

Four Lane Traffic way from Changalpattu and Nagercoil

*371. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps have been taken by Government to extend the four lane traffic way from Changalpattu to Nagercoil; and

(b) if so, the time limit fixed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. This section consists of three segments namely.

- (i) Changalpattu-Tindivanam on NH-45.
- (ii) Tindivanam-Madurai via Trichy on NH-45 & 45B.
- (iii) Madurai-Kanyakumari on NH-7.

Changalpattu-Tindivanam section is being developed on BOT basis. Contract has been awarded and work is targeted to be completed by November 2004. DPR for the development of Tindivanam-Madurai via Trichy has been completed. Since funding arrangements have not been finalized, no firm date can be indicated. Madurai- Kanyakumari is a part of North-South Corridor and is scheduled to be completed by December, 2007. DPR of this section is under preparation.

Reaction of foreign countries over Gujarat carnage

*372. SHRI M.V. RAJASHEKHARAN:
DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some countries have officially expressed their anguish over Godhara and its related communal riots in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the names of the countries and summary of their communications;

(c) whether Government have assured them of taking serious action against the people involved in riots; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

[12 August, 2002]

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THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Reaction of foreign countries over Gujarat carnage

Some countries of the world officially expressed their reactions over Godhara and the communal riots in Gujarat. The reactions of these countries are as follows:

Pakistan

On March 2, 2002, President General Pervez Musharraf, expressed dismay and sorrow over large-scale communal violence in India and said that violence against the Muslim community had caused deep distress and concern among the people of Pakistan.

In a statement, President Musharraf said that the incident could not provide license for the reprehensible brutalities and violence against the Muslim community that had caused hundreds of deaths, destruction of property and desecration of Muslim religious places. He said the measures taken by the Government of India for the protection of its Muslim minority, which is the target of Hindu extremism and terror, needed to be strengthened. He said that the carnage must be brought to an end and all those responsible for the violence be arrested and punished.

President Musharraf said the violence and mayhem in India had again highlighted the damages posed by politics of communalism and the forces of extremism & terrorism. The International community cannot afford to be complacent or take a biased view in responding to and combating this evil in whichever form it manifested and wherever it existed, he added.

According to APP report (1.3.02) in response to a question about the communal violence in Gujarat, the Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman stated that while law and order inside India was an internal matter of that country, the government of Pakistan deeply regretted the loss and property in the recent incidents. He also said the Government of Pakistan sympathised with all those who suffered as a result of the violence and offered its condolences to the bereaved families.

When his attention was drawn to the allegation by the Indian Defence Minister, as reported in a section of the Press, that Pakistan's ISI was behind these disturbances, the spokesman termed its as ridiculous and irresponsible.

China

Though no official comments/statement were made/issued by the Government of China, the Spokesman of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on our Prime Minister's alleged remarks about Muslims said at a press conference on 16th April, 2002 that they "have not read the relevant speech. However, it is our hope that India could maintain social stability as well as unity and harmony among its ethnic groups."

Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh did not officially express any reaction over the Godhara incident and communal riots. However, through a Note Verbale of May 12, 2002 to our High Commission in Dhaka, it referred to the incident in Godhara and Informed the Government of India about Bengali speaking families from India trying to flee and allegedly attempting crossover into Bangladesh as a result of the violence due to the riots in Gujarat. It was also alleged in the note verbale that BSF was actively involved in trying to push these families into Bangladesh. In response to the note verbale, our High Commission conveyed to the Government of Bangladesh that in the context of Government of India's concern regarding large scale illegal migration from Bangladesh, there was no question of BSF of India trying to push them into their home country, since these families had come to India from Bangladesh. Details were also requested from Government of Bangladesh on any Indian national who may have returned to Bangladesh from India. Govt. of Bangladesh was also informed that the situation in Gujarat was being brought under control and suitable action against those found to be indulging in violence was being taken by the Government of India.

Iran

The Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran made an official statement on Gujarat events on March 2, 2002. He strongly deplored wide-scale unrest and violence of the past few days and said that Iran was hopeful that Indian government would

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overcome the problem with full capability by exercising tolerance. He said that it was expected that leaders of the Muslims and Hindu communities will demonstrate self-restraint and concentrate their efforts on building mutual understanding and dialogue, that will lead to prosperity.

During a meeting at Tehran with President Seyed Mohammad Khatami of Iran on March 31, 2002, Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Omar Abdullah, who was visiting Iran as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, stressed upon the Indian government's commitment to secularism. He said that we moved fast to contain the spread of violence to other states and will ensure that there is no repeat of such violence in the affected areas.

New Zealand

Hon'ble Phil Goff, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand in a letter dated 2nd April, 2002 addressed to our High Commissioner in Wellington expressed "deep concern about the communal unrest in Gujarat". He added that media reports of the conflict have been quite shocking and especially disturbing for the New Zealand Indian Community. However, he further stated that it was encouraging to note that communal conflict appeared to have subsided for the last week or so. In response, our High Commissioner through a letter addressed to Hon'ble Phil Goff provided detailed information on the subject especially various preventive and confidence building measures including peaceful conduct of secondary school examination; elections to the village Panchayats, appointments of Justice S.D. Dave to hold judicial enquiry into incident of attack on journalists; visit by Prime Minister to Gujarat, etc.

Europe

U.K.

Statements on the communal violence in Gujarat were made by Prime Minister Tony Blair, Foreign Secretary Straw and other British officials. In these statements, the British Government expressed its concern over local casualties and over the safety of British citizens in the State. It also appreciated the efforts of Government of India to restore calm.

Germany

German Foreign Minister made the following statement on March 1,

2002:—"The German Government condemns the violent riots in Gujarat. It is shocked and concerned about the terrible images of dead and the injured as well as burning houses, all the more so because his confrontation is taking place between supporters of two major world religions. The German Government urges the leaders of the groups involved to end the confrontation. The prudent stand taken by the Indian Government, which is pressing for a peaceful solution to the conflict based on the rule of law, deserves our recognition."

France

There was no official statement or comment by the French Government. However, in response to a question asking whether the riots in India which left at least 200 dead were linked to the crisis in Central Asia, the official Spokesperson of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied, "We profoundly deplore such violence but I have no other comments."

European Union

The EU General Affairs Council consisting of EU Foreign Ministers adopted a Declaration on 15th April 2002 in which it also expressed its concern at the sectarian violence in Gujarat.

Even though events in Gujarat are strictly an internal matter of the country, the Government of India has, from time to time, sensitized the international community and our principal interlocutors of the actions that have been taken to bring the perpetrators of violence to justice and provide relief and rehabilitation to those affected.

Golden Quadrilateral Project

*373. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Golden Quadrilateral Project connecting Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai, which was to be completed by December, 2003, has now been delayed due to land acquisition problem and law and order situation in some States; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the likely date of its completion?