

Delayed pace of laying of National Highways

2006. SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has managed to lay only 12 kms roads a day;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether lack of interest among private players has contributed to this slow pace;

(d) if so, the details of action Government is taking to rein in private players; and

(e) the details of speedy steps Government is taking to build 17000 km roads in the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SARVEY SATHYANARAYANA): (a) and (b) Against the target for construction of 3000 km of National Highways during the year 2012-13, only 1169 kms of roads have been constructed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) up to October 2012. The pace of construction have been affected due to various reasons like delay in land acquisition, shifting of utilities, delay in getting statutory and mandatory clearances, approval for Road Over Bridges (ROB), poor performance of some contractors etc.

(c) to (e) Response of private sector to Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) projects in road sector was overwhelming till 2011-12, but recent response to bids for road projects during the current financial year has been comparatively subdued. The primary reason for non-response of private sector during the current financial year is the lack of availability of finance, both debt and equity. Other reasons for delay in implementation include delay in land acquisition process and in obtaining environment and forest clearances. Government has also taken a number of steps to minimise procedural bottlenecks and delays by resorting to extensive inter-ministerial consultations including taking the matter to the Committee of Secretaries (CoS), headed by the Cabinet Secretary. A meeting was also held recently with the Chairpersons of the banks, concessionaires and lenders to understand the concerns of stakeholders. Another meeting of a group consisting of Secretaries of the

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Financial Services, Planning Commission and the Chairman, NHAI has also been held to discuss the issues hindering the road sector programme and to examine the modalities to allow withdrawal of equity by concessionaires. Government has also taken a number of steps to minimise procedural bottlenecks and delays by resorting to extensive inter-ministerial consultations including taking the matter to the Committee of Secretaries (CoS), headed by the Cabinet Secretary. Ministry is aggressively pursuing 4000 kms. of road stretches to be developed on Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) mode (through public funding). In addition, in order to improve riding quality, approximately 3000 kms. of stretches are proposed to be bid out on an OMT (Operation, Maintenance and Transfer) basis during the current financial year. Out of this 3000 km, a length of 587 kms has already been awarded. Department of Financial Services (DFS) has also been requested by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to advise banks not to take extremely difficult position for advancing debits for financial closures. For rotation of equity capital, divestment of equity after completion of project has also been proposed. Government has also announced the setting up of Infrastructure Debt Funds (IDFs) to provide long-term, low-cost debt for infrastructure projects. The funds would allow infrastructure developer's access to domestic and offshore investors on a long-term basis. Special Land Acquisition Units (SLAUs) have been set up at State level for new stretches of national highways across the country to put the land acquisition on fast track. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has also taken up the matter with all the State Governments emphasizing the need to streamline the process of land acquisition and utility shifting etc., by constituting high level committees under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of the respective States.

Progress of work on NH-39 and NH-53

2007. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of work in progress on NH-39 and NH-53;
- (b) the reasons for delay in works; and
- (c) the details of steps Government intends to take to complete the projects in time?