

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a casual approach. He is trying to say something. Let him say. It is not a casual approach. How can this be a casual approach ? (Interruptions) You are un-necessarily (Interruptions).

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : I am going to tell you that figure. During the Seventh Plan an amount of Rs. 31 crores has been allocated for the programme and I would like to say that I am not at all giving a non-serious reply. I am saying that this programme cannot be closed down tomorrow because it has been found beneficial in many places. It cannot be left to the whims of the quacks because some calamities have occurred. So, therefore, we will have to go into all these things. We have set up. We have taken at the highest level of CCH and we are going to go into this.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD ; There are approximately 90 lakh people who are blind in this country and fortunately majority of them can be given eye sight with a small investment by simple operation. May I know, under the National Programme for Control of Blindness, whether medical and para medical forces are in position ? If so, by what time it would be possible for the Government to give sight to those who can be given under this scheme ?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO ; The National Programme for Control of Blindness which was launched throughout the country in 1976 aims to reduce the blindness in the country from 1.4% which it happens to be at the moment to 0.3% by the year 2000 A.D. and we are working with that as a target.

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Please allow us.

MR. SPEAKER : I cannot do it daily. I have so many Members more on the question list. (Interruptions)

SHRI A. CHARLES : Please allow me. I have been working on this.

MR. SPEAKER : If you are working on it, it is very good. Please keep working on it.

Repair and Maintenance on National Highway No. 12

*148. SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the repair and maintenance work on National Highway No. 12 has been delayed considerably;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) whether the laid down norms for National Highways have been adhered to so far as National Highway No. 12 is concerned;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps the Ministry propose to take to bring the National Highway No. 12 to the laid down specification ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes Sir, within available resources.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Improvement of the National Highways is a continuing process subject to availability of funds. Further improvement works costing about Rs. 37 crores have been included in the 7th Plan for being taken up on National Highway No. 12 in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : National Highway No. 12 was deeded as such in 1960 and in 1960 it was only about 500

kms. in the State of Madhya Pradesh. In 1981 another 400 kms. of Rajasthan area was also added to the National Highway No. 12. Now the hon. Minister has said in his reply to part (c) that it is a continuing process. I would very much have appreciated if the process were continuing provided it had begun. With the process of repair, maintenance and bringing it to the specifications it has not begun, the question of continuing process does not arise.

Now, my first Supplementary is: During the Fourth and Fifth plans, i.e., in the Sixties, what all was done by way of repair, maintenance and bringing the National Highway of 1960 till 1981 to the specifications and how much money was allotted in the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Plans, and in the Sixth Plan how much money was spent on the section in Madhya Pradesh and how much money was spent on the section in Rajasthan? It is because I have a feeling that the area and the section of the road in Madhya Pradesh since 1960 has not been repaired at all and there has been a lot of public inconvenience because of that.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Your question are quite lengthy. You will have to give all these points in writing separately. We can say about National Highway No. 10, but yours is National Highway No. 12.

[*English*]

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member of Parliament has a background of ordnance in the Army and the Army people really believe when the bomb is blast. Till the bomb is made, they do not call it a process.

This working of National Highway has been on after it was declared in 1960 and the Rajasthan portion was included in the year 1981. In the Sixth Plan we spent roughly Rs. 10 crores on this National Highway, Rs. 1.79 crores in Rajasthan portion and Rs. 1.38 crores in Madhya Pradesh portion. In the Seventh Plan we had roughly Rs. 17.74 crores in Rajasthan and Rs. 19.26 crores in Madhya Pradesh.

Sir, as a second point he has asked about the Sixth Plan expenditure on the National Highway 12. In Madhya Pradesh portion in the Sixth Plan we had spent from 1980 to 1985 Rs. 1600 lakhs and in Rajasthan we had spent Rs. 1800 lakhs.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: I would also like to know from the hon. Minister: Is there any priority for the road plan laid down in the Seventh Plan by the Planning Commission and if it has not been laid, what steps the Government is taking to get the road plan given priority and within this money which the hon. Minister has said, for the Seventh Plan Rs. 17.74 crores for Rajasthan and Rs. 19.26 crores for Madhya Pradesh, whether work will start from Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan side.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: As far as priority is concerned, the Planning Commission has been taking up the case with the Government because road sector we have got to give priority. But unfortunately resources are limited and that is why the Government is going in for a National Highway Authority so that resources could also be augmented in a different way because at the moment our requirement is great, to bring all the National Highways to the standard and every State is demanding for the National Highway. So, we are trying our best, whatever we can augment from the Planning Commission within our resources and also some other sources could be opened to augment this priority sector.

As far as the work is concerned, when it starts I will certainly give the choice to the hon. Member of Parliament who wants the work to start from Madhya Pradesh. We will start from Madhya Pradesh also and we start from Rajasthan also.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU: Sir, with regard to the National Highway it is under the direct control of the Central Government. Funds are being allotted Statewise by the Central Government only and the maintenance is taking place according to the funds available, which are allocated to the State Governments. My question is, the condition of the National Highways is

very very poor when compared to other foreign countries. Sir, we do not have any express ways also. Just in foreign countries express ways are allotted and by that a car can go straight with 80 km or 100 km per hour speed, but here not even a bullock cart. Here I want to know, from the Sixth Plan period and the Seventh Plan period not even a single kilometre of road has been upgraded from State Highways to National Highways. That is the position now. Even in respect of the maintenance you are not giving priority according to the National Highways which are available in the States concerned. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether you will come forward to allocate more funds to the States, according to the km. wise, at least for maintenance, if not for upgradation. You know fully well that you are now having independent charge. Formerly, you were not having independent charge of Surface Transport and now you are. Therefore, you should please find out and get more allocations for the States for the maintenance of Highways.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Sir, it is a fact that regarding National Highways, we have not been able to cope up with the national requirements of the traffic. But it is again due to the resources. As far as the maintenance is concerned, whatever resources we give to the States, that is also not very rightly utilised by some States. That is why, we are coming up with the suggestion...

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : What are the States which are not rightly utilising ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Well, if you ask a separate question, I can tell you. Some of the States have surrendered the funds also. We are fighting for the funds; we have given funds to the States but they have not been able to utilise the minimum possible, whatever they can spend from the fund. That is why, we are coming up with the suggestion that we should have a National Highway Authority so that the quality of work can be monitored by the Centre.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Why do you want to stir up a hornet's nest ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Sir, I do agree with the hon. Member that when you travel on the road, it is the National Highway image which is projected. If a foreigner goes and travels on the road, he does not know which State he is passing through. He will certainly feel about the national roads. That is why, we are coming up with this idea.

As far as adding of kms. to the National Highways are concerned, we have taken a decision that whatever the National Highways are there at the moment, let us first bring them up to the standard, improve them first and then add to the Kms.

As far as the Express Way is concerned, it is a very good suggestion. We have already taken up the work with the World Bank aid in Ahmedabad-Baroda route. The work has been sanctioned. The work is going on. We are also seeing the feasibility of having Express Ways in other parts of the country.

SHRI AMAL DATTA : When the National Highways are planned and specifications are laid down for them, it is done according to the number of traffic which is expected to move in the next 5 years. And also the load is taken, as the axle load of the type of traffic which is to move. In other words, if 200 trucks of Tata, Mercedes are supposed to move, you take 200 trucks and the axle load is taken as 7.5 tonnes. Everybody knows that Tata, Mercedes or Benz truck carries 15 to 17 tonnes. That is the usual thing. Now, I have asked the authorities concerned in road building and they say this is the international norm and therefore, they have to take the axle load and they cannot take the actual load. That is the reason—and they have admitted—why our roads break-down very easily. If you do not go by the reality, the actuality of the position, this is bound to happen.

The other thing is, 5-year term is too short a period because by the time you

sanction, 5 years have already elapsed. So, the number of traffic has gone up. Now, what are you going to do to rectify the situation ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Sir, it is a fact that by overloading, our roads get damaged. That is why, we are coming up with an amendment to the Motor Vehicles which go overloading. The amendment is likely to come.

SHRI AMAL DATTA : Why don't you take the actual position ?

[*Translation*]

SHRI MOHD. AYUB KHAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister comes from Rajasthan. Firstly, he had promised to link Jhunjhunu with the National Highway. I would like to know whether he intends to construct National Highway from Sikar to Delhi *via* Jhunjhunu and if so, when he is going to inaugurate it ?

MR. SPEAKER : Please give a firm assurance, no *Kucha* business here.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Sir, as I said just now, the policy of the Government is to improve the existing National Highways first and after that new National Highways should be taken in hand. If we go on accepting new National Highways, we shall not be able to improve the existing ones. I am not in a position to give any firm assurance to the hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER : You should take up at least one by doing a favour.

[*English*]

Setting up of Centrally Controlled Medical Institute in Andhra Pradesh

*149. **SHRI V. TULSIRAM :** Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal to set up Centrally controlled Medical Institutes in Andhra Pradesh ;

(b) if so, the details alongwith location thereof ; and

(c) the time by which the medical institutes are expected to be set up ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI V. TULSIRAM : Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I thought, I would not be getting a chance because you would say that the Question Hour was over. You did give me a chance but the hon. Minister has spoiled that chance (*Interruptions*). . . . Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to why a negative reply is given every time the turn of Andhra Pradesh comes ? Is it due to the reason that Telugu Desam Government is in power there ?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE : Sir, it is not that a negative reply is given because Telugu Desam Government is in power there. Since no such proposal is under consideration of the Central Government, hence the negative reply.

SHRI V. TULSIRAM : Sir, there is one Nizam Orthopaedic Hospital there, in which a special ward in the memory of late Sanjay Gandhi was also opened. Funds for this purpose were also made available, but nothing of this sort is seen there. At the same time, a promise was also made to set up a Cancer Research Centre, but in this case too, no such arrangement is there. I want to know whether she is going to provide such an arrangement there ?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE : The question asked by the hon. Member was about something else, but he is asking supplementaries on entirely a different point.