

Regarding need for construction of an underpass on NH-55 at Radhakishorepur Panchayat in Athagarh block of Cuttack Parliamentary Constituency, Odisha-Laid

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK):The residents of Radhakishorepur Gram Panchayat and 10 adjoining Panchayats in Athagarh Block, Cuttack, seek immediate action to address severe public hardships caused by the ongoing four-laning of NH-55. The Residents, including school and college students, are forced to travel over 1 km to access the RD Village Road. This detour at Radhadamodarpur junction increases accident risks, with several fatalities already reported. The domestic animals crossing the elevated NH-55 are frequently killed due to the lack of an underpass. Over the last few months, numerous cattle and goats have died. The project also obstructs wildlife corridors between reserve forests, endangering elephants, deer, and other species. Hence an underpass is essential to ensure safe wildlife movement. I would like to state further that a one-sided service road is being constructed, perceived as wasteful and influenced by private interests, while neglecting public needs and existing approvals for necessary infrastructure on the opposite side. Despite promises made during an on-ground visit by NHAI officials on July 22, 2024, no progress has been observed.

I urge the Government for urgent approval and construction of an underpass at Km 21+562 to resolve these critical issues and ensure public safety, animal welfare, and wildlife conservation.