

private sector industries in the country. These measures include according priority and preference to procurement from Indian vendors and liberalization of the licensing regime.

Government has also promulgated the policy on Strategic Partnership in the defence sector which is intended to institutionalise a transparent and objective mechanism to encourage broader participation of the private sector in manufacture of major defence platforms and equipment.

During the last three financial year and current year (upto 31.1.2018), 121 contracts have been signed with Indian vendors and 71 contracts have been signed with foreign vendors for capital procurement of Defence equipment for Armed Forces.

Progress of work on NH 43

*169. SHRI RANVIJAY SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the contractor working on NH-43 from Ambikapur to Pathalgaon and Pathalgaon to Kunkuri in Chhattisgarh, has stopped the work;

(b) the amount provided to the contractor for the said work; and

(c) the progress made on NH-43, till date and by when the said two works would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI): (a) to (c) The contractor has not stopped work on NH-43 from Ambikapur to Pathalgaon and Pathalgaon to Kunkuri in Chhattisgarh, however, the progress on these works is very slow. The payment (including mobilisation advance) made to the contractor are ₹ 45.91 crore and ₹ 37.41 crore for the works on Ambikapur to Pathalgaon section and Pathalgaon to Kunkuri section, respectively. The physical progress on these works as on date is 0.84% and 3.64% with dates of completion as per agreement being 05.10.2018 and 14.07.2018, respectively.

Construction of new highways

*170. SHRI MANAS RANJAN BHUNIA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has taken steps to construct new highways in various States for interconnectivity;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) details of the new highways in the State of West Bengal?