

[9 March, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question. Question Number 262 ...*(Interruptions)*... Please take your seat ...*(Interruptions)*... Nothing will go on record.

Upgradation of Coastal Highways in Gujarat

*262. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that though Gujarat has 25 per cent of the country's coastline with many ports and all sections of the coastal highway along this coast has not been upgraded to National Highway; and

(b) if so, the time envisaged for this upgradation?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) A length of 1034 kilometer of roads along the coastline in Gujarat has already been declared as National Highways. This includes 350 kilometer length of roads declared as national Highways in February 2004. The declaration of any road as a National Highway depends not only on the consideration that it runs along the coast but on several other considerations including traffic needs, *inter-se* priority on all India basis and availability of resources. At present emphasis is being given for development of roads already declared as National Highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways.

SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, although a number of expressways and highways have been constructed in many States, but the roads in Gujarat have not been developed, the way they should have been developed. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what are the plans of the Government for development of expressways and highways during the next two years in Gujarat and what is the amount sanctioned or likely to be sanctioned from the Central Road Fund for this purpose.

SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA: Sir, this supplementary does not arise out of the main question. The main question is relating to the upgradation of coastline ports in Gujarat. I need a separate notice for this question.

SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Sir, my supplementary is very much within the purview of the main question. Anyway, now, I will put my second supplementary.

Sir, the Central Government have funded for the development of high-priority highways in various States. So, my question is whether the Government is considering the funding of high-priority highways in Gujarat. If so, the details of projects with funds so far been released to the State?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, recently, I had the privilege of inaugurating Ahmedabad-Vadodra Expressway. The hon. Prime Minister has already announced that 1,000 kms. of expressway would be developed in the country on priority. If density of vehicle population is more in a particular area, definitely, we will go in for expressway.

SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Sir, what I would like to know from the hon. Minister is this. Sir, the purpose of the main question is whether the ports—Mundra, Kandla, Porbander, Jamnagar, Vadibander, Rodiport, Bhavnagar and Pipav--of Gujarat, which are presently connected with the coastal highways, will be upgraded or not. So, would the hon. Minister give us an assurance that link roads of these ports from which imports and exports are taking place would be joined with the main coastal highways? If yes, by when are they going to be joined?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the main question is pertaining to the upgradation of coastal highways in Gujarat.

Sir, as far as Gujarat coastal line is concerned, it is the second largest coastal line, next only to Andaman. India has got a total of 7,517 kms. of coastal line. Out of that, Gujarat has got 1,215 kms. of coastal line. And, out of these 1,215 Kms., we have declared 1,034 kms. as the National Highway. Gujarat has got around 40 minor ports. Out of these ports, wherever we have got density of vehicle population more than 15,000 to 20,000 PCU, definitely, we will take care of these roads. These national highways would be developed into four-lane roads.