

MR. SPEAKER : The supplementaries which give suggestions, which give information and which ask for opinion are not allowed.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : I will change the question if you like. I want to know whether it is a fact that the representatives of General Insurance employees have submitted a memorandum to the Government saying that the present Custodians have done certain injustice to them. There was an assurance given by Mr. Chavan that nothing will be upset. There are certain genuine complaints. I would like to know whether these complaints will be rectified and the Custodians will be asked not to upset the present arrangement.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : There was no representation given this morning. But I may tell him that if there is any such thing, it will be looked into and the Custodians will be asked to see that no injustice is done.

**Vacancies of Class IV Employees in the
Office of Central Excise and Land
Customs in Cooch Behar**

*1481. **SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are a considerable number of vacancies of Class IV employees in the Office of the Central Excise and Land Customs in Cooch-Behar District ;

(b) if so, the number of such vacancies and when Government propose to fill them up by proper recruitment ; and

(c) whether in case of such recruitment, the local candidates would be given preference ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH) : (a) to (c). The sanctioned strength of Class IV employees in the Central Excise and Land Customs Office in Cooch Behar District is 102. There are 13 vacancies in the Class IV cadre—2 in the grade of Drafty and 11 in the grade of Sepoy. The vacancies of Daftries are filled by promotion of Sepoys. The vacancies in the grade of Sepoy cannot be filled now due to ban on filling up of the posts.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : This is a simple question. In view of the fact that there are 13 vacancies and those vacancies, according to the hon. Minister, are to be filled up from Sepoys, may I know why those vacancies have not been filled up ? Secondly, the hon. Minister also said that there is a ban. In view of the acute unemployment problem and in view of the fact that the Government also is very much keen that there should be more and more employment, may I request the hon. Minister to consider to lift the ban particularly for filling up these 13 vacancies ?

SHRI K. R. GANESH : The hon. Member's suggestion will be considered.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY
rose—

MR. SPEAKER : I don't know how a supplementary arises. But you manage it.

**Conversion of Coastal Road into a
National Highway in Kerala**

*1486. **SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN :** Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any request from the Kerala Government from the conversion of the Coastal road into a National Highway ; and

(b) if so, the decision taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI OM MEHTA) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Government of Kerala requested for the declaration of the West Coast Road as a National Highway. This request is receiving attention.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN : The Minister says that the request is receiving attention. I would like to know whether it is a favourable attention or. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI OM MEHTA : All these schemes were forwarded to the Planning Commission and they agreed to it, but the Ministry of

Finance thought it necessary that it should be kept in abeyance for some time. Again, we have referred it back to the Ministry of Finance for reconsideration about its classification as a National Highway and I hope it will be done very soon.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA : Since it is a favourable attention, I would like to know as to what is the estimated expenditure likely to be involved in undertaking this scheme and which are the important cities the road is likely to connect ?

SHRI OM MEHTA : The development of the road is estimated to cost Rs. 22.39 crores.

About the second question, I will require notice. If he wants information about the States through which this road will pass, I can give that. It will be passing through Maharashtra, Kerala, Goa and Mysore. But to give the names of the cities, I want notice. Almost all the coastal towns it should connect.

Expansion of National Highway from Darbhanga to Forbesganj

*1488. **SHRI JAGANNATH MISHRA** : Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction of a National Highway from Amingaon to Forbesganj is not only sanctioned but it is also completed upto Darbhanga in Bihar ;

(b) whether the expansion of the same from Darbhanga to Forbesganj via Jhanjharpur and Nartiya in the District of Darbhanga is being delayed ;

(c) if so, what are the factors that led to its delay ; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to complete its construction ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI OM MEHTA) : (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

Persumably, the Member is referring to the Bihar portion of the Bareilly-Amingaon

Lateral Road. There is a sanctioned alignment of this lateral road in Bihar between Salemgarh (on UP/Bihar border) and Galgolia (on Bihar/West Bengal border). The Salemgarh-Purnea section of this alignment in Bihar is already a N.H. route on which work between Salemgarh and Muzaffarpur is nearing completion except the bridge on river Gandak at Dumariaghat which is in progress. Work between Muzaffarpur and Purnea has already been completed—partly under some other programmes and partly under the Lateral Road Programme. Similarly work on the remaining alignment of the Lateral Road between Purnea and Galgolia, which is a State road, is also nearing completion. In addition, the Lateral Road Project also provides, *inter alia*, for the construction of two link roads connecting Muzaffarpur with Darbhanga and Arraria with Forbesganj. Work on these link roads is nearing completion. There was also a proposal to connect Darbhanga with Forbesganj via Maricha/Dagmara to provide a more northerly route for the Lateral road. Work on Forbesganj-Darbhang link via Maricha/Dagmara could not be taken up so far as it was dependent upon the fixation of a site for the construction of a bridge over Kosi and later also because of financial limitations. However, in January 1971, a Committee consisting of the representatives of the Ministries of Shipping and Transport, Finance, Defence, and the Planning Commission was constituted to consider ways and means to finance the construction of the Darbhanga-Forbesganj link road with a major bridge over the Kosi. The report of the Committee is awaited.

SHRI JAGANNATH MISHRA : It is said in the statement that a committee consisting of the representatives of the Ministries of Shipping & Transport, Finance, Defence and the Planning Commission was constituted and its report is awaited. I would, therefore, like to know from the Minister how long it will take for the committee to submit its report.

SHRI OM MEHTA : Very soon the report will be there.

SHRI JAGANNATH MISHRA : Since it is a defence oriented scheme and it is very important from the strategic point of view also, will efforts on the part of the