

- (v) NH No. 31 in Assam, NH Nos. 40,51 and 62 in Meghalaya, NH 44 in Tripura and NH 39 in Manipur States connecting neighbouring countries viz., Bangladesh and Myanmar are being maintained in a traffic-worthy condition within the availability of funds. Highway from Karimganj to Sutar-khandi on Indo-Bangladesh border in Assam State has been declared as NH 151 during September, 1999 for promoting trade with Bangladesh.

The draft Ninth Five-Year Plan (1992-97 for the NE region provides for improvement of NHs and construction/reconstruction of bridges at an estimated cost of Rs. 2104 crore. This amount includes a mega project for construction of rail-cum-road bridge across Brahmaputra at Bogibeel near Dibrugarh on NH 52B costing about Rs. 942 Crore.

Growth Rate in Industrial Production

537. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of industrial production in the country during Sep. 98 Sept. 99 as compared to the growth rate in corresponding period of the preceding year;

(b) whether it is a fact that growth rate has displayed a poor performance;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to boost up the growth rate including the growth in export and infrastructure sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) The overall growth rate of the index of industrial production during Sept. 1999 over Sept. 1998 was 7.6%.

(b) No Sir.

(c) Does't arise in view of (b) above.

(d) The steps proposed, interalia, are

- (1) amendments to Patents Act, 1970.
- (2) amendments to Trade and Merchandise Marks Act, 1958;
- (3) replacement of Designs Act., 1911;
- (4) geographical indications of goods (Registration and Protection) Bill 1999;
- (5) extending the scope of the Plan Scheme of 'mass communication' for productivity;
- (6) setting up of a National Benchmarking Clearing House of India;
- (7) launching up of National Quality Campaign involving Quality Council of India;
- (8) operationalisation of National Information and Enquiry System relating to standards;
- (9) the national Accreditation Board for certification bodies and the national Accreditation Board for Auditors will commence their activities shortly;
- (10) passing off of Insurance Regulatory Authority Bill;
- (11) simplification of procedures for importers and exporters
- (12) formulation of an Integrated Transport Policy;
- (13) corporatisation of State Electricity Boards; and
- (14) formulation of a new competition policy.

Legislation for Strengthening the Intellectual Property Rights

538. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are likely to introduce a number of bills for strengthening the Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) regime in the Winter Session of Parliament;

(b) if so, the details of the amending bills and main features thereof; and

(c) whether special appellate courts are likely to be set up to decide the cases relating to Trade Related Property Rights?