts of Bankura and Burdwan in West Bengal and for the development of industry, the Durgapur barrage was conceived over Damodar river in the year 1957, with an object to store water in rainy season and to distribute water for irrigation in the dry season. But since its inception, no action whatsoever has been taken to dredge the silt at the catchment area of Damodar river. As a result, the holding capacity has gone down to a great extent. In the year 1978, the people who need to live in the embankments of Damodar river had witnessed an unprecedented flood situation. Not only the adduct of the barrage collapsed and thousands of acres of agricultural lands were submerged but also huge layers of sands were left on the agricultural lands and thus, diminishing the fertility of the lands perpetually. In the last week of September 1995, villages namely Kuldia, Pinguri, Madhavpur, Navpara under Maliara Gram Panchayat, Jalanpur under Barjon Gram Panchayat and Mana under Pokhannya Gram Panchayat were again submerged under flood water leaving tons of sand on the agricultural lands afterwards. It is noteworthy to mention here that most of the people of these areas are poor agricultural labourers and they simply turned to be out of employments for ever as the fertility of the lands is finished for ever. There are reports of formations of in-numerous crack zones in and around the embankment areas of Patrasayer and Sonamukhi Panchayat Samity areas in the district of Bankura. Already hundreds of acres of lands have gone down in the Damodar river for ever. In order to save the lives, properties and agricultural lands of the local people and for the development of industry, both in Durgapur and Barjora areas, I demand immediate action plan for regular dredging of the silt and sand deposited for years in the catchment areas of Durgapur barrage.

(v) Need to televise programmes through L.P.Ts throughout the day particularly at Martandam, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil): Sir, in several low power transmission centres in this country, there is no full time transmission programme. It is carried out only for a short

duration, generally after 4.30 p.m. So the viewers depending on such low power transmission centres are disappointed due to the non-transmission of full time programme. It is seen that adequate staff strength is not provided for the transmission of full time programme. This deficiency in staff strength and consequent reduction in the time of transmission and programmes is causing concern and disappointment among the viewers. The L.P.T. at Martandam, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu is one of such stations which has no full time transmission programmes due to low staff strength and inadequate arrangements. So I urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to provide PTs with adequate staff strength and other arrangements so as to enable the viewers to get the opportunity of full time programme.

(vi) Need to restore the railway line between Kotipalli and Kakinada in East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh

SHRI T. GOPALKRISHNA: A railway line between Kotipalli and Kakinada in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh existed during World War time. During the war period, some lines like one being mentioned have been removed whereas many or almost all those rail lines were restored after Independence. This line which is about 50 kms. in length has not been restored till date. During the 10th Lok Sabha in one of his Budgets, the then Hon'ble Railway Minister was kind enough to include this line in his Budget proposals. I understand that a survey has been conducted. This line, when restored, will benefit the people of agriculturally rich Konaseema area.

At present due to increased operations of ONGC in this area, there is a lot of pressure on road transport. Further, Kakinada is one of the important educational centres with Medical, Engineering and other colleges, besides being a port and district headquarters. A large number of students, farmers, businessmen, employee, commute from Konaseema area to Kakinada daily. They depend only on road transport which is unable to bear the pressure. The businessmen/agriculturists of Konaseema can conveniently transport their products to Kakinada Port and in the process the Railways too can earn sufficient revenue.

I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to see that his predecessor's promise to restore this line is fulfilled.

[Translation]

(vii) Need for early completion of by-pass in Lalitpur, U.P.

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI (Jhansi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, The Construction work of a by-pass road in Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh is going on. It was started 10 years ago. Foundation stone was laid by a Union Minister. For the last 5 years construction work is held up. Construction of bridges on the river and stream is yet to be completed.

Sir, Jhansi, Sagar and Jabalpur road passes through Lalitpur city which comes traffic jams for three to four hours

during the day time and 10-12 serious accidents take place there every year. Therefore it is quite necessary to build the road and bridges on the river and stream to reduce the congestion in the city.

I, therefore, urge the hon'ble Minister to issue urgent instructions for the completion of remaining work expeditiously

(viii) Need for early construction of a by-pass on National Highway No. 3 between Indore and Dewas, M.P.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): An action plan is under consideration of the Government for the past several years to build a bypass and fourlanes of the National Highway Mumbai-Agra between Indore and Dewas. This Highway passes through the city and as a result thereof accidents take place every now and then. During the recent past a survey for this pass was also conducted under the aegis of World Bank. The cost of construction may also increase because of delay in taking up this work. I, therefore request the Central Government to start the construction work without any further delay.

14.29 hrs.

[English]

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Loss of Lives due to Heavy Rains and Landslides during Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We will now take up discussion under Rule 193. The time available is two hours. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev. .

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Before I start, I would like to know since two days have elapsed in between, whether the Home Minister wants to add anything; because many news items appeared in the newspapers which are quite contradictory to what he has said. I being one of the Members of the supporting party, would like to know whether the newspapers are right or the Government is right. I will urge upon him to share the information with us so that it will be easier for us to react.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I do not know which newspaper report the hon. Member is referring to. But I can give you some latest information which we have received regarding different aspects of this tragedy.

It is with deep regret that I have to inform the House that the number of total deaths has now gone up to 194. Last time, when I made a statement in this House, the figures