

Status of construction activities on NH-544

2507. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the major reasons for abruptly halting the ongoing widening activities and construction of tunnel in Kuthiran in Thrissur district in Kerala on NH-544;

(b) whether Government will take any *suo moto* action against the private contractor who had made the commitment to complete the work within three years but the work has been going on for the last ten years and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government has given any assurance for the completion of the construction and widening activities on NH-544 and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI): (a) to (c) The work on NH-544 in the State of Kerala has been completed except in the stretch from Vadakanchery to Thrissur. The civil work in the stretch from Vadakanchery to Thrissur was started in September, 2012. The project was delayed on account of non-availability of land and financial crisis faced by the concessionaire. As far as Kuthiran tunnel is concerned, the same has been constructed except for minor works in tunnel tube on one side and approaches due to non-availability of land and delay in Forest and Wild life Clearance. The project has been stopped since May, 2018. The project has been declared as NPA by the Bankers/Lending Agencies. The efforts to infuse funds required for completion of the project have been initiated by the Concessionaire. At present, 83% physical progress has been achieved in the project. The rescheduled completion date is May, 2020.

Plantation along the highways

†2508. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any plan to plant trees on a large scale along the National Highways;

(b) if so, the amount spent on the same during the last financial year;

(c) the details of highways in the State of Bihar along which tree plantations are planned; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether Government plans to promote intensive afforestation along the National Highways in order to increase the forest cover?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI): (a) Yes, Sir. Indian Road Congress (IRC) has published the Guidelines on Landscaping and Tree Plantation (IRC:SP:21:2009) to focus attention on different aspects of landscaping, broad guidelines on Landscaping and Plantation, types of species which includes general considerations relating to landscaping, specific aspects relevant to rural and urban highways, landscaping problems of existing roads and maintenance of the landscaping facilities.

(b) An amount of about ₹80.60 crores is spent during the last financial year for carrying out plantation through forest department/Government Agencies, as deposit work including through private agencies. Besides above, plantation is carried out by Concessionaire/contractor as a scope of agreement.

(c) The plantation for a length of 220 km is planned in 2019-20 in the State of Bihar.

(d) Indian Road Congress' Guidelines on Landscaping and Tree Plantation (IRC: SP: 21:2009) has been adopted by the Ministry for plantation along the National Highways.

Condition of various National Highways

2509. SHRI RAJMANI PATEL:

DR. AMEE YAJNIK:

DR. L. HANUMANTHALAH:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken note of the dilapidated condition of various National Highways (NHs) in the country and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, NH-wise;

(b) whether Government has received proposals from various States including Maharashtra to improve the condition of NHs;

(c) if so, the details thereof along with the funds allocated, released and utilized for the maintenance and repair of NHs during each of the last three years and the current year, State/Union Territory- wise; and