

the amendment of the acid soils. Detailed schemes for the purpose are being drawn. The Government of India have already set up the Central Soil Salinity Institute at Karnal for evolving a suitable technology for reclamation of saline-alkali lands.

Expenditure on the development of Kerala National Highways

428. SHRI P. K. KUNJACHAN:
SHRI SHOWALESS K. SHIL-
LA:
SHRIMATI KUMUDBEN MA-
NISHANKAR JOSHI:
DR. V. A. SEYID MUHAM-
MAD:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to impose a cut of 6 per cent on the total expenditure to be incurred in future on the development of National Highways in the country; and

(b) if so, the reasons for reducing the expenditure on the development of National Highways in Kerala to the tune of Rs. 267 lakhs against the target of Rs. 322 lakhs as originally provided in the Plan?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir. The amount to be allotted to various States for National Highway (Original) works from year to year depends upon the total requirements of the States and the total availability of funds.

(b) During 1973-74, the allocation of funds for National Highway (Original) works was reduced for the country as a whole in the context of financial stringency prevailing during that year. As a result, the final allotment for various States had to be reduced and in this process within the available funds a sum of Rs. 273.95 lakhs could be finally allotted to Kerala as against their original budget provision of Rs. 322 lakhs.

Shipping Development Fund Committee

429. SHRI BIPINPAL DAS:
DR. V. A. SEYID MUHAM-
MAD:
SHRI KASIM ALI ABID:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state the reasons for allocating only Rs. 40 crores to various Shipping Companies as loans as against Rs. 55 crores earmarked and Rs. 67 crores estimated by the Shipping Development Fund Committee?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): The hon. Members have presumably in mind the position in respect of the year 1973-74. The Shipping Development Fund Committee during the year 1973-74 was allocated and disbursed an amount of Rs. 61.1352 crores for grant of loans to shipping companies.

Amount for the development of major ports

430. DR. V. A. SEYID MUHAM-
MAD:
SHRI NABIN CHANDRA
BURAGOHAJIN:
SHRI K. B. CHETTRI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been high percentage of under-utilisation of the approved amounts for the development of major ports during the Fourth Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, what is the respective percentage and the reasons for such under-utilisation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The information is being collected from the Port Trust and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.