

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI N.K.P. SALVE) : (a) and (b). To instal confidence among the prospective investors on the Indian Private Power Policy, Government of India has decided to extend counter guarantee to initial few projects cleared from foreign investment angle. Subsequently Government of India decided to evolve alternatives to Government of India counter guarantee. This matter also came up for discussion during Indo-US Bilateral Energy Consultation held in January, 1995 and during the visit of the US Secretary of Energy in February, 1995 wherein it was agreed that the US Government would provide support in developing the alternatives to counter guarantee, based on the experience in other countries and a workshop could be organised in which US financial institutions, US Department of Energy, USAID and US project developers could participate.

(c) The alternatives to counter guarantee which were discussed, *inter-alia*, are :

- (i) Direct supply of Power by Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to High Tension consumers.
- (ii) Opening of an Escrow account as a back up to Letter of Credit, in which identified payments by consumers are credited and the payment liability to the IPP is a first charge on this account.
- (iii) Escrow with Financial Institution counter guarantee.
- (iv) The blended counter guarantee.
- (v) PPA with Powergrid Corporation.
- (vi) Linking Power generation with distribution.
- (vii) Escrow arrangement with central devolution also committed to such an account, backed up by State Government guarantee.
- (viii) World Bank guarantee.
- (d) The various alternatives to counter guarantee are under finalisation by the Government.

(e) and (f). In the case of Gujarat Torrent Energy Corporation's gas based mixed fuel combined cycle power project in Gujarat, the foreign debt equity ratio has been relaxed. This project has no counter guarantee.

[Translation]

Privatisation of Road Projects

*285. SHRI BRIJBHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to involve private sector in construction/repair works on roads by-passes bridges and Express roads;

(b) if so, the number of private parties which have been given such assignments;

(c) the terms and conditions laid down in the agreements signed with the private sector companies; and

(d) the reasons for involving the private sector in road projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) There is a proposal to involve private sector in the development, maintenance and operation of National Highways, including expressways, bypasses and bridges. However, there is no proposal to involve private sector only for repair of existing National Highways.

(b) No private party has been given such assignments so far.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) As budgetary resources fall far short of the requirement, it is proposed to harness private entrepreneurship and private resources in the development of the road sector.

[English]

Haj Sailings

*286. SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to abolish Haj sailings with affect from Haj 1995;

(b) if so, whether the abolition of Haj sailings highlights the need for restructuring and relocating the Haj Committee;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have completed consultations with all the interests concerned on the long-standing proposal to amend the Haj Committee Act or replace it by a new Act; and

(e) if so, the time by which amendment Bill or the new bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e). Government have been considering the question of introducing new legislation in replacement of the Haj Committee Act of 1959 to take account of the changed conditions of the Haj pilgrimage including, *inter-alia*, the fact that pilgrims now embark for Haj from Delhi, Calcutta and Madras in addition to Bombay. The legislative proposals to be incorporated in the Bill are under active consideration and the new Bill is proposed to be introduced after all aspect have been examined.