

whose lives are in danger. This is being done to serve the national interest.

[English]

National Highway Links in Maharashtra Regions

*338. DR. VENKATESH KABDE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Union Government has been drawn to the handicaps faced by Vidharbha, Marathwada and some other regions of Maharashtra in their development on account of not being adequately linked with the National Highways; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or contemplated to improve the linkage of those regions with the National Highways ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir We have received representation for the declaration of new National highways in the backward region of Vidharbha, Marathwada and other region of Maharashtra. Maharashtra has 2918 Km of National Highways out of a total of 33612 Kms. Regions like Vidharbha and Marathwada are also served by National Highways. There have however, been demands for more National Highways Addition to National Highways in the 8th Plan will depend upon the Plan provision and priority considerations.

DR. VENKATESH KABDE: Sir, he has not answered part (b) of my question, namely what are the steps taken or contemplated to improve the linkage of those regions with the National Highways

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: As I have explained in the brief statement, we are aware of it and we have received several representations from Marathwada, Vidharbha and Konkan regions, backward regions of Maharashtra as well as from

various other backward areas from all over the country.

As far as Maharashtra is concerned, in the year 1985, during the Seventh Five Year Plan, the State Government has sought inclusion of 11 number of national highways, approximating to about 4679 kms.

Another requirement was, according to them in the Seventh Plan; Ratnagiri-Khopalapur-Sholapur-Nagpur-Nanded- Yeotmal-Nagpur Road. The roads are in the regions of Maharashtra.

There have been several other representations demanding various other network linking backward regions of Vidharbha and Marathwada. As I explained, this could be considered depending upon the Plan provisions and resources available and accordingly, priority could be given for certain essential linkages.

DR. VENKATESH KABDE: Sir, my first question is that Marathwada in Maharashtra is a backward region. The report of the Dhandekar Committee which was set up for this purpose observed that the proportion of roads in Maharashtra is the lowest in the country the most backward district in the country. I am sorry to say that the linkage does not exist at all. The national highway in Marathwada is in one corner of the district. Out of 2,918 KM in Maharashtra, less than 40 KM are in Marathwada which forms about 1/4th of Maharashtra. Justice has not been done to Marathwada for the last 42 years. Nothing has been done to promote the national highway. My question to the hon. Minister is whether he has a specific plan to provide National highways in the region of Marathwada because so far nothing has been done

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: Generally, in the debate on Questions, there is a lot of confusion. One is the confusion between requirement for effective roadways which, of course, everybody accepts and then the question of State highways and national highways. As you are well aware, the Union

Government is only concerned with national highways and there has been the national perspective in relation to construction of national highways subject to the resources made available to the Department of Transport. We have, as a matter of fact, been running into road mileages from different States but it would be difficult for us to take up any one plan or two plans. Therefore, while I entirely sympathise with the demand expressed by the hon. Member, I would request him to approach the Government of Maharashtra to provide more effective linkages in terms of State highways and also while I can see that there is a need to be more effective in relation to national highways, this will be dependent upon the priorities given to by the Government of Maharashtra.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : If anyone goes on the national highways of Vidarbha and Marathwada, he will find they are so poorly maintained. Firstly, there is paucity of highways linking as it is. Secondly, they are so poorly maintained. Whose responsibility is it to maintain at least these highways which, for lack of maintenance cause accidents, resulting in fatalities ? I would like to know that the Government is proposing to ensure the proper maintenance of these highways.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN : My distinguished friend was Minister for long and I am sure he is well aware of the problems of his own backward region of Vidarbha as well as Maharashtra. As far as Maharashtra is concerned, it is served with 11 numbers of national highways, Nos. 3, 4, 40, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 16, 17 and 50 for a total of 2,918 KM. If you take the proportion, there are many other States where the proportion is much smaller. We cannot subdivide into regions. While I sympathise with the regional aspirations, you cannot divide it, how much in a State, how much in a tehsil and so on. That is why, I said, please bear in mind the perspective for formulation of national highway plan. If these things remain a national highway, then there has to be a national perspective behind it. As for maintenance, the hon. Member is well aware that we do not have separate machinery. We are dependent on

the State Government. We give money. We have our own national highway and, that is why, we are formulating a policy for national highway where we will have a direct voice. It still takes sometime to formulate these things.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Does your Authority not monitor this?

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN : Monitoring is one thing.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Do you give money to the States?

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN : As you are well aware, we also give money.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : I would like to know from the hon. Minister that because of the poor maintenance of the National Highways whether Government of India is thinking to take-over the National Highways under its control since the State Governments are constructing and maintaining the National Highways. The National Highways Authority is being created and the entire construction and maintenance charge will be taken over by the Government of India. If that is so, when this Authority is going to be operated ? What is the national perspective ? As far as the backward regions are concerned, the National Highway percentage is less in different States like Orissa etc. What priority the Government is going to give to the backward regions especially to the State of Orissa which is total backward in respect of National Highways?

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN : I think the last part of the Question has already been answered. As for the details and other proposals, I would require a separate notice. It is under process. We will definitely take Parliament into confidence.

SHRI A.R. ANTULAY : Sir, as everybody is aware, Konkan is the most backward region in Maharashtra. The only mode of transport available in this region is road transport. There is no steamer or no railways there so far. The National Highway No. 17

goes through Kashedi Ghat which is between Poladpur village and Khed town Traffic is blocked due to frequent land slides every year due to excessive rains and severe down-pour As a result of this, the traffic is diverted from Chiplun via Pune for Bombay rather than through Kashedi Ghat As a result of this, a by-pass is suggested from Khed via Mhapral bridge to Tol-bridge so that the traffic can smoothly go on even during the worst rainy season or the worst period of severe downpour I would like to know from the hon Minister whether the Government is conscious and earnest and that the actual construction will be taken seriously by this Government The present dangerous ghat situation causes the death of many persons during every rainy season and the roads have been blocked annual successively for many weeks Will the hon Minister consider my suggestion of immediate construction of bye pass ?

SHRI K P UNNIKRISHNAN The suggestion of the distinguished Member will be taken seriously and it will be looked into

[*Translation*]

SHRI DAULAT RAM SARAN Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon Minister as to what is the criterion for declaring a highway as a National Highway ? I would also like to know as to which state of the country has the highest and which state has the lowest percentage of the National Highways ?

[*English*]

SHRI K P UNNIKRISHNAN I have already explained that it is not just to meet the requirements of any particular district or foreign or any State it is done There are certain inter-State priorities to be determined in order to improve the national economy There is also the inter-State linkages and so on There was a National Transport Policy Committee whose recommendations were accepted by the Planning Commission The criteria for the declaration of a road as a National Highway have been the road should

run through the length and breadth of the country as a whole, roads which connect the adjacent countries, roads which connect the state capitals, roads which are connecting Ports and other vital installations and major tourist centres, those roads which are essential in national and strategic requirements and also high density of traffic and adequate length Further, they take into account roads which enable a sizable reduction in travel distances These are the broad criteria on which so far the Planning Commission as well as the Ministry of Transport have directed the National Highways Policy

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY Sir, there are many States which are much below the All-India percentage and due to this the development is happened No new construction has been made I would like to know whether the Government is considering in the Eighth Plan that those areas or regions which are lagging behind as far as percentage and other things are concerned, which the Minister has explained, will get priority over other things

SHRI K P UNNIKRISHNAN The proposals are still under consideration It is too early to speculate on this We shall certainly have an opportunity to discuss this

[*Translation*]

DR DAULATRAO SONUJI AHER Mr Speaker, Sir, 'Kumbha fairs' are scheduled to be organised in 1991-92 in Nasik and Trambak A proposal to widen National Highway No 3 and National Highway No 51 which pass through Nasik in Maharashtra was sent for approval of the Central Government by the State Government but the Central Government have not cleared the proposal so far I would like to know whether the proposal for widening the National Highways referred to above would be cleared and the worked would be completed before the Kumbh festival ?

[*English*]

SHRI K P UNNIKRISHNAN I have

already explained that the main proposal is of the Government of Maharashtra. There are also other proposals which will have to be considered.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: It was found that the national highways in certain States are maintained very nicely. National Highways passing through black cotton soil are not so good. May I know what is the criteria of giving maintenance grants to these States? Is it a flat rate or does it differ from structure of the land in different States?

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: It is good that he has raised this issue. There are certain broad criteria. In addition to that, there also, some weightage is being given. There have been complaints about certain types of soil that high monsoon fed areas are not getting adequate support. This is a problem which we have raised in the Planning Commission. We hope, the Planning Commission would consider this sympathetically.

Milk Power Plants

*339. **SHRIP.R. KUMARAMANGALAM** : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of milk powder plants in different States which are not working to full capacity;

(b) the names of longlife tetrapak plants either not working fully or lying idle;

(c) whether some of the State Governments have requested the NDDB to take corrective measures in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI NATHU RAM MIRDHA). (a) to (d). A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) Milk powder plants set up under Operation Flood are primarily meant to convert surpluses arising out of seasonal variation in milk procurement by the dairies. Keeping this perspective in view, of the 50 powder plants established under Operation Flood the utilisation during December, 1989 and January, 1990 was 76.08% and 81.98% respectively. Of these 23 plants operated at levels ranging from 75% to 10% plus, 13 plants operated between 50% to 75% of their capacity and 14 operated below 50% of their capacity. The names of the powder plants that operated below 50% of their capacity are Guntur and Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh; Patna and Begusarai in Bihar; Bangalore in Karnataka; Latur, Pune and Sangli in Maharashtra; Jullundhar in Punjab; Bikaner, Ganganagar and Jodhpur in Rajasthan; Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh and Darjeeling in West Bengal.

(b) to (d). No tetrapak plant is lying idle and the initial teething problems inevitable in any new technology have been resolved. Fuller utilisation of capacity for Tetrapak plants can only be achieved over time as demand picks up. However, there is likely to be near doubling of the quantity of aseptic milk packed in 1989-90 as compared to 1988-89.

SHRIP.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I am happy to note that we have a new Deputy Prime Minister now.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: He has already taken my permission, you make your point.

[*English*]

SHRIP.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: First of all, I seek your protection. The question is specific and the answer has not been given in the statement. The most important point is, in Part 'B' of the question, I have specifically asked;