

Funds to State Governments for repair of Highways

†*272. SHRI ASHK ALI TAK: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state the reasons for not allocating adequate amount to the State Governments for repair and maintenance of highways situated in States by Central Government?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): The allocation available annually to this Ministry for Maintenance and Repair (M&R) of National Highways (NHs) is of the order of 40-60% of the requirements' as per the Ministry's stipulated norms.

Man-made disaster in Uttarakhand

*273. SHRI K.C. TYAGI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the recent calamity in Uttarakhand has been termed by some environmentalists as a man-made disaster;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the precautionary steps taken and proposed to be taken by Government to prevent/minimise losses due to such disasters in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) and (b) The State of Uttarakhand experienced abnormally high rainfall between 15th and 17th June, 2013 that resulted in a number of landslides, cloudbursts and flood events throughout the State. As per information provided by Indian Meteorological Department, rainfall in Uttarakhand during the period 1st June — 18th June, 2013 was 385.1 mm against normal level of 71.3 mm, which was in excess by 440%. Heavy precipitation augmented the river discharge and almost all the major rivers and their tributaries crossed the danger level in Uttarakhand. This caused severe damage to life, crops and property in different parts of the State. Some environmentalists have asserted that the damage has been exacerbated on account of undertaking various development activities in the State without paying due attention to environmental concerns.

- (c) As regards the precautionary steps to address the environmental concerns, the environment and forest clearances for various developmental projects, including those in the State of Uttarakhand, are granted after following statutory procedures. The Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 as amended from time

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.