

#### **Disruption of National Highways due to civil agitations**

1969. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there have been cases wherein National Highways have been disrupted due to civil agitations;
- (b) the details thereof;
- (c) the action taken by Government to avoid such incidents;
- (d) whether Government has calculated losses to Government exchequer due to civil and public agitations; and
- (e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Instances of disruption of traffic on National Highways (NHs) have occurred due to civil and public agitations. However, the details in this regard are not being maintained by this Ministry.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

#### **Advantages of inland waterways modes of transport**

1970. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether inland waterways provide enormous advantages as compared to other modes of transport, such as cheaper capital and maintenance costs, greater fuel efficiency and easier integration with sea transport;
- (b) whether despite India's 14,500 kilometers of navigable rivers and canals the inland water transportation remain largely undeveloped and neglected; and
- (c) if so, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI MUKUL ROY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (c) Over a long period, investment made in preservation and development of inland water transport infrastructure in the country was very small in comparison with the investments made to develop roads and railways. As a result, the inland water transport mode lost its importance in

most parts of the country except in a few areas where it enjoys natural advantage such as Assam, Goa, Kerala, West Bengal etc. Development of inland waterways is within the purview of the respective State Governments. The development and regulation of only those waterways which are declared as National Waterways come under the purview of Union Government.

Upto 1986, there was no proper organization at the Central Government to develop this mode. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) was set up in 1986 by an Act of Parliament for development and regulation of inland waterways of the country. Since then the systematic development of potential waterways of the country started and three National Waterways were declared in 1986, 1988 and 1993. Thereafter, significant level of inland water transport infrastructure has been developed by IWAI on these National Waterways 1, 2 and 3. Two more waterways have been declared as National Waterways in November, 2008 but since no funds were allocated during 11th Plan, development works thereon have not started so far.

#### **Welfare scheme for seafarers**

1971. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to strengthen the welfare schemes for seafarers in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has made consultations with various stakeholders before finalization of welfare schemes;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the time by which Government proposes to finalize such welfare schemes for seafarers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G. K. VASAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The following measures for welfare of seafarers are under consideration:

- (i) The Monthly Ex-gratia Monetary Assistance (MEMA) Scheme operated by the Seamen's Welfare Fund Society (SWFS) is proposed to be reinforced.
- (ii) Introduction of a contributory Annuity Scheme for the seafarers.