

the cost of material pushes the cost of the project. It applies for any project located in any part of the country. To face this problem, ministry encourages alternate materials like use of Fly Ash in embankments, cement treated base/sub-base etc., Cost Benefit Analysis for changing from the Rigid pavement to Flexible pavements due to constraints of limited/non-availability of sand in affected areas. Development of Green Field Corridors in order to reduce cost of land acquisition and utility shifting, forest diversion etc. are also explored.

(c) and (d) In order to mitigate the problem being faced due to shortage of sand, National Highway Authority of India has entered into an Memorandum of Understanding with Inland Waterway Authority of India and Dredging Corporation of India.

Expansion of Salem-Chennai highway

1375. DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that there is stiff opposition to Government's proposal to construct eight lane road from Salem to Chennai in the State of Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is also aware of the fact that some of the farmers, whose land is proposed to be acquired for the project, committed suicide in protest against acquisition of the land for the project;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government is reconsidering to drop the project in view of stiff opposition; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI MANSUKH MANDAVIYA): (a) and (b) Four Writ Petitions have been filed in Hon'ble High Court, Madras primarily regarding loss of biodiversity and forest cover.

(c) and (d) No such incident has been reported by the field office in this regard.

(e) and (f) No Sir. Efforts are being made to sensitize people regarding utility of this greenfield corridor that apart from reducing the distance by 68 km. it will also boost economic development in the region.