

(c) The extension of the line from CJDhampur to Srinagar can be considered only when the Jammu. Udhampur New Line is nearing completion, subject to availability of resources.

Blocking of Jammu Srinagar Highway

306. SHRI GHULAM RASOOL KAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) how many times in the last three years the Jammu and Srinagar Highway got blocked;

(b) the number of passengers who were stranded;

(c) the number of them who died as a result thereof;

(d) whether any compensation was given for the dead and what arrangements were made for the stay of the stranded persons;

(e) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for a better alternative route to the valley; and

(f) whether any survey has been done in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) to (f) During 1982—84, Jammu-Srinagar Highway was blocked nine times. Information regarding number of passengers stranded, number of passengers who died, if any, and the compensation paid to them is not maintained by the Government of India. At present there is no proposal to provide an alternative National Highway route to the valley.

Sethusamundram Project

307. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study in the past was conducted on the Sethusamundram Project;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to implement the same;

(c) whether Government propose to conduct any study on this project during the Seventh Five Year Plan period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Yes.

(b) The Report of the Expert Committee set up to examine the economic viability of the Sethusamundram Canal Project has been received by the Government. The Committee has observed that the economic viability of the Project is not amenable to exact quantification since certain factors, relevant to the Project's assessment, are based on a number of probabilities. The cost of the Project has been estimated at Rs. 282 crores with reference to February, 1983 prices. The Committee has also found that the Project might yield a return varying from 4.72 per cent to 11.93 per cent under different sets of assumptions. The Committee did not find it possible to quantify the indirect economic benefits to the country and the social benefits which the Project could confer. The internal rate of return with reference to the Project's estimated cost has been considered rather low. The Committee has recommended that the Project could be implemented in view of other considerations, and for making the Project financially and economically viable, concessions like treating the investment on the Project as a grant, etc. could be considered. No decision on the report has been taken.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.