

Government have recently announced the construction of a four-lane / six-lane East West corridor. This will partly cover the said route from Dalkola-Siliguri to Guwahati. Connectivity of National Highway to the said corridor is separately under consideration.

Indore Habitat Project

*386. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the "Indore Habitat Project" has been a commendable success and has brought about a tremendous change in Indore's Urban scape;

(b) whether Government are aware that the project has won International acclaim and secured the Aga Khan Award for 1998 for excellence in architecture; and

(c) if so, whether there are any proposals with Government to recommend similar projects for implementation for the improvement of other towns and cities in India?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Government of Madhya Pradesh has informed that the ODA-UK Government assisted Indore Habitat Improvement Project has been a commendable success and has brought about tremendous change in the improvement of 174 slums of Indore, in which community development and health programmes were implemented which include 148 slums where physical upgradation of infrastructure has been done.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Presently, DFID (formerly ODA)-UK Government is assisting three projects for Slum Development at Calcutta, Cuttack and Cochin and another project to cover 32 class-I towns in Andhra Pradesh is in the the pipeline.

Revision in the System of Royalty

*387. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Gujarat has represented to streamline the existing system of departmentally fixing of rates of royalty;

(b) whether Government propose to set up a statutory body of experts to revise rates of royalty;

(c) whether a decision has been taken to revise the rates of royalty for lignite every three years; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not revising the rate since 1990?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK): (a) to (d) As per the provisions of Section 9(3) of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, amend the Second Schedule to the Act so as to enhance or reduce the rate at which royalty shall be payable in respect of any mineral with effect from such date, as may be specified in the notification, provided that the Central Government shall not enhance the rate of royalty in respect of any mineral more than once during any period of 3 years. There is no proposal to set up a statutory body of experts to revise rates of royalty. However, a study group representing all interested sections is constituted to recommend the revision in the royalty rates periodically.

Before the last revision of royalty rates on major minerals (others than Coal and Lignite) which was notified on 11.4.97, the Central Government had constituted a Study Group which had members from some of the important mineral producing States including Gujarat. The Study Group also has consultations with the State Governments and the Mining Industry before submitting its report to the Government. After considering the