

(a) whether some States are awaiting clarification from the Ministry on the proposals for widening the national highways passing through the States especially Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last five years where the cases are pending with the Ministry, State-wise;

(c) by when the clearances will be given to each proposal; and

(d) the reasons for keeping the proposals pending?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Naxalites extending their activities to Punjab

*53. SHRI H.K. DUA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the press reports about the naxalites extending their activities to Punjab are correct;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to tackle the situation;

(c) whether State Government has asked for special Central assistance in this connection; and

(d) whether the naxalites have developed any links with some terrorist groups in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN): (a) to (d) While different naxalite outfits continue to have marginal presence in Punjab, no armed activity or violence has been reported from the State in recent times.

Significantly, as part of its design of building a broad united platform, the CPI (Maoist)'s front organizations have been noticed joining hands with other groups in taking up various agrarian-related issues as well as those related to privatization of the PSEB. However, there are no inputs to indicate that Left Wing Extremists have developed links with some terrorist groups in the State.

Central Government provides funds to the State of Punjab under the Modernization of State Police Forces Scheme.

Gender bias in army

*54. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state: