

SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMY: What is the number of foreign tankers?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: The number of foreign tankers has to be related to a specific period and if a suitable period is indicated, we shall collect the information through the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals.

WEST COAST ROAD

***304. SHRI K. DAMODARAN:** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what progress has so far been made in the construction of the West Coast Road in Kerala;

(b) the amount so far spent in this connection; and

(c) when the work is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) Out of a total length of 198 miles of the road in Kerala, improvements in 160 miles have been completed so far. The work of blacktopping has been completed for a length of 155 miles. The construction of culverts in about 150 miles has been completed. In the remaining sections of the road, the work is in various stages of progress.

Out of 32 bridges to be constructed on the portion of the road in Kerala, thirteen have been completed, ten are in progress and nine remain to be taken up for execution.

(b) Rs. 218.33 lakhs till the end of July 1964.

(c) The work is expected to be completed during the Fourth Plan period.

SHRI K. DAMODARAN: May I know whether this inordinate delay is

due to the fact that the project is being executed through the Kerala State P.W.D.? If not, what is the reason?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: No, Sir; that is not a fact. As a matter of fact, the project was estimated initially to cost only Rs. 10.54 crores but due to escalation of prices the cost has gone up considerably and the provision of Rs. 7.5 crores for Third Plan for the entire length of the road from Panvel in Maharashtra to Cape Comorin has proved insufficient. The total estimated cost stands now in the vicinity of Rs. 23.15 crores and we are unable to find funds to that extent. We cannot blame the Kerala Government for that.

SHRI K. DAMODARAN: Will the hon. Minister give some idea of the expenses that will be incurred for the construction of the project in addition to the expenses already incurred?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: What has been spent already I have given in the statement. I can repeat that; it is Rs. 218.33 lakhs. I cannot exactly say how much more is to be spent.

SHRIMATI SHAKUNTALA PARANJ-PYE: How far has this road been built from Panvel to Cape Comorin?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I think most of the Maharashtra sector is complete except for certain culverts and certain by-passes. In so far as Mysore is concerned, the progress is satisfactory but for a detailed statement I would require separate notice.

RICE PRODUCTION FIGURES

***305. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA:** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a memorandum has been sent to his Ministry by the Federation of the All India Foodgrain Dealers' Association challenging the figures of rice production as given by Government;