

(d) if so, the details thereof, the reasons therefor and the actions taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI TUSHAR BHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Maintenance and repair of National Highways (NHs) is a continuous process. Periodic assessment of the condition of NHs is carried out by the executive agencies for taking up remedial measures keeping in view the type and extent of damages. Accordingly, the NHs in the country are being kept in traffic worthy condition from time to time within the available resources.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Appointed date is yet to be declared in 37 projects. The main reasons for delay of works are problems such as land acquisition, shifting of utilities, environmental and forest clearance, lack of private sector finances etc. In order to expedite implementation of the Projects, Regional Offices have been set up by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) headed by Chief General Manager. Powers have been delegated to the Chief General Managers. Special land acquisition units are also set up to expedite land acquisition. Chief Secretaries of State Government have also been nominated as Nodal officers to expedite construction of highway projects. Recently, the issues of delinking environmental clearance from forest clearance and exempting linear stretches from the requirement of NOC from Gram Sabha have been resolved. Reserve Bank of India has given dispensation to treat the debt due to lenders, to the extent assured by Project Authorities in terms of concession agreement, as secured loan. Disinvestment of 100% equity to other willing buyers has been allowed after completion of the construction and also substitution of concessionaire allowed after achievement of financial closure to salvage the languishing projects.

Study on vehicular traffic on NHs

580. DR. T. N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been conducted with regard to vehicular traffic on the National Highways (NHs) in India; if so, the details thereof and the key findings of the study, State-wise;

(b) the details of accidents that have taken place in the country due to use

of mobile phones while driving, during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise; and

(c) whether Government has taken any action in this regard and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI TUSHAR BHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) No, Sir. The Ministry has not conducted any study with regard to vehicular traffic on the National Highways (NHs) in India.

(b) This Ministry collects information in respect of road accidents from State Governments in a 19-item format devised under the Asia Pacific Road Accident Database (APRAD) project of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The data on road accidents due to use of mobile phones while driving is not separately captured in the APRAD format.

(c) Measures taken by Central Government include generating awareness through audio-visual-print media against using mobile phones while driving. Also the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle, Rules, 1989 contain a number of provisions to curb use of mobile phone while driving motor vehicles. All the State Governments/UTs, responsible for enforcing provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act/Central Motor Vehicles Rules, have been advised from time to time to gear up their enforcement machinery to implement the provisions of law to eliminate the chances of road accidents.

Problems in transport sector

581. SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether several aspects of the transport sector are riddled with problems due to outdated infrastructure and lack of investment in less economical active parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by Government to solve these problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI TUSHAR BHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) For providing an efficient, sustainable, economic, safe, reliable, environment-friendly, reasonably