

Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme provides for old age pension to all citizens above the age of 65 years and living below the poverty line.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme ensures livelihood security to the households in rural areas by providing a guarantee of wage employment for at least 100 days in a financial year to every rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Review of Contract Labour Act

532. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government propose to review the Contract Labour Act;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) to (c) A Task Force has been constituted on the recommendation of the 42nd Session of the Indian Labour Conference to revisit the provisions of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970. The first meeting of the Task Force has been scheduled for 17th July, 2009.

Formula to divide the width of road as per traffic

533. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is considering a formula to divide the width of road as per requirement of traffic;
- (b) if so, whether Government has plans to rationalize the sanctioned projects of NHs based on the new formula;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether such a decision will adversely affect the road network enhancement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N SINGH): (a) to (d) The capacity of the road for different lane width is already prescribed in terms of passenger car units (PCUs). Capacity augmentations of existing road by way of providing four lane / six lane are done based on the norms so prescribed. As per the norms, a 2- lane Road is due to for 4 lane once the traffic exceeds 15000 PCUs per day. The rational norms for widening from 4 lanes to 6 lanes etc. are also similarly prescribed. The work of actual capacity augmentation, however, depends upon availability of funds and *inter se priority*. The existing norms are not adversely impacting the road network advancement.

Poor response from qualified bidders for tenders floated by NHAI

534. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 75 per cent of tenders floated by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) do not have response from qualified bidders during the year 2008-09.

(b) if so, whether Government has analysed the reasons for this situation since a number of proposed highways projects are still at inception points; and

(c) the steps taken by Government for early completion of those pending projects and materialisation of tenders under NHAI and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N SINGH): (a) to (b) During the year 2008-09, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) initiated bidding process for 60 projects. Bids have been received in respect of 30 projects including those received on re-bidding, and 10 projects have been awarded. Bids have been cancelled in respect of 11 projects where either single bids were received or the bids were not found reasonable by the NHAI. Evaluation of bids in respect of 9 projects has been undertaken by the NHAI for decision. The projects did not attract many bidders due to economic downturn and also due to perceived lack of viability in terms of low traffic for implementation of projects on "Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Toll basis", in respect of some of the projects etc.

(c) The steps taken by the Government for early completion of the pending projects of NHAI are enclosed as Statement.

Statement

Efforts of Government to expedite implementation of the project

- a) The Contracts are regularly monitored at various levels such as by Supervision Consultant, Project Directors, Senior officers of NHAI. Progress reviews are also held at the level of Chairman, NHAI, Secretary, Department of Road Transport & Highways.
- b) State Governments have appointed Senior officers as nodal officers for resolving problems associated with implementation of the NHDP such as land acquisition, removal of utilities, forest / pollution / environment clearances etc. These nodal officers hold periodic meetings to review the projects and take action to resolve the problems.
- c) A Committee of Secretaries has been constituted under Cabinet Secretary to address inter-ministerial and Centre - State issues such as land acquisition, utility shifting, environment approvals, clearance of ROBs.
- d) The total cost estimated at the time of preparing feasibility reports, and in 2006-07 were revised upwards by 20% and 10% respectively and brought to the current level.
- e) Making available the entire 40% of the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) during the construction phase itself.
- f) The projects which did not attract bidders are being restricted by reducing the scope of works to the extent feasible so as to bring down the costs and to improve their viability.

- g) The procedure of issue of Land Acquisition notifications has been simplified. Earlier all the notification under NH Act were vetted by the Ministry of Law. Recently, an amendment has been made in the Allocation of Business Rules by which these notifications are not required to be sent to the Ministry of Law. The Ministry of Law has approved the standard formats of various notifications keeping in view the similar nature of the notifications of Land Acquisition.
- h) To expedite the construction of ROBs an officer of the Railways has been posted to NHAI to coordinate with Ministry of Railways. MOU has also been signed with M/s. IRCON for construction of some of the ROBs.
- i) Action has been taken against non-performing contractors and they are not allowed to bid for future projects unless they improve the performance in existing contracts.

New guidelines for the construction and expansion of NHs

535. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any new guidelines has been formulated for the construction and expansion of National Highways;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the financial burden has to be borne by the commuters of these Highways by paying Toll, Cess etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N SINGH): (a) to (b) In accordance with the comprehensive policy on alternative modes of delivery of national highways as already approved by the Government, construction and expansion of projects under NHDP Phase III and onwards is required to be undertaken on Public Private Partnership (PPP) basis in Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Toll mode, failing which on BOT (Annuity Payment) mode; and failing which on "Engineering, Procurement and Contract (EPC)" mode.

- (c) The user fee is required to be paid by road users for all projects taken up on Build, Operate and Transfer (Toll) basis as also for completed 4 lane highways.

Completion/ implementation of highway project under NHDP

536. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that many highway projects under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) are running behind schedule;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government has formulated any plan for timely completion/ implementation of highway projects; and