

Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

The Government will formulate policies in this regard on getting suggestions from the Core Group.

(d) Appropriate measures are already being taken to minimise the impact of disasters like cyclone and floods. However, based on the suggestion of the Core Group, formulation of area based action plans for management of different types of Natural disasters will be considered.

Declaration of West Coast Canal as National Waterway

*107. DR. A. K. PATEL:
SHRI SHANKERSINH
VAGHELA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Tamil Nadu have given their comments on the restoration of the old AVM Canal linking it upto Kovalam in Trivandrum;

(b) if so, the decision taken by the Union Government thereon;

(c) the progress made in the feasibility studies for declaring the West Coast Canal as a National Waterway; and

(d) the time by which the above projects are likely to be taken up and the estimated cost in each case?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) The Government of Tamil Nadu have intimated in September, 1990 that they propose to investigate the feasibility of reviving the old AVM Canal.

(b) No decision of Central Government is called for at this stage.

(c) The feasibility studies on the

Kovalam-Badagara stretch of the West Coast Canal have been completed.

(d) The position regarding the old AVM Canal has been stated in answer to part (a) of the question. The cost of development of waterway between Kovalam and Badagara in West Coast Canal has been estimated by Inland Waterways Authority of India to be Rs. 410 crores. This stretch has not been declared as National Waterway and, therefore, the time by which the development work will be taken up cannot be indicated at present.

Meeting of World Tourism Organisation in Goa

*108. SHRI R. GUNDU RAO:
SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of the World Tourism Organisation was held recently in Goa to discuss the problems connected with the growth of tourism in the world in general and India in particular;

(b) if so, the outcome of the deliberations of the meeting;

(c) whether the Government have worked out any strategy to give rural orientation to the growth of tourism especially when 1991 is to be observed as "Visit India Year"; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI USHA SINHA): (a) and (b). The World Tourism Organisation held the 39th Session of its Executive Council in Goa from 6-8 December, 1990.

In the meeting the members of the Executive Council deliberated upon the administrative, financial and technical programme of W.T.O.

(c) and (d). Government is observing 1991 as "Tourism Year". During this year number of fairs and festivals are being promoted. Most of the fairs and festivals have rural orientation and will focus upon Indian heritage and culture.

Private Sector Involvement In Development of National Highways

*109. SHRI B. N. REDDY:
SHRI PRAKASH KOKO
BRAHMBHATT:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have taken a final decision with regard to participation of private sector in the field of construction and improvement of National Highways in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Meeting of Indo-China Joint Working Group on Border Issue

*110. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed meeting of the Indo-China Joint Working Group on the boundary question to be held in 1990 has since been held; and

(b) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The second session of

the India-China Joint Working Group on the boundary question and Annual Consultations at Foreign Office level took place in New Delhi on August 30-31, 1990.

During the discussions, the two sides significantly enhanced their understanding of each other's approaches to the solution of the boundary question. The effort was to adopt a practical and realistic approach and to look to the future. Hope was expressed by both sides that, by working in a sincere and forward-looking manner, they would be able to establish a basis for the solution of the boundary question, as well as for maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

The two sides agreed to a mechanism whereby their military personnel would meet from time to time at an appropriate level with a view to maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

Ways and means of further improving bilateral relations between the two countries were discussed, and views exchanged on regional and international issues of mutual concern. The growing interaction between the two countries in various fields was noted with satisfaction by both sides. The determination to maintain and further strengthen the momentum of bilateral relations was reiterated.

Telephone Connections in Maharashtra

*111. SHRI HARI BHAI SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons on the waiting list for telephone connections in Maharashtra, district-wise;

(b) the number of telephone connections released since 1 January, 1990, district-wise; and

(c) the time by which telephone connections are likely to be provided to all the persons on the waiting list?