

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO -574
ANSWERED ON -07/02/2024

ROAD PROJECTS IN THE HIMALAYAS REGION

574. SHRI JAWHAR SIRCAR:

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

- (a) whether Government is prepared to re-evaluate and reduce the mammoth road and connectivity projects in the fragile Himalayan region after several mishaps, including the Silkyara tunnel collapse;
- (b) the details of update on the Char Dham project that was to cover 900-kilometre at \$1.4 billion; and
- (c) the efforts done by Government to implement recommendations of the Supreme Court High Powered Committee that cautioned about instability of the soil, risks of landslides and flash floods?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

(SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI)

- (a) National Highways projects are taken up in Himalayan region keeping in view traffic and strategic requirements. Detailed Project Report is prepared after evaluating the geological, geotechnical, hydrological and topographical conditions of terrain before taking up any development work on National Highways in Himalayan region.
- (b) Chardham project comprises improvement of 5 existing National Highways (NHs) connecting Chardham viz. Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath including Tanakpur to Pithoragarh section of Kailas-Mansarovar yatra, aggregating a length of about 825 km. Out of 825 km length, 606 km length has been completed.
- (c) Under the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, MoEF&CC, in August 2019, has constituted a High Powered Committee (HPC) comprising representatives from various reputed institutes like Physical Research Laboratory, Wildlife Institute of India, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Central Soil Conservation Research Institute, National

Institute of Disaster Management, Forest Research Institute etc. with mandate to consider the cumulative and independent impact of Chardham Projects on the entire Himalayan Valleys and give directions in respect of environmental impacts. In addition, Hon'ble Supreme Court has also set up an "Oversight Committee" to ensure the implementation of the recommendations given in the report of aforesaid HPC especially the strategic roads viz. Rishikesh – Mana, Rishikesh – Gangotri and Tanakpur - Pithoragarh. The committees meet on regular basis and their recommendations are implemented during the execution of works.
