

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Cement concrete road has longer design life of 20-25 years in comparison to bituminous road designed for 10-15 years. The cost of cement concrete road is about 15-20% more than bituminous road.

(b) At the project preparation stage several factors like type of subsoil, traffic, project size, climatic conditions, availability of materials and equipments, relative costs etc. are considered for deciding the option of concrete or bituminous pavement. The most suitable pavement type is then adopted.

Declaration of National Highways

†2338. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the length of roads in various Himalayan States which have been declared as National Highways, State-wise;

(b) whether Government are considering any proposal to declare more roads as National Highways in the States with less rail and air links to expand transport system;

(c) if so, by when a final decision would be taken on such proposal; and

(d) if not, the reasons for neglecting such States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) The length of National Highways in the Himalayan States is as under:

| State | Length in km. |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| (i) Jammu & Kashmir | 823 |
| (ii) Uttaranchal | 1075 |
| (iii) Himachal Pradesh | 1188 |
| (iv) Sikkim | 62 |
| (v) Arunachal Pradesh | 392 |
| (vi) West Bengal (Hilly areas) | 147 |

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) Presently, there is a ban on declaration of new National Highways due to funds constraint. The Government may, however, consider declaration of very limited lengths of a few State Highways as National Highway during the course of the Tenth Five Year Plan, keeping in view the traffic needs, *inter-se* priority and availability of funds, after the ban is lifted.

(d) The Central Government is not neglecting these States and provides funds to the State Governments from the Central Road Fund (CRF) for the improvement of State roads. The details of accruals and release of CRF for the Himalayan States are as under:-

(Rs. in lakhs)

| Sl. No. | Name of State | Accruals under CRF upto 2002-03 | Amount utilised so far | Balance amount as available |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Jammu & Kashmir | 9162.08 | 2125.02 | 7037.06 |
| 2 | Uttaranchal | 2937.08 | 1511.38 | 1425.70 |
| 3 | Himachal Pradesh | 3145.08 | 1481.04 | 1664.04 |
| 4 | Sikkim | 329.00 | 229.00 | 100.00 |
| 5 | Arunachal Pradesh | 3279.08 | 742.00 | 2537.08 |
| 6 | West Bengal | 10888.08 | 4447.05 | 6441.03 |

Laying of optical fibres along National Highways

†2339. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Highways Authority of India is laying optical fibre cable along the National Highways; and

(b) if so, the amount being spent thereon and justification therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.