

**Road connectivity to ports**

1657. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether development of road connectivity to all major ports in the country has been completed;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN P.): (a) to (c) Out of nine projects for development of Road Connectivity to the major ports, seven projects have been completed. As regards of balance two, work in Mormugao Port was foreclosed on the directive of Hon'ble Supreme Court and work in Chennai Ennore Port road is in progress.

**Maintenance of National Highways**

1658. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether National Highways comprise only 1.7 per cent of the total length of roads but carry over 40 per cent of the total traffic and if so, the details of measures taken to maintain their quality;
- (b) whether allocation of funds for maintenance and repair of National Highways is highly inadequate considering the damages etc. in the existing highways and new National Highways added every year;
- (c) the steps taken to enhance allocation of funds for proper maintenance and upkeep of National Highways; and
- (d) whether the National Highway from Faridabad to Mathura is in dilapidated condition and if so, the steps taken to maintain the said highway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN P.): (a) to (d) National Highways are arteries of road network and carry maximum traffic. Out of 48.65 lakh kilometers of total road network in India, the total length of National Highways (NHs) is 96,128 km. The development and maintenance of NHs including maintaining their quality is a continuous

process and all the NHs in the country are kept in traffic-worthy condition within the available resources. The available allocation for maintenance and repair of NHs is of the order of 40 to 60% of the requirement. This Ministry has taken up the issue of enhancement of allocation of funds for proper maintenance and upkeep of National Highways with the Ministry of Finance.

### **Stalled highway projects**

1659. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of highway projects are stalled for a host of reasons, including land acquisition problems, delay in environment/forest clearances;

(b) whether Government has proposed to revive these projects after fast-tracking the process through EPC mode;

(c) if so, whether the long-pending Dawki Bridge over the Umngot River has been included in this priority project for early execution; and

(d) whether considering the strategic importance of this proposed project, Government would also accord top priority for upgradation of stretches of NH-40 and NH-44 linking lower Assam and remote borders of North-Eastern States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN P.): (a) and (b) In some National Highway (NH) projects, there are local problems in availability of land. Most of these are addressed with the support of the respective State Governments. Few other NH projects faced delays in procuring other statutory clearances. Government is making all attempts to fast track the projects facing delays. However, this is not the reason for undertaking projects on Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) mode. Considering the current market conditions, particularly with reference to the highway sector, focus of the Government is on implementation of highways through public funded EPC mode. Once, the highways sector gathers momentum through execution of the EPC projects and current issues plaguing Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) mode are well-addressed, the focus on BOT (Toll) mode would be restored in order to effectively take highways sector forward.

(c) Yes, Sir. Construction of Dawki Bridge over the Umngot River has been included in the project of Shillong-Dawki section of NH-40.

(d) Improvement of NH-40 and NH-44 has been taken up by the Ministry of