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Ashadha 24, 1941 (Saka)

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(English Version)

First Session

(Seventeenth Lok Sabha)

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, July 15, 2019 / Ashadha 24, 1941 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[**HON. SPEAKER** *in the Chair*]

*ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Now Question Hour,Q.No. 301,

Shri Jayadev Galla.

… (Interruptions)

(Q. 301)

SHRI JAYADEV GALLA: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am sure the Hon. Minister is very well aware of the entire issue. Hence, I do not want to dwell too deep into it. I will get directly into the question.

I agree with the reply of the Hon. Minister that these companies are Board-governed entities. But the notification issued by the Finance Ministry, Department of Financial Services, bearing no. S-11012/4/2014-institutions.1 dated 23rd September 2014, directing insurance companies, including the National Insurance Company, that when a company transfers female employees, they have to be accommodated where the husband is stationed, was issued keeping in view the genuine hardships and feelings of insecurity being faced

* **For Questions, please visit** https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers .

by female employees. My question is this: Why is the National Insurance Company not following this notification?

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: all our public sector insurance companies are largely Board-governed entities. They have their own transfer and mobility policies. As the Hon. Member has stated, if there is any specific case relating to a woman officer or employee, in accordance with the policy, you may provide us with the details. However, by and large, if the matter is examined objectively, the Government does not intervene anywhere in this process. If these companies have a total of 56,798 employees, only 604 employees have been transferred, which is merely one Percent. If, anywhere, the policy has not been followed or there is any specific case, you can give it to us. We will look into that. We will ask the insurance company concerned to look into that.

[English]

SHRI JAYADEV GALLA: Sir, the second question that I have is that it is strange that the National Insurance Company does not consider Delhi a Metro city when all other insurance companies are considering Delhi a Metro city. I would like to know the reasons behind this.

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, as to why these insurance companies are not accepting this position, we will ascertain the facts from them and provide the information to the Hon. Member accordingly.

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANYOPADHYAY: Sir, there are reports of private companies using unethical methods to grab motor insurance in particular, which is a very big sector, depriving the public sector companies of a level playing field. I would like to know what the Government and the Regulator are doing in this regard in the interest of the public sector companies and also the general public at large.

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, nearly four public sector insurance companies are operating in this sector, which together hold about 45 Percent share of the insurance sector. Within the insurance sector, the segment with the largest volume is motor vehicle insurance, followed by health insurance, and thereafter other areas. In this field, where competition is market-driven, if a private company has a better product, the consumer naturally gravitates towards it. In order to enable these companies

to perform better and compete effectively, the decision regarding merger was also taken. The proposal to merge the three Government public sector insurance companies is presently under consideration. This was also stated in the previous Budget.

(Q. 302)

SHRI RAMCHARAN BOHRA: Hon. Speaker Sir, under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Minister for Human Resource Development has taken several steps for the development and upgradation of the education sector in the country. I would like to thank the Hon. Minister. Through you, I would also like to ask whether, before admission to engineering colleges, a system of counselling has been put in place to guide students on which subjects they should opt for and how many employment opportunities exist in those fields, so that they may secure employment accordingly.

DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK: Hon. Speaker Sir, it is only natural that when a student comes for admission, counselling is also conducted. Where a student seeks admission, if a suitable subject is not available in accordance with his or her preference, counselling is provided, and it is done properly and in a structured manner. As regards the second question raised by Shri Bohra concerning employment opportunities, we have also indicated certain Percent figures in this regard. However, I am pleased to state that today, across the world, students graduating from our institutions are reaching the highest positions. Our three institutions have figured at the top of global rankings, namely IIT Mumbai, IIT

Delhi and ICAR Bengaluru. The CEO of Google, Shri Sundar Pichai, is an alumnus of IIT Kharagpur. Shri Shantanu Narayen, the Padma Shri awardee and CEO of Adobe, is from Hyderabad. Shri Satya Nadella is the CEO of Microsoft, Shri Rakesh Arora is the CEO of Alto Networks, Shri Dinesh C. Paliwal is the CEO of Harman International, and Shri Rajeev Suri is the CEO of Nokia. Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member expressed concern that students graduating from our engineering colleges are progressing rapidly across various sectors. We have also stated earlier that companies come directly to the institutions for recruitment. In the year 2017-18, approximately three and a half lakh students were recruited, in 2018-19 approximately four lakh students were recruited, and even at present, these companies are recruiting students in very large numbers. Today, among the world's top 500 companies, nearly 200 companies have the highest number of Indian IT professionals.

SHRI RAMCHARAN BOHRA (JAIPUR): Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether the Government is taking any steps to improve the quality of engineering colleges operating in the private sector, so that students graduating from these colleges are capable of securing employment and performing effectively in their professions. In recent years, as you have just stated, around four lakh students have obtained

employment, and I would like to congratulate you on this achievement. I would also like to ask whether any such arrangement has been made with companies whereby, after graduating from college, students can undertake some form of practical engagement similar to CA internships, so that they may become employable.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please ask only one question. You have asked two questions. Hon. Minister.

DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member has raised a very pertinent question. We have established a dedicated cell in every institution to ensure coordination with the industrial sector. Along with this, in order to enhance quality, when a student completes engineering education and steps out, there is a structured plan for finishing and further refinement of skills. Since you specifically asked whether any finishing schools are being established, Hon. Speaker Sir, in that direction we have issued tenders and entered into agreements with four institutions, namely Career Launcher Educate, Universal Education, Athenaeus and TIME. Under these arrangements, students of the third and fourth years are given systematic training.

Not only this, with regard to your concern about how students can perform better in competitive examinations, we have coordinated with four institutions for GATE training, namely

GATE Academy, GATE Coach, Engineering Academy and GATE Forum, so that students can be prepared to reach the highest level in employment-related competitive examinations.

[English]

DR. SHASHI THAROOR: Thank you so much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I listened attentively to the Hon. Minister. There is one statistic which he has mentioned in his reply and also another statistic which he has not mentioned. Both of them are very serious.

The first one is this: The study by the India Skills Report shows that only 57 percent of our engineering graduates are employable. There is another picture which he has not mentioned, and it is this: In detailed studies done by multiple people, including the organisation which I have the privilege to head, that is, the All India Professionals Congress, which did a study of 10,000 engineers, it shows that 60 percent of our country's engineering graduates end up doing jobs which do not even require an engineering degree. It is because there is such a major mismatch between what is taught in the majority of our engineering colleges and what the marketplace wants. Employers come back and say that these people are not qualified to work for us. Even big companies like Tata, TCS, and Infosys have set up campuses in which they are re-educating the children whom they have already hired, not on-the-job training

but just teaching them what they should have learned in college. Will the Hon. Minister, using AICTE or whatever means he wishes, kindly take some serious steps to completely transform the engineering curricula of our country in order to ensure that it matches the demands of the workspace? Can we ensure, therefore, that this question about finishing school is not the right point, but the right point is how do we enhance employability and what kind of skills can we give to our people that are actually needed so that they can get real jobs and we do not have to advise them to fry pakoras on the side of the street? Thank you.

[Translation]

DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK: Hon. Speaker Sir, Shri Shashi Tharoor ji has raised a very important question, and certainly the concern expressed by him is equally the concern of the Ministry. That is why, as you may have observed, AICTE has introduced changes in all these curricula, and these have been made mandatory. One important initiative that we have undertaken is the preparation of a model curriculum based on the NISAS framework, which has already commenced. Mandatory internships have been incorporated as an integral part of the curriculum, and colleges are required, as a matter of obligation, to coordinate with the relevant industries. Keeping future requirements in view, we have identified

10 to 15 such focus areas that are relevant today. What was being taught over the last 10 to 20 years is no longer adequate to meet present-day needs.

Hon. Speaker Sir, we are also developing the skills of teachers so that, through modern methods and coordination with the global academic community, they can understand where the world is moving today. You have expressed concern about integrating students with new curricula, and I wish to state that this process has already begun. We have mandatorily entered into at least five agreements with industries so that they are associated with these engineering colleges at an early stage and, in line with your concern, begin engaging with students there itself and prepare them according to industry requirements. We have such 50 to 52 arrangements in place, and if you so desire, I can provide details of these as well. ... *(Interruptions)* Shri Shashi Tharoor ji also mentioned the figure of 57 Percent. This 57 Percent refers to those who pass through our campuses and thereafter pursue M.Tech programmes, go abroad, take up self-employment, or engage under the Make in India initiative. Moreover, within the country itself, prior to the year 2013 there were only three mobile manufacturing companies, whereas today there are a total of 268 mobile companies. Last year, our Hon. Prime Minister jointly entered into

an agreement with the Prime Minister of South Korea. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: What connection does that have with this? ... (*Interruption*s) He has given an incorrect reply. ... *(Interruptions)*

DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK: Hon. Speaker Sir, in one year, one crore. ... *(Interruptions)* that is the connection, ... *(Interruptions)* It is connected to employment. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Hon. Speaker Sir, I want to place before you the errors in the reply given by the Hon. Minister. ... *(Interruptions)* This is a very strange matter. ... *(Interruptions)*

DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK: Hon. Speaker Sir, if employment is being asked, as to where these students will go, then my Make in India will be number one in the entire world, and it has already been launched. ... *(Interruptions)* Our students will go there. ... *(Interruptions)* Preparations for that have begun.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, I want to bring out before you the mistakes in his response. ... *(Interruptions)* Sir, in the year 2018, under ‘Number of students graduated’, he has stated ‘Not available’. ... *(Interruptions)*

(Q. 303, 313 and 314)

SHRI RAMDAS TADAS: Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you. Owing to the vision and resolve of the popular Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi ji, the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana has been implemented since the year 2014. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that it is extremely necessary to make a specific provision of funds for a popular scheme like the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana. We always make efforts to implement all the schemes of the Central and State Governments along with the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana.

Will the Hon. Minister clarify whether consideration has been given to issuing any guidelines, through the Government, to the concerned companies for utilising CSR funds for the necessary and important development works under the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana?

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member is very serious about CSR, because even on the first of the month his question related to CSR, and today, on the fifteenth as well, his question pertains to CSR. The Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana is a very important scheme, through which villages will be developed, as envisaged by the Hon. Prime Minister. However, under the Companies Act, CSR has its own rules. Under Schedule

VII, it is clearly specified on which schemes funds can be spent. Whether it is the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana or any other scheme, any company may spend its funds there. Under the programmes listed in Schedule VII, if any work is to be undertaken in the *Parliamentary Constituency* by the Hon. Member, there is no intervention by the Government in this regard. These activities are undertaken by the companies themselves. Companies whose net worth exceeds Rs. 500 crore, or whose turnover exceeds Rs. 1,000 crore, or which earn profits of more than Rs. 5 crore, are required to spend at least two Percent of the average profits of the previous three years on CSR. In this process, there is no direct intervention by the Government.

SHRI RAMDAS TADAS: Hon. Speaker Sir, I am asking this question because there are many companies in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, but I do not receive CSR funds there. CSR funds should be made available for important works under the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana through Government companies operating in the public sector. If such funds are to be made available, the Government should take appropriate steps to issue guidelines, through its own mechanism, with respect to public sector undertakings.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, as I stated earlier, the Hon. Member is very serious about this issue, because within a span of fifteen days, he has raised this question for the second time.

HON. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member has already explained the reason for this.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, therefore I am coming to the same point that priority has to be given to the area where the company is operating. This is also in accordance with the rules.

HON. SPEAKER: The company must not be providing the funds there, which is why the Hon. Member has raised the question. You may simply issue directions that they undertake work in his area.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, in this matter, the Government cannot directly intervene or issue directions

Sir, through you, I would like to place some figures before the House. In the year 2014-15, 380 PSUs spent Rs. 2,816 crore. As far as non-PSUs are concerned, 16,405 companies spent Rs. 7,249 crore. Thereafter, in the year 2016-17, 407 companies spent Rs. 3,285 crore, and 21,063 companies spent Rs. 10,956 crore.

[English]

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I would like to take this opportunity to expand on the answer given effectively by the Minister of State on this matter. The idea of Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, which the Hon. Prime Minister brought in 2014, was to make sure that the Member of Parliament, irrespective of whether he represents through the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha, would adopt such villages which are in desperate need of help, essentially using the Member of Parliament's knowledge of the various schemes which already exist so that he, by adopting that village, will make sure that the existing programmes and the schemes reach that village and using such existing programmes, these villages will stand out as exemplary villages.

So, it is all right for a Member of Parliament to also access resources from the CSR, but it is not the funding which is the matter, there it is more the adoption, ensuring you are sitting and talking with the concerned people, stakeholders there, the Gram Panchayat there, and making sure what has not reached them through the existing scheme reaches them. So, the core idea is to make sure that the Member of Parliament, through his awareness, access, Parliament, Government, is able to bring the village up to the speed with the rest of them.…*(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I will give you an opportunity later. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, Question Nos. 313 and 314 are of a similar nature; therefore, I am clubbing these questions.

Question No. 313 - Shri H. Vasanthakumar.

[English]

SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR: Social responsibility is the most important thing for the development of agriculture, roads, water supply, etc. It is connected with the CSR activity. I would like to know from the Minister whether the money under CSR can be used in other areas also. I also would like to know whether they have adjusted the pending amount, which they are having in the corporate office, for the next year.

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, as I have stated earlier, under Schedule VII of the rules, it has been elaborately laid down in which sectors funds are to be spent. The scope of this has been expanded, and three to four amendments have been made in this regard. On the CSR portal created by the Government of India, detailed information has been provided about where 500 companies have spent their funds. This money is not spent directly under Government schemes. However, if any company wishes to undertake development works in its area of operation, different companies prepare annual reports through their

respective CSR Committees, spend funds accordingly, and through their returns clearly indicate the sectors in which these funds have been utilised.

[English]

SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR: The corporate office, from the net profits, is supposed to spend under CSR. But it is not possible to pre-plan the amount and all those things. Whatever profit they may be having, they are able to spend that money for the development of the nation. How can they pre-plan that thing?

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, as I have stated earlier, companies whose net worth is Rs. 500 crore fall within this framework, companies with a turnover of Rs. 1,000 crore fall within this framework, and companies whose profit exceeds Rs. 5 crore also fall within this framework. Such companies are required to spend two Percent of the average of their profits over the previous three years. Companies that come under this ambit undertake their planning well in advance. A separate CSR Committee is constituted, and for ensuring compliance and centralised scrutiny, the Union Government has also put in place an appropriate mechanism. For prosecution purposes, there is the CSPM, which we refer to as the Centralised Scrutiny and

Prosecution Mechanism. This has also been operationalised. From the year 2015-16 onwards, we have begun collecting information in this regard, and we have made all companies aware of the need to implement these provisions diligently.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, many Hon. Members here are new. They have come here for the first time. Therefore, please arrange to send a copy of the CSR guidelines to all Hon. Members.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Yes, Hon. Speaker Sir.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Unmesh Bhaiyyasaheb Patil – Not present.

Shri Kalyan Banerjee.

[English]

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: CSR is basically spent by the companies or related factories situated in the area for the development of that area. That is the basic concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. Let us take the case of Eastern Coalfields Ltd.

Mines are there, and the company is situated. So, construction of roads, etc., in and around the locality is the basic intention of Corporate Social Responsibility.

I am talking about the Central PSUs. Nowadays, we are seeing that a company is situated at one place, but the money is going to a

different State. It has happened in the 15th Lok Sabha also. Let me tell you the case of a company, Durgapur Steel Plant of Steel Authority of India, which is situated at Durgapur. The monies of CSR Funds were sent to Nagpur where nothing was there. This is one of the points.

Sir, I am talking about only the Central PSUs and not about the private companies. From the Central Public Sector Undertakings' CSR Funds, monies are going to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and the Prime Minister's other development funds. I do not have any problem here. But I am also saying that in that case, why should this money not go to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund also? Why should all States not get it? Why should it only go to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund?

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to provide some information to the Hon. Member. First, under the provisions of CSR, priority has to be given to the local area, and this is clearly laid down. Where mining activities take place, a District Mineral Foundation has been constituted at the district level. Companies that commenced operations after the year 2015 are required to contribute 10 Percent, while those that were in operation prior to that are required to contribute 30 Percent.

If you look at the figures for the last year, that is, 2016-17, a total of Rs. 7,860 crore was spent under CSR, and only Rs. 8 crore 70 lakh, that is, merely Rs. 8.69 crore, was given to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, which is perhaps even less than one Percent. It is not even one Percent, it would not even amount to 0.01 Percent. To allege that CSR funds were given to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund is not correct. Moreover, even if contributions are made to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, that fund is also utilised solely for the welfare of the people of this country.

HON. SPEAKER: That is a good thing. What is the difficulty in giving to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund?

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to add one more point that this is meant for the welfare of society. This money is for fulfilling society's overall responsibility, and very commendable work has been carried out in this field.

SHRI DILIP GHOSH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, in our area, the institutions that receive CSR funds do not get a No Objection from the District Magistrate. As a result, the money remains unutilised. People are ready to undertake the work, yet the work does not take place. I was an MLA there for three years. The municipality there wrote to the District Magistrate stating that they would not allow the MLA to spend the funds. Then who will provide funds to their

…*? Speaking in one manner here and acting in a different manner there, how can this be justified? The administration there does not grant permission to spend Government funds. I have experienced this personally.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please ask your questions.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Speaker Sir, I believe that the Hon. Member is referring to his earlier issues rather than CSR. ... (*Interruption*s) I think the Hon. Member intended to say that in West Bengal, far from CSR, even the MLA development fund could not be utilised. ... (*Interruption*s) This is not the first instance. I believe that Shri Adhir Ranjan ji had earlier also stated that meetings of the DISHA Committee could not be held. This is a matter pertaining to the State, but it is the right of Hon. Members of Parliament that the local committee should examine such issues. This is not related to CSR. However, the Hon. Member has raised a very serious issue, that if in West Bengal, funds cannot be spent by an MLA or an MP, then this matter must be taken seriously.

[English]

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: After the 15th Lok Sabha, DISHA has not been constituted.

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* Not recorded.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: I have already requested the ... * in response to the point raised by Shri Adhir Ranjan ji, to ensure that he is invited to the meetings of the DISHA Committee.

* Not recorded.

(Q. 304)

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT: Hon. Speaker Sir, for the welfare of the poor of the country, our popular Hon. Prime Minister has launched the Ujjwala Yojana. The Ujjwala Yojana is a very useful scheme, under which gas connections are to be provided to all persons belonging to Below Poverty Line families. In this context, through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister that within my Mishrikh *Parliamentary Constituency*, there are extremely backward rural areas in the three districts of the State, namely Hardoi, Sitapur and Kanpur Nagar. How many gas connections have so far been provided under this scheme to Below Poverty Line families in these districts, and how many families still remain to be provided with gas connections in this area?

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member has asked about one district of his *Parliamentary Constituency*. I will provide him with the specific details separately. He has also raised another related question as to by when the entire population, particularly the poor, will receive LPG connections. Through you, I would like to inform the Hon. Member and all Hon. Members of the House that the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has been implemented very rapidly and successfully with the cooperation of all of you. We are steadily moving towards 100

Percent coverage. Uttar Pradesh stands at number one, with a total of 7 crore 40 lakh connections having been provided. In Uttar Pradesh alone, approximately 1 crore 34 lakh 49 thousand connections have been provided as of today. With the continued support of all Hon. Members, in the coming time we will go to Mishrikh and celebrate the achievement of 100 Percent coverage of LPG connections.

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT: Hon. Speaker Sir, under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, the Hon. Prime Minister has provided 14 kg LPG cylinders to families living Below the Poverty Line. The cost of such cylinders is unbearable for many Below Poverty Line families. Steps have been taken to provide five kg cylinders to such families. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister as to by when these smaller cylinders will be made available to poor families.

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Hon. Speaker Sir, the price of a 14 kg LPG cylinder as on today is Rs. 637. For those who have purchased a cylinder this month, a subsidy of Rs. 142 has been credited back within three days, which means the effective price is Rs. 494.35. Through you, I would like to provide comparative information to the Hon. Member. In place of LPG, people use firewood, cow dung cakes and other polluting fuels. Several

institutions have conducted studies which show that for the same amount of energy that is available today at Rs. 494, an expenditure of approximately Rs. 850 to Rs. 1,000 is required. Therefore, LPG is not more expensive than other sources of energy. You have made a suggestion regarding 14 kg and 5 kg cylinders. When the Hon. Prime Minister undertook an intensive mobilisation under the Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, feedback was received that purchasing a 14 kg cylinder is somewhat challenging for poor families. The provision for five kg cylinders already exists, and it is being expanded at a faster pace.

I would request you that if you take some interest in promoting conversion to five kg cylinders in your *Parliamentary Constituency*, we would be happy to extend full cooperation from our side. We would like five kg cylinders to reach as many areas as possible, so that greater convenience is ensured for poor families.

SHRIMATI POONAMBEN MAADAM: Hon. Speaker Sir, inspired by the vision of the Hon. Prime Minister, today we can proudly state that if there is any scheme in the world that empowers poor women and sisters on the largest scale, it is the Ujjwala Yojana. In our country, more than six crore sisters are benefiting from this scheme today. With the fundamental objective of improving the health of sisters affected by smoke-related ailments

and strengthening their social conditions, the Hon. Prime Minister announced this comprehensive scheme.

Through you, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister for having implemented such a large-scale scheme. Today, the Ujjwala Yojana has the highest number of beneficiaries in the world. The monitoring mechanism of this scheme and its sustainability are also being taken forward very effectively by the Hon. Minister. I would like to ask whether any study has been conducted to assess whether the objectives of this scheme have been achieved, particularly whether there has been any improvement in the health and economic condition of women. A report has recently stated that today 27 crore BPL families have moved above the poverty line.

In that context, has the Ujjwala Yojana contributed in improving health outcomes and helping families rise above the poverty line? Has this scheme provided tangible benefits to sisters? This is what I would like to know from the Hon. Minister.

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member has asked about the benefits of LPG under the Ujjwala Yojana. I am grateful to her for acknowledging this scheme in this august House. Today, the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has become a major global example of women's empowerment. Providing LPG connections in the names of women has led to their

empowerment as well. This scheme has resulted in three to four kinds of benefits. It benefits the environment, it benefits women in terms of employment opportunities, and it improves overall well-being. Several reports have been published in this regard. The most notable among them in recent times is a report from IIM Ahmedabad. A study has also been conducted by the World Health Organization. Further, a recent review under the UN's Multidimensional Poverty Index has stated that several interventions have taken place in India in recent years, in which LPG is one significant factor, and that these interventions have helped people move above the poverty line.

The most interesting study has been conducted by the Indian Chest Society and the Chest Research Foundation. These are autonomous bodies that continuously conduct research on chest-related ailments in India. Their report has revealed that due to the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, there has been a 20 Percent reduction in chest congestion among the poor. This is the greatest validation of the Ujjwala Yojana. It is an achievement of the foresight and welfare-oriented policies of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

[English]

DR. G. RANJITH REDDY: Sir, the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana is a laudable scheme. But as per the definition of an LPG connection, it has to include an LPG cylinder, regulator, and stove. However, currently, only the cylinder and regulator are provided. Does it include the stove or not? I would like to ask the Minister through you.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Hon. Speaker Sir, the stove is not a part of the LPG connection. The cylinder, regulator and pipe are the three components of an LPG connection. The consumer may purchase a stove of his or her choice, keeping quality in mind. This Government has also addressed this concern. After consultations with stove manufacturers, arrangements have been made to provide durable, good-quality and affordable stoves under the Ujjwala Yojana. At present, through the companies, this has been structured as a long-term EMI arrangement. As of now, beneficiaries are receiving this facility free of cost.

[English]

SHRI RAGHU RAMA KRISHNA RAJU: Sir, my question is not directly linked to the wonderful Ujjawala scheme which has been in force. I have a question to the Hon. Minister with slight deviation.

Kindly pardon me for the deviation but it is an important question to the Hon. Minister.

There is a proposal for blending 10 per cent ethanol with petrol by 2022. But in 2018, all ethanol imports were banned. With the growing demand for industrial consumption as well as human consumption and with the reduction in sugarcane-ethanol production in India, how are we going to achieve the target of 10 per cent by 2022? Are there any alternative measures that are there in the thinking process of the Government as it is very important environmentally to the nation?

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Hon. Speaker Sir, this question is not directly related to the main question, but if you permit, since a very pertinent issue has been raised, I would like to respond to it. When the Hon. Prime Minister assumed responsibility of the country, ethanol procurement and blending with petrol was already in practice. The country consumes approximately three thousand crore litres of petrol annually, but ethanol blending was less than one Percent. One of the specific policies of our Government is to double farmers' income. Some friends believe that income can be doubled only by providing MSP. Our thinking is different. We believe that by adding value to the farmer's basic

produce, greater income can be generated. Ethanol is an effective step in that direction. Ethanol procurement, which was earlier less than one Percent, has now increased to six Percent.

The Hon. Member has raised a very good question. I would humbly submit that we are working towards import replacement. In coastal areas, certain intermediaries, middlemen and traders are present. This policy is not meant to serve their import lobby. Whether it is sugarcane or other produce, gradually the Government will promote ethanol production using technology that extracts ethanol from rotten potatoes, rotten wheat, broken rice and biomass. Our policy is not meant to promote ethanol routed through middlemen.

(Q. 305)

SHRI ARUN SAO: Hon. Speaker Sir, in the notification issued by the Hon. President, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are mentioned. There are many tribes whose commonly used caste names closely resemble the castes published in the notification, but with slight variations. Because of this, a large section of people is deprived of the benefits of reservation. Across the country, proposals are repeatedly made and demands have been raised to include such castes.

Through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether there is any consideration to include these castes in the notification.

SHRI ARJUN MUNDA: Hon. Speaker Sir, it has been clearly explained in the reply as to how and under which procedure these castes are included. Certain matters are already within the knowledge of the Government, and information in this regard is also received from several States from time to time. On the basis of recommendations and reports received from the State Governments, the Ministry forwards all relevant information to the Registrar General of India, and further action is taken after the receipt of reports based on those inputs. There are several such cases which the Government is examining seriously and considering carefully. In many instances, issues arise due to the

existence of various synonyms. From cadastral survey data to anthropological reports prepared during the British rule, certain tribes could not be included. While studying all these aspects, the Union Government is giving serious consideration so that all such issues can be corrected through appropriate revision. Due to the use of synonymous terms, variations in spelling or pronunciation, and differences arising from regional languages and dialects across States, minor discrepancies occur in nomenclature. Efforts are being made to remove these anomalies, and continuous meetings are being held in this regard.

SHRI ARUN SAO: Sir, by when will the Union Government take a decision with regard to the State of Chhattisgarh, and by when will the people be able to receive the benefits?

SHRI ARJUN MUNDA: Hon. Speaker Sir, this is an issue concerning several States, not just one State. Since it pertains to multiple States, work on this matter is being carried out on a continuous basis. We are making every effort to ensure that this issue is resolved at the earliest possible.

[English]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: The issue is relating to the modalities that had been prepared by the Government initially in 1999 and subsequently amended in 2002.

[Translation]

Today, the issue that is being repeatedly raised pertains precisely to the modalities. You have stated that there are synonyms, that there are variations in spellings where some alphabets differ, and that pronunciations also vary. Because of these factors, such communities are left out of the list. The Government of Odisha has sent 21 proposals, just as there are 28 proposals from Chhattisgarh and 10 proposals from Jharkhand. [English] These are the three major tribal-dominated States.

[Translation]

You have stated in your reply that three years have already passed. How many more years will it take? The issue you have outlined relates to the modalities. Can these modalities not be simplified? Can the procedure that has been put in place not be expedited? The Government is not declaring this on its own. The Registrar General of India has been asked to determine the modalities. [English] In Odisha, Saara is a tribal caste. Sabara and Saara are tribals. Just because their pronunciation is different, they are out from the list of Scheduled Tribes. How long will it take? Should you fix a timeframe that within this much of time the Registrar General of India (RGI) will finalize and declare it, and

notify the Government to come to the House for passing it as a Bill to make a law?

[Translation]

SHRI ARJUN MUNDA: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to inform the Hon. Member that an official meeting between the Registrar General of India and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs was held on Wednesday. After detailed discussions on all these issues, it has been decided that the matter will be taken up as expeditiously as possible. The Ministry recognises that a large number of people are facing difficulties due to this issue, and we are committed to resolving it at the earliest.

SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA: Hon. Speaker Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to raise a question on the present problems of the tribal communities of the country.

The Hon. Minister has given a good reply, and I have gone through the entire response. Both the State Governments and the Government of India have brought forward several commendable schemes for tribal development. However, in States such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, many persons who are not genuinely tribals are obtaining false certificates and getting included in the Scheduled Tribes list. As a result, the

rights of the original tribal communities are gradually being eroded. Those who are not tribals are availing benefits in educational institutions, various schemes and even petrol pumps on the basis of fake tribal certificates. The Government is making efforts to improve the standard of living of tribals. But if this practice continues, the rights that tribals have by birth will not reach them, and tribals will remain tribals only in name. What steps does the Government intend to take to protect them?

SHRI ARJUN MUNDA: Hon. Speaker Sir, whenever such matters come to light, they are duly investigated. I would like to inform the Hon. Member that only those communities which have been notified by the Hon. President under Article 342 are issued certificates.

(Q. 306, 307 and 312)

HON. SPEAKER: Question 306 .

Shri Praveen Kumar Nishad - Not present.

Shri Ajay Nishad - Not present.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Question Nos. 306 and 307 are being clubbed.

Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma.

SHRI JUGAL KISHORE SHARMA: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to raise this very important question. There are seven districts in the Rajouri–Poonch hill region, and these districts add to the natural beauty of this area. They have historical recognition dating back to ancient times and the Mahabharata period. The areas surrounding these districts are closely associated with tourism and religious faith. Tourists from across the country can enjoy visiting these districts. Therefore, I request that these districts be developed from the tourism perspective so that local people may also get employment opportunities. What steps does the Hon. Minister propose to take in this regard?

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, I express my gratitude to the Hon. Member. He is a senior Member and

comes from Jammu and Kashmir. Through you, I would first like to state that the Ministry of Tourism considers proposals received from the States. I will respond to the points he has raised. We undertake the creation of tourism infrastructure and, with the cooperation of the State Governments, we also work on promotion, marketing and skill development. However, with regard to the question raised by the Hon. Member, I would like to draw his attention to the fact that under the ongoing schemes there, as he would be aware, under the PMRP of 2004, the establishment of 12 Development Authorities, three circuits and 50 tourist villages was proposed, along with the conservation of Wular Lake. You have mentioned ponds. I regret to state that funds were allocated, but the State Government at that time did not utilise those funds. The Utilisation Certificate has not yet been received. Generally, the Government of India decides that funds for another scheme are released only after the earlier scheme is completed. Through you, I would request the Hon. Member that I will certainly consider his proposal. The State Government should send the proposal and also endeavour to forward the Utilisation Certificate, so that there is no difficulty for the Government of India.

SHRI JUGAL KISHORE SHARMA: Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that two projects have

been forwarded by the State Government to the Union Government. One project relates to Rajouri, namely the Shakkar Marg and Seven Lakes Project, and the second project pertains to the Development of the Ganga Ghat at Sunderbani. There has been considerable delay in these projects. When will work commence on these projects so that tourism development can also take place in this region? If tourists from outside visit these places, it will generate employment opportunities for the local population.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to inform the House that among the projects under consideration, one Eco-Tourism Adventure and Eco Circuit for Jammu has been proposed, which includes Ranjit Sagar Dam, Nagrota, Sonamarg and Doodhpathri. Another Eco-Tourism scheme includes Akhnoor, Samba, Gulabgarh and Sunderbani. Under the Heritage Circuit, three projects have been proposed, namely the Jhelum Riverfront, Rainawari and Jogi Lankar. In addition, there are five projects under the Himalayan Circuit. We have requested the State Government to submit the proposals. However, no Detailed Project Report or complete information has so far been received from the State Government.

SHRIMATI RITI PATHAK: Thank you, Hon. Speaker Sir. Today, I have received the opportunity to ask a question during

Question Hour for the first time, and I express my heartfelt gratitude to you for this. While thanking the Hon. Prime Minister, I would also like to mention that the Hon. Minister himself belongs to Madhya Pradesh and frequently visits my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Therefore, with great hope, I wish to place this matter before the House through you.

In the reply given by the Hon. Minister, I was looking for the possibilities of tourism development in my region, but I could not find them. My humble submission is that in the Bhind region of Madhya Pradesh, there are several temples and stupas dating back to the tenth century. For instance, there is the Lord Shiva Temple at Chandel, the Chaturbhuj Lord Vishnu Temple at Pardi, which is believed to be from the fifth century, the Mani caves, the temple of Goddess Chandi, the revered deity of Birbal, and at the fort of Rewa, Hon. Speaker Sir, where I would also like to invite you, there is a 37-foot-tall statue of Lord Bhairav. Through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether there is any plan to develop these extremely ancient sites as special tourist destinations and thereby establish their glory. If such a plan exists, what is it, and if not, by when is such a possibility envisaged? I would also like to add one more line that if at least this proposal could be included under the Rural Circuit theme, I would be most grateful.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank the Hon. Member. In Madhya Pradesh, the Wildlife Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Heritage Circuit and Eco Circuit are already in operation. Among these, there was a matter relating to the proposed and under-consideration Buddhist Circuit, which does not include Sanchi and Buddhagaya, but the Ramayana Circuit does include Satna. Earlier, a proposal amounting to Rs. 69.48 crore was approved in Uttar Pradesh, but the Government of Madhya Pradesh has now sent us a proposal of Rs. 51 crore. The Ministry will examine this proposal and take further action. I would like to inform the Hon. Member that in the areas connected with her constituency, site selection has been carried out on the Amarkantak side and work is in progress there. Now I come to her third question.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I am aware that a major excavation is being undertaken there by the Archaeological Survey of India. I believe that whenever I speak on this matter, I should place only authenticated information before the House. I take pride in the fact that remains dating back to the tenth century have been found in the Singrauli region, but I cannot formally confirm this until the Archaeological Survey of India submits its findings. Until such confirmation is received, I feel it would not be appropriate to state this in the House. However, whether it is the birthplace of

Banabhatta, which I myself have visited, or other sites that I personally observed there, I have issued directions that detailed information should be collected. The ASI is working on this, and once the results are received, I will, through you, Hon. Speaker Sir, beg to lay them on the table of the House.

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister just one question. Tourism activity is very extensive in all three regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. If the Hon. Minister holds a meeting with all six Members of Parliament who come from these three regions, we would be able to place our tourism-related concerns before him in a comprehensive manner.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, this is a good suggestion. I will certainly consider it.

HON. SPEAKER: Question No. 312 is also being clubbed with this.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: I have already given my ruling earlier.

SHRI SUNIL BABURAO MENDHE: Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister that about 44 Percent of the region from which I come is covered with forest area. There are also two tiger reserve forests there, namely Koka and Nagzira. Through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister

whether there is any scheme from the Ministry of Tourism for their development. If not, by when does the Government propose to formulate such a scheme?

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member has raised this question. In fact, at one time a scheme known as PIDDC was in operation. After that scheme was discontinued, the funds that were released for it were completed by the Government of Maharashtra by contributing its own share. If the Hon. Member so desires, I can provide him with the details. However, I believe that for the matter the Hon. Member has referred to, unless the State Government submits a proposal, we cannot take any initiative from our side. As far as the previous project is concerned, the State Government is working on it. I had sought information from the State Government, and they have duly provided details that works such as the Navegaon Dam, Khamma Talab and others have been completed in accordance with the funds provided by the Government of India. Based on the Utilisation Certificates that we have received, the Ministry of the Government of India is satisfied.

SHRI SUNIL BABURAO MENDHE: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister that when I obtained information, it came to my notice that a DPR for the eastern part is being prepared

by the Government of Maharashtra. In the forest-covered areas and in the buffer zones, the people residing there do not have any means of employment. For such people, the Government intends to formulate some projects in that area. I would request the Hon. Minister to provide funds for this purpose so that employment opportunities can be generated.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I have already informed the House that funds are provided for honey processing and related activities. Full approval is obtained from the Ministry of Environment and Forests in this regard. Whenever a project is formulated, it is a matter for the State Government. I would request the Hon. Member to send a concrete project proposal. I have personally visited that area as well. My constituency borders Chhindwara and Seoni, and I have been there. However, my difficulty is that the proposal has to be sent by the State Government. They must obtain the necessary forest and environment clearances, and if the State Government approves the scheme, I will extend full support in its implementation.

[English]

SHRI LORHO PFOZE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to put a supplementary question during the Question Hour. I want to ask the Minister what projects the

Government has taken up for the promotion of tourism in North-East India, especially in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, Outer Manipur.

12.00 hrs

Sir, the lack of other resources in North East tourism development is the only available resource. This is a very important issue, and our Minister is very well acquainted with North-East, especially Manipur. I would like to know from him about what is being done on this account.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Hon. Speaker Sir, I extend my greetings to the Hon. Member from Manipur. I am familiar with those regions of Manipur. Over the past three and a half years, I have visited those areas of Manipur. Through you, I would like to inform him that under the North Eastern Circuit, for tourism circuit development in Manipur, Imphal and Khongjom have been included. While Imphal does not fall within the Hon. Member's area, Khongjom does, and it is part of the North Eastern Circuit. If he feels that there is a need to offer further suggestions in this regard, he may do so, and I will extend all possible assistance.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Question Hour is over.

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*WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Starred Question Nos.308 to 311 and 315 to 320

Unstarred Question Nos. 3412 to 3641

* **For Questions, please visit** https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers .

12.01 hrs

REFERENCE BY THE SPEAKER

Swachhata Abhiyan in Parliament House Estate

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I am very happy to inform the House that taking inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi, on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary , Swachhata Abhiyaan was launched on 13th and 14th July in the premises of the Parliament House in which hon. Ministers, hon. Members, Officers/Staff of Lok Sabha Secretariat and other allied agencies participated wholeheartedly. Our effort is to spread this resolution of 'Swachhata Abhiyaan' from Parliament to every nook and corner of the country.

The role of the hon. Members in making the people aware about this Abhiyaan is very important. You came and actively participated, I thank and congratulate you all for this. I believe that with your active participation we will be successful in spreading this message amongst the people through this Swachhata Abhiyaan from this temple of democracy. We will certainly be able to fulfil Mahatma Gandhi's dream of Swachha Bharat and the resolve of the hon. Prime Minister by the 2nd October 2019.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have received several notices for Adjournment Motions. Although these matters are important, it would not be appropriate to disrupt the proceedings of the House at this moment. Therefore, I do not grant permission for any of these Adjournment Motion notices.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Sir, just one minute, this is a very serious issue. ... *(Interruptions)*

12.03hrs PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

HON. SPEAKER: Now, papers to be laid on the Table. Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Human Resource Development for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 257/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ARJUN MUNDA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 258/17/19]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 259/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Engineers India Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 260/17/19]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Labour and Employment for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 261/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

(i) Detailed Demand for grants of the Ministry of Tourism for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 262/17/19]

(ii) Detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Culture for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 263/17/19]

(2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indira Gandhi

Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, for the year 2017-2018.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 264/17/19]

(4) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of The Asiatic Society of Mumbai, Mumbai, for the year 2016-2017, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of The Asiatic Society of Mumbai, Mumbai, for the year 2016-2017.

(5) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (4) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 265/17/19]

(6) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Centre for Buddhist Cultural Studies, Tawang, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Centre for

Buddhist Cultural Studies, Tawang, for the year 2017-2018.

(7) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (6) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 266/17/19]

(8) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, for the year 2017-2018.

(9) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (8) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 267/17/19]

(10) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Tibet House, New Delhi, for the year 2017-2018.

(ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Tibet House, New Delhi, for the year 2017-2018, together with Audit Report thereon.

(iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Tibet House, New Delhi, for the year 2017-2018.

(11) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (10) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 268/17/19]

(12) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata, for the year 2017-2018.

(13) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (12) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 269/17/19]

(14) A copy of the National Monuments Authority (Heritage Byelaws for Nizamuddin Basti group of monuments) (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 270/17/19]

(15) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, for the year 2016-2017, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, for the year 2016-2017.

(16) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (15) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 271/17/19]

(17) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, for the year 2017-2018.

(18) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (17) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 272/17/19]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER, MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MINITER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (SHRI R.K. SINGH): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for the year 2019- 2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 273/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND

INDUSTRY (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 274/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 275/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SANJAY SHAMRAO DHOTRE): I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan State Mission Authority Manipur, Imphal, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan State Mission Authority Manipur, Imphal, for the year 2017-2018.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 276/17/19]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Jharkhand Secondary Education Project Council, Ranchi, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Jharkhand Secondary Education Project Council, Ranchi, for the year 2017-2018.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 277/17/19]

(5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, for the year 2017-2018.

(6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 278/17/19]

(7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Kerala, Trivandrum, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the

Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Kerala, Trivandrum, for the year 2017-2018.

(8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 279/17/19]

(9) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Jharkhand Education Project Council, Ranchi, for the year 2016-2017, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Jharkhand Education Project Council, Ranchi, for the year 2016-2017.

(10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 280/17/19]

(11) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Goa, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Goa, for the year 2017-2018.

(12) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (11) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 281/17/19]

(13) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Kerala, Trivandrum, for the years 2014-2015 to 2016-2017, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Kerala, Trivandrum, for the years 2014-2015 to 2016-2017.

(14) Three statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (13) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 282/17/19]

(15) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Tamil Nadu Rashtriya Madhyamik

Shiksha Abhiyan, Chennai, for the years 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Tamil Nadu Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Chennai, for the years 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2017-2018.

(16) Three statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (15) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 283/17/19]

(17) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Jharkhand Education Project Council, Ranchi, for the year 2017-2018, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Jharkhand Education Project Council, Ranchi, for the year 2017-2018.

(18) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (17) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 284/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR): I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 285/17/19]

(2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (4) to Section 23A of the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976:-

1. S.O.983(E) published in Gazette of India dated 22nd February, 2019, regarding amalgamation of Pragathi Krishna Gramin Bank and Kaveri Grameena Bank as Karnataka Gramin Bank.

2. S.O.984(E) published in Gazette of India dated 22nd February, 2019, regarding amalgamation of Sarva U.P. Gramin Bank and Prathama Bank as Prathama U.P. Gramin Bank.

3. S.O.985(E) published in Gazette of India dated 22nd February, 2019, regarding amalgamation of Assam Gramin Vikash Bank and Langpi Dehangi Rural Bank as Assam Gramin Vikash Bank.

4. S.O.986(E) published in Gazette of India dated 22nd February, 2019, regarding amalgamation of Baroda Gujarat Gramin Bank and Dena Gujarat Gramin Bank as Baroda Gujarat Gramin Bank.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 286/17/19]

(3) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (2) to Section 30 of the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976:-

1. The Saurashtra Gramin Bank (Officers and Employees) Service (Amendment) Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. F. No. HO/PER/2018/3471 in Gazette of India dated 6th December, 2018.

2. The Saurashtra Gramin Bank (Employees') Pension Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. F. No.

HO/PER/2018/3471 in Gazette of India dated 6th December, 2018.

3. The Central Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank (Officers and Employees) Services (Amendment) Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. 488 in Gazette of India dated 12th December, 2018.

4. The Central Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank (Employees') Pension Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. 488 in Gazette of India dated 12th December, 2018.

5. The Mizoram Rural Bank (Officers and Employees) Service (Amendment) Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. F. No. PSN-MRB/2018-19/01 in Gazette of India dated 4th January, 2019.

6. The Mizoram Rural Bank (Employees') Pension Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. F. No. GZT-MRB/PSN/2018-19/01 in Gazette of India dated 4th January, 2019.

7. The Pallavan Grama Bank (Officers and Employees) Service (Amendment) Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. F. No. PGB/service (Amendment)

Regulations/2018-19 in Gazette of India dated 21st December, 2018.

8. The Pallavan Grama Bank (Employees') Pension Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. F. No. PGB/Pension/2018-19 in Gazette of India dated 21st December, 2018.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 288/17/19]

(4) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under Section 31 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992:-

1. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Employees' Service) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. SEBI/LAD-NRO/GN/2019/15 in Gazette of India dated 8th May, 2019.

2. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Foreign Portfolio Investors) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2018 published in Notification No. SEBI/LAD-NRO/GN/2018/58 in Gazette of India dated 31st December, 2018.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 288/17/19]

(5) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (4) of Section 469 of the Companies Act, 2013:-

1. The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Accounting, Audit, Transfer and Refund) Amendment Rules, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.343(E) in Gazette of India dated 1st May, 2019.

2. The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Recruitment, Salary and other Terms and Conditions of Service of General Manager and Assistant General Manager) Amendment Rules, 2018 published in Notification No. G.S.R.1175(E) in Gazette of India dated 5th December, 2018.

3. The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Form of Annual Statement of Accounts) Rules, 2018 published in Notification No. G.S.R.1023(E) in Gazette of India dated 11th October, 2018.

4. The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Form and Time of Preparation of Annual Report) Rules, 2018 published in Notification No. G.S.R.1024(E) in Gazette of India dated 11th October, 2018.

5. The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Recruitment, Salary and other Terms and Conditions of Service of Deputy General Manger, Private Secretary, Personal Assistant, Stenographer, Senior Secretariat Assistant and Junior Secretariat Assistant (JSA) Recruitment Rules, 2018 published in Notification No. G.S.R.793(E) in Gazette of India dated 21st August, 2018.

(6) Four statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at item No. (ii) to (v) of (5) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 289/17/19]

(7) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under Section 77 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985:-

1. S.O.1350(E) published in Gazette of India dated 13th March, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum declaring the substances, mentioned therein, salts and preparations thereof to be manufactured drugs.

2. S.O.1351(E) published in Gazette of India dated 13th March, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum

making certain amendments in Notification No. S.O.1055(E) dated 19th October, 2001.

3. S.O.1352(E) published in Gazette of India dated 13th March, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum making further amendments in the list of psychotropic substances specified in the Schedule of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

4. The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Rules, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.215(E) in Gazette of India dated 13th March, 2019.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 290/17/19]

(8) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962:-

1. G.S.R.1236(E) published in Gazette of India dated 27th December, 2018, together with an explanatory memorandum making certain amendments in the Notification No. 82/2017-Cus.(N.T.), dated 24th August, 2017.

2. The Courier Imports and Exports (Electronic Declaration and Processing) Amendment Regulations, 2019

published in Notification No. G.S.R.158(E) in Gazette of India dated 27th February, 2019.

3. The Courier Imports and Exports (Clearance) Amendment Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.159(E) in Gazette of India dated 27th February, 2019.

4. The Sea Cargo Manifest and Transhipment (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.165(E) in Gazette of India dated 27th February, 2019.

5. The Shipping Bill and Bill of Export (Forms) Amendment Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.239(E) in Gazette of India dated 25th March, 2019.

6. G.S.R.277(E) published in Gazette of India dated 1st April, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum making certain amendments in the Notification No. 12/97-Cus.(N.T.), dated 2nd April, 1997.

7. The Handling of Cargo in Customs Areas (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.278(E) in Gazette of India dated 1st April, 2019.

8. The Shipping Bill (Electronic Integrated Declaration and Paperless Processing) Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.326(E) in Gazette of India dated 25th April, 2019.

9. The Customs (Supplementary Notice) Regulations, 2019 published in Notification No. G.S.R.429(E) in Gazette of India dated 18th June, 2019.

10. S.O.1974(E) published in Gazette of India dated 18th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum making certain amendments in two notifications, mentioned therein.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 291/17/19]

(9) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under Section 24 of the Union Territory Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017:-

1. G.S.R.74(E) published in Gazette of India dated 29th January, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to notify the date on which the provisions of the Union Territory Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Act, 2018 shall come into force.

2. G.S.R.366(E) published in Gazette of India dated 16th May, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to

notify amendment in Constitution of Authority for Advance Ruling in the Union Territories (without legislature).

3. G.S.R.367(E) published in Gazette of India dated 16th May, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to notify Constitution of Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling in the Union Territories (without legislature).

4. G.S.R.463(E) published in Gazette of India dated 29th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to specify retail outlets established in the departure area of an international airport, beyond the immigration counters, making tax free supply of goods to an outgoing international tourist, as class of person who shall be entitled to claim refund of applicable central tax paid on inward supply of such goods.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 292/17/19]

(10) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R.460(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated 29th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to specify retail outlets established in the departure area of an international airport, beyond the immigration counters, making tax free supply of goods to an outgoing international tourist, as class of person who shall be entitled to claim refund of applicable central tax paid on

inward supply of such goods under Section 166 of the Central Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 293/17/19]

(11) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R.461(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated 29th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to specify retail outlets established in the departure area of an international airport, beyond the immigration counters, making tax free supply of goods to an outgoing international tourist, as class of person who shall be entitled to claim refund of applicable integrated tax paid on inward supply of such goods under Section 24 of the Integrated Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 294/17/19]

(12) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R.464(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated 29th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to exempt any supply of goods by a retail outlet established in the departure area of international airport, beyond the immigration counters, to an outgoing international tourist from the whole of the goods and services tax compensation cess under Section 13 of the Compensation Cess Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 295/17/19]

(13) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (7) of Section 9A of the Customs Tariff Act, 1975:-

1. G.S.R.444(E) published in Gazette of India dated 23rd June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to extend the levy of definitive anti-dumping duty on the import of 'Ductile iron pipes', originating in, or exported from China PR upto and inclusive of 9th October, 2019.

2. G.S.R.449(E) published in Gazette of India dated 24th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum seeking to levy definitive countervailing duty on import of new/unused pneumatic radial tyres with or without tubes and/or flap of rubber (including tubeless tyres) having nominal rim dia code above 16" used in buses and lorries/trucks, originating in, or exported form the People's Republic of China for a period of five years (with effect from 24.06.2019) based on recommendations of investigations conducted by the directorate General of Trade Remedies.

3. G.S.R.450(E) published in Gazette of India dated 24th June, 2019, together with an explanatory memorandum

seeking to further extend the levy of anti-dumping duty till 09.07.2019 on imports of “Paracetamol”, originating in, or exported form the China PR, in pursuance of order of Hon’ble High Court of Gujarat dated 20.06.2019 in the matter of Special Civil Application No. 5278/2019.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 296/17/19]

12.05 hrs

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 258th report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Demands for Grants (2018-19) pertaining to the Ministry of Culture.*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay a statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 258th Report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Demands for Grants (2018-19) pertaining to the Ministry of Culture.

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* Laid on the Table and also placed in Library,See No.LT 297/17/19.

12.08 hrs

GOVERNMENT BILLS - Introduced

(i) MOTOR VEHICLES (AMENDMENT), BILL, 2019*

HON. SPEAKER: Item No. -14, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [GENERAL DR. V. K. SINGH) (RETD.)]: Sir, on behalf of Shri Nitin Gadkari, I beg to move that leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

HON. SPEAKER: Motion was moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988."

Prof. Sougata Ray ji is a Professor of Physics and has served in the teaching profession for 35 years.

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Thank you, Sir. I rise to oppose the introduction of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

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* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section-2 dated 15/7/2019.

At present, the issue does not concern the legislative competence because of the fact that the subject is in the Concurrent List and the Parliament can make a law defining powers available to the States. It is mainly due to the reason that some of the States are concerned about new provisions, which empower the Centre to formulate a National Transport Policy through a process of consultation and not concurrence.

Under the new amendments, changes in the Motor Vehicles Act will enable the Union Government to formulate schemes for the national multi-nodal and inter-State movement of goods and passengers for rural mobility and even last-mile connectivity.

This will take away the powers of the State Governments, which have been making changes as per the requirements, suiting their local conditions as well as the needs of the local population in the hinterland. Moreover, it also takes away the powers of the States so far as providing rural connectivity as a social service instead of profitable routes for operation of such services.

Sir, this will put the people living in rural and far flung areas to disadvantage because the private operators refuse to cater to their needs because of low profits or losses due to scarcely populated regions spread across the Himalayan belt and tribal areas of Central Indian States. That is why, I oppose this Bill which infringes on the

rights of the States, and takes away the powers of the States to improve road connectivity in the rural areas.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Sir, I also rise to oppose the introduction of the Bill. However, not in its entirety but I oppose only a few provisions. I think, it does not comply with the established constitutional provisions. I must appreciate that the Minister has burnt midnight oil to make it a comprehensive and a robust Bill. However, certain loopholes are identified.

We all know that it is a long overdue legislation. I would simply draw the attention of the concerned Minister to Clause 33 where the Bill provides that the Union Government may modify any permit issued under the Act. It may also modify the scheme for national multimodal and interstate transportation of goods or passengers, and issue or modify license under such schemes. These permits and schemes must be for specific purposes listed in the Bill, and include last mile connectivity, rural transport and improve freight movement.

I would like to say that before taking any such action, the Union Government should consult the State Governments. So, I would propose to the Minister that he should take the State Governments into confidence before the introduction of this legislation.

Secondly, the Clause 17 of the Bill provided that, for a new motor vehicle, the dealer would apply for the registration of vehicle if the dealer is situated in the same State where the vehicle is being registered. Here, my objection is with respect to empowering the dealer or the registering authorities because it would be against public interests. These two issues I thought it prudent to raise in this House, and for Minister's consideration.

[Translation]

Along with this, it is also true that today discussion is scheduled under the Demands for Grants on the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019. In India, nearly four thousand people lose their lives every day in road accidents. It is astonishing that despite such a high number of daily fatalities, particularly if one looks at areas like Delhi and Noida, which are often described as having turned into deadly roads, this issue does not receive the attention it deserves. I would request that this aspect also be kept in mind.

[English]

SUSHRI MAHUA MOITRA (KRISHNANAGAR): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose the amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act. We seek to oppose very important clauses where the Government has brought amendments to the Bill. In Clause 5(c), you have increased the time limit for renewal of licence from one month to one year after the expiry. This means that you will have people with an expired driving licence driving for one year after the licence has expired. This is detrimental to road safety as well as to the lives of others who may be on the road.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, would you like to respond?

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, you may raise this point during the discussion.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS AND MINISTER OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI): Hon. Speaker Sir, I will respond to all the questions raised by the Hon. Member. This Bill had been passed during the previous Lok Sabha, but thereafter it could not be passed in the Rajya Sabha. With regard

to this Bill, I would like to state that when it was drafted, certain Hon. Members as well as some other stakeholders had raised objections to it. At that time, Shri Yunus Khan was the Transport Minister of Rajasthan. Under his chairmanship, Transport Ministers from 18 States examined this Bill and submitted to me a copy of the Bill with their recommendations, which I then placed before Parliament.

After it was introduced in Parliament, directions were issued by both Houses, following which the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee as well as the Joint Selection Committee. After the reports of both these Committees were received, the Bill was taken up in the Rajya Sabha, but at that time it could not be passed there. Today, once again, I have introduced the same Bill in this House. ... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): What if this Bill is not passed again? … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: Hon. Speaker Sir, Professor Sir, I would like to make just one submission to you, I would like to make only one request. I am aware that this subject falls under the State List, not under the Union List. This subject comes under the Concurrent List. Therefore, since it is in the Concurrent List, the

Government of India as well as the State Governments both have the authority to legislate on this matter.

First of all, I would like to assure you, as you yourself have mentioned, that any State which wishes to implement this legislation may do so. Any State which does not wish to implement it is under no compulsion. It is neither binding nor mandatory. Through this Bill, we do not intend to take away any rights of the States, nor do we intend to interfere with their powers in any manner.

Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Member has placed his point before the House. There is a rule that after purchasing a new vehicle, it has to be taken to the RTO office. After inspecting the vehicle, the RTO affixes a stamp and carries out its registration. I do not wish to go into what happens while taking the vehicle there and bringing it back. ... *(Interruptions)* Therefore, we have proposed that the dealer should carry out the registration, and the amount corresponding to the work performed by the RTO office will be deposited into its account. ... *(Interruptions)* We have not taken away any right of the States through this provision. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: I am not talking about rights. ... *(Interruptions)* Is there any mechanism to make this system efficient and foolproof? … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: The first point is that I am ready for every discussion. ... *(Interruptions)* Whatever issues the Hon. Member brings to my notice, we will address and rectify them. ... *(Interruptions)*

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: We will have a detailed debate during the discussion. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE (SREERAMPUR): It is a practice that you have to consult the State Governments. Their opinion should also be taken … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I am reiterating the same point. After granting their approval, the Transport Ministers of 18 States prepared this Bill after duly considering all inputs. Thereafter, the Joint Selection Committee and the Standing Committee scrutinised this Bill for six months each.

I have even felt frustrated at times, because you yourself have referred to this issue. In our country, every year one and a half lakh people lose their lives and five lakh accidents take place. Thirty Percent of driving licences are bogus. A person from Delhi goes to Jaipur to obtain a licence, goes to Mumbai to obtain a licence. There is no control over this. ... *(Interruptions)* If there is any country in

the world where it is the easiest to obtain a driving licence, that country is India. ... *(Interruptions)* There is no punishment in such cases. ... *(Interruptions)* People place their hand over the number plate while riding a scooter and pass right in front of the police, without any fear. ... *(Interruptions)* There is neither respect for the law nor fear of it. ... *(Interruptions)* No one worries about a fine of Rs. 50 or Rs. 100. ... *(Interruptions)* It is precisely to save people's lives that we have brought this Bill. ... *(Interruptions)* I have already stated, even before you, that this is the biggest failure of my Department. I have no hesitation in accepting it. ... *(Interruptions)* Despite trying for five years, accidents have reduced by only 3.5 to 4 Percent. ... *(Interruptions)* Tamil Nadu is an exception in this regard. Tamil Nadu has saved lives by reducing accidents by 15 Percent. ... *(Interruptions)* Therefore, with the consent and permission of all of you, we wish to move forward by adopting the same experiment that Tamil Nadu has undertaken. ... *(Interruptions)* Professor Sir, this is documented everywhere. ... *(Interruptions)* Please listen to what I am saying.

I assure the House that nothing in this is binding on the States. ... (*Interruption*s) I recently visited London and studied the transport model there, where double-decker buses are operated by

private operators. ... (*Interruption*s) We want to improve our transport services and introduce electric buses. ... (*Interruption*s) The introduction of electric buses has already begun. Yesterday, I inaugurated a motorcycle that runs on ethanol, and in the same manner, we want to develop taxis as well. ... (*Interruption*s) States that wish to adopt these new initiatives may do so, and those that do not wish to adopt them are free not to do so.

This is not mandatory. ... (*Interruption*s) We do not wish to take away any right of the States. ... (*Interruption*s) I only want to say this much to you, please discuss this Bill. I will sit with you during the discussion. Either convince me or be convinced by me. If you convince me, I am prepared to step back. ... (*Interruption*s) Please pass this Bill to save people's lives. ... (*Interruption*s) One and a half lakh people are dying every year in road accidents in this country. ... (*Interruption*s) I am myself affected by this. My leg was fractured at four places. Despite five years of effort, this Bill could not be brought earlier. I am ready to sit with you. Members from all political parties were part of the Joint Selection Committee and the Standing Committee. I personally went to meet them in two or three meetings, and our Secretary also went. ... (*Interruption*s) Thereafter, Transport Ministers of 18 States also examined this Bill. Even after that, since all of you are newly elected Members, I

request all of you to sit with me. Whatever you say in public interest, I am ready to accept it. There is no politics in this. I humbly request all of you to accept this Bill in order to save people's lives.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988."

the motion was adopted.

GEN. DR. V. K. SINGH (RETD.): Hon. Speaker, I introduce the Bill.

12.20 hrs

(II) SURROGACY (REGULATION) BILL, 2019*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): Sir I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to constitute National Surrogacy Board, State Surrogacy Boards and appointment of appropriate authorities for regulation of the practice and process of surrogacy and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

> "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to constitute National Surrogacy Board, State Surrogacy Boards and appointment of appropriate authorities for regulation of the practice and process of surrogacy and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

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* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section-2 dated 15.7.2019.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Your notice time is over. However, if you wish to speak for one minute, you may do so.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I am granting you special permission. Although your notice time is over, you may still speak. *... (Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Sir, I have a procedural objection and 3 substantive objectives. Sir, as far as the procedural objection is concerned, under your direction 19B of the Directions by the Speaker, no Bill shall be introduced until its copies have been made available to the Members at least two days before the Bill is proposed to be introduced in the House. This Direction has not been complied with, Sir. We have not had the Bill for two working days. And I must say the Minister has to give special reasons for not doing so or defer the Bill.

Then, I have three substantive objections. First, it prevents same sex couples from having surrogate children even though there is credible scientific research to show that same sex parents are as good as heterosexual parents. Second, it violates the Puttaswamy judgment of the Supreme Court. The first one violates article 14

because it treats equals unequally, and the second one violates article 21 because of the Right to Privacy. And finally, requiring married couples to wait for five years after their marriage in order for them to be eligible for surrogacy, I am afraid, is an unreasonable restriction on their reproductive rights and violation of their Right to Life under article 21.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: A copy of this has already been provided to the Hon. Members.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

> "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to constitute National Surrogacy Board, State Surrogacy Boards and appointment of appropriate authorities for regulation of the practice and process of surrogacy and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

the motion was adopted .

[English]

DR. HARSH VARDHAN: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

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12.23 hrs

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The matters under Rule 377 shall be laid on the Table of the House. Hon. Members may personally hand over the text of the matter at the Table of the House. For this purpose, a time of 20 minutes is allotted.

... (*Interruption*)

HON. SPEAKER: Today, there will be no Zero Hour.

... (Interruptions)

* Treated as laid on the Table.

(i) Regarding infiltration in Assam

SHRI DILIP SAIKIA (MANGALDOI): Illegal infiltration has become a serious national problem across Assam, including my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Mangaldai. In this regard, the Government is making serious efforts at its own level. However, unchecked infiltration has now emerged as a nationwide challenge. According to the World Migration Report 2018, in the previous year, the Bangladesh–India corridor became the second most frequently used route for infiltration.

Not only this, the manner in which the number of voters has increased in the electoral rolls of Assam is also extremely alarming for the country. In my *Parliamentary Constituency* alone, the number of voters has increased by nearly three lakh over the past five years. The rights of the indigenous people of Assam are being completely violated. Due to this infiltration, the economic, social and political rights of the local people of Assam are also being severely undermined. Increasing infiltration has also led to encroachment on forest land, reserved land and riverine floodplain

areas. Therefore, this infiltration can prove to be extremely dangerous for both the internal and external security of the country.

I, therefore, request the Hon. Home Minister to kindly address this serious challenge by implementing stringent nationwide laws and take necessary steps to put an end to this problem.

(ii) Regarding irrigation project for Kolar Constituency

[English]

SHRI S. MUNISWAMY (KOLAR): Good percentage of Kolar constituency in Karnataka comprises of agricultural lands, which produce various horticulture and agricultural products. But the main problem being faced by the farmers in Kolar area is drought. This is due to the absence of water resources in the area. As a result of drought, most of the agricultural lands are useless and the harvests are not fruitful, sometimes it leads to famine. If there is an irrigation project in Kolar area, the area can overcome from drought. So I kindly request the Government to allocate fund for an 'Irrigation projects' for Kolar area.

(iii) Need to set up a Mega Food Park in Maharajganj *Parliamentary Constituency*, Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL (MAHARAJGANJ): The State of Bihar is a backward State. Within this State lies my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Maharajganj, which is an extremely backward region. The brunt of this backwardness is borne most severely by the farmers of this area. Therefore, it is of utmost necessity to provide maximum facilities and resources to the farmers of my *Parliamentary Constituency* so that they may lead a dignified life and continue to produce energy and sustenance for all citizens of the country.

Our Government is committed to enhancing farmers' facilities and doubling their income. In such a situation, if a Mega Food Park is established under the scheme of the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries within my *Parliamentary Constituency*, it will help increase farmers' income, enable longer preservation of their produce, reduce their compulsion to sell foodgrains at throwaway prices due to lack of storage facilities, and also assist in preserving fruits, vegetables, fish and other produce for longer periods. In addition, the establishment of a Mega Food Park will

create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth in our rural areas.

I, therefore, request the Hon. Minister for Food Processing Industries to kindly establish a Mega Food Park in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Maharajganj, Bihar.

(iv) Regarding clearance to Jhalawar airport

[English]

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (JHALAWAR-BARAN): There is no airport connectivity to the Hadauti region. Jhalawar is the only district which has the capacity to land airplanes due to its airport infrastructure. But this airport has not got the clearance from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Therefore, I urge the Ministry to give the necessary permission in this regard. This will help tiger tourism and also help students from other parts of the country to reach Kota area. It will also help evacuation of any sick person.

Therefore, I urge the Ministry to give the necessary clearance.

(v) Need to set up a Passport Seva Kendra in Morbi district of Gujarat

[Translation]

SHRI VINOD LAKHAMSHI CHAVDA (KACHCHH): Sir, I request that passport services be started for the newly constituted Morbi district, which is included in the Kachchh region.

(vi) Need to extend train no. 64589 and train no. 64160 upto Etawah and Phaphund respectively

DR. RAM SHANKAR KATHERIA (ETAWAH): Due to the non-extension of services at various railway stations in my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* of Etawah, passengers are facing considerable difficulties in commuting. To address this problem, the local populace has been demanding for a long time that the station limits and train services be extended. EMU Intercity Train No. 64589 from Kanpur to Phaphund, which presently has its night halt at Phaphund, should be extended up to Etawah, so that it may operate from Etawah to Kanpur in the morning. Similarly, EMU Intercity Train No. 64160 from Agra to Etawah, which has its night halt at Etawah, should be extended up to Phaphund, with its halt at Phaphund Railway Station, so that it may operate from Phaphund to Agra in the morning. With the extension of these services, the people of my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* of Etawah will find it easier to travel to Agra for medical treatment and to Kanpur for business purposes. It will also facilitate government employees and the general public, making travel more convenient and commercially viable. At the same time, this will result in a significant increase in railway revenue.

(vii) Need to establish an Agriculture college in Abusar, Jhunjhunu district, Rajasthan

SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR (JHUNJHUNU): I propose that that there is a need to establish an Agricultural College be established at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Abusar, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan. In my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* of Jhunjhunu, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Abusar was established in the year 1992 under Swami Keshwanand Rajasthan Agricultural University, Bikaner. Under this centre, a total of 72 hectares of land is available. All essential basic facilities are already in place, including buildings, agricultural implements, tractors, tubewells, scientists from various disciplines, a seed production farm, a seed processing plant, horticulture and agricultural demonstration units, along with other necessary infrastructure. As a result, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, conferred the National Best KVK Award upon this centre in the year 2005–06. In view of these facts, I respectfully submit my request for the establishment of an Agricultural College at this Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

(viii) Need to shut down or shift coal dumping yard situated in Lohardaga district, Jharkhand

SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT (LOHARDAGA): I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the serious problems being faced by the local population due to the coal dumping yard operating in village Badkichampi, under the Kudu Police Station area of Lohardaga district in the State of Jharkhand.

In village Badkichampi, a coal dumping yard has been operating for the past one and a half to two years. Owing to the operations of this dumping yard, thousands of people from the surrounding villages are being adversely affected. Increasing pollution is causing damage to life and property, and the health of local residents is being severely impacted. Moreover, the movement of thousands of vehicles has led to frequent accidents in the area. Despite this large-scale operation, no employment opportunities are being generated for the local people. Furthermore, no adequate arrangements have been made by the dumping yard company to control pollution. Local residents have protested against this several times, but neither the company nor the administration has taken any cognisance of their concerns. The dumping yard continues to operate in violation of mining policy norms, playing with the lives

of local residents and causing them immense hardship. Therefore, in the interest of the public, I request that this coal dumping yard be closed down immediately or relocated elsewhere without delay.

(ix) Need to make Sariswa river in Bihar pollution free

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (PASCHIM CHAMPARAN): Under the Namami Gange Project, it is extremely necessary to include the Sariswa River, the lifeline of Raxaul, and make it pollution-free. The Sariswa River originates in Nepal, and due to the discharge of toxic and hazardous industrial waste into the river by factories located in Birgunj, Nepal, the water of the Sariswa River has turned black, poisonous, foul-smelling and life-threatening. Consumption of this polluted water has resulted in the death of animals and birds, and villagers residing along the riverbanks are suffering from serious illnesses. This river flows through Raxaul and joins the Sikrahna Budhi Gandak before ultimately merging with the Ganga. In order to ensure that the Ganga is kept clean and unpolluted, it is absolutely essential that the Sariswa River originating from Nepal, along with other such rivers, is also made pollution-free.

(x) Regarding water problem and drought situation in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

[English]

DR. SUJAY VIKHE PATIL (AHMEDNAGAR): A dry spell during monsoons has aggravated the ongoing water crisis in Maharashtra to calamitous proportions. As per data provided by Office of Nashik Divisional Commissioner, due to drought, water scarcity has affected more than 15 lakh people in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Ahmednagar. The occurrence of drought coupled with climate change has resulted in adverse impact on farmers who are under severe distress due to crop failure and residents of Ahmednagar are facing severe water crisis. There is an urgent need for the Government to announce a special financial assistance for Ahmednagar to tackle drought and promote water conservation techniques such as rainwater harvesting to replenish the existing groundwater table which has been depleting with the passage of time. I request the Government to take measures to solve the issue of drought and water crisis in Ahmednagar.

(xi) Need to construct railway line between Barwadih (Jharkhand) and Chirmiri (Chhattisgarh)

[Translation]

SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM (PALAMU): The proposal for a railway line between Barwadih in Jharkhand (Latehar district) and Chirmiri in present-day Chhattisgarh (Ambikapur district) dates back nearly nine decades to the British era. Some work on this project had commenced in the 1930s, but due to the outbreak of the Second World War, the proposal was shelved. The Union Government has approved the implementation of this 182-kilometre-long railway line and has also sanctioned Rs. 5 crore in the current financial year. Land acquisition and earthwork for this line have already been carried out. On the Chirmiri–Barwadih rail route, more than a dozen stations have been proposed between Ambikapur and Barwadih. These include, beyond Ambikapur, Parsa, Bariyon, Rajpur Road, Karra, Pasta, Jhalariya, Daldhowa and Sarnadih, and in Jharkhand, Badgadh, Nauki, Binda, Paro, Hutar and Barwadih. This railway line will be highly beneficial from a commercial perspective, as the entire region is rich in forests and mineral resources. With the construction of this rail line, the distance between Howrah and Mumbai via Ranchi, Tori and

Latehar will be reduced by approximately 200 kilometres. Last year, the Union Government had also signed an MoU with the Government of Chhattisgarh for this project. In the past, there have been disputes between the Union Government and the State Government regarding funding for this project. The Chirmiri–Barwadih railway line will be equally beneficial for both Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to kindly take immediate steps to commence work on this railway line project without further delay.

(xii) Regarding alleged dereliction of duties by officials of Electricity Department

SHRI DEVENDRA SINGH 'BHOLE' (AKBARPUR): I seek to draw the attention of the Government to accidents occurring due to the negligence of officials of the Electricity Department. I request that effective measures be taken to prevent such accidents and that strict action be initiated against the officials found guilty of negligence.

(xiii) Need to include Kol caste of Uttar Pradesh in the list of Scheduled Tribes

PROF. RITA BAHUGUNA JOSHI (ALLAHABAD): In the Census of 1931, the Kol caste was included along with the Kolaria caste and 11 other castes. Under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order Amendment of 2003, all the remaining castes were included in the Scheduled Tribes list, except the Kol caste. In Bundelkhand, Prayagraj, Mirzapur and Sonbhadra regions of Uttar Pradesh, lakhs of people belonging to the Kol community live in extremely miserable conditions. Many reside in temporary stone shelters, while several lead a nomadic life. This largely illiterate community works as labourers in silica sand and stone mines and suffers from life-threatening diseases such as tuberculosis and silicosis. The Uttar Pradesh Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Research and Training Institute conducted a survey and submitted a report stating that, from social, economic and religious perspectives, the Kol community is eligible to be included in the Scheduled Tribes category. Between 2002 and 2013, the Uttar Pradesh Government sent this proposal to the Union Government on five occasions, but for one reason or another, it was rejected each time. In 2014, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs returned the proposal,

stating that after four previous examinations, there was no need to reconsider the matter.

I request the Union Government to reconsider this issue and, like in other States, include the Kol community of Uttar Pradesh in the Scheduled Tribes category.

(xiv) Need to promote water-harvesting and solar energy system

SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM JARDOSH (SURAT): In the present times, urban development and urban problems go hand in hand. If I speak of my own city, it is evident that development and the challenges accompanying it are progressing simultaneously. The natural resources available to us, such as water and land, are the same as they were years ago. Groundwater levels are declining, while the proportion of people dependent on and settling upon limited land parcels is steadily increasing. Traffic is also growing rapidly in proportion to the population. In our city, almost every household has at least two two-wheelers, and perhaps every fifth household also owns a four-wheeler. As far as housing is concerned, I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister, as from his tenure as Chief Minister and through nearly 15 years of public service, followed by five years as Prime Minister, the dream of every family owning a house appears to be nearing fulfilment. After Surat was included under the Smart Cities Mission, the pace of development has accelerated significantly. However, my humble request is that a nationwide campaign be undertaken to ensure that all government and semi-government buildings, local bodies, institutions run on government grants, as well as schools, colleges and hospitals, are equipped with water

harvesting systems and solar power. The adoption of solar power in hospitals is particularly important to ensure uninterrupted services and to prevent mishaps during power outages. With regard to traffic-related issues, a strong campaign should be launched to promote public transport. Additionally, in schools and colleges, community education focusing on civic rights and civic responsibilities should be actively encouraged.

(xv) Need to set up a Kendriya Vidyalaya in Kheda *Parliamentary Constituency* of Gujarat

[English]

SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN (KHEDA): I wish to draw the attention of the Government towards the fact that there is no Kendriya Vidyalaya in my *Parliamentary Constituency* i.e. Kheda, Gujarat. I continuously followed it up with the Ministry, but till date no positive action or response has been received. I am facing a lot of problems as I have no option but to recommend admissions in Kendriya Vidyalayas near my constituencies. The needy and genuine people of my Constituency are not getting admissions due to far distance of Kendriya Vidyalayas from their place. If the Ministry is facing any difficulty in Gujarat in getting land or any other issue, then please share the same with me so that I could also request the State Government to provide the same and help accordingly. I am again requesting and urging the Government to open at least one Kendriya Vidalaya in my Kheda *Parliamentary Constituency*, Gujarat at the earliest.

(xvi) Need to make Hooghly river pollution-free

SHRIMATI LOCKET CHATTERJEE (HOOGHLY): Hooghly river is one of the main tributaries of Ganga in West Bengal that is being polluted day in day out. Ganga gets most polluted in West Bengal. My constituency is named after the Hooghly river and I feel sad as my constituency contributes a lot to this pollution. The main reason for pollution is the dumping of untreated sewage in the river. Around 20 canals dump their waste directly into the river. The holy river turns murky grey when it passes through the Dakshineshwar temple. Chandannaagar, a part of my constituency dumps most of its untreated sewage directly into the river. This is harming the aquatic life and also polluting the environment. The State Government is allowing the closed leather mills of Kanpur to open near the banks of the holy river that is polluting the river further. I would like to urge the Government to take proper and prompt corrective measures to ensure that Hooghly becomes pollution free.

(xvii) Need to establish a Railway station in Bhandara, Maharashtra

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL BABURAO MENDHE (BHANDARA-GONDIA): I would like to raise an issue relating to Bhandara Railway Station in my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Bhandara is a fairly old city, but the nearest railway station is located about 12 kilometres away from the city. Bhandara is a district headquarters with a population of over one lakh. A large number of traders, farmers and students reside there, and they face considerable inconvenience due to the lack of proper railway connectivity. Land for a broad-gauge track and a railway station in Bhandara was acquired nearly 30 years ago, yet in all these years, neither has a railway station been constructed nor have any trains been operated from there. I request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly ensure that at least a local train service is started and a railway station is constructed, so that a district headquarters like Bhandara may receive proper railway connectivity.

(xviii) Need to revise target of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) for Kerala

[English]

SHRI K. SUDHAKARAN (KANNUR): Kerala has lost very heavily in its due share under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana I and II. The state was sanctioned only 2624 Km in PMGSY and a meagre 570 Km under PMGSY II. For unknown reasons, this target was set significantly lower than its actual road length which is 52,000 Km calculated in the District Rural Road Plan (DRRP) and revised by the Government of Kerala. Now, in the phase III announced in 2019 Budget, the Centre had earlier informed the target will be conceived based on DRRP set for phase II and not on actual core network. This would only benefit those States which got higher target allocation in PMGSY. Considering the substantial loss in Kerala's share of PMGSY, I request the Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development to reallocate the target for Kerala, considering the wide rural network and less consumption of diesel in the State.

(xix) Construction of sea wall along the coastline of Kerala

ADV. ADOOR PRAKASH (ATTINGAL): Kerala has very long coastline and thousands of families living along the coast depend on fishing for their livelihood. The life and property of poor fisherfolk are always at risk during the monsoon. Houses are being washed away and people live in deep and constant fear. It is almost impossible to relocate them. There is around 40 kms of coastal area in my constituency and the problem occurs very often in villages like Anchuthengu and Edava. The only solution for sea erosion is construction of sea walls and Pulimuttu. But the coast is very high and the state alone cannot afford it. I request the Government to extend all possible assistance to the state of Kerala for completing the seawall along the entire length of its long coastline. I also request the newly formed Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries to provide financial assistance to fishermen during monsoon season.

(xx) Need to save Cordite Factory Aravankadu in Tamil Nadu by increasing its production target

SHRI A. RAJA (NILGIRIS): The production target for Cordite Factory Aravankadu (CFA) has been reduced to Rs. 132 crore for this current fiscal year as against the target of Rs. 275 crore for the last fiscal year. Thus Factory is not in a position to use its full production capacity. This has badly affected the normal life of 2000 employees including 362 women employees. This has also resulted in shutting down of many of the chemical plants and machineries. The Cordite Factory Aravankadu is manufacturing Double Base and Triple Base Propellant for the production of Bi-Modular Charge System and other propellants as per the indent received from our Armed Forces through Ordnance Factory Board, Kolkata. Presently, CFA is producing BMCS propellant 500T as against its capacity of 1000T. These propellants are sent to Ordnance Factory Nalanda, Bihar for assembling the modules. Ordnance Factory at Nalanda is having capacity of making 2 lakh modules per year whereas Army requirement is about 7 lakh modules per year. Before the commencement of Nalanda Factory, CFA itself was assembling the modules because CFA has the capacity to meet the target of Army. Moreover, presently Armed Forces are importing BMCS from foreign countries which is increasing import bill for

Defence purposes. This goes contrary to ‘Make in India’ motto. I, therefore, urge upon the Government of India to kindly allow CFA to start the BMCS Module Filling which costs half the price of imported price and also meet the quantity requirement of our armed forces.

(xxi) Regarding upgrading Rajahmundry Airport to International Airport

SHRI MARGANI BHARAT (RAJAHMUNDRY): The Rajahmundry airport is a domestic airport located at a distance of 16 km north of Rajahmundry in the Madhurapudi area in Andhra Pradesh. Besides the commercial low cost flights to Hyderabad, the air strip is also extensively used by the helicopters of ONGC and other Government agencies for its offshore oil exploration operations.

Sprawling on an area of 366 acres of land, the airport at Rajahmundry has been operational since the British period. It was served by Vayudoot between 1985 and 1994 and by VIF Airways in 1995. The new terminal at the Rajahmundry airport was inaugurated on 16th May, 2012 and AAI plans to extend the existing runway from 1,749 metres to 3,125 metres in order to enable landing of aircraft like Airbus A320. Limited by runway length, presently airlines operate smaller 70 seat ATR turbo-prop aircraft and Bombardier from Rajahmundry. Rajahmundry is a hub to Godavari district which has a population of nearly one crore. Therefore, A.P. State Government proposed International Cricket Stadium in Rajahmundry. The nearest international airport

connecting Rajahmundry to the rest of the world is the Vishakhapatnam airport, which is 200 km away. There is one terminal at the Rajahmundry airport which has the capacity of holding 150 passengers during peak hours. There is only one gate at the terminal serving both arriving as well as departing passengers. Proposals for the expansion of this airport are under progress and I understand that the Government has sanctioned about Rs. 80 crore for its expansion.

I request the Government to upgrade it to international airport as lakhs of people from West Godavari and East Godavari are working in the Gulf countries so that they could travel to Rajahmundry directly from the Gulf and other countries too.

(xxii) Regarding safety and security of women in Delhi

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH): When it comes to women safety, Delhi is the most dangerous city. If the capital of India is not safe even during daytime, then it is unfortunate. Rape cases have become very common in the National Capital. Roads are not safe. I urge the Government to formulate an effective policy for safety and security of women in Delhi.

(xxiii) Regarding promoting generic medicines in the country

[Translation]

SHRI KRUPAL BALAJI TUMANE (RAMTEK): Even today, a large section of the population in our country lives below the poverty line and within the middle class. When a person falls ill, the biggest concern is the expenditure involved in treatment. Significant expenses are incurred on treatment and medicines, and medicines are often costly. Generic medicines are affordable, and the quality of branded medicines and generic medicines is essentially the same. Since these medicines are approved by the FDA, they are now being sold in pharmacies. Therefore, there is a need to open as many generic medicine outlets as possible across the country.

I request the Hon. Minister to ensure that more and more generic medicine shops are opened nationwide and that doctors are directed to prescribe generic medicines to patients. Further, a mechanism should also be put in place to ensure whether doctors are prescribing generic medicines to patients or not. This will greatly benefit people living below the poverty line as well as the middle class in the country.

(xxiv) Need to accord special category status to Bihar

SHRI MAHABALI SINGH (KARAKAT): The demand to grant Special Category Status to Bihar has been raised for a long time. This demand has been placed at every level, but it has not been fulfilled so far. There is a severe lack of industries in Bihar. A large population of Bihar is compelled to migrate outside the State every day in search of livelihood and employment. In such a situation, if Bihar is granted Special Category Status, large-scale industries will be established and employment opportunities will be created for the people.

This issue is directly linked to the fundamental livelihood of the people. Therefore, Bihar should be granted Special Category Status.

(xxv) Need to amend rules of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) fund

[English]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Frequent death of elephants due to electrocution (both deliberate and accidental) have been reported in Elephant Movement Areas across the State of Odisha despite the fact that the Energy Department, Government of Odisha has taken various initiatives in three phases from its own budget to prevent such deaths of elephants. Further, the Department of Energy has requested the Department of Forest and Environment, Government of Odisha to fund the Phase- IV of such initiatives to strengthen electrical infrastructure in Elephant Movement Areas across the State. But, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has expressed its inability to fund the said initiatives unless the rules for CAMPA Fund are amended suitably. I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to amend the rules for CAMPA fund to enable the Department of Forest and Environment, Government of Odisha to fund the Phase-lV initiatives of Department of Energy, Government of Odisha taken to prevent deaths of elephants from electrocution across the State.

(xxvi) Regarding adequate compensation to land oustees

SHRI RITESH PANDEY (AMBEDKAR NAGAR): According to Central Housing Policies, rehabilitation prior to eviction is necessary for land acquisition by the State.

However, in Tanda, Ambedkarnagar, people have been evicted three times without being rehabilitated. The issue is that even if the Government is paying them the required compensation, people are unable to acquire land and house because of the meagre compensation of Rs. nine lakhs paid to them.

In the quest for development, we as a nation, are creating homeless people and despair. This is not just an urgent matter because of the lives and livelihoods of millions across the nation who have fallen victims to the mandatory land acquisition by the State. The matter questions the almost existence of the State. Whom does it serve? To whom does its law apply? Will it ever submit the status quo and serve it people?

(xxvii) Regarding approval to Industrial Corridors in Telangana

DR. G. RANJITH REDDY (CHEVELLA): Industrial growth shapes up the overall economic health of any State which, in turn, helps the State to take up social sector schemes and programmes to ultimately achieve the objective of holistic development of the State. So, dedicated industrial corridors are set up so as to attract and promote industries in a particular area or corridor.

With this objective, Telangana Government proposed to create Hyderabad-Nagpur Industrial Corridor and submitted DPR. Commerce Ministry gave approval for Hyderabad-Nagpur and Hyderabad-Warangal Industrial Corridors in 2016. But, since then, Commerce Ministry has not taken projects forward to get the final approval of the Cabinet. The proposed Corridors will accommodate oil refining, textiles, handlooms, handicrafts, paper units, mining, engineering, livestock, agro-based industries, poultry and other small and medium enterprises. The identified segments have the potential to generate employment opportunities to lakhs of people and also push economic activity in and around the Corridor. The advantage of these Corridors is the presence of several professional colleges and other educational institutions which help to churn out

manpower. Secondly, the Corridors are all the more important because they boost the economic activity in Ranga Reddy, Nizamabad, Nalgonda, Warangal, Medak and Adilabad districts.

Hence, I request Minister of Commerce and Industry to immediately prepare a Cabinet Note on this, get the approval of the Union Cabinet and complete it in a fixed time-frame.

(xxviii) Need to set up an Airport in Vaishali, Bihar

SHRIMATI VEENA DEVI (VAISHALI): Vaishali, the birthplace of Lord Mahavira, the progenitor of democracy, and the land of action of Lord Buddha, is a place of great historical and spiritual pride. Buddhist followers from across the world frequently visit Vaishali. However, there is no adequate air connectivity available to reach Vaishali. Even the neighbouring *Parliamentary Constituency* of Muzaffarpur does not have an airport. As a result, visitors are compelled to undertake a long and tiring journey by road from Patna. Vaishali is a highly significant destination from the tourism perspective, and tourists from all over the world visit this place throughout the year.

Therefore, I urge the Government to kindly take steps to construct an airport at Vaishali.

(xxix) Regarding night landing facilities at Lashadweep airport

[English]

SHRI MOHAMMED FAIZAL P.P. (LAKSHADWEEP): Lakshadweep is a major international tourist destination but still doctors refuse to serve in the union territory's health sector. And due to this so many patients during their critical stages are shifted from Lakshadweep to other hospitals in the country. Presently there are no night landing facilities available for helicopters or planes in Lakshadweep. Due to this there is always delay for timely evacuation of patients.

No aircraft is permitted to land at night at an airport which does not have night landing facility and the flight operations.

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[Translation]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Hon. Speaker Sir, the point is that in this very House, a few days ago, our Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh ji, while replying to a question raised by me, had assured the House on the issue I had highlighted that tax is being imposed on the pensions of our disabled soldiers. He had stated that keeping this matter in mind, appropriate steps would be taken the very next day. However, even today, the Hon. Defence Minister has not come to this House to say anything on this matter.

Sir, our armed forces defend India by taking great risks and protect all of us. When these soldiers become disabled or incapacitated, it is essential to provide them with due facilities. ... *(Interruptions)* This is our duty. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, the Hon. Defence Minister is attending Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Hon. Speaker Sir, the exemption that used to be given in pension to our disabled soldiers should be maintained. The Hon. Defence Minister had assured the House on this issue, yet no solution has emerged till date.

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Sir, in the Parliament, some questions are normally allowed to be raised on the floor of the House with mild variations again and again. But ten advisories have been sent to the Government of West Bengal by the Government of India in ten days. This is hurting the parliamentary democratic system. Sir, why is the Government of West Bengal being targeted? That is our question. If any Member asks any question, that is sent to the State Government. In the last ten days, ten advisories have been sent by the Government of India to the Government of West Bengal. It is butchering the parliamentary democratic process. Why is the Government of West Bengal being targeted in such a manner? …*(Interruptions)* Sir, we will not allow it. We strongly protest against it.

Sir, I would draw your attention that you must take care of it and the questions should not be allowed to be repeated again and again in this manner. …*(Interruptions)* The Government should be careful about sending advisories to the State Government. The Government should restrain itself. …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI T. R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Sir, even to conduct the all-India examinations like IAS, IFS, the Government of India had released a notification on 5th March, 2013, during the Government of Dr. Manmohan Singh that the candidates can write all-India examinations in Hindi, in English or in any of the 22

languages as established in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. …*(Interruptions)* Sir, I have to plead my case. But to my surprise and shock, the day before yesterday, the Postal Department has conducted the examination for C & D employees at Chennai, Madurai, Coimbatore and Trichy to select 986 candidates, only in English and Hindi, but not in any regional language. The regional aspirations have not been taken into account by this Government. How can it be so?

Sir, the Government's notification is there. In spite of it, this Government has ignored the aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Item No. 17. We shall now take up the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Thank you very much Speaker Sir. On Friday, Hon. Speaker was not in the Chair. I had raised a very serious matter regarding procedure, that is, Rule 220 and Rule 221 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. When a financial business is being listed in the List of Business, it is the bounden duty of the House to transact

the financial business first. Then only, the legislative business shall be taken up. Rule 220 is very specific about the introduction of the Bill. That is why these two Bills, namely, Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill and Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill have been introduced. Introduction of the Bill is permitted as per Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure.

As per Rule 221 of the Rules of Procedure, it is very clear that it is the bounden duty of the House to first transact and complete the financial business, and then only, the Bill can be taken up. So, I am seeking a direction from the Hon. Speaker. Let the convention of the House, let the procedure of the House, let the rules of the House be complied with. I am seeking a ruling or a direction from the Hon. Chair. With these words, I conclude.

Thank you very much, Sir.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Now everyone has begun to recognise you as a Professor.

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Sir, I am doing a professorial job now. I am teaching parliamentary procedure to the Members of the ruling party. Sir, Rule 220 states that:

> "Notwithstanding that a day has been allotted for financial business under rules 207, 208, 218 or 219, a motion or motions for leave to introduce a Bill or Bills may be made and a Bill or Bills may be introduced on such day before the House enters on the business for which the day has been allotted".

Secondly, Rule 221 states:

> "In addition to the powers exercisable under these rules, the Speaker may exercise all such powers as are necessary for the purpose of…."

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: This is a similar subject.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Don't be cruel, Sir. Let me complete,

"The speaker may exercise such powers as are necessary for the purpose of the timely completion of all financial business..."

In the history of Parliament, not once during the discussion on financial business, a Bill has been allowed to be discussed. Only once, a debate under Rule 193 was allowed while financial business was going on. So, the Government is surreptitiously bringing in a Bill in the midst of financial business. Today, the discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for 2019-20 was included in the List of Business. The Hon. Minister has to state why suddenly the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill is being brought. This is totally irregular, illegal and violative of Parliamentary procedures and rules. Please don't allow the discussion on this Bill even if the Home Minister is present.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Hon. Speaker Sir, I have listened to Shri Premachandran ji and Professor Sougata Ray ji. They are referring to Rules 220 and 221. We also

need to look at Article 118 of the Constitution. The House is supreme in this matter, and these issues were also discussed in the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee under your Chairpersonship. I would like to submit that while there are Rules, Rule 221 specifically mentions the timely completion of financial business. Timely completion means that we will issue the Bulletin on the 17th. When the business is completed in a timely manner and if, in the meantime, any important Bill comes up, we are taking it up with your permission. The Government requests you to kindly allow this.

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Sir, there is no need to go into the Constitution. Rule 389 clearly states that—

[English]

"All matters not specifically provided for in these rules and all questions relating to the detailed working of these rules shall be regulated in such manner as the Speaker may, from time to time, direct."

[Translation]

If this is the direction of the Speaker, then there is no question of any further discussion. The Speaker has given this direction. Just now, Shri Meghwal has stated that it will be completed by the 17th.

The matter is concluded. There is no point in continuing any discussion on this.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please take your seat.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: Shri Nishikant Dubey has rightly suggested that it is the discretion of the Speaker and that Rule 389 can be taken into account and used. But the problem is that it is the convention of the House that legislative business will have importance only after the financial business has been transacted. Hon. Speaker, Sir, it is up to you to decide whether the financial business or legislative business is more important as far as this Government is concerned.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have heard all your points. I have always endeavoured to give adequate time to all Hon. Members, whether it was for the Finance Bill or the Demands. When the Railway Demands were taken up, I gave you sufficient time, and on that day the House functioned until 12 midnight. Today also, there is a discussion on Road Transport, and I will give you adequate time. There will be no curtailment of your time. The House will continue the discussion for as long as it wishes to sit.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir, the issue is one of procedure.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, just as the Finance Bill is important, there are several other important Bills as well. Therefore, Rule 220 clearly does not state anywhere that no Bill can be taken up in between the consideration of the Finance Bill. Accordingly, I am giving my ruling today that this Bill has been included in the List of Business. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to initiate the discussion on this Bill.

12.35 hrs

NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2019

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY): Sir, on behalf of Shri Amit Shah, I beg to move:

> "That the Bill further to amend the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, be taken into consideration."

[Translation]

Hon. Speaker Sir, terrorism is a matter of grave concern. It is not only a threat to India, but a dangerous challenge for the entire world. In our country, even eminent personalities such as the Prime Minister, former Prime Ministers and Chief Ministers have fallen victim to terrorism. Therefore, in order to strengthen investigation and prosecution relating to terrorism in the country, the NIA Bill was brought in the year 2008. Our Government is committed to reinforcing the intelligence setup, checking infiltration, building the capacity of special police forces in the States, constituting National Security Guard hubs, and strengthening the NIA for investigating terrorism-related issues.

Hon. Speaker Sir, in the year 2008, the NIA Bill was introduced in this very Parliament, and in 2009 the functioning of the National Investigation Agency commenced. Today, terrorists are attempting to attack our country in different ways, and indeed, they seek to strike across the world. It is for this reason that we seek to further strengthen the National Investigation Agency. Different countries have different investigation agencies. Earlier, matters relating to investigation and prosecution of terrorism rested with the State Governments. However, terrorism is no longer confined to a single State, a single district or a single location. Terrorism has become an inter-State issue and, indeed, an international issue. People from different countries are coming to India and to other parts of the world with the intent of promoting terrorist activities. Therefore, we want to make this NIA Act more powerful and more robust. For this purpose, we propose to make amendments to certain sections of the Act. We want to empower the National Investigation Agency with extra-territorial jurisdiction for the investigation of terrorist offences that take place outside India.

Hon. Speaker, our embassies are present in every country, and lakhs of NRIs reside across the world. At times, terrorist activities target our NRIs, our embassies, our properties and even our flights. In such situations, our investigation agencies are currently not empowered to go to any country in the world and conduct

investigations. Therefore, we seek to confer this authority upon the National Investigation Agency, so that if terrorist activities are carried out anywhere against India's property or India's citizens, the NIA can go to those countries and conduct investigations. Hence, through you, Hon. Speaker Sir, I place this Amendment Bill before Parliament.

Hon. Speaker Sir, secondly, there is the constitution of Special Courts. As Hon. Members are aware, after the establishment of the National Investigation Agency, the country has witnessed positive results. The NIA has been doing commendable work. As one of the best organisations, the NIA has earned recognition across the world as well. After its establishment, the headquarters of the NIA is located in Delhi, and it has eight branches across the country, namely at Jammu, Lucknow, Kolkata, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Raipur, Mumbai and Kochi. So far, approximately 272 cases have been registered by the NIA, out of which judgments have been delivered in 51 cases. Convictions have been secured in 46 of these cases. In nearly 90 Percent of the cases handled by the NIA, terrorists have been convicted. Hon. Members are also aware that the NIA handled a major case involving Yasin Bhatkal, a senior operative of the Indian Mujahideen, in which capital punishment was awarded.

Punishment has also been awarded in cases such as the bomb blasts that took place at Dilsukhnagar in Hyderabad, in front of the Secretariat, and at Bodh Gaya. For this very reason, we want to make the NIA even more powerful. There is a provision for the appointment of judges for Special Courts. Why is this necessary? If these cases go to regular courts, their disposal takes years. Therefore, there is a provision for Special Courts under the NIA. At times, a judge gets promoted, sometimes a judge retires, and sometimes a judge is transferred. For the appointment of a new judge, we have to write to the Chief Justice of the High Court. After receiving the recommendations, a notification has to be issued, and only thereafter is the judge appointed. This entire process takes about two to three months. If a Special Court judge is transferred or promoted, another three to four months are lost. We would like to clarify that special judges of the NIA court will continue to be appointed by the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned. Only the process is being simplified to avoid delay as our Government wants to ensure that terrorists get punished quickly as per law. We want them to be punished expeditiously through the courts. Therefore, the Special Court judges will be appointed by the Chief Justice. A court is a continuous process. A court is a continuing process. That is why we are proposing designated Special Courts. Since the appointment of Special Judges will continue to be done

by the Chief Justice, I would like to place this clarification before you and before Parliament.

Hon. Speaker Sir, we also want the State Governments to constitute Special Courts for matters relating to terrorism. We intend to extend this facility to the State Governments as well. Along with this, we also seek to bring offences relating to explosives within the purview of the NIA. Under the Explosive Substances Act, 1908, the cases that the NIA investigates and which we propose to designate can be dealt with under this framework itself. Today, explosives are being used in different parts of the country. The NIA should also have information in this regard. It should know who the people are who are illegally transferring explosives and explosive materials. All this must be within the knowledge of the NIA. With this objective, we want to confer full authority upon the NIA under the Explosive Substances Act. Wherever explosives or explosive materials are seized in the country, we are empowering the NIA to investigate and ascertain all related aspects.

Hon. Speaker Sir, today the United Nations has highlighted three major issues: arms trafficking, drug trafficking and human trafficking. At present, human trafficking has become a very serious problem, not only across the world but also in India. Therefore, human trafficking is not an issue confined to a single State. It

involves people connected with Bangladesh, Nepal and different States within the country. Today, human trafficking is a major challenge before the nation. Even in such cases, punishment is often not being ensured in an effective manner. For this reason, we want to entrust this responsibility to a centralised investigation agency, and we propose to assign this responsibility to the National Investigation Agency. Accordingly, we are empowering the NIA to deal with matters relating to human trafficking. Through you, Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to place this amendment before Parliament.

Hon. Speaker Sir, with regard to the Arms Act, prohibited arms are being found in different parts of the country. In such cases as well, through the NIA Act, we want to empower the NIA to carry out investigations. Wherever prohibited arms are found and in whosever possession they may be, we want to authorise the NIA to investigate such cases.

Hon. Speaker Sir, today cyber terrorism has emerged as a serious challenge. The problem of cyber terrorism is not only before our country, but before the entire world. Instances of cyber terrorism have been observed in Uttar Pradesh and Kerala as well. The Government has taken note of this issue. Under cyber terrorism, individuals can sit in one place and communicate with foreign elements from within the same house. Therefore, we want

to empower the National Investigation Agency to deal with cyber terrorism as well. For this reason, through you, Hon. Speaker Sir, we wish to place this matter before Parliament.

Hon. Speaker, on the issue of terrorism, our Government has already made it clear, through the Hon. Home Minister and the Hon. Prime Minister, that we want to fight terrorism with a policy of zero tolerance. Therefore, through you, I would like to request and humbly appeal to all Hon. Members of Parliament to approve this Bill. We are bringing this NIA Bill in the interest of the nation and for the defence of the country. Hence, I earnestly request all of you to pass this Bill.

HON. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

> "That the Bill further to amend the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, be taken into consideration."

[English]

SHRI MANISH TEWARI (ANANDPUR SAHIB): Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your kind permission, I rise to speak on the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

Whenever such a legislation is brought before the House, it gives us an opportunity to re-visit the fundamental principles of jurisprudence and governance. I would like to broaden the ambit of this discussion slightly and most respectfully point out that if we were to take into consideration, how eight billion people on planet earth are governed, it can primarily be divided into five categories. One is democracy, second is dictatorship, third is monarchy, fourth is military rule, and fifth is tribalism or tribal customs and conventions.

When you talk of a democracy, what lies at the heart of a democracy? At the heart of democracy lies an inherent tension between civil liberties and the security of the State. Based upon our colonial experience, when our founding fathers sat out to draft the Constitution of India, they inserted into the Constitution, three articles which are called the holy trinity of fundamental rights. They are article 14, article 19 and article 21. These three articles which are justiciable through the process of writ jurisdiction provide the guarantee to a citizen that in case the State commits an excess or

the State transgresses beyond law, they can access the judicial system through the process of writ jurisdiction which is provided.

The founders of the Indian Constitution gave primacy to civil liberties and the reason why they gave primacy to civil liberties is not because they were negligent or non-cognizant of the challenges which were there to the security of the State, but given the fact that we had emerged from colonial rule, there was a whole architecture and entire panoply of laws which had been put in place by an exploitative colonial State in order to keep the people of India and the citizens of India suppressed.

The reason why I am pointing out some of these fundamental facets is primarily because the founding fathers also emphasized that a democracy must be run by the rule of law. In terms of criminal jurisprudence what does rule of law translate into? The rule of law translates into three things.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member - Tiwari ji, Hon. Member Tiwari ji, I stop you for a moment.

Hon. Members, please do not engage in conversations. I once again appeal to all Hon. Members that if we are to maintain the dignity of this House, then at the very least, those who wish to talk

should go to the lobby outside. There should be no conversations inside the House.

[English]

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was submitting that the founding fathers of our Constitution emphasised on the primacy of Rule of Law in terms of running a democracy. What does Rule of Law translates into when you talk about criminal jurisprudence? It translates into three things. First of all, every person, not only a citizen, every person should have the right to be able to freely access the criminal justice system. Secondly, that the investigation that is carried out is free, fair and impartial and thirdly, the judicial adjudication which takes place is objective, is unbiased, is transparent and delivers justice. These are the three facets of what constitutes Rule of Law. Over and above that there is an over-arching maxim which goes across the entire structure of criminal jurisprudence that you are innocent; you are innocent until proven guilty – [Translation] that you are innocent until your guilt is proven. This is a fundamental principle of the Constitution of India and of India's criminal law.

[English]

Now, herein lies the problem. When there is a perception that investigative agencies are being misused and abused for the

purposes of political vendetta, then there is consternation; there is alarm and there is anxiety. When any Bill, maybe, for legitimate purposes, is brought before this House in order to give additional powers to any investigative agency, therein lies the fundamental problem with any such Bill which seeks to empower any such investigative agency further.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to point out that despite the Vineet Narain judgement which came in 1997, it has been 22 years since then, the separation between investigation and prosecution has not taken place. Therefore, investigation becomes a handmaiden of the Government in power, prosecution becomes a command driven performance and therefore the justice which should be meted out to a citizen gets denied. Here I am not trying to talk about one Government or the other. I am making a responsible generic comment on the state of our criminal justice system. Therefore, it is very important that when the Government brings such amendment Bills, it must provide that there has to be a separation between investigation and prosecution and prosecutors should have the authority and the autonomy to independently come to a conclusion whether an offence is prosecutable in court and whether that investigation will stand up in court.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was about to say Your Lordship, …*(Interruptions)* the third problem is media leaks. The

investigation process because of inspired media leaks which emanate out of investigative agencies have stood the entire system on its head. Today, unfortunately the maxim has been turned around – you are guilty until you prove yourself innocent and that in my respectful submission is something which is extremely dangerous for our democracy.

Now, let me come to the provisions of the National Investigative Agency Bill after having made some of these generic fundamental points. The NIA Bill in 2008 came under very specific circumstances. The country had faced an unprecedented challenge of terrorism and therefore it was felt that there should be a National Investigative Agency which should be tasked with the responsibility of investigating certain specific and limited crimes so that speedy investigation and prosecution can take place. When the NIA Bill was enacted, it drew legislative competence or legislative powers from Entry 8, List 1 of the Seventh Schedule of article 246 of the Constitution of India. But there is an inherent contradiction because Entry 8 of List I of the Seventh Schedule is in conflict with Entry 1 and 2 of the State List which gives the powers of public order and police to the State Government.

Here, I would like to draw the attention of the Treasury Benches and specifically the Hon. Home Minister to what I am going to say. The constitutional validity of the National Investigative Agency Act

is not a settled question so far. It was challenged in 2013 by Sadhvi Pragya Thakur who is an Hon. Member of this House now. A Division Bench of the Mumbai High Court upheld the constitutional validity of the NIA Act. For some reason, they did not pursue that challenge in the Supreme Court but, as we currently speak, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court is seized of the constitutional validity of the National Investigative Agency Act and it is not limited whether the NIA can function in Jammu and Kashmir. The *vires* and the constitutionality of the entire Act is under challenge. The reason why I say that the question of the constitutional validity of the NIA Act has not been settled is because, in November, 2013, a Division Bench of the Guwahati High Court held that the Central Bureau of Investigation is an unlawful organisation and it is an illegal organisation. I remember that, when I was a Member of this House in 2009, I had raised the question of illegality and validity of the Central Bureau of Investigation. I had moved a Private Member's Bill in 2010 to give a proper legal architecture to the Central Bureau of Investigation and in 2013, my apprehensions came true when the CBI was held by a Division Bench of the Guwahati High Court to be an illegal organisation.

Now the Government will argue that that judgement has been stayed by the Supreme Court. Yes, I also know that it has been

stayed by the Supreme Court but, a stay only stops the operation of the judgement. It does not take away the foundation of the judgement.

Here, I would like to pose a very fundamental question. Tomorrow, if the Supreme Court of India upholds the judgement of the Guwahati High Court, then every prosecution which has taken place since 1963 by the CBI will be thrown out of the window and the Government of India will open itself up to claims of thousands of billions of dollars. The law of torts in India is not so developed. Otherwise, the Government will have to face claims of hundreds of millions of dollars. I am surprised that for six years, the NDA Government has chosen not to pursue it with the Supreme Court that the constitutional validity of the Central Bureau of Investigation should be settled and adjudicated, whether it is an unlawful organisation, whether it was lawfully constituted and what is the status of the Central Bureau of Investigation. That is why I am saying that if the validity of an organisation which was founded on 1st April, 1963 could be quashed in the November, 2013, the constitutional challenge to the validity of the National Investigative Act still continues to be an open question.

Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission, I will take five more minutes as this is an important discussion. I will come to the Amendment Bill which the Government has brought forward.

Basically, the Amendment Bill sets out to do three things. Firstly, it sets out to give extra territorial jurisdiction to the NIA. I do not think anybody should have a problem with that because that is *pari passu* with Section 3 of the Indian Penal Code whereby police forces have extra territorial jurisdiction and the Indian Penal Code goes back to the 19th century. So, I do not think that anybody should have a difficulty with the extra territorial jurisdiction which has been given to it. …*(Interruptions)* My colleague will make her own points.

The real problem is with designating Sessions Courts as Special Courts. Sir, when the NIA Act was brought, as I pointed out earlier, it was brought for a very specific purpose.

Sir, I will just take five more minutes. This is an important fundamental discussion which goes into the genesis of criminal jurisprudence. Please bear with me because if some parts of what I am saying or attempting to say gets registered with the Government, I think, we will be a better democracy.

13.00 hrs

That is why, I am submitting to you to please give me some time.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, when it comes to Special Courts, as I was saying the NIA was constituted with a specific remit, a very limited, focussed and narrow remit. There was a provision that

Special Courts would be constituted, and there were safeguards which were built into that particular sub-section, like sub-section 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, of that relevant provision which deals with Special Courts so that the offences, which are of a very grave and heinous nature, are tried by Special Courts constituted for that purpose. When you start designating Sessions Courts as special courts, in fact, what you are doing is that you are not strengthening this Act; you are diluting this Act because you are turning this special Act into any other kind of an Act or turning the investigating agency into any other kind of a police force. Sir, it is my last point. I think, that provision of Special Courts was very carefully considered, and that is why, it was engrafted into the Act for special purposes. So, I would urge the Hon. Home Minister not to dilute that provision.

My final point is this. Now, the Amendment Bill puts Section 66F of the Information Technology Act into the Schedule listing offences. Section 66F deals with cyber terrorism. My submission is that we do not have a Data Protection Act or the definition of terrorism. Even in the UAPA, Section 15 defines the 'terrorist act' only and it does not define 'terrorism'. Even till today, there is no laid procedure that at what point of time does an act of violence actually become a terrorist act. How do you designate an act of violence as a terrorist act? These are very fundamental legal questions which need to be gone into. Therefore, in conclusion, I

would say, if you read the NIA (Amendment) Bill in conjunction with the UAPA Amendment Bill, in conjunction with the Biotechnology Bill, in conjunction with the Aadhaar Amendment Bill, you are seeking to turn this country into a Police State. The repercussions of that are going to last far beyond your tenure. This is what I want to tell the Treasury Benches. Thank you very much for bearing with me and giving me time.

SHRI A. RAJA (NILGIRIS): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to comment upon the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019. I will not take much of your time.

Sir, the amendment proposed by the Government in the National Investigation Agency Act is to enlarge the ambit and scope further on the grounds that the applicability of the law is beyond the Indian territory. This is number one. The second one is regarding the power of the Investigating Officer, which can be exercised beyond India. The third one is regarding the power to register the case here. If at all the offence is committed in the foreign country, the case can be registered here, apart from the constitution of the designated courts.

Sir, much has been spoken by my learned brother about the constitutional validity and the legal apprehensions enunciated under this Bill. I must be very specific, confined to the points. I was the Minister and the Member of Parliament when the original legislation came into existence, where the then Hon. Home Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram spoke and gave all answers to the apprehensions expressed by the Hon. Members in this House and also the other House. If my memory is correct, he was very categorical. He prayed in this House to pass these legislations to give a sense of confidence to the people that the criminals would be punished. This is number one; Number two, to give a sense of

confidence to the police force that they would be armed with legal powers to deal with offenders; Number three, to give the confidence to the prosecutors so that they would be able to prove the offence within a stipulated time. So, in order to give these three confidences, in spite of the apprehensions expressed in both the Houses by the Left Parties, the then Hon. Home Minister requested them to sail with him and enact the Act. These confidences must be ensured.

After 10 years of experience, I want to know from the Hon. Minister whether such a confidence has been created in the people, in the police force and in the prosecution. I sincerely and positively believe that the exercise that has been done by the Government was to expand the ambit and scope of the Act.

When the original Bill was passed in the other House and in this House, apprehensions were expressed that a proper study was not conducted; there was no comprehensive analysis of the issues; and no review of existing legislations and capabilities was taken into consideration while passing the original Bill. I want to know whether such an exercise has been done in the past 10 years to say that the amendments are essentially needed to fulfil the aspirations of the Government.

Sir, when the original Bill was taken up for discussion, there was a hue and cry that the Bill should not be looked through the

communal prism. This country is a secular country. The opening sentences of the Preamble say:

> "WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC"

All criminal laws must be secular, except the civil law and the personal law with regard to marriage, adoption etc. So, the apprehension which was expressed at the time of enactment of the Bill was that this Bill should not be looked through the communal prism. I want to know from the Hon. Minister, how many cases were filed; how many persons were convicted; and how many people were of a particular community or particular religion in order to avoid the clouds, since there is an apprehension because of the change in political entity in this House. The Act was enacted during the period of UPA. The Minister gave categorical assurances that it will not be used against Muslims or any minorities or any religion. Now, the political entity has changed. I am not accusing you. But it is the duty of the Government to remove such a cloud that they will not look at it through the communal prism.

I want to raise one more point and it is very important. Our Constitution says India i.e. Bharat; it is not India that is Hindustan. If it is Hindustan, if you want to call it Bharat i.e. Hindustan, then

the entire country will be distracted, the federalism structure will go away and the peace and harmony will not be there. I want to be specific with the Government. By amending this law, more and more powers will be with the police, more and more powers will be with investigating agencies and more and more powers will be with the prosecution. If these types of widening of powers is enacted in a good sense, we will be supporting you. On the other hand, if the powers which have been enhanced, its ambit and scope is enlarged, to punish a particular community or a particular religion, if such an apprehension is prevailing in the country, if it is prevailing in the House, that should be removed by the Government.

It was well said by Manish that the fundamental principle of criminal law is that each and everybody is innocent before the court of law or before the investigating agencies until and unless the guilt is proved. I have had the bad experience in the 2G case. I was prosecuted and I waited for seven years. I personally deposed evidences. CBI used to cross-examine me for 15 days. Thereafter, the court said that Raja was not only innocent, but also what was done by Raja was correct under the law. Out of my own experience, I am telling you that law should not be misused. We repealed POTA. We repealed TADA. Why? We admitted in the House that these two laws were misused. After getting the rich experience, we made an open and deliberate admission before the House that the

POTA and TADA were misused. But what about those persons who were punished under these Acts? How are we going to compensate them? Even I have asked for personal liberty for 15 months. Having served as Cabinet Minister, having served as 5th term MP, I lost my 15 months liberty which is ensured by the Constitution. So, Sir, I have an apprehension …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (SARAN): You are correct, Mr. Owaisi. It was done under the UPA …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Whoever it may be; law is law.

My next point is also very important. After the destruction of twin-towers in USA on 9/11, the United States enacted a series of laws. The entire world including India applauded it. We appreciated it. The laws were amended in the USA Parliament. But one important and basic difference is there. Those Acts, which were legislated in the USA were against aliens and not the citizens of their own country, but we are enacting a law for our own domestic people, those who are Muslims or Christians or Minorities.

Sir, the Government must keep this in mind while the prosecuting agency is exercising the power.

I am on my last point, now. There was a hue and cry in the other House when the Bill was being passed. The Bill itself says that in order to address the Left-Wing Extremism, this Act came into

existence. Then, a question was legitimately asked in that House: “What about the Right-Wing Terrorism?” The same question is still pending. What about writers like Kalburgi? Kalburgi was killed. Gauri Lankesh was killed. Dabholkar was killed. These were all cases of Right-Wing Terrorism. So, in order to address the Right-Wing Terrorism also, the Government must bring a law, or this law has to be further amended to curb the Right-Wing Terrorism.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you, Sir.

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH (BAGHPAT): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I must thank you for giving this opportunity to speak on this very important Bill. I am also thankful to my party for giving me this time.

At the outset, I would like to say that in my earlier career, I was a police officer.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): You were a Police Commissioner and not a police officer.

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH: I was a Police Commissioner also, Sir.

I would like to say that unfortunately on many occasions, fighting terrorists and countering terrorism in this country was made political. We enacted the law many a time. First it was TADA. Then, TADA was repealed and POTA came in. Then, POTA was also repeated and UAPA came in. Unfortunately, this was the main reason why terrorism flourished in India. I say, it flourished.

Shri Arvind Sawant comes from Mumbai. I was also in Mumbai for a long time. We have seen how Mumbai had faced the acts of terrorism years after years and every year. It is because we have politicised terrorism. We never allowed terrorism to be tackled as a very serious crime against humanity.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): You must also talk about Malegaon blasts …*(Interruptions)*

13.13 hrs (Shri N.K. Premachandran *in the Chair*)

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH: Sir, when they are talking about some specific cases like Malegaon blasts, I know there have been some cases. I would also like to quote some of the cases; and when we talk about Malegaon, we should also talk about Hyderabad. About Hyderabad, I know specific cases. Not one, I can quote many cases here when it was made political just because it did not suit the political interests of a political party. There were many cases like this.

In Hyderabad, I remember a very specific case. When a Police Commissioner started investing Mecca Masjid blasts and arrested some of the suspects from a minority community, the Chief Minister himself called the Police Commissioner and said: 'Please do not do this. Otherwise, you will lose your job.' …*(Interruptions)* When this Police Commissioner did not listen …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (HYDERABAD): Sir, how can you allow it?

HON. CHAIRPERSON: He is not yielding. Please be seated.

... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Satya Pal Singh, you may continue.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: One second, Dr. Singh.

Yes, Mr. Owaisi, what is your point?

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Sir, I am requesting you that what the Hon. Member is saying, let him corroborate, take an oath and table it here.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No, no. This cannot be done.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Singh, you please continue.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, wrong information should not be given to the House. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Singh, you may continue.

SHRI A. RAJA: He must authenticate it.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, please continue.

… *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AMIT SHAH): Hon. Speaker, why did you not rise when Shri A. Raja was speaking, he made several remarks that do not conform to the rules, let us listen calmly. Shri Owaisi, you must cultivate the habit of listening, this manner is unacceptable, you are required to listen.

13.16 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

[Translation]

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: I am not someone who gets intimidated; do not try to show ...* to me.

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Hon. Speaker Sir, I have not spoken of intimidating anyone. I have only said that when Members from both sides are speaking, and when an issue is raised on the basis of principle, it should be raised when Members on both sides speak. There is one dimension for Shri A. Raja and another for Shri Satyapal ji. That is all I am saying. There is no question of intimidation. If fear exists in someone's mind, what can I do about it? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: No Hon. Member shall cause any disturbance.

Dr. Satya Pal Singh

I give opportunity to all Hon. Members. When any Hon. Member is speaking, do not cause disturbance. If you wish to speak, please give me a slip. Do not create disturbance.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

* Not recorded.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir, you should give a ruling. Can this House refer to a private conversation? …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Please, Hon. Members.

[English]

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH: Speaker, Sir, whatever I am stating here is with full conviction. I am not speaking here because of some hearsay; it is because of my personal experience. I happened to be the Police Commissioner. I was, once upon a time, appointed as a SIT Chairman, which was investigating the Ishrat Jahan terrorist case in Gujarat. The kind of politics which was being done at that time or the way the Union Government was dealing with this case, was not good. I had spoken about it earlier also. This is not the time to talk about all such things. I want to reiterate this point that terrorism should not be made a political issue. Terrorism has become an international menace for the entire humanity; for the entire country; and for the entire world. That is why, when we discuss about terrorism; when we discuss about the law to tackle terrorism; we should be totally apolitical. We should think about the safety and security of our innocent people and the humanity at large. The NIA Act came in 2008. It came after the Mumbai attack where more than 66 people were killed and 300 people were

injured. At that time, we all know, how India, as a country, was exposed to the whole world. The whole world saw the way we dealt with the terrorist attack? That terrorist attack continued for almost four days. The whole world saw our incompetence. After that, the Government had brought this Act. I want to say that it was realised at that time. …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, it was not the incompetence. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing shall go on record except what is spoken by the Hon. Member. The Hon. Home Minister would like to say something. Hon. Member, please ... *

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Hon. Speaker Sir, in that case, no one would be able to deliver a speech at all. That is not how it works. You may speak after him. My submission is that you should certainly speak after him, but if he is speaking at the moment, he should not be interrupted midway. He should be heard with patience.

HON. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

… (Interruptions)

* Not recorded.

HON. SPEAKER: All Hon. Members had agreed to this arrangement.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Hon. Speaker Sir, Members of the forces lay down their lives in martyrdom. How can they be called incompetent? Are the forces incompetent? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please do not speak from your seat.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, all of you had agreed in the House that when any Hon. Member is speaking, no other Hon. Member shall speak from his or her seat, nor shall there be any disturbance. Once consensus has been arrived at in the House, any Hon. Member who wishes to speak after Hon. Satyapal ji should give me a slip. I will grant permission, and then the Member may speak. No Hon. Member shall speak from his or her seat.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Hon. Speaker Sir, are the forces incompetent? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please state the Rule under a Point of Order.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI HIBI EDEN (ERNAKULAM): Sir, I have a Point of Order under Rule 352.

HON. SPEAKER: There is nothing under Rule 352.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I have already given my ruling. Please take your seat.

Shri Satyapal Ji.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please read the final paragraph. The ruling of the Chair is final. The ruling has already been given.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH: We all know that America has a terrorist attack on 11th September, 2001.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I make a final appeal to those seated on the back benches that the back benches are not meant for conversation.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH: Sir, I am demanding all the Hon. Members here that US saw this terrorist attack on 11th September, 2001. Immediately, the American Government brought a law and called it 'Patriot Act', which provides appropriate tools to intercept and offset the terrorism. But in India, we waited for almost seven years to bring that kind of an act. We waited till 2008 when the terrorist attack happened in Mumbai. Why was it brought in? It is because at that time, it was realised that the State police were not well-equipped and they were not well-trained to handle these terrorists' acts. That is why, they thought that terrorism will become a global problem. They, the terrorists, recruited the people from one country. They raised the fund from some other country. The get the training from the third country and they target the fourth country. That is why, it was believed that the State police are not competent or not well-equipped to deal with such kind of cases.

13.24 hrs (Shri N. K. Premachandran *in the Chair*)

At that time, it was also realised that the CBI was investigating such kind of cases. Some CBI officers felt that CBI was over-burdened. But that was not the main reason. The main reason was that the CBI required the State consent before taking up any investigation in any case.

We know that in India, some of the States have withdrawn this consent clause and that is why, CBI cannot investigate. Mr. Manish Tewari was telling as that in List 1 of the Constitution, 'internal security' was brought in.

There were some other problems we really faced after 2008. Recently, in Sri Lanka, many Indians were killed and in Afghanistan, our Indian Embassy was attacked. It is because we could not register a case and we could not investigate the case, we realised that we require amendment to the NIA Act. We all know and I am reminded of the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack case. The US registered a separate case in America. You all know that David Headley was convicted because of the Mumbai case because America has a separate Act like what we are doing today. What we are doing today, America has done long back, and that is why, they registered a case against David Headley and ultimately, he was convicted.

We all know that Section 3 of the IPC has extraterritorial jurisdiction but the NIA was not having that. Even when we have the Indian victims, our Indian interests became the victim, the NIA was lacking this kind of provision to deal with that. While I congratulate the MHA for bringing this kind of amendment to the Act- do not know whether it is there or not—I would also like to request the Hon. Home Minister who is sitting here that earlier as

per the NIA Act, the power to attach the property of a terrorist was vested with the State DGPs. I know one case in West Bengal. In West Bengal, the then DGP refused to attach the property of the terrorist. So, I would also like to request that this power should be given to the DG, NIA.

Sir, about the designation of the court, it has already been done. We have faced many cases like this and our MoS for Home also mentioned about it that when the judges were being appointed by their names, it used to create a lot of delays in the case. It should be by number that the court should be there.

There is one more thing. Today, everybody knows about human trafficking and cybercrime. Many persons are recruited from India. It is not only the question of Nepal or Bhutan or Bangladesh but it is the question of Indian nationals also. They are also taken to some other country. For example, they might be taken to Syria or some other country for terrorism purpose. They are being trained in some other country for terrorism purpose. That is why, we required a law where the provision must be there to deal with wherever human trafficking is there only for terrorism purpose, and similarly, to deal with cybercrime.

Similarly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to suggest one more thing that the NIA Act is applicable to J&K.

When we have the enabling provisions of the IPC, in J&K, we have the Ranbir IPC and Ranbir CrPC and those provisions of the Ranbir IPC and Ranbir CrPC have not been actually given in the NIA Act. So, I would request that that should also be taken care of and they should be notified in the case of NIA also.

With these things, I am supporting this Bill. This is the need of the hour, need of the humanity and need of the country. Thank you very much.

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE (SREERAMPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, while speaking on the amendment Bill, before I go into the merit of the Bill, I have a very general question or appeal. When India is attacked and when India is the worst sufferer in the world because of terrorism, we do not find other countries speaking so much about this. But when the Twin Tower in the USA was attacked, all the countries in the world were making a hue and cry. Why could we not bring these extreme terrorist activities, which are perpetrated in our country every year and every day, to the notice of the entire world?

Is there any failure on our part? That is a question. The National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 was brought in with an objective, which is stated as:

> "Over the past several years, there have been innumerable incidents of terrorist attacks, not only in the militancy and insurgency affected areas and areas affected by Left Wing Extremism, but also in the form of terrorist attacks and bomb blasts, etc., in various parts of the hinterland and major cities. A large number of such incidents are found to have complex inter-State and international linkages."

Sir, through you, I would like to bring the attention of the Hon. Minister to the expression ‘inter-State and international linkages’. The question is whether it is being diluted by any of the amendments which are being brought or the Government is trying to take the power or interfering with the powers of State regarding law and order situation. This is the only thing. I will come and address this aspect later on.

First of all, I would like to say that an amendment has been correctly brought in clause 2 which says that "and" shall be inserted. This Act shall be called as the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008.

Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to seek certain clarifications or certain answers from the Hon. Minister since he is present in the House.

Clause 2(iii)(d) says:

“to persons who commit a Scheduled Offence beyond India against the Indian citizens or affecting the interest of India.".”

Then, you come to clause 4 which says,

“In section 3 of the principal Act, in sub-section (2), after the word "India", the words "and, subject to any

international treaty or domestic law of the concerned country, outside India," shall be inserted.”

Therefore, the objective is, if any act of terrorism is committed by any person outside India, this Act gives you power to proceed.

But, again, I would like to refer to clause 4 which says ‘subject to any international treaty or domestic law of the concerned country’. I would like to know whether it will really help you achieve your objective. Is there any treaty with Pakistan? It is because our country is suffering from terrorist activities mostly emanating from Pakistan. Do you have any treaty with them? If you do not have any treaty, how will this Act be made applicable to Pakistan? Can you proceed with this Act against any person in Pakistan? So, this clause is not applicable with a country which has no treaty with us. In that case, the clause will remain in the statute book only, which I have also brought in. If the treaty is not there with a particular country, you cannot make this Act applicable there. If we do not have any treaty, say, with Spain, or any other country, I am not taking any name, this Act will be futile.

Sir, I will take some time.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The time allocated is very short.

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: Sir, this is a very important Bill. I am talking on merit. Therefore, this is the point which needs to be

addressed. Since the Hon. Home Minister is here, I am sure that he will clarify this point.

The object of the Bill is speedy trial. Sir, through you, I have a humble suggestion to give to the Hon. Home Minister. Kindly fix up the time in the statute. I know that it will not be mandatory, but also make a clause that if time is extended, the Special Judge shall give reason for extending the time. Then, he will be having accountability. Since you are extending the time after retirement or after transfer, he will remain with the file and not finish the trial. That will also not be acceptable. Therefore, he should give the reason. Since the inception of the 2008 Act up to 2019, we want to know how many terrorists have been hauled up.

So far as the designated Special Judge is concerned, the question is whether you are creating the post of Special Judge or you are empowering the present Sessions Judge with that power. If you are empowering the Sessions Judge with that power, then it will not be helpful. The pity is that the Sessions Judge is already over-burdened with cases and he cannot do it. If you create Special Courts, then creation of the posts is also necessary. If the post is created, only then it will be helpful. If the post is not created, it will not be helpful.

The Hon. MoS was submitting about women trafficking. I have read the object. If the women trafficking is inter-State or international, you apply our power. There is no difficulty. If it is only within the State itself, and you interfere, then you are interfering with the power of the State and hitting the federalism itself. How can it be done? …*(Interruptions)* If it is not involved within the local area, you cannot do it. …*(Interruptions)* Shri Satya Palji said about that. This Act should not be misused. I also support this.

You were referring to the West Bengal case. As per the Union Government Report, the West Bengal Government has given extensive cooperation in that matter. This is on record so far as the Burdwan blast case is concerned. Therefore, under no circumstances, this Act should be misused or abused for achieving any political gain. Whoever or whichever political party may be in power, power does not remain with any party forever. Someone comes, someone goes.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Kanumuru Raghurama Krishnaraju.

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: Sir, I will finish it. You have given me very minimal time. It is such a big Bill. It should have been allotted more time.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I think, you have made almost all the points.

...(Interruptions) *

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please make the concluding comments.

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: I will just finish it by speaking on one more point.

I have one very constructive suggestion to give. Since the Hon. Home Minister is here, I will request him that so far as these cases are concerned, when they are appointing the designated Special Judges, they may also consider appointment of Special Public Prosecutors who will be having a good knowledge of the subject. This is very important. These subjects cannot be handled by everybody. Take the example of a cyber crime where a prosecutor is needed who understands the cyber laws. This thing is lacking and we have to fulfil this.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

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* Not recorded.

SHRI RAGHU RAMA KRISHNA RAJU (NARSAPURAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this very important Bill. At the very outset, I am very happy that to make everybody understand the seriousness and concern of the Government, Hon. Minister of Home Affairs has been sitting all through. I am very happy for that.

Coming to the Bill, the NIA Act, 2008 was originally intended to cover offences affecting integrity and sovereignty of the country. It was extended to include offences under the Atomic Energy Act 1962 and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967, which was a very welcome amendment.

In this regard, I would like to refer to what ex-Police Commissioner pointed out.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member.

SHRI RAGHU RAMA KRISHNA RAJU: Yes, Hon. Member. I am sorry.

He basically spoke about the people who are used for terrorism. I slightly differ from him. It should include women trafficking which is a heinous crime. It is becoming a major problem in the country. In majority of cases, women from one State are being trafficked to other States. No State is really taking any interest in

handling these kinds of issues. So, I am glad that this has been included in this Bill.

13.42 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

It also includes offences related to counterfeit currency notes and cyber terrorism. Of late, we have seen that offences related to cyber space has been increasing. So, including that is the need of the hour. I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister, through the Speaker, that while we are adding so many offences in this Bill, we should also look at the staff strength of the NIA to handle these cases. In a similar situation, the CBI also said that it does not have the strength to take up several cases. So, when you are including so many offences under the ambit of the NIA, which is a welcome step, the strength of the officers of the NIA should match its workload.

Hon. Member, Shri A. Raja has made some points. I would like to mention that terrorism has no religion. In the society, there are religions and tolerance towards religion should be there. But there is no religion when it comes to terrorism. He mentioned that whenever cases are taken up, the religion of those involved in those cases should also be mentioned. I object to that because, as I said, terrorism has no religion. They would be punished irrespective of their religion they belong to. So, publishing that these many people

from these religions have involved in terrorism is not in the interest of secular fabric of this country. I object to that.

Hon. Member, Shri Manish Tewari has said that it should not diluted by bringing it to the Sessions Court. That is a very welcome suggestion. He spoke about the CBI. In Assam they have dismantled the CBI. …*(Interruptions)* I will take just a minute. This is an important point though it is not directly related to this subject. I would like to bring to the notice of the Government one small point.

For every stay that was granted, the Supreme Court has given a direction that beyond six months, the stay would expire. This stay was given by the Supreme Court six years ago. So, I would like to know whether that six months' rule would apply for the Supreme Court or not. This is the question which many legal stalwarts are asking.

Since the topic has come, I would also request through you the Hon. Minister to expedite the matter. Otherwise the problems which our learned friend, Shri Manish Tiwari, being a senior advocate, has mentioned would create a major problem at a later stage. Our party, YSR Congress is wholeheartedly supporting this NIA (Amendment) Bill and kindly look at improving the strength of the NIA team.

[Translation]

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE (MUMBAI SOUTH-CENTRAL): Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019, which seeks to strengthen the security of the nation.

In fact, this Bill, which has been brought to further amend the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, is, in a way, a tribute to the hundreds of Indian citizens who were martyred in the 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attacks. After the terrorist attacks that took place in Mumbai in the year 2008, the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 was enacted and the NIA was constituted to prevent such terrorist attacks and anti-national activities in the future. Through the amendments being made in this Bill today, our country is poised to take even stronger steps against terrorism. This is a matter of pride for every Indian.

This Amendment Bill has been presented in the House by the Hon. Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah ji, with the objective of further strengthening national security. On behalf of the Shiv Sena, I express my gratitude to the Hon. Home Minister and extend my full support to this Bill.

Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray ji always placed national interest above everything else. The alliance that Shiv Sena entered into in the year 2014 was formed with the objective of strengthening national interest, and once again in 2019, keeping national interest paramount, Shiv Sena Party President, respected Uddhav ji Thackeray, took the decision to form the Shiv Sena–BJP alliance. We have formed this alliance for a strong and secure nation and for decisive leadership. By bringing this Amendment Bill in the very first Session of the BJP–Shiv Sena Government, the NDA Government has once again made its stand absolutely clear that there is nothing greater than the nation and no interest higher than national interest. Through this Bill, the NDA Government has once again demonstrated this commitment.

Before speaking about the necessity and achievements of this Amendment, I would like to briefly place on record the performance of the NIA over the last ten years. I say this with pride that the conviction rate in cases investigated by the NIA is more than 95 Percent. The investigations carried out by the NIA paved the way for the arrest of several terrorists such as Abu Jindal and Yasin Bhatkal. Many terrorist organisations, including the Indian Mujahideen, were banned. Some time ago, separatist organisations were also proscribed. While working in the national interest, our

NIA was facing certain difficulties in effectively curbing terrorist activities. It is precisely for this reason that the need arose to bring this Amendment Bill.

To further strengthen the NIA Act, it had become absolutely essential to introduce amendments. Accordingly, certain provisions were required. As a result of this Amendment, not only organisations but even individual persons who promote terrorism can now be proceeded against with stringent action. Our brothers must also understand that those who aid and abet terrorism will also face action under this Bill. Any individual who conspires against India and is linked to terrorist organisations, whether located in any corner of the country or in a foreign land, can now be firmly proceeded against by NIA officers, who will be able to take appropriate action. Any terrorist who plots against our nation, regardless of which country he may be in anywhere in the world, can now be effectively dealt with by the NIA.

Human trafficking, fake currency, illegal trafficking of arms and, most importantly, cybercrime pose grave challenges to our nation. This Amendment Bill, which empowers the NIA to effectively combat these threats, will prove to be a revolutionary step in strengthening the security architecture of our country.

Hon. Speaker Sir, for internal security, it is equally essential to curb money laundering. In view of the close nexus between narcotics trafficking, organised crime and terrorism, it is also imperative to enhance the effectiveness of the Narcotics Control Bureau. The financing and channels for the procurement of arms have both visible and invisible Maoist sources, which deserve the highest priority of scrutiny. There are certain so-called NGOs and think tanks which operate covertly and with great sophistication, projecting themselves as social revolutionaries while providing extremists with intellectual and ideological space. Such organisations and individuals must be held accountable, as they are equally culpable and responsible for undermining the internal security framework of the nation.

For years, a weak criminal justice system and widespread corruption have allowed organised crime to operate unchecked, as a result of the nexus between criminals, the police and politicians.

Hon. Speaker Sir, most of India’s internal security challenges are State-centric. Since 1947, these challenges have manifested in various forms, including sponsored separatist militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, ethnic and cultural unrest in the North-Eastern States, violence in Punjab, and the threat posed by Maoists spreading across the eastern corridor and other regions. While some of these

challenges are externally sponsored and supported, others are the product of political mismanagement, governance deficits and corruption. Today, the situation in most States is far from satisfactory. The lack of synchronisation in border management along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China is a vivid example of this concern.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab Ji

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE: Sir, I am concluding my remarks. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please read the last paragraph.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE: Sir, India faces four primary threats to its national security. Externally, its conflict with Pakistan is driven by competing geopolitical interests and bitter historical legacies. In the future, the Government of India will have to operate within these constraints, and tensions over Kashmir are likely to continue. Internally, India confronts several separatist and utopian movements, the most prominent among them being the Maoist Naxalites. The highest incidence of Naxalite activities is witnessed in the Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, and to curb these, there is a need to enact stringent laws.

Before concluding my remarks, I once again congratulate the Hon. Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah, for bringing forward this Bill.

[English]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Hon. Speaker, Sir, we remember very clearly that in 2008, when this Act was promulgated, many Members had justified why this Act was necessary. I would say that the situation has worsened further. I am saying this because there was a time, some 20 years ago, when in this House the then Home Minister used to say with pride that wherever terrorist activities are happening in the world not a single Indian is found to be a terrorist. But the situation worsened or became bad in 2008, and this law came into effect, especially, after the Mumbai carnage.

Subsequently, after 10 years, we are deliberating again relating to the functioning of the National Investigation Agency (NIA). It is being called an investigation agency as the prosecution power also is being given to this agency to find out who should be the best person to prosecute on the basis of whatever has been collected through investigation.

There are three major issues, which come up for consideration today. One is to expand the scope of investigation. Second is to expand the scope of investigation to foreign shores, and also to bring in human trafficking and other issues.

I would just like to mention here that there is a need to expand the scope of NIA. But my point here is what I had said last time when this Bill was before this House that in this Bill you have mentioned that investigation can be conducted by NIA without informing the State police. I had raised objection to this issue that we are not only a federal structure, but the highest police officer of the respective State is also a Government of India service holder. At that time, an assurance was given by the then Home Minister that: "Yes, we will make provision that the highest police officer of the State will be informed". Today, as I was going through the papers, I came to know that he is informed. When is he informed about it? It is in case there would be a law and order situation during investigation. This is the situation when the local police at the DGP-level will be informed.

I am not talking about West Bengal where another incident had occurred when the CBI went into the Commissioner's residence.

Local police gheraoed them. Subsequently, and luckily, the Army was not called in. But why this type of mismatch between the State police and the Central forces? This could have been avoided. Here, I would like to say that if the DGP is taken into confidence, not only of being informed but also becomes part and parcel of the investigation, it will be helpful. There are certain areas where you need secrecy at the time of investigation but a number of meeting

do take place, especially to target the terrorist activities inside the country.

Today, the alarming situation is this. Due to Internet services, people have direct contact with the Islamic State (IS). Boys have gone out of our country to join the IS. How to tap them? How to prosecute them? What you have in this Bill is this. When you are making an investigation in foreign shores or countries, you have to take their Governments into confidence. But in this you have a provision that you don't take your own State Government into confidence, your own State police into confidence. At certain level, at least at the highest level of the State police, information should be shared before investigation, and they should become part and parcel of the investigation and prosecution.

It has been mentioned about the power of the Union Government to constitute Special Courts. Special Courts shall be presided over by a Judge to be appointed by the Union Government on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of the High Court. This is all right. But subsequently in Clause 22, it is stated that the State Government may constitute one or more Special Courts for the trial of offences under any or all the enactments specified in the VI Schedule. Even it comes down to the Sessions Court. I need a clarification from the Government. Ultimately, who appoints the Special Court? Is it the Union Government? Is it the State

Government? At what level, the prosecution will take place, decision will be given and punishment will be imparted? While going through this amendment, I feel a bit unsure because ultimately it is the prosecution and punishment which matters, not only apprehending the terrorists.

Some seven years ago, a boy was apprehended in our State because he had some connection with IS – it was earlier ISIS, now they are terming it as IS. I would like to understand whether the local police or State police is involved in that investigation. But prosecution of that person has not gone a bit further. Therefore, I would like to mention here that it is necessary that human trafficking needs adequate investigation. Narcotics issue also was mentioned here. But here I would like to just mention that under Sections 370 and 371 of the IPC relating to human trafficking also has inter-State and international linkages, which also needs to be looked into with full vigour. With these words, I support the amendments but I need certain clarifications, especially in regard to taking the State police into confidence.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, all parties have been allotted time within the Business Advisory Committee. However, when a Bill is taken up for discussion, we certainly provide some additional

time. Therefore, Hon. Members should please keep the subject in mind.

14.00 hrs

KUNWAR DANISH ALI (AMROHA): Hon. Speaker Sir, I rise to clearly place on record my party's position on the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill that has been brought before the House. Whenever the NIA is discussed and such laws are framed in this country, it is absolutely clear that every party, every group, and every Member present in this House stands united in the belief that there must be zero tolerance towards terrorism. There is no difference of opinion on this point. However, when we look back, we also see that many laws enacted earlier in the name of fighting terrorism were grossly misused, and several innocent people were incarcerated for long periods without trial. The only difference is that those who were once seated on this side later move to the other side and frame such laws, and when those from that side come here, they raise these very concerns.

Hon. Speaker Sir, the TADA law was enacted by those who are today seated on this side of the House, and POTA was enacted by those who are today seated on that side. Both these laws ultimately had to be repealed. My only submission is that investigating agencies and prosecuting agencies should be separate. The manner in which 24x7 electronic news channels have emerged in our country, I believe that many television channels and anchors no longer feel it necessary to recognise that investigation is the

responsibility of police officers and awarding punishment is the responsibility of the courts. I believe that several Hon. Members sitting on the Treasury Benches would also agree with me on this point. My submission is that, in view of the way media trials are conducted, we need to draw a clear boundary somewhere. Suppose a raid takes place at someone's premises. It is the duty of the agencies to conduct raids and apprehend terrorists. Many a time, raids do take place, but the information behind the raid may turn out to be incorrect. Yet, from morning till evening, a media trial is conducted and the person is declared a terrorist.

Sir, there have been several cases of this nature where people were later honourably acquitted by the courts. I do not wish to cite specific cases, but somewhere or the other, laws such as TADA and POTA were misused, and that is precisely why this House subsequently repealed those laws. As far as cyber crime is concerned, our position is that while the Government keeps making vague references to the Data Protection Bill, before bringing it, several other Bills are being introduced which are, in one way or another, interlinked with the Data Protection Bill. Through you, I urge the Government to bring the Data Protection Bill at the earliest. I would once again like to make it very clear that this House has zero tolerance towards terrorism. However, the framers of our

Constitution very clearly stated that in a democracy, the fundamental rights granted to citizens cannot be violated under the cover of any law.

Today, I have no hesitation in saying that, somewhere, this Government appears to be acting in such haste that it is attempting to convert the State into a police State. I would conclude by saying that the fundamental rights of the common citizens of this country must not be violated, and in the fight against terrorism, the entire Opposition and all of us stand with the Government.

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE (BARAMATI): Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you. I have risen here to support this Bill. I am supporting it, but there is a matter of deep anguish in my mind. I take legitimate pride in the Maharashtra Police. It is because of this police force that, at one point, Police DGP Virk Sahib was invited by the Punjab Government to come from Mumbai, Maharashtra, when they were facing serious difficulties there. Shri Julio Ribeiro was also called from Maharashtra when Punjab was facing grave challenges. For such a police force, whose officers and personnel have laid down their lives for the safety and security of this nation, to be described as incompetent by a retired police officer from Maharashtra is something I strongly object to and completely refute. I humbly request that this remark be expunged from the record. [English]The hon. Member had great pride in working in Maharashtra Police. He was CP Pune, CP Mumbai, CP Nagpur. So, I please urge him. … *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please take your seat.

…(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: If there is any such issue, I will look into it.

…(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: He has not said so; he is denying it.

…(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE: We should not call any police officer incompetent. We are sitting here safely because thousands of people give their lives for our security, so I request this to be corrected. We are immensely proud of our police force.

I just have three-four quick questions to ask the Hon. Minister. [Translation] He has stated that there has been a 95 Percent conviction rate. In Maharashtra, however, there have been 14 such cases, of which only one has resulted in conviction, while 13 have not. [English] Where is he getting his data from? I am getting my data from the replies of the Government of India. There is obviously some disparity, so this may kindly be clarified.

I have three pointed questions to the Hon. Minister. Point No. 2(i) of the Statement of Objects and Reasons says: "…to persons who commit a Scheduled Offence beyond India against Indian citizens or affecting the interest of India…." Of course, there will be the international court and international pressure. You remember the issue of the Italian Marines. They came to India, but they were taken back. In such situations, what will the Government do, or what is it doing specifically to improve these relationships so that any Indian who suffers anywhere in the world gets a fair trial and

justice? Is the Government able to get each terrorist from anywhere in the world, and what is the time-bound plan for it? It should not be another jumla like "“I will bring Dawood, I will bring this one, I will bring that one,” when five or six years have passed and no one has been brought back. So, please be committed. This is about terrorism, about national security. You have children, I have children, and everyone here has children. This is a national security issue. This is not about UPA vs NDA. When it comes to national security, this House must stand together to tell the world in one voice that we stand united against any corruption or any national security issue. So, I request that this be not made a political debate.

Point No. 3*(ii)* of the Statement of Objects and Reasons says: “… National Investigation Agency shall have the similar powers, duties, privileges and liabilities, being exercised by the police officers …”. We have all objected to this. I will not repeat the point. But I just want to ask one question. I would like this to be verified because I am not sure about this point. When this first came during the UPA time, I think the Gujarat Government had raised some reservations about NIA. So, could the Minister kindly clarify if that stand was different then and is this different now? If it is the same, I stand corrected. I will not raise it. But I want to know for the record of this House when NIA proposed a similar Act, what was Gujarat

Government's line at that time. The Hon. Minister may kindly clarify that.

The third point is regarding the scheduled offences committed outside India, registration of the case and taking up investigation. Now, this is also as per the Indian Convention, 1948. I will give you an example. You are talking about drugs. If you are caught up with drugs in Singapore, there is a punishment that you will be hung immediately. Are we going to do the same here? So, when it is Singapore versus India, we are going to have this exchange of law. How is there going to be a common law? How are you going to take this forward?

This looks very idealistic and I support it. I am very happy if this happens. But how are you going to do it? How are we going to have the agreements with several countries for Indian citizens? You keep talk about cooperative federalism. When there is so much cooperative federalism, why are we showing mistrust in States? If the State is willing to cooperate, let us work together. I do understand that there are cases where CBI can walk in. But when you are saying that this is a national security interest, why should NIA go parachuting on any State? There can be misuse and this country has shown misuse in the past.

So, let us have something where national security and terrorism are above political agendas. Even, in the Treasury Bench, one of the speakers – I do not want to get into that speech – talked about misuse of power.

I have two questions. When you are in position of power and there is misuse, why do you not stand up and say that I will not do this or expose the Government. So, these are all *tu tu, main main.* This is not the time to make a political statement. This issue is about national security. You should kindly come through on all these three things.

Sir, I have one last point to make. I come from a State where Dabholkar ji, Kalburgi ji, – who are all modern people – were shot dead. Also, Gauri Lankesh, has been shot. There are hundreds of examples like this, which I can give you. We have not been able to close those cases. Here, you are worrying about international safety and security. What about our own security here, first?

So, I urge this Government that we are all willing to support these things but let us have clarity. Let it not just be a peacock which will come and flash its feathers and there will be no outcome. Let us put our hand where our mouth is. I think, globally, everybody is willing to work together. Let us not give examples of other countries because we need to have our own rules. What other

countries do idealistically, we can definitely copy but it has to be effectively implemented above politics. This is the only request.

So, I think, the sense of this House is that we should not misuse any of these things politically in the larger interest of this nation and for the safety and the security of this nation.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI KESINENI SRINIVAS (VIJAYAWADA): Sir, I rise to support the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

The original 2008 Act, empowers the Government to constitute special courts for the trial of scheduled offences listed in the act. The amendment seeks to change this and empower the Union Government to designate a Sessions Court to rule over the offences under the purview of the National Investigation Agency. Designating Sessions Courts as special courts dilutes the importance of the effect of an investigation agency created especially for a particular purpose.

We are well aware of the burden of pending cases on the Judiciary. According to a question answered by the Minister of Law and Justice, the total number of pending cases in District and Subordinate Courts is 3.12 crore. Can we really afford shifting burden to Sessions Courts as the amendment proposes?

Let us also take a look at the National Investigation Agency's performance. As the Minister of State for Home Affairs has stated, since its inception, the NIA has had 272 cases. Out of the 272 cases, trial has concluded in 52 cases, that is, 19 per cent cases have seen trial concluded for them. Though, the conviction rate of the NIA is high, as the Minister said, the number of cases for which trial has

concluded with respect to total registered cases is low and that needs to be looked at.

The amendment adds new offences added to the already existing schedule in the NIA Act including trafficking, cyber-terrorism, counterfeit currency among others.

It is a good move to add such offences but it must be taken care of that the powers of the National Investigation Agency are kept in check so that they do not encroach upon the liberties of the citizens. A mechanism to keep a check on the powers of the National Investigation Agency needs to be put in place to safeguard the Fundamental Rights of the citizens.

Another concern with a powerful agency like the National Investigation Agency is that it will not be free from political interference and this will undermine the purpose of this purpose. We also need to look at the larger picture here. The National Investigation Agency was set up as a policing mechanism to investigate terror attacks but we lack a preventive mechanism to foil such attacks from happening in the first place. The Government needs to look at this also. With this, I support the Bill.

ADV. A.M. ARIFF (ALAPPUZHA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I support all the views and apprehensions raised by the Shri Manish Tiwari, Shrimati Supriya Sule and other Hon. Members of the Opposition. At the outset, my major concern with the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019 is the provisions of the closely related Unlawful Activities Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

The Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967 is included in the offences scheduled under the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008. The amendment to Schedule 4 of the Bill will allow the National Investigation Agency to designate an individual suspected to have terror links as a terrorist. As the other Members from the Opposition stated, it is nothing but State-sponsored terrorism and violates the Fundamental Rights and ethos of our Constitution. The Hon. Member, Shri N.K. Premachandran, at the time of opposing the introduction of the Bill, spoke about the case study of A.K. Gopalan vs. State of Madras regarding the unlawful detention. As of now, only groups are designated as terrorist organisation. The Unlawful Activities Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2019 that seeks to allow an individual suspected to have terror links to be designated as a terrorist could prove to be draconian. At the time of formulation of Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was opposed to such a provision and

the BJP-led Government should keep in mind the veteran leader's views. A large number of under-trials are languishing in various jails without hearing under the National Investigation Agency Act. The Unlawful Activities Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2019 is unleashing the Frankenstein's monster that could turn to you in future. Please don't think you will be in power till the end of the world.

I would like to invite your attention to another act of terrorism which was a classic example of the use of State power in the name of national security. The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, commonly known as TADA, was in force between 1985 and 1995. It was the first anti-terrorist law legislated by the Government to define and counter terrorist activities. It was allowed to lapse in 1995 due to the increasing unpopularity after widespread allegation of abuse.

The widespread human rights abuse under the TADA is evident from the following example. After spending nearly 20 years behind the bars under the TADA and several other sections of the Indian Penal Code, 11 Muslim persons were found innocent on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 by a special court in Nasik. Then there is Abdul Nazer Mahdani's case in Kerala. He was detained under judicial custody for nine years and released after he was found not guilty.

The Bill amends the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008. The Act provides for a national level agency to investigate and prosecute offences listed in a Schedule. Further, the Act allows for creation of special courts for the trial of scheduled offences. The Bill states that the Union Government may designate Sessions Courts as special courts for the trial of scheduled offences. Further, the State Governments may also designate Sessions Courts as special courts for the trial of scheduled offences.

I am not going into the details of pending cases in all the courts of India. Our courts are already clogged with huge backlogs and it is illogical that now the Government is adding more cases through the amendment to the NIA Act. Under the NIA Act, in spite of mandating special courts, all the Session courts have been designated as Special courts.

The proposed amendments will also allow the NIA to probe cybercrimes. As per section 66 F, Chapter XI of the IT Act, 2000, the cybercrime is not defined officially in the IT Act or in any other legislation. In fact, it cannot be too.

To conclude, the NIA (Amendment) Bill, 2019 and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill are amorphous and vague. It is the sign of a growing repressive state. I would urge the Government to set up real and functionally efficient special

courts and remove the draconian provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2019 which, in the name of tackling terror, contravene the fundamental rights of the citizens.

Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: You have already moved so many amendments; you may speak at that time.

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Thank you, Sir. I will take only a few minutes.

I fully support the observations made by the Hon. learned Member, Shri Manish Tewari in his concluding part. The democratic, secular fabric of our country shall never be destroyed in the name of terrorism. If you examine the past experience of TADA and POTA at a micro level, it is very clear that a section of the society has been targeted and they have been put behind bar for long. If you examine, in most of the cases, the convicts have not been found guilty and have been released. This is the situation prevailing in our country. So, I would like to urge upon the Government of India to revisit the criminal jurisprudence which highly essential for the time being because even the basic elements of the criminal jurisprudence is under threat.

Shri Ariff has just now rightly cited that a person who has not been found guilty, is unnecessarily put behind bar for 20 years and after 20 years, it is proved that there is no evidence against him. He is being declared innocent and is being released. Who is responsible for 20 years of punishment that he has to suffer in the jail? Who will answer for it and who will compensate it? That is why I would suggest that the system of criminal jurisprudence has to have a

drastic amendment. That system has to be re-looked. This is my first suggestion.

The original Bill of 2008 was enacted," to constitute an investigation agency at the national level to investigate and prosecute offences affecting the sovereignty, security and integrity of India, security of State, friendly relations with foreign States and offences under Acts enacted to implement international treaties, agreements, conventions and resolutions of the United Nations."

The NIA (Amendment) Bill, 2019 is intended to provide an extra territorial jurisdiction or an extra territorial power to National Investigating Agency so that an offence committed outside India by a citizen, can be taken as a case which has happened in this country and the National Investigating Agency is empowered to investigate into that case, prosecute the case in the special court being designated under this Bill.

In such a situation, the cloud of suspicion among the minorities has already been discussed here. A number of amendment Bills are being brought before this House; Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, Aadhaar (Amendment) Bill, and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill. Taking into consideration all these Bills, the cloud of suspicion is increasing. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, from 2008 to 2019, that is from the POTA to the UAPA,

how many FIRs have been lodged, and cases charge-sheeted? How many have been prosecuted and punished? How many have been declared innocent? This statistical information is highly essential to look into the veracity and merit of this Act. With this point of clarification, I conclude my speech.

Thank you very much, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI KAUSHLENDRA KUMAR (NALANDA): Hon. Speaker Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

Sir, this legislation seeks to confer additional powers on the NIA, and after the amendment, the agency will be empowered to investigate terrorist activities committed against Indians even outside the country. The NIA will now also be authorised to investigate cases relating to cyber crime and human trafficking.

Hon. Speaker Sir, we are living in a digital age, and incidents of cyber crime are increasing day by day in the country. Therefore, it has become essential to strengthen the hands of the NIA for effective investigation. At the same time, cases of human trafficking are also on the rise, which had been providing protection to exploitation. Now, the NIA will have full authority to investigate cases of human trafficking or illegal migration. Those who provide any kind of protection to traffickers will also be brought to book, and there will be provisions for appropriate punishment.

At present, the law provided only for the designation of organisations as terrorist organisations. However, after this amendment, the NIA will also have the provision to designate an

individual or a group of individuals, who are suspected of involvement with a terrorist organisation or a terrorist incident, as terrorists and to impose punishment accordingly. Their property will also be liable to confiscation. With the amendment to Section 4, the NIA will become fully empowered. Any individual or organisation, even if located abroad, can now be investigated by the NIA without hindrance. In my view, this step taken by the Government is appropriate and fully in tune with the present security environment.

Sir, therefore, I would also request the Government to ensure that this law is not misused in any manner. No innocent person should be forcibly implicated due to any malafide intent, as that would amount to a violation of the constitutional freedoms guaranteed to our citizens.

Hon. Speaker Sir, a large number of cases under this law are pending. The courts will also ensure their expeditious disposal. Therefore, whether it is a pending case under this law or any new case before the court, it should be resolved at the earliest.

Sir, I support this bill. Thank you very much.

HON. SPEAKER: I once again request the Hon. Members to note that this Bill is important and all Hon. Members are learned. Therefore, we should not repeat the same points. If any new issue is raised, I am prepared to give even more time than what is allotted to your party; there will be no difficulty in that. However, repetition of the same subject does not befit the standard of Parliament. If a new subject is raised and a party has only two minutes of time but the new issue requires ten minutes, I will give ten minutes. But no Member should repeat the same points.

SHRI RAVNEET SINGH (LUDHIANA): Hon. Speaker, thank you. I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak in the House on this important occasion. I feel a sense of pride, because I come from a family of martyrs. I was a Member of the Home Committee when the NIA Bill was being drafted and when the NIA was being established. Shri Venkaiah Naidu ji, who is now the Vice President, was the Chairman of that Home Committee at that time, and I had the opportunity to serve as a Member under his chairmanship.

Sir, the core issue is this. As Shrimati Supriya Sule ji mentioned, in Punjab, during those difficult times, officers like Shri Julio Ribeiro, Shri V. K. Virdi, Shri K. P. S. Gill, and my grandfather Sardar Beant Singh, who was the Chief Minister then,

played decisive roles. From my own perspective, I wish to place on record that when a case arises, the media reports extensively on it and a particular sentiment and atmosphere develops across the country. However, when there is delay, the case loses its urgency and people's attention gradually shifts away from the issue. It is appropriate that special courts are being constituted. There should be conviction at the lower court level within three months. Appeals in the High Court and the Supreme Court should also be disposed of within three months each. Beyond that point, the sentiment and the seriousness attached to the case tend to fade away.

Sir, in the case of my grandfather, three personnel of the NSG were martyred, CRPF personnel were martyred, Members of his staff were martyred, and in this manner, on 31 August 1995, a total of 17 people laid down their lives. The trial continued for years, and in 2012, one of the accused was awarded the death sentence. At that time, Shri Badal Sahab was the Chief Minister. A mercy petition in that case reached the Hon. President in 2012, and that petition is still pending. No decision has been taken on it so far. But what, Sir, has been the outcome of this case?

Sir, this applies to both sides. If a person is a terrorist and receives punishment within a year, that is appropriate and in the interest of justice. If, on the other hand, an innocent person has been

apprehended and is not involved, he too will be released within a year and will not have to languish in jail for a long period. The most important aspect is that investigations should be completed expeditiously and trials should be conducted swiftly in the courts. The police and investigating agencies may complete their work, but when a case drags on in court for years, it loses its impact and relevance. The public sentiment that initially existed fades away. Human rights groups then step in, various other organisations intervene, and attention begins to shift towards the aged parents and families of the accused. Gradually, the national sentiment itself changes. As a result, even the courts find it difficult to act decisively, because judges too are human. The sentiment that prevailed six months earlier is very different from what exists after two years. Therefore, it is essential that such offenders are punished at the earliest. A large agency like the NIA has been created, and its effectiveness must be visible. Only then will such elements be deterred. These people will not reform through leniency. They live comfortably in jails, eat well, and continue to devise plans from there. They must be punished swiftly and, where warranted, awarded capital punishment.

Sir, in the Pulwama incident, funds came from outside the country and weapons were also brought in from outside. The CBI

is an agency that can operate in other countries through Interpol. Ensuring that such offenders are punished in a timely manner should be the primary responsibility of our agencies. Wherever we fall short, the nation suffers losses. These people sit in jails, live at the expense of the State, and continue to plan further harm. Therefore, they must be punished at the earliest.

Similarly, Sir, with regard to the case relating to Sardar Beant Singh Ji, through you I appeal to the Hon. President that the punishment awarded in that case, as upheld by the Hon. Supreme Court, should be taken to its logical conclusion. Thank you, Sir.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member Manish Ji, you are moving around with a book repeatedly. I have already said that you are carrying the book again and again. If you wish to take a book, please do so.

[English]

SHRI E.T. MOHAMMED BASHEER (PONNANI): Sir, as far as terrorism is concerned, we should deal with it with iron hand. Of course, the whole nation should stand together against that. There are no two opinions about that.

As far as the performance of NIA is concerned, while introducing the Bill, the Hon. Minister was saying that its performance is excellent. With due respect, I differ with it. As regards credibility of NIA, I would not hesitate to say that its credibility is eroding. We all know that the NIA is becoming an instrument in the hands of the Government for attaining its political wish and will. There are many things to say but because of time constraint, I do not want to take much of the time.

When we made the first enactment on this, there was high objective in it, such as, investigation and prosecution of offences affecting the sovereignty, security and integrity of the nation. But what is really happening? If we analyse, we have to see whether NIA is moving in the proper direction or not. I would like to say that its credibility is facing challenge. As a classical example, I will give you the example of Malegaon blast case. ... *has said publicly that ever since the change of the Government at the Centre, pressure

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* Not recorded.

is being imposed to favour the accused in this trial. It is the shame on the nation. How can the Government interfere in these kinds of things? It was said openly and not secretly that the Government pressurized the ... * to support the accused.

With all politeness, I would like to tell you not to misuse the investigation agencies for political motives. As has been said by earlier speakers, innocent youths are languishing in jails. What is the position of the CBI? It is also like that. The CBI is called, the 'caged parrot' and now NIA looks like a chained agency because they are not having any free hand to move.

In this case, if the Government verify the cases and also looks at history, one would find that a majority of people belonging to the minority community and the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are in jail. Even charge sheet against them have not been filed. As has been correctly mentioned by other Hon. Members, after 10 years or maybe, more, there may be acquittal but who will compensate for those lost years in jail? Their lives are completely ruined. That is the situation.

Sir, so I urge upon the Government to keep this investigation agency as independent as possible. If that is not done, then there is no meaning in making any kind of enactment in this regard.

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* Not recorded.

What is justice? If justice is not dispensed on time, then it is said that justice delayed is justice denied. We have to keep this in mind. I urge upon the Government not to interfere in the work of the investigating agency. If the Government does not allow them to work freely, then they will be doing a kind of injustice to the people. With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Vishnu Dayal Ram. Shri Vishnu Dayal Ram Ji is a former D.G.

SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM (PALAMU): Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak in support of the proposed amendments to the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008.

I am also thankful to the Hon. Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah Ji, and the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji, because they have clearly declared a policy of zero tolerance against terrorism. This country has been suffering the scourge of terrorism for many years. It was in the year 2008 that the NIA was constituted for the first time. The NIA was authorised to investigate offences relating to the integrity, sovereignty, and security of the nation. Prior to this, there was no such Act in the country that enabled action to be taken against criminals who committed offences against our citizens or against the interests of our nation after going to another country.

Sir, I believe this is a very important Act. Amendments are made in accordance with the changing times, circumstances, and requirements. Laws too are framed keeping in view the prevailing conditions and needs of the country. Before I say a few words on this proposed amendment, Hon. Manish Tewari Ji is present among us. He delivered, in my view, the first and perhaps the most impactful speech. He spoke about Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the

Constitution, and rightly so. I would like to add just one point to that discussion. He elaborated in detail on the rights conferred upon citizens under these Articles, but he did not mention at all the nature of the reasonable restrictions that are imposed on those rights.

Sir, the very first amendment to the Constitution itself imposed restrictions on the rights granted under Article 19. Through the Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the integrity and sovereignty of our country were explicitly addressed, and these provisions were inserted in the year 1992. The Act enacted in 2008 conferred upon the National Investigation Agency the authority to investigate all offences relating to the integrity and sovereignty of the nation. Under the provisions of the 2008 Act, the NIA has been empowered to inquire into crimes that directly affect the unity, integrity, and security of the country.

We all know that terrorism is not confined within the territorial boundaries of any one country. It operates beyond national borders as well, and therefore the provision relating to extra-territorial jurisdiction has been included. No Hon. Member has raised any objection to this, nor should there be any objection. One important aspect of the powers being conferred is that similar authority exists in the laws of other countries as well such as the SAARC Convention, Suppression of Terrorism Act, 1993, International

Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism, International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorists Bombings, the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Maritime Navigation and Fixed Platforms on Continental Shelf Act, 2002. extra-territorial jurisdiction. It is the duty of our nation to protect the safety and interests of our citizens who reside abroad, and this amendment to the NIA Act has been brought precisely in fulfilment of that duty. Apart from this, there are only two other important points which Hon. Members have discussed. One relates to special courts. I would, however, like to focus a little more on the Schedule, because comparatively less discussion has taken place on it. The insertions being made in the Schedule are directly related to the Act. These include the Arms Act, the Explosive Substances Act, laws relating to trafficking and anti-trafficking, among several others. These insertions have been made so that offences under these Acts are not investigated by linking them with multiple laws, but are instead investigated separately under a clear and focused framework. The importance of this cannot be underestimated under any circumstances. Very strong and effective provisions have been made in this regard, and there should be no objection to these insertions. Finally, keeping in mind the shortage of time and in accordance with your directions, Sir, I conclude my remarks. Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (HYDERABAD): Sir, I oppose the National Investigation Agency Bill, 2019. I will list out the various reasons for opposing this Bill.

Firstly, as a student of law, I was taught that criminal law is based on territorial jurisdiction. By bringing this Bill, you are extending the territorial jurisdiction. The concept of universal jurisdiction does apply only in cases of crime against humanity or genocide. The classic case is the case of PANACEA trial which was held in UK. That is why I feel that we, as a country, have not yet signed International Criminal Courts Statute. I want to know from the Hon. Minister as to whether they are going to sign the International Criminal Courts Statute so that any dictator who has indulged in crimes against humanity or genocide will be tried. Till you sign that, we do not have that territorial jurisdiction. It is fine to say that you will do it.

Secondly, assuming that a terrorist offence takes place. You send an NIA officer there and say that our laws will prevail. They will not prevail because the local laws will prevail there. What powers are you giving to that NIA officer? For example, God forbid, something happens in the Indian Embassy of Afghanistan.

Will the Afghans allow it? No. Even Nepal will not allow it. The reason behind this is that we do not have the diplomatic clout.

... * This is my opinion. Are you so afraid of US? I do not know. You love US so much. Good luck to you and Israel ! …*(Interruptions)*

Here, this amendment talks about affecting the interests of India. What is that? Can you please define as to what is affecting the interests of India? In a Bill, it cannot be so vague. You say "affecting the interests of India". You are creating a device for yourself to even bring in some people who write a blog against your ideology and your Party.

Thirdly, in this Bill, you say "Special Court designated for an area or areas". Again, it is violating Article 14 of the Constitution because the notification has to be made, and you cannot make it for a specific case or area. It is violating the provision of equality. If you refer to the case of Anwar Ali Sarkar vs. The State of West Bengal, you will get to know why I am saying this.

My fourth point is this. Does the NIA have special investigative techniques? If yes, do they have the legislative approval and sanction? No. Now, in administrative and constitutional law, we follow the rule that any power is coupled with responsibility. May

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* Not recorded.

I know from the Hon. Minister, the responsibility of the Government towards the victims? I can quote you numerous examples. Regarding Samjhauta blast case, the judge said that the NIA could not even produce the CCTV footage of the Delhi Railway Station. May I know from the Hon. Minister whether the Government will issue a letter of apology to the accused of Malegaon blast who were exonerated by the Courts of law?

In this Schedule, you have included the IT Act. Can he confirm to this House that the ISIS in Khorasan had issued a video with my photograph stating that I am a *Ghulam* of this Hindu Nation – whether that video is there or not? Please tell that. The reason why I am saying that is this. The Hon. Minister quoted that Hyderabad is a den of terrorists. The ISIS in Khorasan issued a video with my photograph. So, who am I? Am I for the nation or for the terrorists? Let the Government reply to that.

Sir, will you appeal against the Mecca Masjid blast? Who killed those nine people which included a 11-year old Hafiz-e-Quran? I had seen his body. His head was in two pieces. I cannot still go to his house. Why are you not appealing? Do you have a firm resolve against terrorism? Why are you not appealing against the Mecca Masjid blast? Who is responsible for that? Where is the accountability? Who is responsible for those 66 people who died in Samjhauta blast? Why are you not appealing? Why are you not

appealing against the Ajmer blast? These are all terrorist offences and I hope that the Government will reply to it. [Translation] The narrative has now become such that if the victim is a Muslim and the accused is a non-Muslim, then nothing will be done.

With this, I oppose this Bill.

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Hon. Speaker Sir, Shri Owaisi Sahab has made two or three points, one concerning Israel and another concerning the United States. Both are sovereign countries. In this regard, Rule 352(7) clearly states:- "A Member cannot use treasonable, seditious and defamatory words."

HON. SPEAKER: This point is quite lengthy. I have read it.

... (Interruptions)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY: Hon. Speaker Sir, the cases that the Hon. Member has referred to are also under judicial scrutiny, and a Member cannot raise such matters in this manner. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: I will look into it.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: If the Prime Minister goes there, then please do ensure that he is introduced to Mr. Trump and embraces him as well. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL (NAGAUR): Hon. Speaker Sir, first of all, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

Terrorism is not only a problem of India, but a very serious problem of the entire world. Even a country like the United States has suffered the scourge of terrorism. I thank the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Home Minister, and the Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs for further strengthening the powers of the NIA. The scope of this Bill has been expanded so that if there is any attack on persons of Indian origin living outside India, it is also covered under its ambit.

Hon. Speaker Sir, the entire country knows that two former Prime Ministers were targets of terrorists, and Shri Beant Singh Ji, the former Chief Minister of Punjab, who, as our hon. colleague Shri Bittu Ji mentioned, was his grandfather, sacrificed his life to eradicate terrorism in Punjab. The case relating to Shri Beant Singh Ji is also still continuing. Through you, I would urge the Government that in such cases, while we enact laws and apprehend terrorists, these terrorists end up spending their entire lives in prison, and many of them are later acquitted while some are not. Therefore, there should be a system under which, once they are apprehended under a particular law, their cases are disposed of

within one, two, three, six months, or at most within one or two years. Those who are innocent will be acquitted, but those who are guilty should be sent to prison and awarded capital punishment. Until this happens, terrorism cannot be eradicated. I thank the Hon. Prime Minister for giving a strong response to terrorists. After Pulwama, air strikes and surgical strikes were carried out. Today, whether one goes to the North East or to the South, a wave of patriotism is flowing across India. Everyone says, "I am an Indian," and feels proud. I also thank the Hon. Home Minister for withdrawing the security that had earlier been provided by previous Governments to certain separatist leaders in Kashmir, on which huge amounts of money were being spent. As a result, those leaders have retreated into their homes out of fear, and at the same time, the youth of the region have returned to the mainstream.

Hon. Speaker Sir, reference has also been made to TADA and POTA. Under TADA and POTA, many hardened terrorists were apprehended and awarded capital punishment. TADA and POTA also played an important role in eliminating terrorism. There were some minor instances of misuse under these laws, and such minor misuse does occur from time to time. Several leaders of a particular party were sent to jail when they were in power. However, I would like to place on record my appreciation that Shri Modi Ji has not

sent even a single person from the other side to jail. At the very least, investigations were conducted. There were allegations of massive scams, but where did those scams go? ... *(Interruptions)*

Hon. Speaker, attacks were carried out on Akshardham and even on our Parliament. Just look at their audacity. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister for ensuring that Masood Azhar is declared an international terrorist. The entire world has faith in this. Of all the cases handled by the NIA, convictions have been secured in about 95 Percent of the cases.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please take your seat now. The next Hon. Member will speak.

[English]

SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN (TIRUPPUR): Thank you, Speaker Sir, for the opportunity given by you. I will conclude my speech within two minutes. At the outset, I oppose the Bill further to amend the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008. I am forced to suspect the motive of the Government in bringing this amendment. The proposed amendments are aimed at attacking and scuttling any democratic struggle. If enacted into a law, this will be used to intimidate, threaten and victimize the persons and organizations who fight in a democratic manner. Our experience of the last five years and few months now only augment our fear that this amendment only seeks to empower the National Investigation Agency to unleash institutionalized terrorism against dissenting voices. Therefore, I oppose this Bill. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI MEENAKSHI LEKHI (NEW DELHI): Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you very much. There are those who make promises and forget them, and then there are people like us who even fulfil the promises made by others. Now you may ask why I have said this. I wish to read out a speech delivered by Shri Chidambaram Ji, and in that speech, when he had introduced the NIA Bill, he had stated:

> "There are no extraordinary provisions and there are no unusual provisions. I have explained broad features of the NIA. I would respectfully request all sections of the House to support the NIA . Let us allow this Bill to be passed. I know, there may be reservations about one clause or another clause but this is the time to demonstrate to the country that despite our reservation, we are all united. Let us pass the Bill. If in the working of the Bill, we find there are any deficiencies, then we will meet again. "

Unfortunately, he could not be in the House and we could not meet. So, I am here to complete that job, which is that the lacunae,

which were found in the Bill need to be completed. Those lacunae are in the administration of justice.

[Translation]

Shri Bittu Ji referred to the martyrdom in his family. Our former Prime Minister laid down his life, and the father of our Hon. colleague Shri Manish Ji was also martyred. From all these sacrifices, the Congress Party learnt certain lessons and decided that the NIA Bill should be brought, because the nature of terrorism has changed. [English] Nature of terrorism is no longer restricted to the jurisdiction where the crimes are committed. When the objection by Mr. Owaisi was taken on the jurisdictional issue, I have to tell him that when IPC and CrPC were brought in in 1900 or so, at that time, there was no internet; at that time, the global movement was low; and at that point in time, the natures of crime were very different. So, criminal jurisdiction had a different point of view altogether. Today, crimes are cutting across nations; crimes are cutting across States; nature of crime has changed; planning is happening somewhere else and execution is happening somewhere else. Third is a transitional route. We are not just a global village but we are a global hub. In that global hub, we get into the problems, which are faced by other countries. I was just thinking about Sri Lanka bomb blast.

So, this particular Amendment and these particular enactments are with a view to support the UN Conferences on anti-terrorist activities. UN Security Council in Samjhauta Express blasts was talked about by Mr. Owaisi. I want to inform him that in that case there were three narcoanalysis of Nagori in which admission to the contrary has happened. Whatever has happened in so-called cases is because of poor and bad investigation. To strengthen investigation, to train the officers is what we need to do.

It is surprising that people, who have suffered due to terrorism in this country, are Members in this House and they are opposing a Bill like this. One objection, which was taken is the rule of law. Unfortunately, the Member, who had talked about the rule of law, is not present here. I have to inform him that the rule of law is prescribed by rules. When you are creating special courts, you are working under the rules. The power of the courts has not been taken away. In fact, the Judiciary has been brought in and the Chief Justice of a High Court is the appointing authority. By doing that, when you designate a court, you take away the problems of nominating particular Judges by name. Those notifications delay the prosecution of cases, and that delay in prosecution gets to be tackled by these amendments. Bittu-ji’s objection was that 'Cases continue for so many years, and it is precisely because of this that

there is distress'. To handle that, this particular Amendment, which is necessary, has been brought in.

We all understand independence of Judiciary. Independence of Judiciary is ensured. Independency of Parliament, the Legislature, and the independence of Judiciary is very much part of this. This Act, in no way, hinders that.

There are four such courts, which have to be appointed at Guwahati, Kochi, Kolkata and Delhi. This particular aspect was told to West Bengal Government. Mr. Kalyan Banerjee is not here, but I want to inform him that his Government's role, while in the DG's case, was positive but in this particular case, the Government of West Bengal has not been cooperating in assigning this task of ensuring that there is a court, which is assigned as an NIA court.

15.00 hrs

The word ‘cyber terrorism’ has been imported from Section 66(f) and a couple of Members talked about that. [Translation] When Shri Owaisi Ji said that a video was circulated by ISIS in Khorasan describing him as a slave of the Indian Government, I would ask you, as of today, which agency is capable of handling such a matter? No agency is presently equipped to handle it. That is precisely why this amendment is necessary.

[English]

If this amendment is not there, such videos or such issues will come. People from Kerala, so many of them visited ISIS, are involved in terrorism activities outside the country. Under which law, will you prosecute them? Under which law, will you investigate them? Under which law, will you cooperate with the external agencies of other countries? For doing all that, this gap needs to be filled. And for filling that gap and fulfilling the interests, which Mr. Chidambaram expressed at that time, this particular amendment has been brought in.

Now, coming to deletion of sub-sections 3,4,5,6 and 7 of Section 11 which is regarding the appointment of judges, this particular aspect was also brought in by Mr. Manish Tewari. I need to tell him that if a particular Court is assigned as a NIA Court, then

these particular enactments become irrelevant and obscure. For that reason, these are unnecessary sections and that is why this amendment has happened.

The prosecutor's training was also brought in by Mr. Banerjee. I must tell him that the Bhopal Judicial Academy is not only dealing with training of judges but also it is dealing with the training of prosecutors as well.

Intervention in State's jurisdiction was what Mr. Mahtab brought in. Now, I must tell him, as I have already stated, if the nature of crime is different, the State Government …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Let the Minister to reply. You have not been nominated by the Minister. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: Hon. Speaker, do I have the authority to deal with the subjects that have been raised in my speech, or not?

HON. SPEAKER: You do have the authority.

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: Hon. Speaker, what is this objection that is being raised?

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: A Minister can make comments. …*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Minister may comment on my speech as well. It only shows that I was listening to all of you very carefully. I was not sleeping. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please do not respond to them.

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab Ji has spoken about jurisdiction. [English] I have already stated that the nature of crime has changed and since the nature of crime has changed, the State police is not equipped to deal with those aspects. It is for this reason, this amendment has happened. …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Is the DGP not an Investigating Officer?…*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: The DGP is not an Investigating Officer. He is only an administrative head. Mr. Mahtab, what are you saying? …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: You are understanding my point that is why you are saying this. My point of contention here is this. You are informing the DGP when you are going to investigate. Why are you not involving him in investigation?

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: No.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: You cannot say 'no'. You have no authority to say this. I have asked the Government. I have repeatedly asked the Government: "You consider that."…*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: I will say why I am saying this because I am a trained lawyer. …*(Interruptions)* Mr. Mahtab…

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please do not call out names.

Hon. Member, this House is not meant for debating with one another. Please address the Chair.

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: Hon. Speaker Sir, when an offence is committed under the IPC and an arrest warrant is issued under the CrPC, there can be inter-State crimes as well. For instance, if a crime is committed in Delhi and the accused absconds to Uttar Pradesh, there is an existing legal framework under which the Investigating Officer from Delhi can go to Uttar Pradesh with the warrants, inform the local police, and produce the accused before the competent authority. In other words, even within inter-State jurisdictions, under the existing basic criminal law itself, there are provisions covering investigation and arrest. Therefore, what the law is clarifying here is the active role of the Investigating

Officer. [English] This law is giving NIA officers the same powers as that of a police officer. Under those powers, the officer is allowed to investigate the matter wherever the crime may have happened. Now, I have given some examples as to why the registration of a case is important. If the crimes have happened in Syria, Sri Lanka, or Bangladesh, what is the provision under which the Indian Courts or the Indian Judicial system will act? The first and foremost is the registration of a case. Till these gaps are filled, the registration cannot happen, and till the registration of a case happens, the evidence cannot be collected, and till the evidence is collected, the persons cannot be prosecuted.

This is the first step under which the registration of a case becomes imperative and thus prosecution. When transfers take place or any other change occurs, to maintain the continuity of prosecution, the courts have been designated, rather than people, by notification. [Translation] The point that was made regarding the existing Sessions Judges was that they are already burdened with a heavy workload, and if these additional responsibilities are also assigned to them, it would not be feasible for them to discharge their duties effectively. ... (*Interruption*s) Let me to complete.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please address the Chair.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: So, the designation of a court helps in maintaining the continuity of prosecution even if people get transferred or go to some other jurisdiction. It is all meant for expeditious disposal.

Mr. Raja commented about the communalisation of the Act. Let me explain to him; I can take him back to what Mr. Chidambaram said. I am quoting Mr. Chidambaram: [Translation] "that it was a communal law, whereas this is a secular law, you will not say that. I hope you realise that you have caused immense harm to the country." What I am trying to say is this. This particular enactment is actually a secular enactment. It is not defining the religion of a terrorist or the religion of a criminal. In fact, in the practical side of its jurisdiction, Left Wing terrorism, terrorism in the North East, and all these things have been handled in a pretty much exemplary way. As we proceed, I just want to point out that already eight things have been listed. Within these eight things, four more items have been imported. Those four are Section 66F of the IT Act, the Explosive Substances Act, when cases of terrorism are investigated, bombs or similar materials are recovered, over which the State Governments have jurisdiction, but the investigating agency does not. Therefore, it was necessary to import these aspects. Trafficking of women and drug trafficking are grave concerns. We are located

right between the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle, regions where smuggling is at its peak and where human trafficking also takes place. In order to deal with this menace, Sections 370 and 370A of the Indian Penal Code have been incorporated. There are different kinds of firearms, such as AK-47s and others, which have been brought within the ambit of the Arms Act. Prohibited arms have been clearly defined, even specifying the bore, and included in the Schedule, including matters relating to anti-hijacking and atomic energy, among others. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please address the Chair.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, why are you responding to them?

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI: Hon. Speaker Sir, NIA has a pan-India presence in which 272 cases were registered. Judgements have been pronounced in 51 cases out of which conviction was secured in 46 cases. Overall, the conviction rate is more than 90 per cent. NIA has secured conviction of five Indian Mujahideen (IM) senior operatives including Yasin Bhatkal who has been awarded capital punishment for the twin blasts in Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad and serial bomb blasts at Bodh Gaya.

While making statements, Members should be aware that among the 12 persons apprehended and against whom six cases were framed in Jammu and Kashmir, action has been taken against Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, a LeT operative; Syed Salahuddin, head of Hizbul Mujahideen; Yasin Malik, chief of JKLF; Shabbir Shah, a separatist; Asiya Andrabi, chairperson of Dukhtaran-e-Millat; and Masrat Alam. Action against all these individuals has curtailed terrorist funding. Therefore, it is essential that religion is not linked with such matters. However, the House is well aware of the kind of activities that were carried out earlier by invoking religion, and those facts are before everyone. You are also aware that it has been stated that an accused is not guilty till proven guilty.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to conclude by saying that a person is not guilty till proven so. Yet, observe the manner in which statements were made in the case of Sadhvi Pragya Ji, and the kind of remarks that were made with regard to pending cases and even cases that have already concluded.

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH (SRINAGAR): Hon. Speaker Sir, you know how much terrorism there is in our State. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: You may seek clarification from the Hon. Minister later. The Hon. Home Minister is competent.

... (Interruptions)

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: Before the Hon. Home Minister speaks, please allow one of our Members to speak briefly. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I will give you one minute for clarification. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Farooq Sahib, what is it that you wish to submit? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: After the Hon. Minister has spoken, I will allow clarification.

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: Please allow them to speak, because you know how deeply our State is affected by terrorism. ... (*Interruption*s) Our worker was attacked, and an attempt was made to shoot him, but unfortunately a policeman was injured. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I have already asked the Hon. Home Minister to speak. After the Minister has spoken, I will allow clarifications.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AMIT SHAH): Hon. Speaker Sir, the reply will be given by our Minister of State, Shri Kishan Reddy Ji. However, certain points have emerged during the discussion which, through you, I consider it necessary to clarify at my level for the Hon. Members of this House and for the people of the country.

First of all, many Members have said that this law will be misused, that this will happen, that will happen, and so on. Names of certain religions and even certain organisations have also been mentioned. I wish to assure the House at the very outset that the Narendra Modi Government has neither the intention, nor the inclination, nor will it ever allow this law to be misused. This law will be used purely for the purpose of eliminating terrorism. While doing so, we will not look at which religion the person belongs to. Both these points must be absolutely clear. Whoever falls within its ambit, and whoever commits an offence that attracts this law, will be dealt with firmly under its provisions. I would like to give this assurance to the House.

Secondly, many Members have said that POTA had to be repealed and TADA had to be repealed because they were misused. I wish to place the record straight. POTA was not repealed due to misuse; rather, POTA was repealed to protect vote-bank politics. I

state this categorically. There was no misuse of POTA. POTA was a law that protected the country from terrorism. POTA was a law that safeguarded the security of our borders. POTA was a law that instilled fear in the minds of terrorists. It ensured that those who worked against the nation were put behind bars and sent to the gallows. That law was repealed in the year 2004, after the UPA Government came to power, through the very first proposal of its Cabinet. ... (*Interruption*s) I accept that it was a political decision. We have no objection to political decisions being taken. Take political decisions, but please do not use the floor of Parliament merely for political purposes. ... (*Interruption*s) You may say that POTA was misused and ask how many people of which religion were arrested. Shri Owaisi Sahib has said that action used to be taken against Muslims. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except what the Hon. Home Minister has said.

... *(Interruptions)*[*]

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Hon. Speaker Sir, I wish to say to the Leader of the Congress in the House that it was not we who repealed it. That explanation itself was political. ... (*Interruption*s) When they

[*] Not recorded.

were speaking, we did not engage in such debate. Hon. Speaker Sir, I seek your protection. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Home Minister, you are competent. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF COAL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI): When the entire discussion was held, there was absolutely no *Interruption* from this side. Now, it is your turn. Please listen to him. The Hon. Home Minister is replying... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: I want to listen with rapt attention... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: With rapt attention, you are trying to disturb him. I am telling you that it is unfair. I am only appealing to you. This is a very important enactment that we are bringing. Kindly listen very patiently. If you have got any clarification, you will have ample opportunities for that... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: I want to get enlightened by the Hon. Minister... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I had clarified this earlier as well. Even earlier, when there was no formal arrangement, and a discussion on Kashmir was taking place, I had sought clarifications from the Hon. Minister on behalf of all of you. I ensure that all Members are given adequate opportunity within the House. I also expect the Government to respond to clarifications sought by Members. If any Hon. Member requires clarification, please send a note to the Table. If the matter so warrants, and if the subject requires it, I will certainly facilitate clarifications from the Government for all of you. Hon. Home Minister, you may now proceed.

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Hon. Speaker Sir, in support of what I have stated, I wish to add a few more points. It remains my considered view even today that repealing POTA was not a correct decision. This opinion is not mine alone; a large number of officers who have served for years within our security agencies also believe that repealing POTA was a grave mistake. What were the consequences of that decision? Between 2004 and 2008, terrorism in the country increased significantly, to such an extent that the very National Investigation Agency, which we are now seeking to further strengthen, had to be brought into existence by the UPA Government itself. The internal security situation of the country

went out of control. When bomb blasts took place in Mumbai and terrorists were allowed to unleash their violence for hours on end, it was only then that the decision was taken to establish the NIA. Had POTA not been repealed, such a grave situation of terrorism would not have arisen in the country, and perhaps even the Mumbai blasts might not have occurred.

Hon. Speaker Sir, therefore, I wish to submit that whenever we make any comment in this House, we must reflect on what the people of the country think about this House, what they think about its Members, and what impression this House as a whole is projecting to the world. We must consider what message we are conveying to the minds of the citizens. One should not speak merely for the sake of hollow politics. Owaisi Sahib has stated that action is taken against Muslims and not against Hindus. Owaisi Sahib may not be aware that when a Tamil organisation indulged in terrorism, the action taken against it was equally firm and uncompromising. No one has ever looked at religion, nor should religion be looked at. However, when we stand here and speak on such a grave and sensitive issue, we must also be conscious that our words have long-term consequences. Such statements also end up boosting the morale of terrorists. When there is a proposal to strengthen agencies to rein in terrorism and the House does not speak in one voice, it

only emboldens those who seek to spread terror. I appeal to Members across all parties that this law is meant to tackle terrorism in the country and to further empower our agencies. Tomorrow, if our embassy is blown up, how will the NIA investigate unless it is adequately empowered?

Hon. Speaker Sir, all these questions have been raised. Our people were killed in Sri Lanka, our people were killed in Bangladesh, and our agencies do not have the legal authority to go there and investigate. It is precisely to provide this legal authority to our agencies that we have brought this Bill. ... *(Interruptions)* Instead of commenting on this, if one wishes to revisit old frameworks and old calculations, one may seek time from the Hon. Speaker Sir and engage in a full and free discussion. I am also ready to participate in such a discussion. ... *(Interruptions)* As far as strengthening the NIA is concerned, it is essential that this House remains unanimous and united. This unity is necessary to send a message to the people of the country, to the world at large, and most importantly, to the terrorists themselves. ... *(Interruptions)*

Hon. Speaker Sir, Farooq Sahib has raised an issue related to Jammu and Kashmir. A Member of his party, a retired Judge, had gone to someone’s residence where firing took place, in which a security personnel also sustained a minor injury. Farooq Sahib, I

take note of your concern. The system is acting on it, and I am confident that we will soon reach the root of the matter and take the strictest possible action.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of State for Home Affairs.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY): Hon. Speaker Sir, all parties have participated in this discussion. I would first like to thank all Hon. Members of Parliament for their valuable contributions.

Hon. Speaker Sir, our Government is firmly opposed to terrorism. It is to protect the nation from terrorism that we have brought this Act.

In this matter, responsibility rests both with Parliament and with the Government, and it is in discharge of this shared responsibility that we have introduced this Act. Hon. Member Shri Manish Tewari spoke about civil liberties, democracy, and free and fair prosecution. I wish to assure the House, and as our Hon. Home Minister has already clarified before you, that there is no problem whatsoever with the federal system. Through you, Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to inform the House that all State police agencies and our NIA agency will work together in coordination. There is no

discrimination of any kind in this process. [English] It has been provided in our Constitution. There exists a well-established interagency intelligence dissemination platform for terrorism-related acts and intelligence inputs. The Multi Agency Centre (MAC) has been strengthened and reorganised and enabled to function on a 24x7 basis with real-time collection and sharing of intelligence with intelligence agencies of the State, which ensures sharing of information between State and Central agencies and Subsidiary Multi-Agency Centres (SMACs), mostly in State capitals and connected to MAC.

[Translation]

There is continuous coordination between the State Governments, the Centre, and our NIA. There is no problem whatsoever. We will not interfere in the States. The State Police and the State Governments will work together on issues related to terrorism. While sitting in Parliament, we should not speak in terms of division between the State and the Centre.

Hon. Speaker Sir, questions have also been raised regarding international action, about what authority we have and how investigations will be carried out abroad. Some Hon. Members have asked how action will be taken in Pakistan. How investigations are to be conducted with Pakistan has already been demonstrated after

Pulwama and Pathankot. Our Narendra Modi Government has clearly shown how it conducts investigations with Pakistan.

Now, Hon. Speaker Sir, I am speaking about other countries. [English] There is a SAARC Convention (Suppression of Terrorism) Act, 1993, which provides for extra-territorial jurisdiction for the investigation of terrorism offences. The Act is appended to the Schedule to the NIA Act.

[Translation]

The Act that you enacted, the Act that was enacted by the Congress Government, was also linked with SAARC. Earlier, we were not empowered to take action by going abroad, but now we must do something. When the Government framed this Act, there are certain issues within it, and I would like to place those before the House. [English] The Acts which are appended to the Schedule to the NIA Act are the Atomic Energy Act, 1962; the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967; the Anti-Hijacking Act, 1982; the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982; the SAARC Convention (Suppression of Terrorism) Act, 1993; the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Maritime Navigation and Fixed Platforms on Continental Shelf Act, 2002; and the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005. So,

anything that is waging war against our country is looked through this Act. A great deal has happened in which, during your Government's tenure, matters were not handled properly. Therefore, we wish to bring the NIA Act, with amendments, in a proper and effective manner.

Hon. Speaker Sir, reference has also been made just now to the courts. While speaking about foreign jurisdictions, there are two or three other Acts included in this, about which I would like to inform the House. [English] *The International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings also provides for extra-territorial jurisdiction. This is an international Act. Then, there is the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Maritime Navigation and Fixed Platforms on Continental Shelf Act, 2002.* This is also an international Act.

Within this framework, we also enter into agreements with foreign countries. From time to time, whenever any incident occurs in a particular country, we can engage in dialogue with that country. Today, all countries across the world do not support terrorism. Some people keep speaking in terms of terrorism through the prism of Hindu and Muslim. The Hon. DMK Member, Shri Raja Ji, has spoken in this context about Hindu and Muslim. Terrorism has no religion. Terrorism has no belief. Terrorism has no caste. Terrorism

has no region. Terrorism is terrorism. It is an act against humanity. It has no gender either. Therefore, fighting terrorism is the responsibility of the entire world, the responsibility of Members of Parliament, the responsibility of political parties, and the responsibility of our Government, because this is a Government of vigilant guardians, and our guardians will always stand at the forefront in defence of the nation.

Hon. Speaker Sir, reference has just been made to human trafficking. Matters that fall entirely within the jurisdiction of State Governments and occur within their State territory do not come under this framework. However, in cases involving inter State issues, we take up the matter of human trafficking in consultation with the concerned State Governments. Therefore, there is no problem in this regard. Where the matter is inter State, and even international in nature, authority has been conferred upon the NIA in this respect. The NIA regularly, in any case where it seeks to conduct an investigation, writes to the Chief Secretary of the concerned State where terrorist activity has taken place. It also writes to the DGP of that State, and to the head of the State intelligence, requesting that the subject matter available with them be shared, after which the NIA proposes to proceed further. Through such dialogue and mutual understanding, the NIA

undertakes investigation into terrorism-related matters by visiting the concerned State. There exists such an understanding, which some Members may not be aware of. I urge you to speak to the DGPs of your respective States. There is no such problem with any DGP, and no issue with any State. The NIA is an organisation that works cooperatively and in close coordination with all concerned.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to speak about the cases and explain how the figure of 90 Percent has been arrived at. So far, the NIA has registered FIRs and commenced investigation in 272 cases. Out of these, judgments have been delivered by the courts in 51 cases. Of these 51 cases, convictions have been secured in 46 cases. It is on this basis that I referred to the figure of 90 Percent. As I have already stated earlier, Hon.mati Supriya Sule Ji, in the cases where judgments have been delivered, convictions have taken place in 90 Percent of the cases. This point has already been clarified by me. Further, out of the 272 cases, the NIA has filed charge sheets in approximately 199 cases. This is because State Governments and State police forces are burdened with a wide variety of cases, and effective handling does not always take place. Therefore, we seek to strengthen this mechanism further. I have already explained how the conviction rate of 90 Percent has been achieved. Another matter

that has been raised is the Malegaon case. In this regard, the Special Public Prosecutor, Shri Rohini Ji, has also made a statement.

[English]

The SLP is pending in the Hon. Supreme Court. Since the matter is sub judice, it will not be proper to comment. Secondly, the issue of judges has been raised. I would like to clarify that the appointment of judges of NIA Special Courts will continue to be done by the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned, as is being done now. As it is being done at present, it will continue to be done in the same manner in the future as well. There is no change in this. The proposed amendments are for simplification and to avoid delay, as our Government wants to make sure that the terrorists are punished quickly in accordance with the legal provisions. The amendment will result in speedy investigation and prosecution that improves NIA's performance. Secondly, with regard to issues pertaining to State Governments, the role of the higher courts is clearly defined. Under the Unlawful Activities Act, the authority to prosecute such cases has been vested in the State Governments. The Unlawful Activities Act is a law enacted by the Government of India, and under this Act, for all cases that arise, Special Courts are to be constituted in order to expedite proceedings. The authority to constitute such Special Courts rests with the State Governments.

The Special Courts established by State Governments have no involvement or interference from the Union Government whatsoever.

Furthermore, this is not confined only to our own country. There is the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which has its own system, and it has agreements with many countries, including ours. Where they are able to go, India can also go. We proceed only after dialogue and consultation. We do not simply land by flight and immediately commence investigation. Prior to that, our Ambassador engages in discussions, examines what the case is, and only then do we proceed promptly. This is known to all of you. You are all learned and enlightened Members. Therefore, there exists a structured system under which, through consultation with other countries and with their permission, investigations are carried out. This is because, at the international level and at the United Nations level, an agreement has been reached on the issue of terrorism. This is not the problem of one country alone. It is a global issue. Accordingly, agreements have been entered into with all countries, and actions will be taken within the framework of those agreements.

I have already replied on the issues concerning Karnataka, Dabholkar, and other matters as well. Members of the Congress Party are seated there. We too desire that no person in this country

should lose their life due to terrorism. I would like, first of all, to thank Shri Ravneet Singh Ji for the thoughtful point he has made. He understands this from the heart, and he feels the pain. He knows how much anguish a family suffers if even a single person is martyred due to a terrorist act. Whether it is our Army, the paramilitary forces, the military, our police personnel, or an ordinary citizen, the loss of even one life to terrorism causes immense suffering to the family concerned. Shri Ravneet Singh Ji understands this, and everyone should understand that there is no politics in this. There is no connection with any religion. That is why this work must be done. I would also like to state that Shri Asaduddin Owaisi Sahib has referred to Pakistan and Israel. You have spoken about Israel. ... *(Interruptions)* Whether it is Israel or any other country, for us, all are the same. ... *(Interruptions)* I wish to clarify that in matters relating to Hindu or Muslim and terrorism, we do not differentiate. ... *(Interruptions)* I am making a general point. ... *(Interruptions)* For us, whether it is Pakistan or Palestine. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: They do not wish to listen. One must have the capacity to listen. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY: Hon. Speaker Sir, for us and for our Government, whether it is Pakistan or Palestine... ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, please do not respond to them.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY: Hon. Speaker Sir, whether it is Palestine or Israel, for us both are friendly nations. We maintain cordial relations and live in cooperation with both countries. We have nothing against anyone. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please take your seat.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please take your seat. I have given you an opportunity.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing except the statement of the Hon. Minister of State for Home Affairs shall go on record.

… *(Interruptions)*[*]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please do not respond. The Hon. Minister of State for Home Affairs is competent to reply.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY: Hon. Speaker Sir, Sir, neither we nor our Government need lessons from anyone. The people of India,

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[*] Not recorded.

130 crore citizens, have entrusted our Government with the responsibility of protecting them. Whether Hindu, Muslim, or Christian, all are the same for us. ... *(Interruptions)* There is no need to make statements about Hindus in this country, about Hindu deities, about Lord Ram, or to say that if the police are removed for 15 minutes, the 130 crore Hindus of India will be shown their place. ... *(Interruptions)* Such statements need not be made. There is no need to teach us. We never speak in such a manner. There is no need to instruct us on these matters. Making such remarks in Parliament is not necessary. Saying that if the police are removed for 15 minutes, we will take care of this country and of Hindus, ... *(Interruptions)* is not acceptable.

Hon. Speaker Sir, both the Hon. Home Minister and I have already stated that our Government will, in the coming days, take full responsibility to uproot terrorism from its very roots. ... (*Interruption*s) As vigilant guardians of this nation, we have been elected with a mandate. To serve the nation and to protect the country, we will work as vigilant guardians. Therefore, I appeal to all Members of Parliament to rise above politics. This is not a political issue. It is an issue concerning the nation. It is an issue of terrorism.

Some Members have stated that the NIA needs to be strengthened and that its staff strength should be increased. I fully acknowledge this point. We are also giving serious thought to this. We are integrating various institutions, and in the coming days, we wish to develop the NIA into a strong and effective investigation agency. Therefore, I urge all of you to support this Bill. This is not related to religion. This is not related to politics. We all want to work together on this. As I have already stated, in this country, even a Chief Minister has had to make the supreme sacrifice due to terrorism. A Prime Minister has also been a victim of terrorism. A former Prime Minister too has had to sacrifice his life due to terrorism. Very recently, in Pulwama, 40 personnel of our paramilitary forces, of the CRPF, laid down their lives due to terrorism. Their families may be poor. They may have joined in search of employment and to serve the nation. But they too were human beings. They had families, children, mothers, and fathers. We will collectively make every effort in the coming days to eliminate terrorism from this country in every possible manner. Jai Hind.

[English]

SHRI HASNAIN MASOODI (ANANTNAG): Hon. Speaker, Sir, it is nobody's concern that the problem should not be addressed. Our concern is that the mechanism evolved or sought to be employed must be in tune with the Constitution.

We say that the parent Act of NIA is not in conformity with the Constitution. It offends the Constitution, and it offends the superior mandate of Part III of the Constitution. Now, what is the superior mandate of Article 21? It is said that had there been only Article 21, that would suffice in absence of even Part III of the Constitution. Article 21 guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. Personal liberty is multi-dimensional.

Article 21 provides that nobody should be deprived of his life and his personal liberty except according to procedure established by law... *(Interruptions)* What does the Supreme Court say?…*(Interruptions)* The Supreme Court says that the procedure should be just, fair, and reasonable. Whenever we say 'just, fair, and reasonable', it includes all the three stages – investigation, trial, and sentence.

One of the dimensions of Article 21 is access to justice. Now, let us see law in action. Sir, in the case of Jammu and Kashmir, it is an unbridled power of the Union Government to have a designated

court. Previously, it was constituted at any place they liked, irrespective of the place of registration of the cases. Now take the case of Jammu and Kashmir. We do not have any NIA court designated or appointed in Kashmir.

People from far-flung areas, from Nobra, Zanskar, Teetwal etc. have to come all the way to Jammu for a simple application. Is it not a denial of access to justice? Is the law in tune with the mandate of the Constitution? Is the law in conformity with what has been laid down by the Supreme Court?

Sir, that was the parent Act. It was so vividly and objectively put forth by Shri Manish Tiwari Ji. He touched all the dimensions. Regarding conflict of jurisdiction, in case of Jammu and Kashmir, we do not have the State List. Hon. Member referred to conflict between the Union List and the State List. In our case, there is no State List. Whatever powers we have given to the Centre, all the power have been retained by the State. So, in case of Jammu and Kashmir, there is enough reason that the Act should not be applied. *…(Interruptions)*.

Now, let us come to the proposed amendment. The first thing is in relation to the setting up of a court so that we have access to justice to the people who are suspected to be involved in any activity. People experience great inconvenience in Jammu and

Kashmir because the court is not set up. Where will they go? That is the real problem.

Let us come to the second proposed amendment. There can be no disagreement that Government can go for extra territorial jurisdiction for investigation. Whether that will bear any fruit or whether that will have any kind of benefit in real terms, that is to be seen. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, if you wish to offer any explanation, you may do so. If there is any clarification to be made on this matter, please proceed with it.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI HASNAIN MASOODI: The second issue is that you are depriving the High Court …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: Sir, there should only be clarificatory questions after the reply of the Hon. Minister. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: If you wish to seek any clarification, you may do so.

Shri kalyan Banerjee**.** I would first request the Hon. Members that I should not have to ring the bell or interrupt anyone. If you wish to seek clarification on any issue, you may do so. Please do not make a full speech. Shri Kalyan Banerjee.

[English]

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE (SREERAMPUR): Hon. Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Minister of State has mentioned that it is a global problem and all countries have entered into an agreement. I want this clarification from him. Has Pakistan signed that agreement allowing the NIA to enter inside Pakistan and conduct investigations in accordance with the provisions of the NIA Act or not?

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Dr. Satya Pal Singh.

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister of State for Home Affairs whether there is even a single law in this country that has not been misused till date. If, in any case, an innocent person has been acquitted under any law, was it due to the weakness of that law, due to shortcomings on the part of the investigating officer, or due to deficiencies on the part of the prosecutor in the court?

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Manish Tewari, please confine yourself to just one clarification. If you raise a second point, I will intervene.

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: Hon. Speaker Sir, it will not take a second minute.

HON. SPEAKER: Not a minute, only one clarification. Just as Shri Kalyan Banerjee sought a clarification, you may also seek a similar clarification.

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: Hon. Speaker Sir, I will certainly seek only a clarification. I wish to ask one question to the Hon. Home Minister. I had also mentioned this point during my statement. Hon. Home Minister, a Division Bench of the Gauhati High Court had declared the Central Bureau of Investigation to be illegal. I do not know whether that judgment is within your knowledge, but kindly take cognisance of it. It has been six years, and that matter has been pending before a Constitutional Bench. Will you advise your Attorney General to approach the Supreme Court and request the Court to hear this matter and decide it, so that it is conclusively determined whether the CBI is a legal organisation or an illegal organisation? This is the only clarification I seek from you.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please. A healthy discussion is taking place in the House, and everyone must be given an opportunity to speak. Shri P. P. Chaudhary is a learned advocate.

[English]

SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY (PALI): Sir, the object of the Bill is to provide speedy investigation and prosecution. This is a very well-drafted Bill, and it is the need of the hour. But I would like to ask one clarification on this issue. This Act provides so many enactments under which the crime is committed, and the NIA can investigate, but there are so many parallel agencies in our country, including four enforcement agencies.

According to me, if we want speedy investigation to be conducted, then we should pool the evidence and manpower. I believe that there should be a Joint Investigation Council, and the evidence of different agencies can be provided to this Joint Investigation Council.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Sir, I have to ask just one question. Under the Bill, the Minister is designating existing Sessions Courts to double up as Special Courts. The question that I have here is this: Are the designated courts continuing to deal with their other cases that they were dealing with earlier? If this is the case, then are we not just adding to the clogging of the judicial system, which already has such a backlog? Should we not have special courts for terrorists rather than designating

Sessions Courts for it? It was there in the old law, and you have not changed the law. Please consider it.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, you have spoken at length. Please seek a brief clarification.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Minister, in his reply, stated that out of 272 cases, 199 charge sheets have been filed, judgments have been delivered in 51 cases, 46 convictions have taken place, amounting to a 90 Percent conviction rate. That is fine, and it is commendable. However, how much time has been taken in these cases? What has been the time spent from investigation to judgment? Will you, in future, consider laying down a time frame as to how long a case should take from investigation to final judgment? Are you contemplating such a time frame? Secondly, how many cases from West Bengal have so far been taken up by the NIA? What is the outcome of the Khagragarh explosion case?

[English]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the whole Act deals with terrorism. Terrorism has not been defined as the amendment that is being effected today relates to the United Nations Organisation, which has suggested certain provisions to be

made. As it relates to the collective responsibility of the Government, I would like to understand what steps have been taken at the United Nations level because that is India's point of view. We should always put forth our point of view in different international forums in defining terrorism. Dr. Tharoor, I know you were there as the Under Secretary in the United Nations. In West Bengal, terrorism is defined in a different way; in Uttar Pradesh, terrorism is defined in another way.

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE: I have a pointed question. In the reply, the Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs said that he had an issue with Kalburgi *ji* and Gauri Lankesh because it was a Congress Government. In my State, about Dabholkar *ji* and Pansare *ji*, when will you deliver justice to them? Your Government is in power here as well as in Maharashtra.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Asaduddin Owaisi, please confine yourself to only one clarification.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Sir, certainly. I am seeking your protection.

HON. SPEAKER: You have my full protection..

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Sir, I know they will not give me protection. ... *(Interruptions)* Look, Sir, the moment they see me, something happens to them. ... *(Interruptions)*

Sir, through you, I wish to ask the Government that in these terrorist cases, the biggest problem is that witnesses turn hostile. Will your Government initiate a witness protection programme? Will you sign the International Criminal Court statute? Why are you not filing appeals in the Hyderabad Mecca Masjid, Ajmer, and Samjhauta cases? Why are you afraid? Whom are you trying to protect? ... (*Interruption*s)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Home Affairs.

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Sir, beginning with Hasnain Sahib, one after another, Hon. Members have raised certain questions. Some of these questions pertain to the NIA as an institution, some relate to the Act, and some are even beyond its scope.

Hasnain Sahib invoked personal liberty and the rights under Article 21, and stated that people have to travel very far. Hasnain Sahib, when a Designated Court or a Special Court is constituted, under every Act and within a State, it is usually one court. These are rare categories of offences. Crimes of terrorism are not something we desire to see in every household, nor will we allow that to happen. Such offences are relatively few, and therefore, there is generally only one such court in a State. You express great concern for personal liberty. Do you not have concern for the widows and children of those who are killed due to terrorism? We

are equally concerned about them. As far as convenience is concerned, this is not only for Kashmir. In every State, one such court has been established. For instance, if it is established in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, then if someone is apprehended in Kutch, they will have to come to Ahmedabad. In Kerala, if it is established in Thiruvananthapuram, people from across Kerala will have to come there. Do not project this as an injustice specifically against Kashmir. The people of Kashmir have now understood this reality. This kind of propaganda will no longer work. Therefore, kindly move beyond this line of argument.

the Hon. Member Shri Kalyan Banerjee Ji asked whether Pakistan would be included within this framework or not. There is, in any case, a SAARC agreement, which Pakistan has not implemented. However, even if Pakistan does not come within this framework, there are several other options available to us apart from the NIA, including surgical strikes and air strikes. We will strike terrorism there as well. Please do not be concerned. Should we abandon action in all those countries where we have permission, merely because Pakistan does not come within this arrangement?

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: I said this because Pakistanis are involved more often.

SHRI AMIT SHAH: I will explain this to you. You cannot debate further now. Please listen to my reply. Suppose a Pakistan-sponsored terrorist attacks the United States Embassy and our people are killed there. Should we prosecute the case or not? Just because Pakistan does not implement the agreement, should we abandon action across the entire world? What kind of argument is this? Under international pressure, Pakistan will have to implement this treaty sooner or later, and on that day, this Act will apply there as well.

If it does not do so, we have other means to deal with it. Manish Ji stated that the CBI is illegal. That matter is still pending, and no final judgment has been delivered on it. However, if the CBI were indeed illegal, the Congress Party would have suffered the most, because no one has misused the CBI as much as the Congress has.

Shri P. P. Chaudhary Sahab spoke about a parallel agency. Once a case is taken up by the NIA, there is no interference by any State agency in that matter. The NIA also has provisions to seek assistance from State agencies and from experts who specialise in the subject. Therefore, the investigation carried out is comprehensive and foolproof.

Shri Shashi Tharoor Ji asked whether the Designated Court would take up other cases as well. It will not take up any other cases

during the prescribed period. The Designated Court will exclusively hear only NIA cases. This is precisely to ensure that cases are disposed of expeditiously. We have introduced this provision because, at times, judges retire, at times they are transferred, and at times they are promoted, due to which the court remains vacant for a long period. The purpose of having a Designated Court is that the charge will vest in the judge appointed by the Hon. Chief Justice of the High Court, and that judge will automatically become the NIA Court judge. All other cases assigned to that judge will automatically stand transferred away. This position is clear.

Shri Adhir Ranjan Ji spoke about fixing a time frame. What Shri Adhir Ranjan Ji has said is correct, but we live under the rule of law. We apprehend a person, register a case, conduct an investigation, and file the charge sheet. That charge sheet may be challenged in the High Court and in the Supreme Court. Proceedings take place there as well. Thereafter, a quashing petition may be filed, and again the matter goes to the High Court and the Supreme Court. Therefore, a time frame cannot be determined merely by constituting Designated Courts. These are legal proceedings, and through any Act, we cannot curtail anyone’s legal rights. The delays that occur are a result of the beauty of our Constitution, which ensures that every individual has the right to

defend himself. I nonetheless acknowledge that, even then, NIA cases have yielded results at a very fast pace, with positive outcomes. A 90 Percent success ratio is a record among investigative agencies across the world.

Owaisi Sahib raised the issue of a witness protection programme. This is already in force under our Government. It is an order of the Supreme Court, and all State Governments as well as all Union Government agencies comply with it. As regards your question on appeals and who decides them, Hon. Speaker Sir, an agency never decides on filing an appeal on its own. The agency seeks the opinion of law officers and proceeds on the basis of that opinion. If the agency were to influence the law officers, then you yourselves would say that the prosecution agency and the investigation agency must remain separate. How can we merge the two?

Owaisi Sahib goes a step further and portrays the Government, the investigation agency, and the prosecution agency as one and the same, as if the Government itself is doing everything. I would like to say to Owaisi Sahib that this is a Bharatiya Janata Party Government. It functions strictly in accordance with the law. Those who investigate, investigate. Those who prosecute, prosecute. And those who deliver judgments, deliver judgments.

Hon. Speaker Sir, with regard to his repeated question of who did it and who was responsible, I would like to cite a small example. At times, such awkward situations arise. The Samjhauta blast took place. In the Samjhauta blast case, certain individuals were apprehended. Not only the CBI in India, but even American agencies stated that those individuals were responsible for the Samjhauta blast. However, during the UPA Government, a complete U-turn was taken in the Samjhauta blast case, stating that those persons had not committed the offence and that someone else had. Those who were initially apprehended were released, and other persons were arrested. Eventually, they too were acquitted. Now, may I ask Owaisi Sahib and the UPA Government how those who were initially held responsible for the Samjhauta blast were released, why they were released, and because of whose actions they were released?

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: You should do it. You are in Government, you are in power. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI AMIT SHAH: We will do it. We will certainly do it. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Do it in the Mecca Masjid case as well, and in the Ajmer case too. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI AMIT SHAH: We will fulfil that wish of yours as well. Please do not worry. ... (*Interruption*s) Why did you not raise this question with the UPA Government as to why the real accused were being let off and innocent persons were being implicated? ... (*Interruption*s) You should have asked this question at that time.

Hon. Speaker Sir, from here I would like to say one thing to Owaisi Sahib: when you point one finger at someone, one finger is directed at them, but four fingers point back at yourself. Please always bear this in mind.

Hon. Speaker Sir, Shrimati Supriya Sule Ji stated that there is a BJP Government in Maharashtra and questioned what it would do. Neither the Kalburgi case falls within the scope of this matter, nor does what Shrimati Supriya Sule Ji referred to. ... (*Interruption*s) No such case comes within the purview of the NIA. Even so, we had stated earlier, ... (*Interruption*s) that Hon. Member Shri Raja Ji used the term “right-wing terrorism”. I wish to clarify at the outset that terrorism is neither right-wing nor left-wing. It is simply terrorism. ... (*Interruption*s) Everyone is prepared to respond firmly to terrorism. Our Hon. Minister of State has stated that there is a Congress Government in Karnataka. An allegation of right-wing terrorism was made, and therefore clarification was sought. Yes, there is a Government of our party in Maharashtra, and it will be

formed again. Whoever has committed these acts will certainly be punished. You may rest assured. This is all that I wish to state.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, be taken into consideration."

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Hon. Speaker, I demand a division.

SHRI AMIT SHAH: Sir, Hon. Speaker Sir, I submit that there must certainly be a division on this matter, so that the country comes to know who stands with terrorism and who stands against it.

HON. SPEAKER: Let the Lobbies be cleared.–

15.59 hrs (Shri N.K. Premachandran *in the Chair*)

16.00 hrs

16.01 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the lobbies have been cleared. All Hon. Members may kindly take their respective seats.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Secretary-General.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, we are all supporting the Bill. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Secretary-General, please wait for a moment.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, once I have issued directions, they must be followed. An Hon. Member has demanded a division. This is his right, and therefore I have allowed it.

Secretary-General.

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Hon. Members, I have to inform the Hon. Members that as the Division Numbers have not so far been allotted to Members, it is not possible to hold the Division by the Automatic Vote Recording Machine. Division will now take place under Rule 367 AA by distribution of slips.

Members will be supplied at their seats with ‘Ayes’ and ‘Noes’ printed slips for recording their votes. ‘Ayes’ slips are printed on one side in green, both in English and Hindi and ‘Noes’ in red on its reverse. On the slips, Members may kindly record votes of their choice by signing and writing legibly their names, IC Nos., and date at the place specified on the slip. Members who desire to record ‘Abstention’ may ask for the ‘Abstention’ (Yellow colour) slip. Immediately after recording their vote, each Member should pass on the slip to the Division Clerk who will come to their seat to collect the same for handing over to the officers at the Table. Members are requested to fill in only one slip for Division.

Members are also requested not to leave their seats till the slips are collected by the Division Clerks.

Thank you.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, be taken into consideration."

The Lok Sabha divided:

[English]

Ayes **16.10 hrs.**

Abdullah, Dr. Farooq

Agrawal, Shri Rajendra

Ahluwalia, Shri S.S.

Ajgalley, Shri Guharam

Ali, Kunwar Danish

Amarappa, Shri Karadi Sanganna

Angadi, Shri Suresh C.

Annadurai, Shri C. N.

Azad, Shrimati Sangeeta

Baalu, Shri T.R.

Baghel, Prof. S.P. Singh

Baghel, Shri Vijay

Baheria, Shri Subhash Chandra

Baij, Shri Deepak

Balyan, Dr. Sanjeev

Banerjee, Shri Kalyan

Bapat, Shri Girish Bhalchandra

Barla, Shri John

Behanan, Shri Benny

Beniwal, Shri Hanuman

Bey, Shri Horen Sing

Bhabhor, Shri Jashvantsinh Sumanbhai

Bharat, Shri Margani

Bhargava, Shri Ramakant

Bhatia, Shri Sanjay

Bhatt, Shri Ajay

Bhatt, Shrimati Ranjanben

Bholanath ‘B.P. Saroj’, Shri

'Bhole', Shri Devendra Singh

Bidhuri, Shri Ramesh

Bind, Shri Ramesh

Bisen, Dr Dhal Singh

Bohra, Shri Ramcharan

Bordoloi, Shri Pradyut

Borlakunta, Dr. Venkatesh Netha

Chandel, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh

Chandra Sekhar , Shri Bellana

Chandra, Shri Girish

Chaudhary, Shri P. P.

Chaudhary, Shri Pankaj

Chaudhuri, Sushri Debasree

Chauhan, Shri Devusinh

Chavda, Shri Vinod Lakhamshi

Choubey, Shri Ashwini Kumar

Choudhary, Shri Bhagirath

Choudhary, Shri Chandra Prakash

Chowdhury, Shri Adhir Ranjan

Damor, Shri Guman Singh

Dastidar, Dr. Kakoli Ghosh

Das, Shri Pallab Lochan

Deb, Shri Nitesh Ganga

Devarayalu, Shri Lavu Srikrishna

Devi, Shrimati Rama

Dhotre, Shri Sanjay Shamrao

Diler, Shri Rajveer

Dubey, Dr. Nishikant

Dubey, Shri Vijay Kumar

Dwivedi, Shri Harish

Eden, Shri Hibi

Gaddigoudar, Shri P. C.

Gangwar, Shri Santosh Kumar

Gao, Shri Tapir

Gautam, Shri Satish Kumar

Geetha Viswanath, Shrimati Vanga

Ghosh, Shri Dilip

Gnanathiraviam, Shri S.

Gupta, Shri Sangamlal

Gupta, Shri Sudheer

Hembram, Shri Kunar

Jadav, Dr. Umesh G

Jadhav, Shri Prataprao

Jadon, Dr. Chandra Sen

Jaiswal, Dr. Sanjay

Jardosh, Shrimati Darshana Vikram

Jigajinagi, Shri Ramesh Chandappa

Joshi, Shri C. P.

Joshi, Prof. Rita Bahuguna

Joshi, Shri Pralhad

Kachhadiya, Shri Naranbhai

Kamait, Shri Dileshwar

Kapoor, Shri Kishan

Karandlaje, Kumari Shobha

Kashyap, Shri Dharmendra

Kaswan, Shri Rahul

Katara, Shri Kanakmal

Kataria, Shri Rattan Lal

Kateel, Shri Nalin Kumar

Kaushik, Shri Ramesh Chander

Khadse, Shrimati Raksha Nikhil

Khan, Shri Saumitra

Kher, Shrimati Kirron

Kol, Shri Pakauri Lal

Koli, Shrimati Ranjeeta

Kora, Shrimati Geeta

Kotagiri, Shri Sridhar

Kotak, Shri Manoj

Kulaste, Shri Faggan Singh

Kumar, Dr Virendra

Kumar, Shri Bandi Sanjay

Kumar, Shri Kaushlendra

Kumar, Shri Narendra

Kumar, Shri P. Raveendranath

Kumar, Shri Vijay

Kundariya, Shri Mohanbhai

Kuriakose, Adv. Dean

Kushwaha, Shri Ravindra

Lekhi, Shrimati Meenakashi

Maadam, Shrimati Poonamben

Madhav, Shri Kuruva Gorantla

Mahant, Shrimati Jyotsna Charandas

Mahato, Shri Jyotirmay Singh

Mahtab, Shri Bhartruhari

Majhi, Shri Ramesh Chandra

Majumdar, Dr. Sukanta

Mal, Shri Asit Kumar

Mallah, Shri Kripanath

Mandal, Shri Ramprit

Maurya, Dr. Sanghamitra

Meena, Shri Arjunlal

Meena, Shrimati Jaskaur

Meghwal, Shri Arjun Ram

Mishra, Shri Janardan

Mohan, Shri P. C.

Moitra, Sushri Mahua

Mondal, Shrimati Pratima

Munda, Shri Arjun

Munde, Dr. Pritam Gopinathrao

Murmu, Shri Khagen

Nagar, Shri Rodmal

Namgyal, Shri Jamyang Tsering

Nath, Shri Balak

Nishad, Shri Ajay

Nishad, Shri Praveen Kumar

Oram, Shri Jual

Pachauri, Shri Satyadev

Pal, Shri Jagdambika

Pal, Shri Krishan

Panda, Shri Basanta Kumar

Pandey, Shri Ritesh

Pandey, Shri Santosh

Paswan, Shri Chhedi

Paswan, Shri Kamlesh

Patel, Dr.K.C.

Patel, Shri Devaji

Patel, Shri Hasmukhbhai Somabhai

Patel, Shri Parbatbhai Savabhai

Patel, Shri Prahalad Singh

Patel, Shri R.K. Singh

Patel, Shrimati Anupriya

Patel, Shrimati Keshari Devi

Patel, Shrimati Sharda Anil

Pathak, Shri Subrat

Pathak, Shrimati Riti

Patil, Shri C. R.

Patil, Shri Kapil Moreshwar

Pfoze, Dr. Lorho

Pintu , Shri Sunil Kumar

Poddar, Shrimati Aparupa

Pon, Shri Gautham Sigamani

Pothuganti, Shri Ramulu

Prakash, Adv. Adoor

Prasad , Shri Chandeshwar

Prathapan, Shri T. N.

Pujari, Shri Suresh

Rahaman, Shri Khalilur

Rai, Shri Nityanand

Raja, Shri A.

Rajput, Shri Mukesh

Raju, Shri Raghu Rama krishna

Ram, Shri Vishnu Dayal

Ramalingam, Shri S

Rangaiah, Shri Talari

Rathod , Shri Dipsinh Shankarsinh

Rathod, Shri Ratansinh Magansinh

Rathva, Shrimati Gitaben V.

Ravikumar, Dr. D.

Raut, Shri Vinayak Bhaurao

Rawat, Shri Tirath Singh

Ray, Prof. Sougata

Ray, Shrimati Sandhya

Reddeppa, Shri N.

Reddy, Shri G. Kishan

Reddy, Shri Komati Reddy Venkat

Reddy, Shri P.V. Midhun

Reddy, Shri Pocha Brahmananda

Roy, Dr. Jayanta Kumar

Roy, Dr. Rajdeep

Rudy , Shri Rajiv Pratap

Sahoo, Shri Mahesh

Sahu , Shri Chunni Lal

Sahu, Shri Chandra Sekhar

Saikia, Shri Dilip

Saini, Shri Nayab Singh

Sao, Shri Arun

Saraswati, Shri Sumedhanand

Sarkar, Dr. Subhas

Sarkar, Shri Jagannath

Saruta, Shrimati Renuka Singh

Satyavathi, Dr.Beesetti Venkata

Sawant, Shri Arvind

Senthilkumar S. , Shri DNV

Seth, Shri Sanjay

Shah, Shri Amit

Shah, Shrimati Mala Rajya Laxmi

Sharma, Shri Anurag

Sharma, Shri Jugal Kishore

Sharma, Shri Ram Swaroop

Sharma, Shri Vishnu Datt

Shejwalkar, Shri Vivek Narayan

Shetty, Shri Gopal

Shewale, Shri Rahul Ramesh

Shinde, Dr. Shrikant Eknath

Shrangare, Shri Sudhakar Tukaram

Siddeshwar , Shri G M

Sigriwal, Shri Janardan Singh

Simha, Shri Prathap

Singari, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar

Singh ' Lalan', Shri Rajiv Ranjan

Singh (Raju Bhaiya), Shri Rajveer

Singh Deo, Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari

Singh(Retd.) , Gen. Dr V. K .

Singh, Dr. Jitendra

Singh, Dr. Satya Pal

Singh, Shri Bhola

Singh, Shri Brijbhushan Sharan

Singh, Shri Brijendra

Singh, Shri Dharambir

Singh, Shri Dushyant

Singh, Shri Ganesh

Singh, Shri Kirti Vardhan

Singh, Shri Lallu

Singh, Shri Pashupati Nath

Singh, Shri Rajbahadur

Singh, Shri Ravneet

Singh, Shri Sunil Kumar

Singh, Shri Sushil Kumar

Singh, Shri Uday Pratap

Singh, Shri Virendra

Singh, Shrimati Kavita

Solanki, Dr. (Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai

Solanky, Shri Mahendra Singh

Soni, Shri Sunil Kumar

Soren, Shri Sunil

Sreekandan, Shri V. K.

Srinivas, Shri Kesineni

Subba, Shri Indra Hang

Sule, Shrimati Supriya Sadanand

Suman, Dr. Alok Kumar

Suresh, Shri Kodikunnil

Swamy, Shri A Narayana

Tadas, Shri Ramdas

Tamta, Shri Ajay

Teli, Shri Rameswar

Teni', Shri Ajay Misra

Tewari, Shri Manish

Thakur , Shri Gopal Jee

Thakur, Shri Anurag Singh

Thangapandian, Dr. T. Sumathy (a) Thamizhachi

Tharoor, Dr. Shashi

Tripathi, Dr. Ramapati Ram

Tripura, Shri Rebati

Tudu, Er. Bishweswar

Udasi, Shri S. C.

Uikey, Shri Durga Das

Unnithan, Shri Rajmohan

Vaithilingam, Shri Ve

Vallabhaneni, Shri Balashowry

Verma, Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh

Verma, Shri Ram Shiromani

Verma, Shrimati Rekha Arun

Vichare, Shri Rajan Baburao

Vikhe Patil, Dr. Sujay

Vishnu Prasad, Dr. M. K.

Yadav, Shri Ashok Kumar

Yadav, Shri Dinesh Chandra

Yadav , Shri Krishna Pal Singh

Yadav, Shri Ram Kripal

Yepthomi, Shri Tokheho

Noes

Ariff, Adv. A.M.

Jaleel, Shri Syed Imtiaz

Masoodi, Shri Hasnain

Natarajan, Shri P.R.

Owaisi, Shri Asaduddin

Subbarayan, Shri K.

Abstain

Premachandran, Shri N.K.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The result of the division is :

Ayes: 278

Noes: 06

Abstain: 01

The motion was adopted.

HON. SPEAKER: Now, the House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 *Definitions*

HON. SPEAKER: Shri P.K. Kunhalikutty -- Not present.

Shri N.K. Premachandran, would you like to move amendment number 2?

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: I beg to move:

Page 2, line 3,-

after "citizens or"

insert "directly or indirectly". (2)

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: I shall now put amendment No. 2 moved to clause 2 by Shri N.K. Premachandran to the vote of the House.

Amendment was put and negatived.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 2 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 3 *Formation of the National Investigation Agency*

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N. K. Premachandran, would you like to move Amendment No. 3?

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: I beg to move:

Page 2, line 5,-

for "Court of Session"

substitute "special court constituted or a Court of (3) Session".

Sir, when I am moving this Amendment, I am seeking the clarification from the Hon. Minister, that is, without amending the Criminal Procedure Code, how is it possible?

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: I shall now place amendment No. 3 to clause 3 moved by Shri N.K. Premachandran to the vote of the House.

Amendment was put and negatived.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 3 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 3 was added to the Bill.

Clause 4 ***Supervision of the National Investigation Agency***

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N.K. Premachandran, would you like to move Amendment No. 4 and 5?

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: Sir, I am not moving Amendment Nos. 4 and 5.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is

"That clause 4 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4 was added to the Bill.

Clause 5 ***Mode Of Constitution Of The Agency And Conditions Of Service Of Its Members***

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N. K. Premachandran, would you like to move Amendment No. 6?

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: I beg to move:

Page 2, line 12,-

for “is of the opinion”

substitute “has sufficient material to believe”. (6)

Sir, my amendment is harmless. If the Union Government is having sufficient material to believe that this is to be incorporated in the Schedule, let it be there.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: I shall now place amendment No. 6 to clause 5 as moved by Shri N.K. Premachandran to the vote of the House.

Amendment was put for voting and rejected.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 5 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 5 was added to the Bill.

Clause 6 *Investigation of Scheduled offences*

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N. K. Premachandran, would you like to move Amendment Nos. 7 and 8?

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: I beg to move:

Page 2, line 19,-

for ‘the words “designate’

substitute ‘the words “constitute or designate’. (7)

Page 2, line 24,-

after “High Court”

insert “and with the consent of the respective State Government”. (8)

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: I shall now put Amendment No. 7 and 8 to clause 6 as moved by Shri N.K. Premachandran to the vote of the House.

The amendments were put and negatived.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 6 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 6 was added to the Bill.

Clause 7 ***Power To Transfer Investigation To The State Government***

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N. K. Premachandran, would you like to move Amendment Nos. 9,10 and 11?

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: I beg to move:

Page 3, line 2,-

for ‘the words “designate’

substitute ‘the words “constitute or designate’. (9)

Page 3, line 5,-

for ‘designate’

substitute ‘constitute or designate’. (10)

Page 3, line 7,-

for ‘the words “designated’

substitute ‘the word “constituted or designated’. (11)

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: I shall now put Amendment No. 9, 10 and 11 to clause 7 as moved by Shri N.K. Premachandran to the vote of the House.

The amendments were put and negatived.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 7 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.

Clause 8 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, Enacting Formula, and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

[English]

SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.25 hrs

THE UNION BUDGET, 2019-2020

DEMAND FOR GRANT

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the lobbies have been cleared.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Item No. 18. The Demand for Grants No. 83 relating to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways will now be taken up for discussion and voting. Hon. Members present in the House who have given Cut Motions in respect of the Demands for Grants relating to Road Transport and Highways, and who wish to move their Cut Motions, may send their slips to the Table of the House within 15 minutes, indicating the numbers of the Cut Motions they wish to move. A list indicating the serial numbers of the Cut Motions so received will be displayed on the Notice Board shortly thereafter. If any Member finds any discrepancy in that list, they may immediately bring it to the notice of the officer at the Table of the House.

Motion moved:

"That from out of the Consolidated Fund of India, there be granted to the President such sums as are shown against Demand No. 83 relating to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways in Column 4 of the List of Demands for Grants, in respect of Revenue Account and Capital Account, for making payments during the year ending on the 31st March, 2020, in relation to the amounts shown against the said Demand in Column 2 of the said List."

[English]

Demand for Grant for 2019-20 in respect of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways submitted to the vote of Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	**Name of Demand**	**Amount of Demand for Grant voted by the House on February 1, 2019.**		**Amount of Demand for Grant submitted to the vote of the House**	
1	**2**	**3**		**4**	
		Revenue (Rs.)	Capital (Rs.)	Revenue (Rs.)	Capital (Rs.)
83	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways	8450,21,00,30	55585,67,00,00	13169,61,00,000	87233,49.00,00

[Translation]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Hon. Speaker, where is Shri Gadkari ji?

HON. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of State is present here.

Hon. Members, I once again request that those Hon. Members who do not take their seats will be named by me.

Hon. Member, Raju Ji.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister is on his way, as stated by the Hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. The Minister of State is seated here.

Shri K. Muraleedharan .

[English]

SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN (VADAKARA): Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demand for Grant relating to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

16.28 hrs (Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar *in the Chair*)

India has one of the largest road network in the world with about 59 lakh kilometres of road length. This road length includes National Highways, Express Highways, State Highways, District roads, PWD roads and. In India road infrastructure is used to transport over 60 per cent of total goods and 85 per cent of total passenger traffic. The total expenditure of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for 2019-20 is estimated at Rs. 83,016 crores. This is 6 per cent higher than the Revised Estimates of 2018-19. Since then the capital expenditure of the Ministry has increased significantly. In 2019-20, 87 per cent of the Ministry's spending is estimated to be on capital expenditure. I would now like to say something about my State of Kerala.

If the Cabinet Minister would have been here, he may understand what I am saying about the situation in the State of Kerala. I hope, he will come here soon or the Hon. MoS will inform him the details.

Madam, the Minister of Road Transport and Highways. Shri Nitin Gadkari had directed NHAI and the State Government to identify important tourist spots on the roads and facilitate to create widespread amenities on the lines of Overseas Highways in the USA. This facility once built will add to the tourism value of the whole area and shall be helpful in creating employment opportunities for the local people. Unfortunately, there is no Express Highway in Kerala. In 2001, we demanded an Express Highway from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram.

Secondly, during the UPA Government, the State of Kerala got the sanction for expansion of the National Highways. The width of the National Highways from Kannur to Kozhikode is 45 metres. The starting point is Kasaragod. Work regarding acquisition of land of widening National Highways into 45 metres….*(Interruptions)*

I am raising an important issue here. A majority of cases had been notified under Section 3(d) of National Highways Act. Due to non-payment of compensation, the National Highway development of Kerala, unfortunately, is not included in the priority list. Even now, we do not know why Kerala is expelled from the priority list. There is news in the air about the Chief Minister of Kerala and the BJP State unit. Politically motivated action is being taken by the Union Government as per the Chief Minister. I think, Hon. Cabinet Minister knows the fact. He has visited Kerala many times. He has

discussed these issues with the Chief Minister. Three days ago, during the Question Hour, Hon. Cabinet Minister told that he has made some suggestions to the Government of Kerala. Madam, we do not know about the proposals made by the Union Government to the State Government.

During every Session period, specially the Budget Session period, the Government of Kerala invites its Members of Parliament for a meeting and tells us about the stand to be taken in the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha.

Unfortunately, this time, we were not invited. They told us that since we did not take oath, we were not invited. Madam, this is a long Session. You know that when we get the Certificate from the Election Commission, then we automatically become Members of Parliament. We do not know why the State of Kerala was eliminated from the priority list. We do not know the reason.

A lot of agitations are going on in Kerala regarding widening of the National Highways. Actually, they are not against development. They have demanded more money for their land. You know that land value is very high in Kerala. Compared to other States, land value is very much high. Moreover, it is a thickly populated State also.

Only for that reason, during the UPA regime, we used to get exemption. In every State, the length of roads was 60 metres but the State of Kerala used to get exemption because of its thick population. But even now, we are not on the priority list. Due to this, the people are affected in all the areas of Kerala. They are not getting compensation. They are not in a position to sell their land. This is the major issue we are facing. So many road projects are pending before the Union Government. The Chief Minister of Kerala told that they have submitted their proposal but are not getting proper answer from the Union Government. I will tell some of the major road projects in the State of Kerala. One is new National Highway starting from Vadakara, which is my constituency through Pakramthalam to Mananthavady. The main problem is for going to Wayanad which is the constituency of my Leader, Shri Rahul Gandhi.

There is only one National Highway to Wayanad from Calicut. That National Highway is from Thamarassery to Vythiri. The other is the State Highway from Pakramthalam which goes through Wayanad. But if anything happens on the hairpin bend, then all the traffic is banned there. So, Wayanad becomes isolated if any accident occurs in any hairpin bend. So, it is our long pending demand to start a new National Highway starting from Vadakara to Mananthavady. That proposal is before the Ministry of Road

Transport and Highways. Number two is regarding the Vengalam-Mahi six laning of National Highway No. 66 for which the land acquisition should be done on high priority. Three, on the main road from Calicut to Mangalore, the main bridge is Moorad bridge which is in Vadakara, my constituency. It is a very old bridge which may break at any point of time. It was constructed during the British regime. So, there is a proposal for a new Bridge Moorad in Vadakara. The fourth point is regarding the new National Highway No. 66, which comes under my colleague Mr. Prathapan's constituency, Thrissur. I think, last Friday, the Hon. Minister invited MPs from that area. He agreed to our proposal regarding six laning of National Highway No. 66 (old no. 47) from Wadakkancherry to Thrissur. The tunnel work is going on but is very slow. That is the main line starting form Thrissur to Palakkad, Coimbatore and other areas of Tamil Nadu. There are so many new projects going on there. But there is one major project Thalasery-Mahe Bypass, the work of which is in progress but there is no subway there.

So many proposals are there regarding the new National Highway. So, the work should be completed as early as possible.

I also want to say something regarding the road accidents which occur especially in the State of Kerala. One day, 4,000 traffic

accidents occurred there. But the compensation was very less. There were so many deaths due to accidents.

Secondly, there is no strict law. The law is there but that is the law of the State. The Central law should be strengthened to safeguard the people who are moving on the road. My humble request is that the State of Kerala should be given more financial assistance, as a special case, for the widening of roads.

Last week the Hon. Cabinet Minister told that the land value is very high, so they are not in a position to support us. But that is very unfortunate. I demand more Central assistance from the Government in this regard because land value in Kerala is very high as compared with other States. At the same time, the area is thickly populated. People are ready to give their land, but they want proper compensation. For this reason, all development work is stuck.

I urge upon the Government to take this matter seriously and save the people of Kerala. We want development. We are ready to cooperate with the Union Government in this regard.

With these words, I conclude.

CUT MOTIONS

[Translation]

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (JHALAWAR-BARAN): Madam Chairperson, thank you. I am standing here on behalf of the Bharatiya Janata Party. ... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Madam, the Cabinet Minister has not come. You should make some remarks. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Madam, my party has given me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on this important Demand for Grants. For this, I thank you all. I come from Rajasthan. Rajasthan is the largest State in the country. Nearly 10–11 Percent of the country's land area lies in Rajasthan. Whenever a BJP Government has been formed, even earlier when a BJP Government was in power, all the work that was carried out was done by this Government alone. The former Hon. Minister is seated here. Taking inspiration from him, and under his guidance, Shri Nitin Gadkari Sahib has done commendable work.

Infrastructure development cannot take place without road development. You see this both within the country and abroad that where there is a strong road network, a railway network follows. Where there is a railway network, even water connectivity develops. Keeping this in mind, the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi Ji, and under the leadership of Shri Nitin Gadkari

Ji, has made efforts to create such an integrated network across the entire country.

They have promoted trade, they have encouraged commerce, and they have made sustained efforts to provide employment to the people. There is a saying attributed to an American President: “American roads are not good because America is rich, but America is rich because American roads are good." The meaning is clear that where the road network is strong, progress follows and the nation moves forward. Keeping this vision in mind, our Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways and his entire team have done commendable work. Road construction has given a significant boost to our trade. Under the road network initiatives that you have undertaken, National Highways have been constructed, expressways have been developed, National Highways have been expanded, State Highways have been strengthened, district roads have been promoted, and even rural and periodic roads have received due attention and encouragement.

As far as India’s road infrastructure is concerned, approximately 60 Percent of goods transportation and about 85 Percent of passenger traffic is carried by roads. Keeping this in view, our former Prime Minister, the late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

Ji, undertook the Golden Quadrilateral project and initiated major highway development. Through this initiative, National Highways were developed, and roads were connected up to villages, the poor, and the last person standing at the end of the line. Today, we see that since Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji assumed office, drawing inspiration from and guided by the vision of the Hon. Prime Minister, he has, over the last five years, constructed approximately 39,355 kilometres of National Highways. Nearly 40 Percent of these roads were ones that did not exist earlier, and a concerted effort has been made during these five years to build and expand this critical infrastructure.

This work was initiated in the year 2014. I would like to point out that in 2013–14, the budgetary support to the NHAI and through external borrowings stood at Rs. 28,400 crore. Today, that very budgetary support has increased to Rs. 83,016 crore. This substantial increase has been made possible because capital expenditure and revenue expenditure, which earlier stood at a 50–50 Percent ratio, have been significantly enhanced in favour of capital expenditure. For the first time, serious emphasis has been placed on asset creation. The fund allocation for the year 2019–20 stands at Rs. 83,016 crore, which is approximately 6 Percent higher than the previous year. In 2019–20, revenue expenditure amounted

to Rs. 10,957 crore. Through capital expenditure and external borrowings, an amount of Rs. 72,059 crore has been allocated, which means that 87 Percent of the expenditure is capital expenditure. This has never happened before. Even during the UPA Government, revenue expenditure and capital expenditure were maintained at a 50–50 Percent ratio. It is only after the arrival of Gadkari Sahab that this ratio has been substantially altered. Today, in the year 2019–20, the Central allocation for roads and bridges stands at 55 Percent, amounting to approximately Rs. 45,890 crore. The speaker before me referred to the NHAI. Under the present Government, work amounting to 44 Percent, that is Rs. 36,691 crore, has been undertaken through the NHAI. This demonstrates that road and bridge construction has not been confined to one region but has taken place across the entire country. Nishikant Ji is seated here; work has been carried out even in his area. Work has also been undertaken in Naxal-affected regions. In 2019–20, road and bridge works amounting to Rs. 45,892 crore, accounting for about 12 Percent, were initiated. The Union Government has also undertaken extensive work through the NHAI. While the NHAI maintains only about 2 Percent of the road network, it carries nearly 40 Percent of the road traffic. Keeping this in view, an allocation of Rs. 36,691 crore was made to the NHAI in 2019–20. Of this, 44 Percent, amounting to Rs. 16,091 crore, has been allocated to the

Central Road and Infrastructure Fund. About 29 Percent has been allocated for bridges, amounting to approximately Rs. 10,600 crore. By monetising assets worth Rs. 27 crore, when there was a shortage of funds, Rs. 10,000 crore was provided to the National Highway Fund. I would also like to point out that earlier, the infrastructure fund, which included cess collected on motor spirits, was allocated to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Now, it has been proposed that the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund be provided directly to State Governments. The allocation under this head in 2019–20 is approximately Rs. 54,039 crore, reflecting a 6 Percent increase. In this context, Rs. 610 crore has been allocated towards the Permanent Bridge Fee Fund. Funds have also been provided to the National Highway Fund. Our Hon. Minister introduced the Hybrid Annuity Model in January 2016, which was approved by the Cabinet. Under this model, roads are constructed on a 40:60 ratio, where the concessionaire invests 60 Percent of the cost and the Union Government provides 40 Percent assistance to support the project.

Today, the major initiative undertaken by Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji is the Bharatmala Project. Under this programme, issues relating to freight and passenger movement have been addressed, and with a view to optimising freight and passenger transport, connectivity has

been extended to about 300 to 550 districts. In the first phase, the total cost of the project is estimated at Rs. 5,35,000 crore. Under this phase, a length of 34,800 kilometres has been envisaged. In addition, about 10,000 kilometres under the National Highways Development Programme, which had earlier been stalled, have been incorporated into this project. In this context, work on 225 projects was taken up in the year 2019, covering approximately 9,613 kilometres. Out of these, 178 projects, amounting to about Rs. 7,998 crore, have already been awarded. In this manner, substantial and commendable work has been carried out.

Madam, I would also like to state that with regard to the financing undertaken by the Union Government, it was suggested in the Standing Committee that for road transport and highways, a dedicated committee involving the Reserve Bank of India and financial institutions should be constituted. Such arrangements already exist in the power sector and the railway sector. Therefore, we would like a similar mechanism to be established here as well. Several Public Private Partnership projects have been implemented through private funding. In this regard, the Dr. Vijay Kelkar Committee has recommended the establishment of an independent regulator and has also emphasised the need to ensure quality of service and effective delivery.

Madam, I hail from Rajasthan. It is also necessary for me to speak about Rajasthan. [English] From 2013 to 2018, when there was a BJP government in Rajasthan, 8,143 kilometres of roads were constructed. At the same time, from 2008 to 2013, 1,616 kilometres of roads were constructed during the then UPA government. It was the vision of Shri Nitin Gadkari and the Rajasthan government led by Shrimati Raje that helped to build those roads. Furthermore, in the villages, from 2008 to 2013, there were only 2,506 villages where roads were constructed, whereas from 2013 to 2018, 5,859 villages had roads. From 2008 to 2013, 17,079 kilometres of roads were renovated, whereas from 2013 to 2018, 45,941 kilometres of roads were constructed. The roads and national highways have increased during our government.

I just want to come to the issue of road safety. Our Minister Nitin Gadkari Sahib has put in Rs. 280 crore, which is 8 percent higher for road safety. He has just brought in a Bill, the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, in Parliament. The Bill amends the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

Madam, today, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji and Shri Anurag Ji, who are present here, have approved in this Budget that ethanol and, in the present context, electronic vehicles will be further promoted. This is the first time that GST has been reduced

from 12 Percent to 5 Percent. The Hybrid Model introduced by the Hon. Minister has been recognised not only within the country but also internationally. It has been discussed in NITI Aayog. Discussions are taking place on E-Highways, and the State Bank of India has spoken about Green Highways and has provided Rs. 25,000 crore with a triple rating to the NHAI. Today, road construction in our country has reached a pace of 31 kilometres per day. Madam, in conclusion, I would like to state that ethanol will be non-toxic, will be a biodegradable fuel, and will ensure safe handling.

In conclusion, I would like to state that when Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji assumed office, work worth nearly Rs. 3 lakh crore across 403 projects had come to a standstill. He ensured that this stalled work was revived and completed. My *Parliamentary Constituency* is Jhalawar–Baran. When I travel from there, Ujjain lies nearby. The road from Jhalawar towards Ujjain, National Highway 12, is extremely narrow. Because of its limited width, four-laning has not been carried out. Due to the absence of four lanes, over the last ten years, approximately 25,000 to 30,000 people have lost their lives on this stretch. I seek the Government's assistance in this matter. Our Hon. Prime Minister has spoken about building a five-trillion-dollar economy through infrastructure development. Keeping this

vision in mind, our Hon. Minister has worked inclusively, taking everyone along and cooperating with all stakeholders. I have full confidence that under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Modi Ji and Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji, all of us will continue to move forward on the path of development.

Finally, I would like to state that Baran district falls along the route from Kota, which is the *Parliamentary Constituency* of our Hon. Speaker, passing through Shivpuri and going onwards to Jhansi. That road is in a severely damaged condition. For a long time, there has been a demand for work to be undertaken there. I would respectfully urge both the Hon. Speaker Madam and the Government that this damaged road be constructed at the earliest. In conclusion, I thank all of you. All this has been possible because our intentions are sincere and our thinking is oriented towards progress. This has happened because the Hon. Prime Minister of the country is Shri Narendra Modi Ji, and because our Hon. Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji, is personally overseeing this work. I extend my sincere thanks to him and to his entire team for their efforts, dedication, and commitment. ... (*Interruption*s) General Sahab has now arrived, and I would like to thank General Sahab as well.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, those who want to lay their written speeches may do so now.

SHRI C.N. ANNADURAI (TIRUVANNAMALAI): Hon. Chairperson, Madam, this is my maiden speech. I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

I would like to remember and honour our great leader, Tamizhar Thalaivar Dr. Kalaignar. I would also like to thank our Party Leader Thalapathi M.K. Stalin, Youth Wing Leader Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin, our senior Party Leader Mr. E.V. Velu, and the people of my constituency.

During the current financial year, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has set a target of upgrading and expanding 16,420 kilometres of the National Highways, as against a target of 9,829 kilometres of the National Highways in the last financial year. The speed of construction, as was reported in The Economic Survey 2018-19, was around 30 kilometres per day.

In the budget proposal, the Hon. Finance Minister has, inter alia, highlighted the interlinking of the National Highways through grids. I would request the Hon. Minister, through you, Madam, to

kindly inform this House about the details of the grids for interlinking different National Highways.

The focus of the government is to connect tourist destinations and religious places, apart from connecting ports and Special Economic Zones, etc. My constituency, Tiruvannamalai, is known for Arunachaleswarar Temple. Out of Lord Shiva's Pancha Bhoota Sthalam, it represents Agni Sthalam. Also, Tiruvannamalai has many Ashrams to which lakhs of pilgrims pay visits every day.

17.00 hrs

Sir, nearly 20 lakh devotees visit on each full moon day for Girivalam which means 'Parikarma' around the Arunachala hill for a distance of 14.5 kilometres. During the Girivalam and festival time, people are facing huge traffic problems due to the absence of a by-pass road from NH-234 to NH-66 via Tiruvannamalai Kanchi Road. I would request the Hon. Minister, through you Madam, to instruct the authorities concerned to connect the remaining link road from NH-234 to NH-66 immediately.

17.01 hrs (Dr.(Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai Solanki *in the Chair*)

Moreover, a bye-pass is also required for the following towns of Kaniyampadi, Kannamangalam and Vettavalam which are on NH-234.

The two-laned national highway NH-234 connects Karnataka-Andhra Pradesh-Tamil Nadu and passes through Tiruvannamalai. The authorities concerned are setting up toll plazas at three places – Kannamangalam, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram - which will definitely cause inconvenience to the travellers including farmers. I would like to request the Hon. Minister, through you Sir, to dispense with the above-mentioned toll plazas.

I would also like to draw the attention of this House to the slow pace of work on the NH-66 under the National Highways Development Programme Phase 3 which is the main connectivity to the inter-States. The work of two-laning on Tindivanam-Krishnagiri section is also running behind the schedule.

Unfortunately, the statistics of improvement is at 30 kilometres per day and it is not reflected in this Budget. I would request the Hon. Minister to direct the authorities concerned to complete the work quickly. I would also request, through you Sir, to upgrade the existing four-laned NH-45 Chennai-Villupuram section into eight-

laned. The section from Chennai Airport to Chengalpattu should be tackled by providing elevated corridor of six lanes.

I want to talk about transport issues. On the issue of mobility to electric vehicle, I would appreciate that the Government makes budgetary allocation of Rs. 10,000 crore under the phase 2 of Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles. The Government intends to convert all internal combustion two wheelers and three wheelers into electric vehicles by 2025 and four wheeler passenger cars by 2030.

I would request the Hon. Minister, through you, Sir, to inform this House about infrastructural facilities at roadside charging stations. What are all the incentives that are going to be extended to the manufacturers and users of e-vehicles? What will be the estimated reduction of carbon footprint and load on exchequer caused by oil imports with the mobility to e-vehicle in the country?

Hon. Minister, I would like to bring to your notice that in my constituency, till now, no large factories were setup for the employment of youth. If the Union Government opens start ups for the manufacturing of e-vehicle units, it will greatly benefit my constituency people as well as the unemployed youth of my constituency.

Thank you very much.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Sir, I rise to speak on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019-20. The Minister is not here but I am told that he has got reputation for doing good work so much so that the Prime Minister has asked him to shift his family from Nagpur to Delhi so that he can work more, as per the newspaper report. I do not know if he would keep his family in Nagpur or shift it to Delhi or close to the RSS headquarters or close to Prime Minister Modi.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please come to the point.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: But I hope that he will deliver. The report appeared in the newspaper.

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Hon. Chairperson, to make such a remark against a senior Minister, and that too by a senior Member, is most unfortunate.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: What is the objection in this? They disturb the proceedings.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Such remarks should be avoided. Where their family resides or does not reside, what has that got to do with the House? We should confine ourselves to the subject under discussion. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You are a very senior Member. What is the need to bring family matters into this?

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: It was reported in the newspaper. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Alright, please state your point.

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir I rise to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. We have to remember that though we talk a lot about highways, highways constitute only 1.9 per cent of Indian roads. In India, 70 per cent constitutes rural roads. Though highways receive a lot of publicity, it does not constitute a major portion of roads in India. But still the highways carry 40 per cent of the traffic and freight. So, there is some importance and out of the total budget of the Department, not the full amount is given to highways. Out of the amount of Rs.83,000 crore budget given this year, Rs.36,900 crore is for the National Highways Authority of India. Help is also given to the States to develop their roads. Maintenance is done by the State Governments. How is the highways sector surviving with regard to the extra-budgetary resources? It is entirely dependent on loans than internal and extra-budgetary resources. This year fund raising, after Rs.36,000 crore, will be Rs.75,000 crore. You would be happy to

learn that the State Bank of India has given Rs.25,000 crore to the National Highways Authority of India.

My fear is that the Government is taking a lot of loans and raising a lot of market borrowings. Will these loans ultimately become NPAs, if the projects are not complete? The major problem in our roads is that in building roads, we have first the problem of financial crunch, lack of resources. We also have problems with acquiring land and paying of compensation. We have problems with forest and environment clearances. So, this is taking a lot of time. There is no doubt that the Minister has tried to clear some of these cobwebs in road construction, and he is promising to build 30 kilometres of road per day. But in the past, we have fallen behind our targets. That is why, I will ask the Ministry to speed up road construction in the country.

The Government has taken a very, very ambitious programme called, the Bharatmala Pariyojana. It involves Rs.3.85 lakh crore, and the total expenditure for all the unfinished works is Rs.6.92 lakh crore. This is supposed to be completed by 2022. Now, out of this, Rs.2.37 lakh crore will come from fuel cess. Rs.60,000 crore will come from budgetary support. Monetising, that is, toll operate transfer rights given to private parties, will raise Rs.34,000 crore. Rs.46,000 crore will come from toll collection and the Government will borrow Rs.2.09 lakh crore.

Again, *Bharatmala* involves a very large borrowing for which the Government has to ensure that it will be able to raise money ultimately. The private investment is estimated at Rs.1.06 lakh crore. But private investment has been slow to come to the Government. Private investment has been very tardy. If we look at Adanis, they want to take over the airports but they have not invested in road infrastructure. If we look at Ambanis, they have not invested in road infrastructure. Private sector wants the Government to build the infrastructure and they want to take advantage of built up infrastructure. They are not investing in a big way in the roads so far. Though we talk of Public Private Partnership, it is mainly budgetary support, loans from banks and other sources and market borrowings. It is not coming from private sector. But there is no doubt about it that we need roads.

Sir, *Bharatmala Pariyojana* has many components. They include economic corridor component, inter corridor and feeder route development, national corridor, border roads and international connectivity, costal roads and port connectivity, green field expressways, etc. All these separate items taken together take *Bharatmala* to 24,800 kilometres at the cost of Rs.3.85 lakh crore. We would be very happy if *Bharatmala* Project is completed.

The first major step in road building was taken up during Vajpayee’s Government in 1998. The total length of Golden

Quadrilateral project is about 5895 kilometres. It forms a quadrilateral connecting the four major cities of India from North to South and East to West. That has been completed. It has been an achievement. But the present scheme is much more ambitious and we need clearances for that. Only national revenues will not be enough.

Having said this, let me point out the main problems that we have been facing in West Bengal in terms of road infrastructure development. There is a National Highway-34, which is the lifeline of our State. It spreads from South to the North of the State. It has not been completed in 10 years. The Krishnanagar-Behrampore stretch is incomplete and is in a bad shape. The work on National Highway-35 which goes up to Petrapole has not started at all. I would like to bring it to the kind attention of the Hon. Minister that West Bengal has only a few National Highways. National Highways 1 and 2 are of short length in the State. NH-34 is the main highway and they should complete the work now.

Having said this, I will say that the main problem today is safety on the highways. A road accident on Yamuna Expressway happened on the 8th of July, where 29 people were killed and many injured when a bus fell 40 feet into a ditch. The Yamuna Expressway is now called a killer highway because 700 people have died in 5000 accidents in last seven years. The Union Government

has not been able to take effective steps in this regard so far. The Hon. Minister, Gadkari ji also admitted it in the morning and assured to take up steps to control the accidents.

Sir, there are many ideas to improve road safety. An MoU was sighed with the Transport for London (TFL) for a quality basis ranking system for toll plazas, simplification of driving licence application, setting up of well-equipped and competent driving training centres, etc. I agree that the Motor Vehicles Act is able to ensure safety but the Centre has to do handholding with the State Government to ensure that they take proper steps to ensure the safety of passengers. It is a big thing today that we are building highways, but people are dying in large number in road accidents on the highways. The modern things are not there.

Lastly, I want to say that compared to our size, India has sizeable roads. The US boasts of the world's largest road network followed by China and India. There are bigger countries like Brazil, Australia and Russia, but our road network is bigger compared to that of those countries, but we cannot compare with the USA. They have got a highway in Texas which has 26 lanes. Our biggest expressway is Delhi-Meerut Expressway which has got 14 lanes. So, we have to improve both - technology and safety.

The Minister has talked of Rs. 14,000 crore for ensuring safety. He talks of all these things, but I do not know where the money will come from. He is only going to the market to borrow money. Money is not coming. Where is that amount of Rs. 14,000 crore? Where is it going to come from? He has talked of electric vehicles. How long will it take to make 50 per cent electric vehicles, even though you have given some concessions in the Budget?

Lastly, he has talked of nitrogen-filled tyres. How long will it take to fill up the tyres with nitrogen? While road construction grows apace, safety considerations are neglected. If we have to progress fast as a country, road construction must be done faster. Still the roads carry much more passengers as 80 per cent of the passenger traffic is carried by roads. If we have to give relief to our people, construction must proceed at a pace.

With these words, I oppose the Budget because it is weak on safety and weak on fund collection. Thank you.

[Translation]

[*]**DR. SANGHAMITRA MAURYA (BUDAUN):** Whether it is the Government of 2019, or of 2014, or every work carried out during the BJP Government in Maharashtra, the person who remains relentlessly engaged until the work is completed is Shri Nitin Jairam Gadkari Ji. From the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana to the National Highways Programme and the Bharatmala Project, ensuring timely implementation and proper arrangements for their maintenance, and transforming the entire framework into a new and effective dimension, is not merely a routine fulfilment of Ministerial responsibility, but one of the many far-sighted visions of Shri Gadkari Ji.

The most significant aspect of all this is that, under your guidance, 1,25,000 kilometres of roads are to be constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Under another of your visionary initiatives, a large-scale restructuring of the National Highways Programme has been undertaken, with the proposed implementation of several new projects.

The work carried out by you during the period from 2014 to 2019 will undoubtedly prove to be a milestone for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table

Since in 2019 as well, various schemes envisaged and directed by you are to be given concrete shape, I wish to seek reassurance in this regard for my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* of Budaun in Uttar Pradesh.

I would like to draw attention to the four-laning of the route from Budaun via Dataganj to Tilhar.

Due to the absence of adequate train connectivity from Budaun to the State capital, people of the district face severe difficulties while travelling to Lucknow for commuting and essential purposes.

If the general public travels to Lucknow via Bareilly, it takes considerably more time, as Bareilly is located at a greater distance. At present, the road from Budaun via Dataganj up to Tilhar is a two-lane and single-lane stretch. If this route is converted into a four-lane road, then the stretch from Tilhar through Shahjahanpur to Lucknow, which is already four-laned, will connect seamlessly, resulting in a continuous four-lane road up to Budaun. This will make travel to Lucknow far more convenient for the people, reduce the likelihood of accidents, and ensure smoother and safer connectivity.

Therefore, I humbly request Shri Mantri Ji, and also place this suggestion on behalf of the respected people of the Budaun region,

that kindly give due consideration to this matter and inform me accordingly.

The people of Budaun will remain grateful to you.

Thank you very much.

[*]**SHRIMATI REKHA ARUN VERMA (DHAURAHRA):** Our Government is working on formulating a 16-lane road scheme to provide relief from traffic congestion in both urban and rural areas. The Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji, has also been actively working on this initiative.

When traffic conditions on the country's roads are continuously deteriorating, vehicles are crawling, and congestion is steadily increasing, it becomes essential to regulate and standardise the average speed of traffic. It is often observed in residential areas and in Delhi that on flyovers, long queues of vehicles move at a snail's pace, and at the front of these queues, two or three three-wheelers can be seen, while the road ahead remains clear. On level roads this may not pose a serious issue, but the engines fitted in three-wheelers are not sufficiently powerful to carry heavy loads and move on flyovers at the same speed as cars. Therefore, it is necessary to provide proper training to auto-rickshaw drivers so that they do not drive in speed lanes.

Along with auto rickshaws or three wheelers, a major challenge is that of balance and safety. These vehicles are inherently less secure and have lower stability, even though auto drivers are skilled

[*] Speech was laid on the Table

in operating them on their regular routes. If one observes people hanging precariously onto auto rickshaws in areas like Noida and Ghaziabad, it is truly alarming. It appears that as the distance from the capital increases, the value of human life correspondingly diminishes. Within a distance of just 20 to 30 kilometres, such scenes are witnessed that it becomes difficult to believe that this is the very land of Incredible India.

Passenger-carrying three-wheelers, being completely open, are unsafe for commuters and, moreover, highly impractical in a country like India with such diverse climatic conditions. They offer no protection against winter, summer, or monsoon rains. Even though attempts are made to cover them with various attachments, these measures are often inadequate. There is no doubt that for last-mile connectivity, such small passenger vehicles are necessary. However, efforts should be made to make them safer and more comfortable. Given the manner in which our cities have developed, it is difficult for large taxis to access every narrow street and lane. In such areas, only auto-rickshaws can operate, and therefore three-wheelers will continue to remain essential there. However, for the other city roads, for high-speed traffic corridors, and for ensuring greater safety and comfort of passengers, why should the Government not gradually assist auto-rickshaw operators through

concessional government loans, enabling them to replace three-wheelers with small four-wheelers? Several such products are already available in the market, such as the Nano, Tata Ace, or Bajaj RE60. Can these not replace three-wheelers? At the very least, with four wheels, they provide better balance and stability, enhanced safety, and some protection against heat, cold, and rain. The time has come to move away from outdated designs. It is essential to consider improving facilities for people of all sections of society. The dividend of development must reach everyone.

According to a survey, every year the country incurs losses amounting to billions of dollars due to delays caused by traffic congestion. This includes not only the cost of additional fuel consumption but also the resulting increase in pollution. Such losses cannot be reduced through a single measure alone. For this, the Government will have to take several additional steps. Why should vehicles used for transporting goods not be diverted away from major roads in residential and urban areas? I strongly feel that the race for development in which everyone is engaged cannot be won by leaving half the population unsafe and forced to move at a slower pace. Development must be inclusive, ensuring safety, efficiency, and dignity for all sections of society.

In Uttar Pradesh, work is underway on a plan to widen National Highway 24 up to Dasna and convert it into a 16-lane highway. Due to traffic congestion lasting for hours at this stretch, commuters are facing severe difficulties. Waterlogging caused by rainfall is not merely a problem of road traffic disruption, but it also brings the country's Gross Domestic Product to a standstill. A survey has stated that due to waterlogging, people remain stuck in traffic jams for hours, resulting in a loss of productive working time. A significant amount of time is wasted because of water accumulation on roads.

The Government must understand that waterlogging has a direct impact on GDP as well as GSDP. In every city, lakhs of people travel daily, and waterlogging adversely affects their work. As a result, industries are severely impacted. Due to such mismanagement, the office work of a very large number of people is disrupted. In such a situation, the Government should adopt an integrated approach and work collectively to address this issue.

Citizens have given several suggestions to resolve the problem of waterlogging. These include imposing a ban on plastic bags, filling up potholes, repairing damaged portions of subways, and prohibiting the dumping of garbage into drains.

At present, due to the rapidly increasing population in cities, the pressure of vehicles on roads has also intensified. With the rise in the number of vehicles, urban traffic systems have become severely strained, frequently resulting in traffic jams and disruption of movement. Owing to the poor fitness condition of many vehicles, accidents are occurring on a regular basis.

Registrations of vehicles, including trucks, are continuously increasing. In addition, there are vehicles used for agricultural purposes as well as other commercial vehicles. Due to the growing pressure of vehicles on roads and the lack of compliance with traffic rules, incidents of road accidents are on the rise.

A majority of road accidents are caused by vehicles used for agricultural activities, such as makeshift vehicles commonly known as “jugaad” or “Petar rehda”, tractor trolleys, and similar vehicles. Apart from this, overspeeding and non adherence to traffic regulations are also major contributors to road accidents. These improvised vehicles, often fitted with diesel engines and operating without any authorisation, move fearlessly from villages to city roads and highways. Such vehicles are openly used for agricultural, commercial, and passenger transport, while the Transport Department and Traffic Police remain silent spectators. These vehicles frequently become the cause of serious accidents.

[English]

***SHRI GAUTHAM SIGAMANI PON (KALLAKURICHI):** Proposal for Kallakurichi outer ring road: Kallakurichi, the headquarters of the newly formed district in Tamil Nadu, is my *Parliamentary Constituency* as well. I request the formation of an outer ring road around Kallakurichi town. This outer ring road will facilitate sugarcane lorries and tractors that are moving the sugarcane to Kallakurichi 1 and Kallakurichi 2 sugar mills and the large number of buses and vans run by educational institutions.

This new outer ring road will ease the already congested streets of Kallakurichi. It is to be noted that Kallakurichi town and the surroundings have an abundant number of educational institutions. The fleets of buses run by the educational institutions are already a big strain on the small roads of Kallakurichi town. The sugarcane lorries and tractors add woes to the already congested roads. In the morning from 8 AM to 11 AM and 4 PM to 7 PM, the streets and roads are heavily congested and cause inconvenience to the people of Kallakurichi town.

So I request the Hon'ble Road Transport and Highway Minister to kindly sanction the Kallakurichi outer ring road.

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* Speech was laid on the Table

Initiating and expediting the national highway connecting Kallakurichi and Thiruvannamalai announced in last year's budget: Last year, a budget announcement of a national highway connecting Kallakurichi and Thiruvannamalai was made. It is learnt that budgetary estimates have also been done. But the same is lying unattended and uninitiated. This proposed national highway connects Thiruvannamalai, Vellore, and Thirupathi. The large congregation of devotees frequenting the Arunachaleswara temple in Thiruvannamalai and the Golden temple in Vellore and the Lord Vengatachalapathi Shrine at Thirupathi will be greatly facilitated. Besides, this national highway will also facilitate industrial units like sugar mills and other small-scale industries that are moving the products upcountry.

Hence, may I request the Hon'ble Minister for Road Transport and Highway to expedite the scheme already announced.

Abandoning the Salem-Chennai eight-way track: The Salem-Chennai eight-way green fast track road will put farmers in a lot of hardship. There are already three national highways connecting Salem to Chennai. NH 48 and NH 2 go from Chennai via Kanchipuram, Krishnagiri, and Dharmapuri to Salem, and the distance is 352.7 km, and it is already a six-way track. NH 48 and SH 18 connect Salem and Chennai, and the distance is 331.89 km, and it is a four and two-way track. NH 32 connects Chennai with

Salem via Villupuram, and the distance is 334.28 km, and this track is two ways and four ways.

So, since there are three tracks connecting Salem and Chennai, that is more than enough. It is an unnecessary expenditure to build a new eight-way track road at the cost of 10,000 crores. It is not just a waste of money but also destroys vast tracts of fertile agricultural lands and takes away the livelihood of the farmers concerned. So it would be a better idea if all three tracks or any one of them could be upgraded and extended to facilitate the fast track from Salem to Chennai. Therefore, the Hon'ble Minister for Road Transport and Highway is humbly requested to abandon the Salem–Chennai eight-way track.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI SUDHAKAR TUKARAM SHRANGARE (LATUR):** I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport presented in the Union Budget by the Government of India. Over the past five years, our Modi Government has placed special emphasis on road transport. Investment in the road sector, which stood at Rs. 51,914 crore in 2014–15, increased to Rs. 1,58,839 crore in 2018–19. In this year's Budget, the Government has made a provision of Rs. 1,64,448 crore for this sector. As a result of this initiative, not only has the basic infrastructure of road transport developed across the country, but a large number of employment opportunities and means of livelihood have also been created. Due to the dedicated efforts of the Government over the last five years, India's road network has expanded to 59.49 lakh kilometres. The Government is committed to constructing high-speed, international quality highways across the entire country, and in line with this vision, the Government declared the year 2018 as the 'Year of Construction'.

Everyone is aware that road construction faces several obstacles, such as land acquisition and financial investment, which also result in considerable delays. Despite all these challenges,

[*] Speech was laid on the Table

through tireless efforts, the Government has increased the pace of highway construction from 12 kilometres per day in 2014–15 to 30 kilometres per day at present. To further accelerate this process, the Government has now decided that during the current financial year, 135 kilometres of roads will be constructed every day, so as to ensure the construction of 30,000 kilometres of roads by the end of this financial year. A notable aspect of this initiative is that green technologies, waste plastic, and cold mix technology are now being used in road construction. Under this programme, an additional 30,000 kilometres of roads will be built. As a result, not only will the carbon footprint be reduced, but it will also significantly contribute to environmental conservation in the country.

Not only this, the Union Government will upgrade 1,25,000 kilometres of roads over the next five years, on which an amount of Rs. 80,250 crore will be spent. These efforts of the Government clearly demonstrate how alert and committed the Bharatiya Janata Party is towards fulfilling the promises made in its election manifesto, wherein it had announced an investment of Rs. 100 lakh crore and the construction of 60,000 kilometres of National Highways by the year 2024.

The Government is making earnest efforts not only in the field of road transport but also for the comprehensive development of inland water transport, so that a multimodal transport system can be

established across the country. It is hoped that the first phase of the Bharatmala Project will also be completed soon. These efforts of the Government are indeed commendable and praiseworthy.

As far as Maharashtra is concerned, over the last five years, the length of National Highways in the State has increased fourfold. In 2014, the total length of National Highways in Maharashtra was 5,700 kilometres, which increased to 22,436 kilometres by the year 2017–18. Under the leadership of the Union Government, road infrastructure development in Maharashtra is progressing rapidly. On this occasion, I would like to place before the House a few issues related to road transport in my Latur *Parliamentary Constituency* and request that these concerns be addressed.

National Highway 361 passes not only through my Latur *Parliamentary Constituency* but also through the entire State of Maharashtra. A few years ago, the Government had decided to upgrade the entire stretch of this National Highway to four lanes. This decision of the Government will greatly facilitate travel and connectivity for the people of Maharashtra. At present, the Government has commenced work on the 76.4 kilometre Nagpur–Wardha section of this National Highway. I request the Government to expedite the work of upgrading the entire stretch of this National Highway.

The condition of the national highway from Ashta Mod to Udgir is very poor. There are potholes in various places, and these contribute to frequent accidents occurring. During the rainy days, the condition becomes even more alarming. People and vehicles passing through this road face a lot of difficulties. Although the Union Government has approved the renovation of this section of the two-lane national highway, the work has been significantly delayed in commencing. Several months have passed, and so far, only the process of inviting tenders has commenced. My request to the Government is to consider the difficulties faced by the general public and to commence the renovation work on the national highway from Ashta Mod to Udgir at the earliest, ensuring its timely completion.

The condition of the National Highway stretch from Ashta Mod to Udgir is extremely poor. There are potholes at several places, and as a result, accidents occur frequently. During the monsoon season, the situation becomes even more deplorable. People and vehicles travelling on this road have to face severe hardships. Although the Union Government has approved the renewal of this two lane stretch of the National Highway, there has been considerable delay in the commencement of work. Several months have passed, and so far only the process of inviting tenders has begun. I request the

Government that, keeping in view the difficulties faced by the general public, construction work for the renewal of the National Highway from Ashta Mod to Udgir be commenced at the earliest and completed in a time bound manner.

Similarly, the condition of the section of National Highway 63 from Tembhurni to Latur is also very poor. There are potholes at multiple locations, leading to frequent accidents. The situation worsens further during the rainy season. People and vehicles travelling on this road are facing immense inconvenience. I request the Government that the renewal work of the National Highway section from Tembhurni to Latur be taken up immediately and completed within a stipulated time frame.

With these words, I once again support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, and I thank the Hon. Finance Minister for making such a substantial budgetary allocation to strengthen the road construction infrastructure in the country.

[English]

***SHRI S. GNANATHIRAVIAM (TIRUNELVELI):** My Constituency Tirunelveli and Tenkasi covering a distance of 54 km on the Tirunelveli-Shencottai-Kollam highway, is to be widened following repeated representations from the public. Evan as the 'Courtallam Season' is fast approaching with the onset of southwest monsoon in neighbouring Kerala, the number of vehicles using this road will increase manifold during the season. As the tourist destination would attract several lakh visitors between June and September.

Hundreds of dangerous potholes, the 54 km long highway, which serves as a major connectivity between the southern districts and neighbouring Kerala has become the most life-threatening stretch of the district. While seriously denting four-wheelers, the dangerous pits and long pits trigger several accidents involving bikes, particularly at night. If this dangerous stretch was left unattended, it would certainly trigger serious accidents make the visitor's vacation better. Though the officials say that this road could only be repaired and there was no plan for re-laying it as this stretch is going to be converted into a four-lane, no step has been initiated so far to make travel along this road safe. The stretch is

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* Speech was laid on the Table

desperately awaiting a facelift for the past several years and hence travel in this stretch remains a nightmare for road users.

The 54 km long road between Tirunelveli and Tenkasi forms part of the Tirunelveli -Shencottai -Kollam Highway. Following increase in traffic, it was planned to widen it into a four lane high on an outlay of Rs. 412 crore. After the Tamil Nadu road Infrastructure Development Corporation, the project proponent, identified the successful bidder for executing the project, complaints pertaining to nepotism in awarding of the contract delayed the process of identifying the lowest bidder. The original plan was to start the work in July 2018 and complete it by September 2020. Delay in starting work on widening the two lane into four lane highway irks road users as there is a sharp rise in fatal accidents on this busy stretch. Once the four lane highway project is completed, dangerous curves, narrow bridges and culverts, which cause accidents, would be removed. 7 over bridges, including a rail over bridge at Pavoorchathiram and 71 culverts are to be built under the project. Land acquisition for the widening work has almost been completed and age old roadside trees removed. To facilitate the widening work, over 1400 trees were axed and replanting them some distance away.

While procedural and practical glitches have collectively delayed this project, not a day passes by without fatal accident on

this stretch. The 2 lane road is in a bad condition and has many sharp and dangerous curves, contributing to fatal accidents.

Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to look into the matter and be completed within the deadline with desirable quality.

[*]**SHRI P. R. NATARAJAN (COIMBATORE):** I would like to bring the Government's kind attention regarding NHAI to establishment of new six lane road for Karur to Coimbatore NH 81. We already have four lane road from Karur to Coimbatore and road between the two places already exists, the Government decided to widen it into six-lane road.

The widening of the existing Coimbatore- Karur road was dropped because lane acquisition was turning out to be more expensive. The farmers, who have lands between Karur to Coimbatore, were suffering more for this new six-lane road. The project will require almost 3,000 acres of land, most of it is fertile agricultural land, and farmers owned less than two to three acres of land and are depended on farming for a livelihood.

The proposed new six-lane road is only 6 Km lesser then the existing four-lane road, the existing road can be widened instead of looking for a 6 lane new proposal with huge investment.

I urge this Government to leave that six-lane project and consider to expand the existing four-lane road to six-lane road.

The Coimbatore- Palakkad existing NH-67 highway construction have been going on last six to seven years but the work

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table

is not yet completed. I urge the Government to allocate required fund immediately to finish the road work at the earliest.

[*]**SHRI K. SHANMUGA SUNDARAM (POLLACHI):** I would like to bring the Government's kind attention regarding NHAI to establishment of new six lane road for Karur to Coimbatore NH 81. We already have four lane road from Karur to Coimbatore and road between the two places already exists, the Government decided to widen it into six-lane road.

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*SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN (TIRUPPUR): We are not against development, growth and expansion of Infrastructure Expansion of roads is essential for growth. But growth is for the people. Laying roads on the destruction of people cannot be growth.

The Salem to Chennai 8 lane green corridor project is one such destructive proposal.

The proposed corridor runs through agricultural and reserve forest land. It will have adverse impact on the environment, water bodies, farm lands and forest land.

Development should aim at the betterment of lives of the people. Protecting the livelihood and enhancing their living conditions should be the objective of growth. But the Salem Chennai 8 lane corridor is detrimental to the growth of the farmers, workers, peasants and people. It is aimed at serving the interests of Corporate, and Multinational Corporations like Vedanta.

Therefore, I very firmly insist that the Government should drop this proposal forthwith and make an official announcement of the same.

Six state highway roads of about 452 KM have been upgraded as National Highways in Tamil Nadu. They are the Thoppur

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* Speech was laid on the Table

Mettur-Bhavani-Erode; Salem-Tiruppathur-Vaniyambadi; Athur-Perambalur; Tiruppur-Oddanchatram road; Chengalpattu-Mahabalipuram; and Kodaighat-Kodaikanal.

A detailed proposal for widening of the roads and converting them into 2 and 4 lane National Highway has been submitted by the National Highway Authority of India to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

This expansion will hugely benefit trade growth. Therefore I request the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to immediately sanction the proposal and carry out the project.

While so saying, I insist that the road expansion should be carried out in such a way that it does not affect the people, workers, farmers and their livelihood.

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH (KAKINADA): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to thank my party, YSRC Party, for giving me this opportunity to speak on Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

The Indian road network is a very vast network comprising of national highways, express highways, State Highways, major district roads, other district roads and village roads. It is globally the second largest network, spanning 5.5 million kilometres. As we all know, in India, road infrastructure is used to transport over 60 per cent of total goods and 85 per cent of total passenger traffic.

At this juncture, I would like to say that I come from Andhra Pradesh. As all the Hon. Members know, after the reorganisation, Andhra Pradesh needed so many funds for development from all Departments. I would like to speak in Telugu to reach out to the people of my State and my *Parliamentary Constituency*.

[*]Road Transport is an important mode of transport. Let it be in rural areas, urban areas or corporation areas, roads play an important role in the development of villages and states. If we look at functioning of Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, in the recent past, they are doing commendable job. The Ministry is

[*] ....* English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Telugu.

working hard to provide road connectivity throughout the country. Though land costs are rising high, department is doing good work. I heartily congratulate the Ministry for this work.

In General Budget, Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, emphasized on development of road infrastructure. On one hand we should develop village roads and on the other hand we should modernise National Highways. It is important to develop roadways to reduce distances. I can say that, Ministry of Roadways is working with same spirit. There are several projects that were announced. Some projects could not take off, some projects are stuck in the middle and few projects are going on for so many years.

Firstly, I would like to request Hon'ble Minister to give special attention to our state, Andhra Pradesh. Every state will be demanding for funds and each state will be having it's own issues. But as far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, it was bifurcated without proper justifications, because of which people of Andhra Pradesh are going through severe difficulties and hard ships. In this context, proposals for various roads were sent by State Government of Andhra Pradesh to Union Government and some of those proposals were approved. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will extend full co-operation and support in expansion of road infrastructure of Andhra Pradesh.

As there is time constraint, I will mention few important roadways. Many Hon'ble Members present here can know and understand these important roadways. Especially, Amaravati-Anantpur Express way which is of 400 kms span, was sanctioned but other related works like land acquisition and construction are yet to commence. Therefore, I request that special attention may be paid to Amaravati-Anantpur expressway and expedite the process of construction. Similarly, there are some more important roads and I will be mentioning only few roads here.

In prioritization, there are high priority, high 1, high 2, medium and low. I will mention only few of them. NHO Vinukonda-Guntur, corridor code – 806. Kaipa-Giddalur – 806, Bugga – Kaipa, 806, Anantapur – Bugga, 869, Kurnool – Atmakur 869 Atmakur-Domala, 802. These six roads are placed under 'medium' priority. Therefore, I request Hon'ble Minister to place these roads under 'high' priority and complete these projects at the earliest. These roads are very important for economic development of our state. Many peripheral roads were also sanctioned; I won't mention all of them. As Hon'ble Chairman directed, I will give my written submission.

I will be referring to important roads in my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Four laning of Kakinada anchorage port to Uppaada beach road, NH-16 of East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

Over ADB Kakinada deep water port from Kumbabhishekam temple to fishing harbor Kakinada to avoid 6 to 7 level crossings in a span of 1 kilometer which causes huge congestion.

These works needs to be completed. Apart from these I have a long list of pending projects, I will not read out these projects, instead I will submit these to the Table of the House. Similarly, Raichur – Hasan section near Adoni of Andhra Pradesh – Karnataka border 425 – Chintakunta – Adoni, 425-Karnataka Andhra Pradesh border Chintakunta, 523 – Maidakur – Badvel, these sections are between 45 & 50 kms. These sections are places under medium priority I request on behalf of people and Government of Andhra Pradesh to place these roads under high priority to complete these projects at the earliest.

Though there are around 15 to 20 e-connectivity roads under high 1 and high 2, by 31 March 2019 the progress of these works are mostly between 0-32% and only two roads' progress is 92%. There could be various reasons for delays. Whatever be the reasons, I request the Government to address these issues and expedite works of e-connectivity roads in Andhra Pradesh. Regarding, road safety, many Hon'ble Members gave valuable suggestions. There is a need to pay special attention for road safety. Many drivers drive for thousands of kilometers without proper break, and as a result there could be health related issues. There is already a proposal to

set up stay homes, but it should be at shorter distances instead of proposed longer distances. For health care also there should be adequate number of hospitals on expressways and highways, so that health security can be ensured to users of these expressways/highways. Sir, regarding road safety - in my constituency there is NH-5 which is now NH-221. This highway passes through ‘Vannepudi’ village which is near Kathipudi junction, every week couple of accidents takes place here. Many accidents took place at this spot and several lives were lost. We had informed concerned department about this particular issue, but we didn’t get any response. Therefore, all accident prone areas should be identified and defects, if any should be rectified.

Similarly, many roads are being connected through Bharatmala and Sagarmala. In this context, I request Hon’ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways, to provide a new highway to connect Kakinada and Rajahmundry.

I urge upon the Hon. Minister, Government of India to consider the construction of a road between Rajahmundry and Kakinada. They are twin cities. Rajahmundry has a large area of river Godavari and Kakinada has a seaport where the coastal corridor between Vizag and Chennai is located. Therefore, it is necessary to have a six-lane National Highway between Rajahmundry and Kakinada to have an access to Rajahmundry Airport.

Sir, there are no other twin cities in our country which have a seaport and a riverport, so necessary for upliftment of people. Sir, I would like to request the Hon. Minister once again to kindly allocate more funds and take steps for early completion of this project and put all the projects on high priority. Thank you. *

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI MUKESH RAJPUT (FARRUKHABAD):** The dream of laying a network of four lane roads across India was envisioned by the former Prime Minister, the late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji. The Government of the illustrious Prime Minister of India, Hon. Narendra Modi Ji, is firmly committed to realising that dream. The pace at which National Highways are being constructed under the leadership of the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji, is truly commendable.

Under the Government of Hon. Narendra Modi Ji, budgetary allocations for the construction of National Highways have been consistently increased. During the Congress Government in the year 2013–14, 4,260 kilometres of National Highways were constructed in one year. In contrast, during the final year of the previous Government led by Hon. Modi Ji, that is 2017–18, as many as 9,829 kilometres of National Highways were constructed in a single year, which is more than double the figure of 2013–14.

The Government is progressing towards the completion of 300 projects by December 2019, which is highly appreciable. The Bharatmala Project is extremely significant from the perspective of connecting the Himalayan regions of the country and enhancing

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

access to border areas. In order to increase the capacity of National Corridors, the Government has identified 53,000 kilometres of National Highways and has made substantial budgetary provisions for completing them in a phased manner by the year 2022. This initiative will strengthen the nation both from the security and economic perspectives.

The project announced for the major Char Dham Yatra in Uttarakhand will enable the overall development of the State. The construction of various expressways, bridges, and related infrastructure is a priority for the Government.

Fatehgarh holds significant importance from the perspective of national security, as the Rajput Regiment, Sikh Regiment, and Jat Regiment (T.A.) are stationed there. However, it is not connected by any National Highway. Last year, this route was declared as National Highway 730 C by the Hon. Minister.

The recently declared National Highway 730 C, which passes through Farrukhabad, is in a very deplorable condition, and I request that its construction be taken up at the earliest. Further, I request that a new four lane National Highway, parallel to NH 91, be sanctioned and constructed from Etah via Aliganj, Nawabganj, Farrukhabad, up to Gursahaiganj. This road will pass through all

five Assembly segments of the Farrukhabad Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE (BARAMATI):** Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is allocated a total budget of Rs. 83,015 crore in 2019-20 as compared to Rs. 78,625 crore of revised estimate in 2018-19.

CAG Audit noted short transfer of Cess collected in Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) to the dedicated non-lapsable fund in Public Account.

1. Road Cess	Name of Fund	Short transfer of cess upto March, 2018
In Rs. crore	Central Road Fund	72,726

Comments on short transfer of funds with respect to Road Cess and Clean Energy Cess have been repeatedly pointed out by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) since 2010-11. However, the Centre has taken no action in this regard.

The Economic survey noted the major constraints faced in construction of roadways and highways as availability of funds for

* Speech was laid on the Table.

financing large projects, lengthy processes in acquisition of land and payment of compensation to the beneficiaries, environmental concerns, time and cost overruns due to delays in project implementation, procedural delays, lesser traffic growth than expected increasing the riskiness of the projects resulting in stalled or languishing projects and shortfall in funds for maintenance. The Centre must take these issues into consideration and take the necessary steps to ease these constraints.

The Standing Committee in its 2018 report highlighted delay in National Highway Development Project (NHDP) in reaching target. The Committee observed that out of the total length entrusted under National Highway Development Project (NHDP) i.e. 56,323 km, only 33820 km has been completed. Similarly there has been under achievement under all the Schemes. The Committee viewed that the Ministry has not taken enough measures to achieve the set target within the stipulated time. I request the Centre to take measures to ensure timely completion of roads and highways construction. The Committee further noted that the hindrances caused to these projects is a testimony to the inefficacy of the present mechanism put in place to solve these issues. I urge the Centre to develop effective mechanisms so as to achieve its targets in a time bound manner and thus help bolster the economic growth of the country.

The Committee noted that the achievement under Left Wing Extremist (LWE) during 2017-18 is 174 km (till December, 2017) but the target for 2018-19 is 400 km. I request the Ministry to evaluate the reasons for the delay and strategise accordingly to speed up the road construction work in LWE areas, as recommended by the Standing Committee. In Maharashtra (balance 23 km) and Odisha (balance 74 km) the works are held up due to LWE activities and slow progress of some contractors. Efforts must be undertaken to expedite implementation of these projects. Since roads are very crucial in ensuring security in these areas the Ministry must provide initial support to these road projects and encourage participation of contractors.

Out of total allocation of Rs. 759.20 crore at RE stage 2017-18 for the States/UTs for development of State roads under the scheme of Economic Importance and Inter-State Connectivity, more than 10% remains unutilized. Inter-state connectivity by roads is important for economic growth of the country and the funds available at hand should be utilized to the fullest.

The Committee noted that though the length of National Highways and State Highways has increased tremendously during the last few years, the public transport has not been augmented proportionately. This has resulted in the prolifieration of private vehicles. The public transport is non-existent in many parts of the

country. The Committee viewed that this deficit in public transport system in the country needs immediate attention and major revamping. I request the Ministry to take steps to improve the condition of public transport system by providing adequate budgetary support. This will not only decongest the roads but also control the air pollution to a certain extent.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in his 2016 Report on National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), observed that NHAI paid Undue financial benefit to the concessionaires. For example, NHAI paid to PIU Begusarai undue benefit of 51.03 crore comprising early completion bonus of 21.83 crore in violation of the concession agreement, and 29.20 crore being part of annuity that was not payable due to reduction in scope of work.

NHAI also paid undue financial gain to the Concessionaire relating to four-laning project between Hazaribagh-Ranchi Section of NH-33 amounting to 47.05 crore and undue financial benefits of 31.90 crore to PIU Darbhanga.

In his 2018 report , the CAG also pointed out to the inability of the NHAI to recover damages and maintenance cost from the concessionaires. It was observed that the National Highways Authority of India extended undue benefit to the concessionaire to the tune of 99.27 crore by not taking prompt action to recover the

damages and maintenance cost from the concessionaire on account of its failure in achieving the project milestones and in meeting the maintenance obligations.

CAG further noted that the National Highways Authority of India failed to recover damages of 85.19 crore on account of delayed/non-completion of work relating to renewal of wearing surface of the road pavements by the concessionaires in four road widening projects in Andhra Pradesh.

CAG also pointed to the Transport Department's failure to comply with the safety guidelines before issuing the completion certificate for roadways construction projects. As per the concession agreement, Independent Engineer (IE) was to issue the provisional completion certificate for the project only after obtaining safety audit report. However, the IE issued provisional completion certificate 45 days prior to the safety audit report and the Authority paid bonus to the Concessionaire based on it, which led to payment of excess bonus of 6.11 crore to the Concessionaire.

The Government suffered a loss of interest on toll revenue due to delay in delinking of road stretch. National Highways Authority of India failed to delink the Chilakaluripet town stretch from the project relating to six-laning of Chilakaluripet-Vijayawada section in the State of Andhra Pradesh, as per terms of the agreement

entered into with the concessionaire. The CAG in his report estimated that it consequently led to loss of interest to the tune of 9.69 crore on account of delayed remittance of toll revenue collected by the concessionaire on the delinked stretch.

The Centre must help the State Governments with projects that improve the public transportation system. It must also ensure that funds are released to the State Governments on time and are properly utilized. With connectivity being an important factor in determining the growth and development of our country, I urge the Centre to consider the issues relating to roads and highways construction, and implement the above recommendations.

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE (MAVAL): Hon. Chairperson Sir, ever since Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji assumed charge as the Minister for Road Transport and Highways of the country, road construction work has been progressing rapidly across the nation. The dream of constructing the country's first Pune–Mumbai Expressway was envisioned by the late Hon. Balasaheb Thackeray Ji. That dream was realised by Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji when he served as a Minister in Maharashtra. Subsequently, several expressways have been constructed across the country. Over the past five years, Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji has transformed the very map of the nation. Compared to the pace at which work was carried out during the tenure of the Congress Government, road construction under Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji has progressed at several times that speed.

Therefore, I take pride in the fact that Shri Gadkari Sahib, having emerged from Maharashtra, is carrying out road construction across the entire country with such speed and momentum. When history is written, Shri Gadkari Sahib will be remembered as "Roadkari". He has not confined his work only to road transport; in order to promote integrated infrastructure, Hon. Gadkari Ji has also undertaken major initiatives in the field of inland waterways in the country. It is a matter of pride for us that

today India has the world's largest road network, with a total length of approximately 59 lakh kilometres. At present, about 60 Percent of goods transportation in the country is carried through containers or trucks on roads, while nearly 85 Percent of total passenger traffic relies on road transport. Every year, around five lakh road accidents occur in the country, resulting in the loss of nearly one and a half lakh lives. If calculated on a daily basis, there are about 1,370 accidents each day, leading to 411 deaths. Therefore, just as the pace of infrastructure development has increased, there is an equally urgent need to bring about improvement in the behaviour, discipline, and safety of road users.

Hon. Chairperson, the Central Road Fund used to be allocated to this Ministry, but in this year's Budget, the provision has been placed directly under the Finance Minister. Those who had demanded the Central Road Fund did receive it. However, I submit that it should be allocated directly to this Ministry.

The Committee on Public Undertakings, in its report of 2017, had expressed concern over the non completion of various projects within stipulated timelines. Many road projects are unable to progress at the desired pace, primarily due to delays in land acquisition. In several cases, environmental and forest clearances are not granted in a timely manner, which further slows down the

work. In order to complete projects across the country at a faster pace, a joint committee comprising representatives of the State Governments and the Union Government should be constituted, working in coordination with the Ministry of Environment and Forests, so that necessary permissions are granted at the earliest.

The work on the National Highway from Panvel to Uran was undertaken under the leadership of Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji, and it is now nearing completion. However, it has been observed that when work is carried out at a very fast pace, contractors do not always execute it properly. There have also been instances where the quality of work has been compromised. In Uran, at a place called Jaskar village, a cement concrete road had caved in, and several reports regarding this incident were published in newspapers.

I would like to state that while speed in execution is important, equal attention must be paid to quality. In my area, the work on National Highway 103, which goes from Karjat Morbar Khind through Maval to Bhimashankar, was also undertaken under the guidance of Hon. Gadkari Sahib. However, this work has come to a halt due to the absence of clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, and it has still not been completed.

Sir, National Highway No. 4, now converted into National Highway 54, passes through Talegaon, Chakan, and Shirur. Chakan and Shirur are industrial zones with heavy traffic movement, and as a result, frequent accidents occur in these areas.

The Union Government had announced an allocation of Rs. 1,800 crore for this project. The DPR has been prepared, but there has not been adequate follow up by the Ministry.

The construction work on National Highway No. 4 was awarded to the Reliance company during the tenure of the Congress Government. This highway passes through Dehu Road, the Katraj bypass, and goes on to Satara and Kolhapur. Even till date, the work on this highway has not been completed. The Ministry has summoned the company several times for discussions, but there has been no progress in the work so far. Several subways have been constructed here, but they too have not been built properly. Their width and height are inadequate, causing inconvenience to the public. As the Member of Parliament from that area, people regularly bring these complaints to me. Through you, I request that future work should be planned keeping in mind population growth and local requirements.

Sir, National Highway No. 4 from Pune to Mumbai is currently four-laned. If it is converted into an eight-lane highway, traffic

congestion on the Pune–Mumbai highway will certainly be reduced. The toll plazas on the expressway are operated by contractors. Long queues form at these toll plazas, causing inconvenience to commuters. This issue requires urgent attention. Hon. Gadkari Ji had announced FASTag lanes at every toll plaza, but the FASTag facility has not been effectively implemented anywhere.

Finally, I would like to conclude by raising one last issue. The work on the Mumbai–Goa Highway has been stalled for many years. This route passes from my area, Panvel, towards Goa and further into the Konkan region. I strongly request that the work on this highway be completed at the earliest. With this request, I conclude my remarks.

Thank you.

SHRI CHANDESHWAR PRASAD (JEHANABAD): Hon. Chairperson, first of all, I would like to thank the people of my *Parliamentary Constituency* who have elected me and sent me to this House. I especially convey my respectful greetings to the people of Jehanabad. I am deeply grateful to you for granting me permission to speak on this subject today.

Sir, as a Member of an allied party, I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting a people centric Budget. Roads play a crucial role in the economic development of the country. India has a vast road network of 89.03 lakh kilometres, which is the second largest in the world after the United States. This network includes National Highways, State Highways, major district roads, and rural roads.

Our popular Chief Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar Ji, has laid an extensive network of roads in Bihar and provided better connectivity to the people of the State. However, the condition of National Highways across Bihar, including in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Jehanabad, is not satisfactory. Delays in the rehabilitation of landowners whose land has been acquired have further aggravated the situation. I consider it appropriate to cite the example of the NH 83 Patna–Dobhi four lane project. This is an extremely important road, particularly as tourists travel to Bodh

Gaya under the Buddhist Circuit. This road is the lifeline of both North and South Bihar. This road project has been pending since the year 2010. Initially, an expenditure of Rs. 600 crore was proposed for land acquisition, but due to changes in the law, this cost has increased to Rs. 3,088 crore. This project is JICA funded, and the National Highways Authority of India has sought an additional amount of Rs. 2,600 crore from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

No decision has been taken on this matter for several months. There is heavy traffic on NH 83. In order to manage this traffic, it is extremely necessary to upgrade and widen this road and convert it into a four lane highway.

Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister to remove every obstacle coming in the way of this project through the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, so that the people of Bihar, along with domestic and international tourists, may be provided smooth connectivity, and travel via Jehanabad to Gaya becomes easier.

Chairperson Sir, I would also like to inform the House that on NH 83 in Jehanabad, a large number of accidents are occurring daily. A few days ago, repair work was initiated, but in the name of repairs, the contractor has merely filled large potholes with boulders

and left them unattended. As a result, during the night, small vehicles meet with accidents and people are getting injured. I would urge the Hon. Minister to pay special attention to this matter.

In my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Jehanabad, National Highways 110 and 139 also pass through, and their upgradation and widening are extremely necessary.

National Highway 110 passes through Arwal district of my *Parliamentary Constituency*, Jehanabad, for a stretch of 17 kilometres, and National Highway 139 runs through the same district for about 36 kilometres. Arwal district is a backward region of Bihar and remains deprived of development. There is a severe lack of basic amenities there. National Highway 110 is the main route connecting eastern Bihar to western Bihar, while National Highway 139 serves as the principal route connecting northern Bihar to southern Bihar. Due to the heavy movement of vehicles on these routes, the number of road accidents has increased significantly. In recent times, local residents and public representatives have requested me to seek the construction of two new bypasses for Arwal town, so that city residents may get relief from traffic congestion and accidents, along with improved ease of movement.

Therefore, in the larger public interest, I request the Hon. Minister to issue appropriate directions for the construction of new bypasses on NH 110 and NH 139 for Arwal town. In this context, through you, Chairperson Sir, I would also like to state to the Hon. Minister that, keeping in view the poor condition of National Highways under the State's jurisdiction and in the interest of smooth connectivity, the State Government has completed several projects from its own funds. Reimbursement of the said expenditure from the Union Government is necessary, which has not been done so far.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, through you, I would like to offer a few suggestions to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Due to the unprecedented growth in road traffic, there is a need for extensive expansion and improvement of the country's road network. This will require substantial financial resources supported by an efficient mechanism and trained manpower. While formulating plans, the views and cooperation of local representatives, particularly Members of Parliament and MLAs, should be taken into account. Proposals received from the States should be approved expeditiously so that project costs do not escalate due to delays. Before the commencement of any project, the National Highways Authority should issue proper directions to

its officers. Action relating to land acquisition, including obtaining No Objection Certificates from the Railways, should also be completed prior to the start of the project. It should be ensured before initiating any project that the necessary environmental clearances have been obtained. Encroachments on National Highways and issues relating to local law and order should be taken seriously and controlled effectively. The National Highways Authority of India has awarded thousands of projects, many of which are stuck in arbitration. This problem must be resolved immediately. Through an active role of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, it should be ensured that all projects are completed within the stipulated time. Contractors should not be granted any leeway to delay projects for any reason whatsoever.

Through better inspection and monitoring, the progress of work must be ensured. Sir, this is the first time I am speaking in the House. Effective coordination should be established among the Ministries, the National Highways Authority of India, State Governments, and private authorities. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways should make arrangements for ambulances and emergency medical relief equipment on all National Highways to provide immediate medical assistance to accident victims. Adequate attention should be given to this aspect

by providing parking facilities on both sides of National Highways and strategically important roads, along with the establishment of Annapurna facilities and trauma medical centres. The regional transport network of the country should be fully computerised. Overloading must be strictly prohibited, as it is a major cause of damage to roads. Sufficient attention should be given to the development of inter State roads, road connectivity, rural roads, and roads of economic importance. Rehabilitation of landowners whose land has been acquired for road projects should be expedited so that projects are not obstructed. Departments related to road transport and highways should be more proactive and should take up these matters with the concerned State Governments to ensure that proposals and utilisation certificates are received, so that funds can be released and effectively utilised. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRI NALIN KUMAR KATEEL (DAKSHINA KANNADA):** I would like to place my views on Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019-2020,

The budget allocation for the roads and highways has been increased to Rs,1,11,691 crore for the year 2019-20 from an allocation of Rs.99,322 for the year 2018-19. It has raised by a significant 12%. To support Sagarmala and other schemes under this for boosting inland water transport, fell to Rs.757 crore, from Rs.891 crore in the previous year.

I would like to mention that the Government has also proposed to improve the efficiency of National Corridors, development of Economic Corridors, Inner Corridors and Feeder Routs along with integration with Sagarmala and “Bharatmala Pariyojana”.

Under Sagarmala, 48 projects for Port Modernization, Port Connectivity, Port-led Industrialization and Coastal Community Development are planned in the state of Karnataka at a cost of Rs.24,772 Crore.

Some of the important roads and highway projects are 23.60 km long Shiradi Ghat Tunnel, which provide links from Bengaluru-

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

Hassan to Mangaluru port through Shiradi Ghat on NH-48, built at a tentative cost of Rs.10,000 crores.

Other important roads and highways projects are 117 kms Bengalore-Mysore Section of the Bangalore-Mallapuram Economic corridor is being developed as a six laned, access controlled highway at an estimated cost of Rs.7000 crores.

Chennai-Bangalore Expressway identified as one of the priority projects under Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor, providing connectivity to the proposed Multimodal Logistic Park at Dobaspet. This expressway passes through three states -76 kms in Karnataka, 91 kms in Andhra Pradesh and 94 kms in Tamil Nadu, and is being built at an approximate cost of Rs. 16,000 crores.

Another important ongoing NH projects in the state includes Bangalore Ring Road, where NHAI has taken up the work of balance portion of STRR for Bangalore (West side) to Hosur in Tamil Nadu (Connecting NH-4 to NH-7) under Bharatmala.

One of the major inter-state projects provides connectivity to neighboring state capitals Hyderabad and Amravathi.

As far as resource mobilization for infrastructure sector is concerned, it has been proposed to increase special additional excise duty and road and infrastructure cess each by one rupee a litre on petrol and diesel. This will generate more funds for

infrastructure investment. A calculation provided by ICRA Ratings suggests that with this, the total Road and Infrastructure Cess is estimated to increase to Rs. 1.27 lakh crore in 2019-20 from Rs. 1.13 lakh crore in 2018-19, an increase of 12.4%.

In the Union Budget the NDA Government has increased the excise duty and levy the special additional tax on using roads. Special additional excise duty on Motor spirit commonly known as petrol has increased by Rs.1, from Rs. 7 to Rs.8 per liter. And on High speed diesel oil it is increased from Rs. 1 to Rs.2 now. Road and infrastructure cess on Motor spirit commonly known as petrol, High speed diesel oil is increased from Rs. 8 to Rs. 9 now.

Another very important and also the matter of concern for all of us is the road traffic injuries and accidents. It is very unfortunate that the number of accidents are increasing every year. I am shocked to see the rising figures of number of persons killed in road accidents in India during the last three calendar years i.e. 146133 persons killed in the year 2015, 150785 in the year 2016 and in 2017 it is 147913. I urge the Union Government to take a serious step to see that the number of accidents is ZERO.

The Union Government has taken various measures to facilitate Transporters. The Government has increased Axle load limits, Allowing carriage of higher payloads, Increase in fitness periodicity

from one year to two years, Simplification in terms and conditions of National Permit, Allowing Transporters to carry documents in electronic form and many other measures would certainly help the transporters to operate comfortably. However, the demand for change in the Toll charge slab is not addressed in the budget.

I would like to request the Union Government to take necessary steps address the issue at the earliest.

The construction of Mangalore City Bypass should be expedited. It would help decongest the city of Mangalore. As per the reports the NHAI, has prepared the new Green Field Alignment for the Mangalore City Bypass. But the Work is yet to start. Hence, I request the union Government to give necessary directions to expedite the project for construction of the Bypass.

The Union Government had sanctioned four-laning of Kulshekar-Karkala National Highway(NH-169) in 2015, the work was delayed due to delay in land acquisition process. Fast Track the project, being undertaken under Bharatmala Pariyojana-Phase-I at the earliest.

Construction of Four-laning of Addahole-BC Road Cross Section under NHDP Phase IV. The project has come to a halt, causing inconvenience to the public. I also request you to direct the concerned authorities to fast track the land acquisition process and adequate compensation is paid to the land owners. Additional funds for completion of the project be sanctioned, if required.

[*]**SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE (MUMBAI SOUTH-CENTRAL):** I would like to place my views on the Demands for Grants under the control of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

I come from Mumbai and I will place on record the problems and suggestions concerning Roads and Highways of Mumbai and Maharashtra State. First of all, I take up the issue about the issues of the Road Transport Sector for which I have been taking up the issues before Hon'ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways as well as Finance, But nothing has been done so far for redressal their problems. The road transport sector deserves a special status and its issues must be addressed on real time basis but sadly is lingered for years. It is in acute distress as is the farm sector. A healthy road transport sector is essential for growth of the economy and employment generation. This sector is one of the highest tax payer and employment generator but highly suppressed and marginalized. Main problem of Transport sector is payment of Toll at large number of places across the various States. Increasing the toll taxes levied by the National Highways Authority of India on trucks would cause for a decrease in the profit margin of the truck owners, leading to transfer the cost to the consumer, which would result in an

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

increase in the costs of essential goods. Hence, in reality an increase in the toll prices would have a direct effect on individuals ability to purchase basic commodities including food products. In some States, the cost incurred on constructing the highways are being collected from highway users in shape of toll. After collecting the cost they still collect revenue which is unfair. And thus, it is my submission to the Government to ensure that toll collection to be done away with once the cost of construction of the highway has been recovered.

Another issue is that every year more than five lakhs pilgrims participate through several dindis to join Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj and Sant Tukaram Maharaj palkhi processions starting from Alandi and Dehu respectively to Pandharpur in Maharashtra. The number of warkaries has increased over the years underscoring the need for expansion of the road infrastructure. Warkaries have expressed satisfaction over the Government's decision to start construction work in February as Shri Rambhau Chopdar of Alandi Devasthan Committee said, 'Thought it's too late, but still we are happy that finally the Government has completed the procedure and announced the date of construction." This will felicitate effective pilgrim services on Wari path from Alandhi and Dehu till Pandharpur.

There is a master plan for cultural path in Mumbai, which starts from Mahim Causeway and ends at Siddhivinayak Temple covering important nodes like-St. Michael's Church, one of the oldest Catholic Churches in Mumbai, built by the Portuguese in 1534, Hajji Ali Dargah, Shivaji Maidan which is 28 acres open space renowned as the cradle of Indian cricket, along with the Memorial of our party Supremo Bala Saheb Thackeray,

Swatantryaveer Savakar Smarak and a memorial to B.R. Ambedkar, at Chaityabhoomi, among others.

The Konkan belt of Maharashtra will soon be connected by a coastal highway, which is part of the Maharashtra Government's grant plan for the State's west coast. Once the highway is ready, it will promote tourism in the Konkan belt, and will also greatly reduce travel time along that stretch;. Sources from the PWD said that the project is expected to start from Uran near Navi Mumbai and go on towards Goa via the west coast of Maharashtra passing through Uran-Alibaug-Kihim-Murud-Harihareswar-Jaigad-Ganpatipule-Ratnagiri-Kunkeshwar-Malvan-Panjim. The project is expected to be around 550-600 km long. There are some missing links on this route which needs to be connected. Also interlinking these roads with the sea forts which will include the tourism.

Maharashtra State is dotted with number of magnificent forts, nested in the Western Ghats or the Sahyadri Mountain range. There are nearly 350 forts in Maharashtra, so it is said that forts are the glory of Maharashtra. Most of these forts are associated with the great Maratha ruler, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The Mughals and Marathas owned a lot of lands here and build some beautiful buildings and forts. He built some stunning forts that stand proudly in Maharashtra. If this circuit is concerned it will boost the tourism and also people will know the history and culture of Maharashtra.

The section from Adoshi Tunnel to Khandala exit is a 6-lane road but the traffic of 10-lane road (6-lane of Mumbai-Pune Expressway + 4 -lane of NH-4) is plying in this stretch. Due to decrease in speed and increase in time of travel in this section. heavy amount of traffic and landslides causes congestion in this strech. Due to decrease in speed and increase in time of travel in this section and in order to save time, vehicles move at a faster speed on rest of the expressway which has resulted in increase in number of accidents. Accordingly, as per suggestions of Technical Advisory Committee alignment of the Mission Link along with Detailed Project Report approved by Technical Advisory Committee. The length of existing Mumbai Pune Expressway section from Khopoli exit to Sinhgad Institute is presently 19 kms. This distance will be reduced to 13.3 kms after construction of this

new missing link reducing the travel time by 20-25 mins. In the meeting held on 13.06.2017, Cabinet Sub-committee of Infrastructure has approved proposal. It is learnt however that his expressway was supposed to be linked till Kolhapur. But still there are many missing links in between Pune and Kolhapur. The work going on is also very slow.

The Expressway has witnessed a large number of auto accidents, attributed to human errors and the large volume of traffic. In the first 10 years since its opening, there were 1,758 accidents with more than 400 fatalities Sporadic instances of robbery have also been reported in the highway. There have been many deaths in this recent year on expressway. Also many high profile people have died here. The construction of the over 3,400 sqft trauma care centre having a heliport facility was completed in June, 2016, but is still not up to the mark. Due to this immediate help can't be offered to the victims. There are no toilets on National Highways & State Highways at regular intervals for the passengers travelling.

I hope that Hon'ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways will consider the issues I have raised and allocate Central funds for the same. Thank you,

SHRI PINAKI MISRA (PURI): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I will follow the example of my distinguished colleague from the Janata Dal (U) who has not wasted his time starting his speech by dissecting these tens of thousands or lakhs of crores of rupees that the Demand for Grant entails and instead concentrated first on his State and his Constituency. Let me do the same thing right away. It is a salutary example set by my friend in his maiden speech.

My Constituency Puri is the most important place in Odisha, one of the four Dhams in the country. It normally takes 45 minutes from Bhubaneswar to Puri. Yesterday, at the end of Rath Yatra, it took me two and a half hours to reach there. It is a horrific situation for two reasons. One, the ROB for which a proposal has come to the Union Government on the Puri-Konark Road is sorely needed. This proposal has been there since November of 2018. I have already written to the Hon. Minister, Shri Gadkari Ji. Now his alter ego Gen. Singh is here. I request Gen. Singh to please take this up personally. Otherwise, on a very busy train line, hours are spent by people in the heart of Puri town. Therefore, this is a major nuisance. This is on National Highway 203.

The second issue, of course, is the Bhubaneswar-Puri Highway, which has again been left abandoned midway. It is a toll road. It has been abandoned midway. I beseech you to kindly make sure that

this is completed at the earliest. [Translation] Those who were your petitioners, who had contested from the Bharatiya Janata Party, had also gone for darshan three or four days ago. Wearing a ceremonial shawl, they said that they would personally bring Shri Gadkari Ji and get this work completed. We have no objection to that. Let them bring Shri Gadkari Ji, let the entire credit go to you and to Shri Gadkari Ji. I say this with folded hands, please get the work done. Whoever takes the credit is of no concern to me. But because of this, the people of Puri and the people of Odisha are facing immense hardship. As of today, these two projects remain stuck here.

[English]

Now that I have done my little bit, let me come down to dissecting some of these tens of thousands of crores of rupees that are involved in the Demand for Grant.

Some work has been done; there is no question about it. This whole road construction rate, touching 30 kms a day, no doubt, is a very salutary thing. However, there are caveats, and I must flag those caveats straight away. One of the most important caveats is the NPAs that these projects are touching.

These NPAs have risen from 1.9 per cent of total advances to now almost 20 per cent. Prof. Sougata Ray had flagged this; a lot of the Members are going to flag this. This is a very serious situation

where NPAs have already touched 20.3 per cent in 2017-18. My friend from the JD(U) also mentioned this.

Almost every case is stuck in arbitration. Contractors have now become professional arbitration experts! These contractors now have full libraries. I have actually seen contractors who have full libraries in their homes, and they have become self-styled lawyers themselves.

It is because their whole point is to take up a project and then push it into arbitration and make hundreds of crores of rupees out of arbitration. So, this is a situation that does not augur well at all. That is point number one.

Secondly, what I need to flag also is that year on year, there is an increased allocation, and hats off to the Ministry that they are managing to do this because I do not believe, apart from the Ministry of Defence, any other Ministry manages an increase in allocation year on year. They have managed a 5.58 per cent increase in the allocation in this Ministry. But the disquieting feature is the under-utilization that is happening, except last year when there was an over-utilization. There has actually been an under-utilization to the tune of Rs. 1,040 crore in 2014-15, Rs. 5,744 crore in 2016-17, and Rs. 3,886 crore in 2017-18. This kind of under-utilization speaks volumes for some inefficiencies at a cutting-edge level that

need to be ironed out. Otherwise, there is no reason why, when you get a year-on-year increase, you are under-utilizing.

On top of that, you are, of course, going to the market and raising funds all the time by all kinds of bonds, saddling yourself with liabilities. Therefore, if there is going to be under-utilization of this nature, then there is no point in saddling yourself with liabilities. The Government moves in mysterious ways as it wonders to perform. I do not know what they do; where they pick up the money from and where they spend it. So, I do not know why you would need to go in for these kinds of external borrowings when there is under-utilization. It is for the Hon. Minister to answer.

Now, my friend Mr. Dushyant Singh is not here. He lamented about [Translation] the condition of roads in the Hon. Speakers's *Parliamentary Constituency*, Kota, which is extremely poor. Something must be done about it. How can anyone address road conditions when the total allocation of the Ministry for maintenance is only 1 Percent? If only 1 Percent is spent on maintenance, how will this situation ever improve? In the United States, as much as 51 Percent is allocated for maintenance. We need to reach that level, even if we are speaking purely in terms of highway construction. That will take many years. Even so, the difference between 1 Percent and 51 Percent is enormous. Since you are from Kota Hon.

Speaker, perhaps the roads there may improve, but as far as the rest of the roads are concerned, it seems they are left to fate. If the allocation is one per cent, I do not believe there is going to be any hope but all for road maintenance.

For road safety, only Rs. 280 crore has been allocated, which is 0.3 per cent of the entire allocation. This again is a pitiable amount. If I were to place before you the figures from the United States, I think it is about 8 to 10 per cent. So, therefore, you need to give more allocation.

The recent accident that occurred on the Yamuna Expressway has been referred to by Sougata Da. The accident took place because the driver fell asleep. If you look at roads anywhere in the United States or Europe, you will always find rumble strips along the sides of the road. When a vehicle moves onto rumble strips, it experiences vibrations, which immediately alert the driver and wake him up. Here, however, we are not constructing rumble strips. We are merely building highways. Reference has been made to the Yamuna Expressway. The focus should not be only on constructing expressways, but also on incorporating essential road safety features. Without such measures, accidents of this nature will continue to occur. [English] In the entire world, I do not think there is a red light on the highway, whereas at Palwal there is a red light.

How can an expressway have a red light? It is a bizarre situation that there is a traffic intersection in the middle of an expressway like this. Who planned this? How was this planned? It is unbelievable! So, what I am going to request is to please apply your mind to the modern way of building these things. I think the Hon. Prime Minister will tell you how to do it because the Vadodara-Ahmedabad expressway is apparently one of the finest expressways in the country. So, the time has come now because [Translation] land acquisition costs have escalated sharply. In rural areas, land has become four times more expensive, and in urban areas, land prices have doubled. [English] At present, if you go for land acquisition for the construction of highways, you are doomed. The only way out is elevated roads, but with rumble strips, both by way of safety as well as by way of minimal land acquisition cost. [Translation] The cost involved in land acquisition is far higher than the cost of constructing elevated roads. You should consider elevated roads everywhere. We are all aware in this House of the rackets associated with land acquisition. We know who wants their land to be acquired, how compensation amounts increase, and the manner in which they are inflated. I seek your indulgence in saying this, but many people at the local political level, including Members of political families, are involved in this. Members of politicians' families are part of this racket. This must be put to an end. Construct

elevated roads. Elevated roads will also provide protection from cattle menace. They will ensure pedestrian crossing safety. From every perspective, they enhance safety. This is a very important suggestion that I am placing before you

Reference has been made to “The Bharatmala Project”. It is a very important project, but I do not feel that work under this project is progressing at the pace at which it should be carried out. Contracts for 178 projects with an aggregate length of 7,998 kilometres have been awarded till March 2019. When you are looking at almost 36,000 kilometres, and out of that only about 7,000 or 8,000 kilometres of roads have been constructed, it essentially means that only one fifth of the work has been achieved. Your ambitious project for the year 2021–22 will never be completed within this time frame. Therefore, the utilisation under this programme must be increased. To enhance utilisation, you must ensure that 100 Percent of the tenders are awarded and that the number of projects is also increased.

I would like to make one final point. The Committee on Public Undertakings stated in its report in 2017 that from 1995 till June 2016, out of 388 projects completed, only 55 projects were completed on or before time. These are shameful figures. For this, we have to put in very strict terms and conditions. One must

recognise that if land is not made available, the work cannot be completed. People have seen how work was carried out on the Delhi–Meerut Expressway. Where there is will and where there is determination, work does get done. Agrawal Ji, we salute you wholeheartedly for the manner in which, while being a Member of Parliament, you ensured connectivity for Meerut. We fully acknowledge and appreciate your efforts. [English] As a result of these kinds of delays, the cost overruns become huge, and it is a very detrimental situation for the Ministry. I can’t say that I oppose the Demands for Grants, as my friend Prof. Sougata Ray has done. Of course, we have to support the Demands for Grants. But we support the Demands for Grants with these caveats and suggestions, particularly with regard to Puri. I hope the Hon. Minister General Singh, who is a doer in his own right, does the needful.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Sir, since the discussion on this subject commenced late, I request that, if the House so permits, the sitting of the House may be extended by two hours.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: If the House agrees, the sitting of the House may be extended by two hours.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Very well. The sitting of the House is extended by two hours.

[English]

[*]**SHRIMATI RAKSHA NIKHIL KHADSE (RAVER):** I would like to express my views on an important issue of infrastructure, the last mile connectivity in the country, Demands for Grants related to Road Transport and Highways.

I congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitaraman Ji for the historic budget ; presented under the dynamic and visionary Prime Minister of our country respected Shri Narendra Ji Modi. And also congratulate Railway Minister Shri Nitin Ji Gadkari and his colleague Minister of State in the Ministry General (Retd.) V.K. Singh Ji in presenting under whom the country's last mile connectivity is taking significant improvement in achievements of the physical targets.

The Indian Economy has reached to the tune of 2.7 trillion dollar at the end of the last five years of our Government and will certainly knock soon at 3 trillion dollar in the current year. The objective of our Government to take country's economy to 5 trillion dollar in the near future, this is possible as our Government has achieved and put forward the growth by adding around 1 trillion dollar in five years whereas the Governments working for last 55 years could achieve only 1.85 trillion dollar till the year 2014 when

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

our Government took charge. This is possible when the Government is working dedicatedly for the last man upliftmment. The Government in last five years tried to build and connect the last mile stone by strengthening the road infrastructure. Not only developed super expressways, new highways but also converted the existing narrow roads and worsening situation of National Highways into Four and Six Lanes wider strengthening with the development of Industrial corridor for logistic transportation. This infrastructure took the Government and made them to reach and achieve the economy of 1 trillion dollar in just five years.

The National Highway no. 6 running in mu constituency connecting many states right from Gujarat in Western India to Kolkata in the eastern side. From last 55 years of independence this NH was neither developed nor repaired and is in a very bad shape. From the record of last 55 years this can be easily assessed by looking at the road accidents and large mishappenings recorded on this NH 6. The Government when took charge in the year 2014 started the work of repair by patching the damages for this NH 6 and for safe movement . My Government in the meanwhile took the work of the conversion of this NH 6 which is mostly passing through the crowded cities where the Bye-Pass was planned and proposed. The work of land acquisition was taken up in last three years in many locations and for conversion to four and six lanes.

The actual work of widening and the new Bye-pass started and is in progress. The complete work of this Four and Six lane will be completed in a year's time. The average rate of the construction of the new NH and roads for last 1000 days works out to be 130/135 kms. in a day. As the NH 6 work is in progress I demand to provide under pass bridge for crossing the main NH 6 at junction crossing joining two villages Hartala and Changdev, both the villages having ancient history andmoral importance large number of visitors and Pilgrims travelling every day to visit these places, for the safe movement at the crossing. Similarly, to provide exit and underpass at Salbardi village on NH6, as at Salbardi, villagers are every now andthen required to visit their farmland for carrying out agricultural activities and the most of the agricultural land of these villagers are located on the other side of NH6.

The other State Highway road remains heavily crowded and most of it observes the Banana traffic handling from farms to the market located in nearby cities from Ankaleshwar to Burhanpur onward joining the city of Indore and other cities of Madhya Pradesh. This is a State Highway and passing through most of the black soil, hence the situation gets worse during every rainy season. I request to Hon'ble Minister to convert that State Highway to National Highway so that the work can be upgraded and provide relief to the farmers and banana growers from this region. The

conversion is urgently required to be upgraded as the farmers are getting the transportation facilities to transport the raw banana to various markets in metros as the operators are denied entry who want to use this state highway, there by damaging farmers highly perishable banana crop. By the time this conversion and the widening of the road is under progress I request Hon'ble Minister to provide sufficient fund under CRF from Union Government.

The prestigious programme Bharatmala for developing national road corridor and highways are in completion of the Phase I and in Bharatmala Phase II my Government is taking up the development of the State roads which will improve the economy in coming five years. As the infrastructure develops by means of the connectivity by Roads, Rail, air and now through Sagarmala by waterways (Jalmarg) there will be revolutionary growth observed in every field of manufacturing, trading, agricultural farming and processing industries. The connectivity through the Roads with Airport and Port these initiatives taken by our Government will lead to improve logistics tremendously, reducing the cost of transportation and increasing the competitiveness of domestically produced goods.

I once again congratulate Hon'ble Road Transport and Highways Minister working under the vision and guidance of respected Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji and the Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji and colleague Minister of

State Shri Anurag Thakur Ji for strengthening the Road and National Highway, Superfast highway, Logistics corridor network and infrastructure with enhancing and developing Rapid Regional Transport Systems (RRTS) through airport and Port connectivity. I support the Demands for Grant for Road Transport and Highways and once again forward my sincere thanks to Respected Speaker Sir for the opportunity given to express my views for the demands for grants for railways.

[*]**SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH):** Roads are part of an integrated multi-model system of transport which provide crucial links to airport, railway stations, ports and other logistical hubs and acts as a catalyst for economic growth by playing a critical role in the supply chain management.

The road transportation system of our country needs immediate modernisation and latest technology. Roads are bad and inadequate in India. The Government should spend more on the development of roads especially in rural areas. Roads are not maintained properly in our country. Less than 0.1 per cent of national income is spent on the maintenance of roads in India, while in Japan, it is 3 per cent of national income. There are many cases of undisciplined driving and drink and drive which lead to accidents; A major problem of Indian roads is heavy traffic condition, Multiple toll fare counter, check points result in driving down the speed of the vehicles and waste valuable time which creates problem for transporter. Road taxes vary from State to State. Lack of essential basic amenities in Indian Highways like first-aid centres, telephone booths, repair shops, clean toilets, restaurants cause serious problems for common people travelling and drivers.

[·] Speech was laid on the Table.

There is no sufficient fund for maintenance and construction of roads. Over the years, the percentage of allocation has decreased a lot whereas this task requires high priority. During the last five years, allocation was 6.9 per cent. Now it has come down to 3.6 per cent.

Railways need to be engaged in shifting heavy weight goods while road transport should be used for transporting small, sensitive and perishable goods.

Truck transport vehicles and buses require immediate replacement. Most of them are outdated and out-modelled. Due to this, major accidents occur as well as environmental pollution increases. We should give priority to this issue. When will these road transportation problems be solved? When will the transportation of goods become easier and can be transported to every corner of the nation making our country a cargo hub?

[Translation]

KUNWAR DANISH ALI (AMROHA): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I will not take much time in making a preface. Two Hon. Members who spoke before me have already expressed certain concerns. Carrying forward those sentiments, I wish to place before the House issues related to my own area. The Hon. Minister of State is present in the House. I come from the Amroha Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*. What was earlier known as National Highway No. 24 has now been renumbered as National Highway 9. Almost my entire constituency lies along this Highway. There are industrial areas such as Gajraula and Brijghat located on this stretch. After Haridwar became part of Uttarakhand, we had hoped and prayed that Brijghat would emerge as the Haridwar of western Uttar Pradesh. However, the situation today is that there is no trauma centre anywhere between Delhi and Moradabad. A large number of accidents occur on this National Highway. There was a plan to establish a trauma centre at Brijghat, and the work had also been awarded. An amount of approximately Rs. 96 lakh has already been spent by the Government. For this purpose, the National Highways Authority acquired land, but thereafter the work on the trauma centre came to a halt.

18.00 hrs (Shri N.K. Premachandran *in the Chair*)

Through you, I would appeal to the Hon. Minister. I have obtained information from the District Authorities that compensation has not been paid, due to which the trauma centre has not been constructed there.

Secondly, in Gajraula, which is an industrial area, accidents occur frequently. On one side of the highway there are factories, and on the other side there is a residential area. In the year 2018 alone, approximately seven major accidents took place, in which several lives were lost. I urge the Government and the Hon. Minister that the National Highways Authority should construct an underpass at Gajraula so that these accidents can be prevented.

Often, our attention is drawn only when certain issues are highlighted. In my constituency, there are two toll plazas, one at Brijghat and the other at Zoya. At Brijghat, there is an old bridge over the river Ganga. It was repaired and reopened, but within eight days it had to be closed again due to leakage. As far as I understand, tomorrow is Purnima. People travelling from Delhi towards Moradabad and Lucknow via this route get stuck in traffic jams for several hours. Even I, when travelling from here to my *Parliamentary Constituency*, am often unsure whether I will reach on time or not. This has happened on several occasions.

I request the Hon. Minister that a new and wider bridge be constructed over the Ganga at Brijghat. There is heavy traffic at this location, and not only regular traffic, but during occasions such as Ganga Snan or Purnima, the entire day passes under severe traffic congestion.

I had mentioned that there are two toll gates in my constituency as well. I would request you to instruct the officials of the National Highways Authority that these problems are not confined only to my area, but are prevalent in many other regions too. The exempted lanes, which are meant for ambulances to pass through, are often misused by all kinds of vehicles. In my constituency, the situation is actually the opposite, and I state this with full responsibility. At both the toll gates in my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*, namely Brijghat and Zoya, the exempted lanes have been permanently closed. A large stone has been placed there to block them. We even contacted the District Magistrate and informed him that ambulances keep sounding their sirens, patients suffer, and precious time is lost. If we raise our voice too strongly, it is assumed that the Member of Parliament wants to use the exempted lane himself because of VIP culture. That is not the case at all. The exempted category is not meant only for Members of Parliament or MLAs. Exempted lanes are created primarily for ambulances.

Because of this misuse and mismanagement, lives are being lost. The contractors who are awarded these toll operations do not deploy properly trained staff.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I will conclude shortly. You have awarded contracts to large companies, and these companies operate tolls by employing local staff. However, the staff posted there are often poorly trained, and many of them are not even adequately trained to handle computer systems. ... *(Interruptions)* This is not just a problem of my constituency; it is a problem faced everywhere. ... *(Interruptions)*

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I believe that the Hon. Minister and his officers, who are seated here in the Gallery, will take note of the issues I have raised and will make efforts to resolve them. This is a matter concerning highways. The Hon. Minister's Road Transport Department is a very large Department. You yourself come from a neighbouring *Parliamentary Constituency*, and I believe you are also aware of these problems. Perhaps, over the years, Governments have knowingly allowed such situations to persist. I wish to refer to Uttar Pradesh Roadways, UPSRTC, and even DTC.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: One more Speaker from your party also has to speak.

KUNWAR DANISH ALI: Sir, I will conclude my remarks in one or two minutes. The entire UPSRTC corporation has virtually been dismantled. This has led to two major consequences. Our party represents Dalits, SCs, STs, and OBCs. Government jobs that existed earlier have been eliminated. As a result, several illegal buses are now operating. I believe that between Delhi and my *Parliamentary Constituency* alone, there are at least more than three thousand such buses operating illegally, running daily between Delhi and Uttar Pradesh.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

KUNWAR DANISH ALI: Sir, within Uttar Pradesh, the number exceeds 50,000. The Government should bring in a policy through which at least the revenue that the Government is currently losing can be recovered.

Hon. Minister, I believe this matter needs to be taken up very seriously. Without saying much more, I conclude my remarks with the hope that you will pay due attention to the demands relating to my constituency. Thank you very much.

[English]

[*]**SHRI BHARATRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK):** Roads have been a means of progress since the advancement of civilization. India has one of the largest road networks in the world with about 59 lakh km of road length. This road length includes National Highways, Expressways, State Highways, major District Roads, PWD Roads and project roads. In our country, road infrastructure is used to transport over 60% of total goods and 85% of total passenger traffic. This Ministry formulates and administers policies for road transport and transport research. It is involved with construction and maintenance of the National Highways through NHAI and National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited. To say in short, it deals with matters relating to road transport.

The total expenditure on the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for 2019-20 is estimated at Rs.83,016 crore. This is 6% higher than the revised estimates for 2018-19. In 2019-20, while revenue expenditure of the Ministry is estimated at Rs.10,957 crore capital expenditure is estimated at Rs.72,059 crore. In 2014-15, the ratio between revenue and capital expenditure was 50:50. In 2015-16 this ratio changed with spending more funds on capital

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

expenditure. Since then, the Ministry has increased it s capital expenditure significantly. In 2019-20, 87% of Ministry's spending is estimated to be on capital expenditure. Yet I would say, though in the past few years the expenditure of the Ministry has seen a significant increase, the actual expenditure has been consistently lower than the budget estimate.

In 2019-20, of the total expenditure, the highest allocation is towards roads and bridges at 55% which is Rs.45,890 crore. This is followed by allocation towards the National Highway Authority of India at 44% i.e. Rs.36,691 crore. The NHs comprise about 2% of the road network but carry about 40% of the total road traffic. In 2019-20, the allocation towards roads and bridges is Rs. 45,890 cr. as I had stated earlier and this is 12% more than the revised estimate of 2018-19 which was Rs. 40,920 cr. Expenditure under roads and bridges includes development of NHs, increasing the number of lanes under various projects, and development of road connectivity in naxalite affected areas. I urge upon the Minister to take special care to provide funds to Odisha for development of roads in Naxalite infested areas.

A very tragic accident occurred on 8th of this month, on Yamuna Expressway which killed 29 people. Cutting through farm land the highway was built at a cost of Rs.12,839 crore to connect the industrial towns of Noida and Agra and take the load off NH19.

Since the highway opened in August 2012, there have been more than 5700 accidents. Why has the seven year old state of the art road, managed by Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority continue to remain risky for motorists? Officials blame on overspeeding, drivers dozing off, poor visibility and bursting of overheated tyres.

There was road safety audit done in 2018 of Yamuna Expressway by IIT, Delhi and had listed several measures for better speed compliance. This includes increasing the number of speed guns and cameras, the height of guard rails and replacing the current medians with flush medians, fining vehicles that switch lanes or drive without tail lights or speed along entry and exit ramps. And the real picture is there are not enough road side facilities such as rest rooms and tea-outlets, many of the cameras meant for capturing vehicle images are not working and the branches can be seen hanging in front of the road side cameras. This year itself, the highway has seen 247 accidents and 127 deaths.

The accidents that occur, need to be brought down drastically to zero level. There is a need to send advisory by the Government to states in this regard.

The issues that I would like to put before the Government are being faced by the road sector. Major constraints are – availability

of land for NH expansion and upgradation, significant increase in land acquisition cost, lack of equity with developers, bottlenecks and check points on NHs have adversely impacted benefits of GST, higher cost of financing and shortfall in funds for maintenance. Further, the value of NPSs in the infrastructure sector, including roads and highways, has been increasing, with NPAs at around Rs. 2.6 lakh crore as of August, 2016.

In 2016, the standing committee on Transport had observed that while the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways invests in the construction of roads, it does not have its own source of revenue other than budgetary support from the Union Government. It had recommended that the RBI and Finance Ministry may help road transport Ministry to set up its non dedicated financial institutions to generate funds for development of the road sector. It had also recommended that Ministry should monitor toll collection and channel and surplus funds towards stressed projects. It also had noted that while Government has allotted huge budget for the road sector, this will not be sustainable over the long term unless Government find some ways and establish appropriate financial institutions and models to encourage the return of private investment to the road sector.

As we all know, private financing for the roads sector is a challenge. Several APP road projects have not been able to attract

bids. The major highway developers in the country are also facing financial capacity constraints. There is lack of debt products that are aligned with the revenue stream profile of highway projects. This makes financing of such projects difficult, and has resulted in some projects getting stalled at the construction stage. This is also discouraging prospective bidders. Dr. Kelkar Committee had looked at issues with PPP projects in India, last November, 2015. It had recommended setting up an independent regulator for the road sector to help bring in and regulate private players in the sector. It had also noted that service delivery, such as constructing roads, to citizens is the Government's responsibility and PPPs should not be used to evolve such responsibilities.

Since infrastructure projects span over 20-30 years, a private developer may lose bargaining power because of abrupt changes in the economic or policy environment. It recommended that the private sector must be projected against such loss of bargaining power. This could be ensured by amending the terms of the concession agreement to allow for renegotiations. I would like to know that steps the Government has taken in this regard.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government relating to CAG report of 2016 which had brought to light several procedural inefficiencies with NHAI. For example, NHAI could not release toll on certain projects due to delays in approvals, toll operations etc.

NHAI did not adhere to the Ministry's guidelines on maintenance of project-wise balance sheet and cash flow. Loss of revenue was also noted due to inefficient bidding process for engagement of toll collecting agencies.

In 2019-20, the Ministry has allocated Rs. 3,150 cr. towards maintenance to roads and highways including toll bridges. This is Rs. 469 crore. It has allocated about 1% of its budget towards maintenance of NHs. The total length of NH is 1.14 lakh Km. In comparison to 2019-20 the US Government seeks to allocate $23.74 billion (51% of its total budget on highways) towards its National Highways Performance Programme to improve the condition of NH system which is roughly 2.2 lakh miles of length. Earlier, I had said Standing Committee had observed that the entire length of NHs in the country cannot be maintained with this amount. Maintenance of roads should be given top priority as it increases the life span of roads. A effective monitoring mechanism for repair and maintenance of roads should be put in place. Further there should be penalties for contractors and engineers in case of poor quality repair, maintenance and construction. Maintenance is carried out only when required, as opposed to being a part of preventive measures.

In this Financial Year, 2019-20, Rs. 280 cr. is allocated towards road transport and safety. This would provide for various things

such as road safety programmes, setting up of facilities on NHs, for extending relief to accident victims, strengthening of public transport, research and training. This amount is about 0.3% of Ministry's total budget. On comparison, the US Federal Government spends about $2.7 billion on its Highways Safety Improvement Programme which is 6% of its total expenditure on highways. In 2017, there were 4,64,910 accidents in India which killed about 1.5 lakh people and injured about 4.7 lakh people. As a signatory to the Brazilian convention, the Government intends to reduce traffic fatalities by 50% by 2020 but where are the funds?

Project delays is another major constraint. Delay in completion of the projects are mainly due to long time taken in land acquisition and obtaining environment and forest clearance and poor performance of concessionaries due to economic slow down. To tide over these constraints, it is necessary to have a coordination mechanism at the central level with Ministry of Finance, Environment and Forest and Defence which will help speed up the process of clearances. The Ministry should obtain all clearances before awarding the projects to concessionaries.

Before I conclude, I may mention about Bharatmala Pariyojana which intends to optimize efficiency of freight and passenger movement by bridging official infrastructure gaps. This aims to increase the number of districts with national highway linkages

from 300 to 550. In 2017, Phase-I of Bharatmala was approved under which 34,800 km of roads are to be developed for a period of five years. The Phase-I was supposed to subsume 10,000 km of balance road works under the NHDP. The estimated cost of Phase-I is Rs.535000 crore. Till March 2019, 225 road projects with an aggregate length of about 9613 km have been approved and of these 178 projects with a length of 7998 km been awarded by March 2019. In 2019-20, this scheme will be extended to include the construction of state highways as well. With the land acquisition in process as well as the rising costs turning out to be a huge challenge, the Government will find states to lay state roads under this Bharatmala Phase-II.

I would also like to know what progress has been made relating to road monetization? The Government had offered eight stretches of highways under the Toll-Operate-Transfer (TOT) model in last August 2018. This TOT model has been developed to encourage private participation in the highways sector. Private players or concessionaire as they are being called to operate and toll the project stretch for the pre-determined 30 year concession period. But are these only on paper? What is the ground reality?

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of Minister relating to the Budget speech of the Finance Minister where she made announcement regarding road sector. Other than increase of cess on

petrol, diesel and Phase-II of Bharatmala project, she has proposed certain changes in the road sector by amending the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund Act, 2004. Currently the Union Government is responsible for formulating the criteria on the basis of which specific projects of state roads are financed out of states share of funds from the Road and Infrastructure Fund. The Bill provides that the Union Government will now be responsible for formulating criteria for any state road project. So who will decide which road of the State will be taken up on priority? Not the state, anymore. Therefore, I urge upon the Minister to at least consult the State Government, seek their opinion and then proceed because the State Government cannot implement it. You do the monitoring for timely completion and quality work.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH (AURANGABAD):** I support the Motor Vehicles Act. Under the leadership of the Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji, historic work in road construction is progressing rapidly across the country. The people have great expectations from Hon. Gadkari Ji.

The six laning work of National Highway No. 2 has been going on for several years and remains incomplete.

This highway runs from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh through my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Aurangabad in Bihar, onwards to Dhanbad in Jharkhand and up to Kolkata, but the pace of work is extremely slow.

On the stretch of this road from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh to Aurangabad–Dobhi in Bihar, frequent road accidents take place, resulting in the loss of many lives.

On the Aurangabad bypass, a particular location, Kama Bigha Mod, has become a major accident prone spot. Several bridges on this road, such as those over the Jharahi River in Madanpur Block of Aurangabad district in Bihar, the Morhar River, the Sorhar River, and the Pipperghati bridge, all of which fall within the limits of

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Gaya district in Bihar, have become highly dangerous and are also causing severe traffic congestion.

The service road at the junction of National Highway 2 and National Highway 83 at Dobhi in Gaya is in a life threatening condition due to potholes measuring nearly one foot in depth at several places. This situation can be clearly seen and verified.

In such circumstances, road users who pay toll tax to use these highways are not only becoming victims of frequent accidents, but are also facing severe inconvenience due to traffic jams. As a result, they suffer loss of valuable time and endure considerable hardship.

The same situation prevails at the junction of National Highway 83 and National Highway 139 at Amba in Aurangabad district of Bihar, where the construction of a bypass is urgently required. In addition, to prevent accidents caused by fog during the winter season, it should be made mandatory to apply white reflective paint on roads. This measure has proved to be extremely effective in enhancing visibility and road safety.

[English]

[*]**SHRI SAPTAGIRI SANKAR ULAKA (KORAPUT):** In my constituency, Koraput, we have serious issues and challenges with respect to maintenance of highways, completion of work, and safety issues. In NH-26, a new NH bypass for Jeypore town from Bariniput to Umuri village under Jeypore NH division was proposed. We would request the Hon. Minister to take up this work on priority and expedite the construction. Around 4000 plus vehicles ply every day, and in the absence of proper traffic facilities, a lot of accidents take place. Similarly, a new NH bypass for Rayagada town is urgently required in NH-326. With heavy vehicles plying and no traffic management, the people of Rayagada have to bear with traffic jams, accidents, and unsafe roads. Also, the flyover in Rayagada (NH-326) is in dire need of repair; the work needs to be expedited. There is a lot of delay in widening the 30-kilometre stretch of NH-326, especially the 5.5-kilometre road at Kailash Kota Ghat near Mukundpur. The road at Kailash Kota Ghat has virtually become a death trap. NH-326 has been handed over to NHAI. Neither PWD nor NHAI is concerned about its upkeep and maintenance. Kindly expedite the above projects and address the concerns of the people.

[·] Speech was laid on the Table.

DR. G. RANJITH REDDY (CHEVELLA): Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to thank my Hon. Chief Minister, Shri KCR, and my working President, Shri KTR, for sending me here. I really know that I do not have the luxury of time—the way the larger parties have—to go into the minute details of the Demands. But I would like to focus only on the issues which are related to my State of Telangana, from where I come.

I take this opportunity to place on record that Shri Gadkari Ji has done an excellent job in the last term and he is the most efficient Hon. Minister in this Cabinet also. There is no doubt about it. He is very receptive also. Anticipating that the same receptive mode will continue, I would like to put forth certain submissions.

I was going through the Demands relating to the NHAI, which is the heart and soul of this Ministry. I was really shocked to look into the details wherein the allocated Budget has gone down by Rs. 630 crore when compared to the Revised Estimates of last year. In the year 2018-19, the NHAI was given Rs. 37,321 crore, but surprisingly and shockingly, this year, they have got only Rs. 36,691 crore. It is seen that the Hon. Finance Minister has increased the Budget of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways by six per cent only. I really do not know how the Ministry is going to take up this.

Secondly, the Hon. Finance Minister, in para no. 19 of her Budget Speech, announced that the States would be helped under Bharatmala-II to develop the State road networks. I really appreciate this. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister how the States would be helped, especially the State of Telangana. Under Bharatmala-I also, I was told that 250 districts will be connected with the National Highways. The State of Telangana has 33 districts. Through you, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister how many districts of Telangana are already connected with the National Highways and how many more districts are to be connected with the National Highways.

When it comes to road safety, as other Hon. Members of Parliament spoke, the Hon. Minister has allocated only 0.3 per cent of the Budget, which is accounting for Rs. 280 crore. I really do not know how Rs. 280 crore can suffice to take care of road safety. As we all know, we are coming across about five lakh accidents every year, killing about two lakh people and injuring about five lakh people also. As per the Brasilia Convention, by 2020, about 50 per cent of road accidents had to come down. But as of now, the road accidents are not coming down.

So I would like to know from the Minister how he is planning to manage with 0.3 per cent money on road safety. When is he going

to bring the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill to address some of the issues relating to road safety?

When you look into the Economic Survey which was presented to this House very recently, you will see that the Ministry has very ambitious targets to fulfill around 15,000 kilometres of road. If you look into the figures of 2016-17, you will find that they could achieve only 50 per cent of their target, and in the next year, they could achieve only 70 per cent. I would really want to know from the Minister the constraints his Ministry is facing and the innovative methods he is going to adopt to achieve the targets next year.

I would now come to the State issues. The Government of Telangana has submitted a proposal to develop a 354-kilometre four-lane corridor along with Godavari-Pranhita rivers. I would request the Hon. Minister to take up this project.

As per the 13th Schedule of the A.P. Reorganisation Act, the road connectivity of Telangana was supposed to be increased. As of now, the density of the National Highways in Telangana is only 2.5 kilometres for every 100 kilometres. In compliance with this, the Ministry has given, in principle, approval for 3,155 kilometres, but as of now, it is notified only for 1,388 kilometres. I would request you to please notify the remaining 1,767 kilometres also.

I would request for the notification of five State roads as the National Highways. We were asked to give consent for 50 per cent work on these National Highways. Our Chief Minister was kind enough to give consent also. I would request that the five roads may be notified as the National Highways. They are Choutuppat-Mangal-Shadnagar, Hyderabad overall, Gowrelli-Voligonda, Thorrur-Kothagudem, Medak-Yellareddy-Rudrur, Bodhan-Basara-Bhainsa, and Medak-Siddipet-Yelkurti. I would also request for approval of four-lane express way around Hyderabad city. There is also need to improve urban stretches on the National Highway-44 in North and Southern parts of Hyderabad. There is also a need to take up a small stretch of NH-167 between Jadcherla and Mahboobnagar. Our Hon. Chief Minister, Shri KCR Garu, has also written letter to the Hon. Minister to enhance the sanctioned ceiling of Rs.3000 crore for 2018-19. It was not done. I would kindly request you to please look into this.

With these observations, I support the Demands of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. There are a few more roads also. Madlur-Bodhan road, Nijampet-Narayankhed road, Karimnagar-Kamareddy, and Zahirabad-Bidar road. I would request you to look into all these roads and please give a special focus on Telangana State which is a newly formed State as the 29th State in the country.

SHRI SUNIL DATTATRAY TATKARE (RAIGAD): Sir, first of all, I am deeply concerned over poor progress of the National Highway going from Panvel to Panjim. It does not only go through my Konkan area but it also goes to Goa, Karnataka and Kerala. A lot of effort is required to complete this work. Every week, a number of accidents occur there and some people die also. There is a dynamic Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari, for this particular Ministry. In the last five years, the work has not progressed as it was expected. There are a lot of problems like land acquisition, payment to farmers, environment clearance, etc. Unfortunately, toll will also be charged on this particular highway which passes through Konkan. In the manifesto of BJP of 2014, a call for toll-free Maharashtra and toll-free country was given. It is the only National Highway passing through Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala. I do not know whether the toll is charged in Goa, Karnataka and Kerala also. I would request that the toll should be waived off.

Another road which was declared as the National Highway by Shri Gadkari Ji goes from Pune to Mangaon which is an assembly constituency and falls in Konkan area. This National Highway is stuck up. In the Western Ghats eco-sensitive zone which is from Pune to Mangaon, the road is just not existing. I would urge upon the Hon. Minister to form a dedicated team for resolving these forest-related issues.

It should be done so that this particular road connecting Konkan and Western Maharashtra could be completed within the stipulated period which, in turn, would help in promotion of tourism in that area. Another important road is the NH that is connecting the Raigad Fort, the ancient capital of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. This NH connects Raigad to Mahad. Mahad is a place where Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar launched *Satyagraha* in 1927. The construction of this road also has been stuck up because of land and forest issues. I would like to urge upon the Hon. Minister that a similar kind of dedicated team should be formed as has been formed for the Mumbai – Nagpur Expressway which is a dream project of the Hon. Chief Minister of Maharashtra and Shri Gadkari ji. Same formula should be adopted for development of the region where it is required.

The other National Highway project passes through my *Parliamentary Constituency* -- Pen to Khapoli, Mangaon to Dighi Port, Indapur to Agardanda. The work on all these roads is in progress. But owing to non-payment to farmers for land acquisition, the work has got stuck up. All these roads are being constructed under the Sagarmala project. The Government needs to give more attention to these projects.

Sir, I would like to refer to another highway, namely, the Reves Reddy Coastal Highway, the only coastal highway passing through

the State of Maharashtra. The State of Maharashtra has a coast line of 720 kilometre in Konkan region and not in Vidarbha or Western Maharashtra or in North Maharashtra or in Marathwada. This coast line falls only in the Konkan region. On the sides of this road, there is scenic beauty just by the side of the Arabian sea. This road has been accorded a National Highway status but no number has been given to it. Providing a number to this National Highway is important and if the DPR for this road is being prepared, then the entire coastal area would benefit by way of tourism. People travelling from Mumbai to Goa will also be benefited from this road. So, this road should be constructed either under the Sagarmala project or under whichever project the Government may consider appropriate. But the first thing is that a number to this National Highway should be provided. That is very important.

Sir, my district headquarters is Alibag. The area is facing heavy traffic jam now. People are visiting Alibag for tourism activities. It falls in the coastal area. The Kulaba fort also is there. The construction of this road was proposed in the last Budget. The DPR for this should also be prepared at the earliest. So, a dedicated team, as has been formed for the Mumbai – Nagpur Highway, for resolving the issues of forest and land acquisition should be formed. The National Highway passing through Konkan area, especially

through my *Parliamentary Constituency* where accidents occur frequently should be taken care of. Thank you.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI RAHUL KASWAN (CHURU):** I would like to place my views on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

I would first like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji and the Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji for presenting such an excellent Budget, keeping in mind every section of society. This Budget will certainly take India towards the category of developed nations, and it holds the potential to raise India's economy to USD 5 trillion in the coming years. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the Government of India has made a provision for the construction of 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads at a cost of Rs. 80,250 crore. For rural connectivity, the far sighted vision of the former Prime Minister, the late Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji, in the form of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, has today proved to be a boon for rural India. Since the inception of this scheme, the majority of villages in rural India have been connected through roads. In my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* of Churu, 97 Percent of villages have already been connected under the first phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. I request that under Phase II, additional

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

budgetary provisions be made to connect Gram Panchayat headquarters with one another, and under Phase III, to interconnect villages, so that connectivity between neighbouring villages is ensured through paved roads instead of unmetalled routes.

The Government of India has set an ambitious target of constructing 40 kilometres of roads per day for the development of National Highways. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji and the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji, this target will be achieved soon, because our popular Prime Minister has a clear vision to strengthen the country's basic infrastructure. The development of National Highways forms a key part of that vision. The Government of India intends to spend Rs. 15 lakh crore over the next five years on the development of National Highways in order to strengthen the country's infrastructure.

Alongside the development of National Highways, it is extremely necessary to identify accident prone locations, because safety is as important as convenience. For this purpose, such locations should be identified at the very stage when DPRs are being prepared. Preparing DPRs for National Highways is an extremely important task, and it must be carried out with proper guidance, careful planning, and thorough deliberation.

In my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*, work is presently underway on National Highway No. 709E from Rajgarh to the Haryana border via Pilani. Further, the DPR work for the road from Sirsa to Churu via Nohar, Sahwa, and Taranagar has already been completed. I request that the Sirsa–Churu road be formally notified as a National Highway, the highway number be assigned, budgetary allocation be made, and the work be commenced at the earliest. In addition, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has already announced two other National Highways, one from Nathusari to Ringas via Bhadra, Sidhmukh, Sadulpur, Mandrella, Jhunjhunu, Udaipurwati, Gudagodji, and another from Lohani to Shri Dungargarh via Bhal, Sadulpur, Taranagar, and Sardarshahar. The process of preparing DPRs for these highways has also begun. I request the Government to expedite the completion of the formal procedures for both these National Highways and to commence the work at the earliest, so that National Highway connectivity in my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* may be completed. These highways are extremely important from both economic and strategic perspectives.

SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER (CHANDIGARH): Thank you, Hon. Chairperson Sir. After a long time, today I have got the

opportunity to speak for the first time in this 17th Lok Sabha. For this, I sincerely thank you from the bottom of my heart.

[English]

Sir, I shall begin by congratulating our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji and Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji for presenting an all-inclusive Budget. This Budget is inspired by the aspirations of more than 125 crore Indians. Further, this Budget gives due importance to building the basic infrastructure, something that our country still lacks after 72 years of Independence. It is a matter of serious concern that successive Governments, beginning from the Independence of this great nation, have never been able to give the required priority to this sector.

After all, roads are the drivers of the economy of this country. A well-maintained road network reduces travel time and increases efficiency and leads to better access to services. For the rich and poor alike, for the rural and urban alike, a well-maintained road network is of utmost importance.

By providing a generous Budget to the Road Transport and Highway Ministry, the Hon. Prime Minister has followed, in principle and in practice, *sabka saath*, *sabka vikas*. There is confidence, and that is why we are seated here. ... (*Interruption*s)

Twenty years ago, the former Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee envisioned the grand design of the Golden Quadrilateral Project. Linking several important cities of India was a huge boost to major agricultural, industrial and cultural centres. Soon after, in 2000, his Government launched the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana to provide connectivity to unconnected habitations. This project has increased the accessibility of villages to city markets, thereby driving the commerce of these villages and giving children a chance to go to schools in farther away places in school buses.

Even today, the people of this country are witness to the development in the infrastructure sector under the able leadership of Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. To name a few, the Eastern and the Western Peripheral Expressway have finally been completed, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Shri Nitin Gadkari.

Another feather in the cap of the Government has been the completion of Bogibeel Bridge in Assam which is the longest rail-cum-road bridge in India. These are just a few examples. The bridge has significantly boosted connectivity, trade and commerce for the North-East. It is quite evident that these past years have seen a complete overhaul in the functioning of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Firstly, the expenditure budget of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been increased from Rs. 78,625 crore in 2018-19 to Rs. 83,016 crore in the current budget. In fact, within five years, we have reached Rs. 83,000 crore from Rs. 33,000 crore. A year-to-year growth rate of 20 per cent is both commendable and unprecedented in this sector.

It is not only the allocation but the utilisation of the Budget has also increased substantially in recent years. In 2017-18, the utilisation was as high as 97.7 per cent of the Revised Estimates, kudos to the driving force and focussed implementation of Shri Nitin Gadkari.

Further, the ratio of Revenue to Capital Expenditure has changed fundamentally. This is a laudable step by the Ministry because roadways is, and should be, a capital-intensive Ministry. In 2014-15, out of every hundred rupees, only fifty rupees were used to build roads. However, as per the current budget, out of every hundred rupees, 87 rupees will be utilised to build roads. A substantial change in this ratio is a strong indicator of increased efficiency of the Ministry.

The results are quite visible. As per *The Economic Survey* of India, from 2014-15 to 2018-19, the average construction rate of National Highways has gone up from 12 kilometres per day to over

30 kilometres per day. The Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, in her speech, announced that under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, a pace of 130 to 135 kilometres per day of road construction was achieved in the last thousand days.

The Government has also approved the ambitious Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I for development of economic corridors, inter corridors, border roads, coastal roads, port connectivity roads and expressways with an aggregate length of about 34,800 kilometres. The project will also generate 14.2 crore man-days of employment which is a commendable achievement of this Government.

A key feature of this Budget is that it gives due importance to building of roads in naxal-hit areas. By doing that, we will be able to provide better access to healthcare, education and other services including better security to tribal communities. To manage revenue sources, there have been several efforts to bring in private investors. Hybrid annuity model has proved to be an effective replacement of the PPP model.

Sir, I would also like to use this opportunity to make a few suggestions regarding the budget of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. The first and foremost of these is about the budget allocated for maintenance of roads and highways. In 2019-20, the

Ministry has allocated Rs. 3150 crore towards maintenance of roads, highways and toll bridges. While there is a hike of 17 per cent as compared to the previous year's Revised Estimates, in my opinion, this amount is not sufficient.

Because as our road network is expanding, there will be an increased requirement for maintenance. We must make roads that last long; and Maintenance is paramount for that.

An effective and permanent monitoring mechanism for repair and maintenance of roads is very important and worthy of being mentioned here. Therefore, I urge the Ministry to increase the allocation towards maintenance and repair of roads and highways.

My second suggestion relates to road safety. In the proposed Budget, the Ministry has allocated Rs. 280 crore towards road safety. Among the incidents related to deaths due to road accidents, the victims are pedestrians and cyclists. In fact, in my own constituency, Chandigarh, in the year 2018, out of 98 deaths in road accidents, 46 were either cyclists or pedestrians. As per the data available from the year 2017, 56 pedestrians get killed every day in road accidents across India. While there are many factors involved, including the increased transport usage in this country, certain interventions will definitely be crucial in preventing such accidents.

Here, I would like to draw the attention of this august House to a Private Member's Bill that I brought in during my first year in 2014 in the last Lok Sabha. It was the Good Samaritan Bill. After this, we petitioned the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the Supreme Court took cognisance of it and the Ministry made it a part of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill. It is unfortunate that today, every Member present here has spoken about the importance of road safety, yet, when Mr. Gadkari, as somebody said, one of the most efficient Ministers over here, brings it up, they do not let it pass. They have amendments, they have so many things to say about it. Is it important for us to oppose just for the sake of Opposition? Because we are called the Opposition, you oppose something which is good for the country, something which is required to save lives in this country. I would request everybody to give a helping hand to this because Good Samaritans are somebody who, out of purity and goodness of their hearts and in good faith, help accident victims, and are not harassed by police, or asked unnecessary questions. Many countries have this as a law. The Health Ministry, whom I also petitioned, has brought it in. The hospitals no longer refuse to admit or ask police to come and interview the people who brought the victim in. The first hour, the golden hour is so important so that the person does not die of bleeding, and we stand here arguing about it. So, I will request my

counterparts across that side.…*(Interruptions)* Brother you were speaking most about it. I am very upset.…*(Interruptions)* When it comes to this, you get up and speak about road safety. When in the morning, Gadkari*ji* was there, you were tricking against it.…*(Interruptions)* This is all part of the process.

Sir, my last and one of the most important points relates to my Constituency, Chandigarh.

It has been a long pending demand of my constituents in Chandigarh that a ring road be constructed in order to de-stress the traffic in Chandigarh. This ring road is crucial so that the traffic bound towards Haryana and Punjab can be diverted, and not go through Chandigarh which is becoming highly polluted. Please give me two minutes, Sir.

Last year, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways approved this demand and agreed to construct it under Bharatmala Phase – I, but the project is not moving forward. Therefore, it is my humble request, through you, Sir, to the Minister, to provide required attention to this project and help in resolving any issues that are holding it up.

Secondly, the Ministry recently approved a six-lane flyover and a four-lane underpass at the Tribune Chowk, the estimated cost of

which is Rs. 184 crore. I thank the Ministry and the Minister for that.

While thanking the Minister, I would urge him, on behalf of the residents of Chandigarh, to extend this flyover till GMCH 32. It is an important project for my Constituency because the above-mentioned road is very congested and needs urgent attention.

I shall conclude by saying that the Budget is reflective of the willingness of the Government to outlay a generous share for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Proposing to raise the allocation up to Rs. 100 lakh crore for infrastructure in the next five years has, thus, given a message of strength and hope, for the development, to the entire country. I am confident that with the brilliant vision of Shri Narendra Modi*ji* and the speedy and decisive execution of this vision by Gadkari*ji*, our nation will soon be a five trillion-dollar economy. I congratulate the Government and also the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I support the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for 2019-20.

[Translation]

***KUNWAR PUSHPENDRA SINGH CHANDEL (HAMIRPUR):** I wish to present my views on the Demands for Grants for the year 2019–20 under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

For the year 2019–20, the Government has presented a Budget of approximately Rs. 27.86 lakh crore and has set a target of increasing the country's present USD 3 trillion economy to USD 5 trillion within the next two years. In achieving this objective, all forms of transport related infrastructure in the country will play an extremely important role, and among them, road and highway transport will be of paramount importance. Along with this, the infrastructural development of roads and highways is the key to development in economically backward regions such as Bundelkhand. Therefore, the central pillar of development in Bundelkhand lies in the rapid development of roads and highways.

In the present Budget, an allocation of approximately Rs. 72,000 crore has been made for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, out of which Rs. 36,691 crore has been allocated to the National Highways Authority of India. Along with this, a

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

comprehensive restructuring of the Authority will also be undertaken, which will ensure the creation of a National Highways grid with the desired capacity. Further, to promote electronic motor vehicles, the Government has approved the FAME II scheme with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore. In addition, GST on electric vehicles has been reduced from 12 Percent to 5 Percent, and an additional tax deduction of up to Rs. 1.5 lakh has been provided on the interest paid on loans taken for electric vehicles. All these steps are welcome and clearly reflect the Government's commitment to maintaining an appropriate balance between development and environmental impact.

However, in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Hamirpur (Uttar Pradesh), there is a need not only to widen National Highways between specific locations, but also to construct ROBs and RUBs at various points under the Setu Bharatam Scheme, along with the development of ring roads and road related infrastructure under the Bharatmala Project. This will further accelerate the pace of development in my *Parliamentary Constituency*.

National Highway 86, the Kanpur–Sagar National Highway, which passes through my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Hamirpur in the Bundelkhand region, is presently a double lane road between Kanpur and Kabarai. Widening this stretch and converting it into a

six lane highway is a matter of great public importance. Every day, approximately 10,000 to 15,000 additional trucks carrying sand and gravel pass through this stretch, resulting in persistent traffic congestion. Consequently, the 100 kilometre distance between Kanpur and Kabarai, which should ordinarily take much less time, takes anywhere between four to eight hours to cover. Even vehicles providing emergency services frequently get stuck in traffic jams. Therefore, there is an urgent need to widen the Kabarai–Kanpur highway and convert it into a six lane road. Such upgradation will bring multiple benefits to both the Road Transport Department and the general public.

Travel for the general public will become smoother, and after widening, there will be a reduction in road accidents. At present, villagers in this region frequently become victims of road accidents.

Kanpur is very well connected to other parts of the country through the rail network, and through road connectivity from Kanpur, the transportation of goods to Kabarai and other areas will become easier and faster. This will also lead to an increase in the revenue of the Road Transport Department.

After the construction of the six lane National Highway, the prospects for the establishment of new industries in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Hamirpur in the Bundelkhand

region will increase significantly. Bundelkhand is an important tourist destination, and this six lane National Highway will play a vital role in attracting tourists to the region. An increase in tourist inflow will also benefit the Road Transport Department.

Under the Setu Bharatam programme, the Ministry is implementing measures to ensure safe and smooth traffic flow. Through this programme, several construction works can be undertaken on a priority basis in my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Under the Bundelkhand region, on NH 86, there are several railway crossings such as Kidari in Mahoba district of Uttar Pradesh, Supa in Mahoba, Harpalpur town in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, Khaichda (Mavaid), and Sumerpur, where the construction of Railway Over Bridges (ROBs) is urgently required. Once these ROBs are constructed, the public will get relief from severe traffic congestion in the area, and travel will become smooth and convenient.

The Bharatmala Project is a comprehensive programme for the highway sector, launched in the year 2017–18, with the objective of bridging critical infrastructure gaps and making road transport mobility across the country more efficient and effective.

In my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Hamirpur in the Bundelkhand region, there is an urgent need for the construction of

road bypasses at several towns. These include the towns of Kulpahar, Panwari, and Harpalpur in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, which are situated on NH 76, as well as Kabarai, Hamirpur, and Sumerpur towns, which lie on NH 86. Mahoba town is located on both NH 86 and NH 76. In all these locations, the construction of bypass roads is absolutely essential. Due to old settlements, National Highways pass through the middle of these towns. As a result, the highways passing through these towns experience severe traffic congestion, frequent accidents, and high levels of pollution. Once the proposed bypasses are constructed, there will be a significant reduction in both accidents and pollution. Vehicles passing through these regions will be able to reach their destinations without entering the towns, thereby freeing the towns from chronic traffic jams.

I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to present my views during the discussion on the Demands for Grants for the year 2019–20 relating to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

[English]

[*]**SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR (KANYAKUMARI):** I would like to place my views on Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Road transport is an important infrastructural sector, which connects each and every state in the country. Unless we have a robust road network, we cannot have a strong economy.

I wish to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister regarding certain pending works in my constituency, Kanyakumari. Kanyakumari District has a coastal belt from Arockiapuram in the Bay of Bengal to Neerodi in the Arabian Sea. Around 48 coastal villages are located in this coastal belt. In addition, fishing harbors are located in the following places of this coastal belt: 1. Chinnamuttom 2. Muttom 3. Colachel 4. Thengapattinam. There is no continuous connectivity of roads to these coastal villages and fishing harbors.

A coastal connectivity road project from Arockiapuram to Neerodi shall be considered by the Union Government to uplift the fishing community and their economy in Kanyakumari District. This proposed road connectivity requires the following additional infrastructure:

[·] Speech was laid on the Table.

The existing worn-out steel bridge connecting Keezhamanakudi and Melamanakudi shall be replaced with new decks on the existing substructure of the old bridge, which could be utilized for this redecking. This redecking of the bridge would be at the estuary of Pazhayar River; a new bridge in Rajakkamangalam Thurai across Panrivaikkal; a new bridge connecting Thengapattinam and Erayamanthurai villages across Thamirabharani River; further rubble mound sea wall construction required for Melamanakudi to Pallam and from Mullorthurai to Thengapattinam; new alignment with land acquisition/land transfer required between Kovalam and Keezhamanakudi, Rajakkamangalamthurai to Azhikkal, Melmidalam to Kurmbanai, and Eraviputtherthurai to Vallavilai.

Since this scheme involves land acquisition of more than 10.00 km length, a special land acquisition unit has to be formed, and a special officer has to be posted to get clearance as this road traverses through the coastal regulation zone, with traffic flow from Thadikarankonam, Vazhayathuvayal, Keeriparai, Kalikesam, and Balamore Estate. The road from Thadikarankonam village to Balamore road crosses the Perunchani catchment in two locations near Keeriparai and Kalikesam. In these two locations, existing causeways got washed away twenty years ago. Local public and pilgrims suffer a lot to cross the river course during the rainy season

and floods every year. For smooth crossing of the river course in the Peruchani dam catchment, two bridges have to be constructed at Keeriparai and Kalikesam of Balamore Road (Major District Road).

All these locations are in a Reserve Forest, and clearance from the Ministry of Environment is required. These bridges are only to replace the existing damaged causeways. After construction, there would be continuous traffic flow from Thadikarankonam, Vazhayathuvayal, Keeriparai, Kalikesam, and Balamore Estate.

Construction of a flyover and both sides widening and improvements of the bridge on NH-47B Vadaseri – Oluginaseri.

Construction of road strengthening and widening on NH-47, and construction of a bridge at Kaliyakkavilai to Kanyakumari.

1. The Union Government has sanctioned over 120.54 crore from the Central Road Fund for repairing 31 state roads in Kanyakumari District. This work should be completed at the earliest so that the roads can be used by the public.
2. Ring road – Parvathipuram to Suchindram – NHAI.
3. Tuticorin-Tiruchendur-Kanyakumari state highway four lane – NHAI-Tirunelveli.
4. Valliyoor-Tirchendur upgraded as NH. NH number not yet given.

5. Kanyakumari-Kaliyakkavilai under the scheme of annual plan 55 km.
6. Kavalkinaru-Parvathipuram NH47B upgrade under the scheme of the annual plan.

EAST COAST ROAD: Chennai-Mahabalipuram-Puducherry-Cuddalore-Chidambaram-Veilankanni-Ramanathapuram-Rameshwaram-Dhanushkodi-Ramanathapuram-Thoothukudi-Manapad-Kanyakumari.

The Union Government has sanctioned over Rs. 300 crore from the Central Road Fund (CRF) for repairing 44 state roads in Kanyakumari District. Rs. 66 crore had been sanctioned for the formation of the West Coast Road linking Kanyakumari and Pazhaya Uchakadai for a length of 71.05 km and other road development works. A sum of Rs. 22 crore has been sanctioned for developing Paraseri, Thingalsanthai, and Pudukkadai roads, and Rs. 24.5 crore for Suchindram Outer Ring Road from the Central Road Fund.

The Government has also sanctioned Rs. 195.59 crore for the Ozhiginaseri flyover and Rs. 256.00 crore for the Chettikulam flyover. Particularly for the Kottar – Chettikulam flyover, the local population and traders are opposed, as they will lose their entire

business. As such, the construction of the flyover may be withdrawn.

With a view to undertaking these works, the State Government has issued an order on August 19 to establish a new office for the Divisional Engineer, National Highways Authority of India, in Nagercoil, offices of the Assistant Divisional Engineer in Kanyakumari, Nagercoil, Thuckalay, and Kuzhithurai, and offices of the Assistant Engineer at 15 towns in the district.

Tamil Nadu receives a major infrastructural boost for seamless road connectivity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation stones for as many as five national highways projects worth Rs. 2995 crore in Kanyakumari. But the work should be completed at the earliest.

Injecting a major financial booster to the road and highway sector of the country, the Asian Development Bank has recently agreed to grant worth $500 million amounting to Rs. 3,300 crore for the Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor Project to strengthen 15 existing major road stretches across the corridor. The financial booster is aimed at pushing growth in the manufacturing sector, promoting balanced regional growth, and giving a fillip to the development of districts of the state in the downstream south. The total cost of the project – funded by the State Government and

the ADB – is Rs. 6,448 crore. In this connection, an ADB team carried out a final survey before clearing the proposal recently.

The corridor is a part of the East-Coast Economic Corridor development scheme. These big infrastructural projects will benefit the local population and citizens in several ways. This will also decrease travel time, as the highways and road projects will enhance connectivity across many areas. However, this will not materialize unless the projects are completed at the earliest.

The toll charges, which the public has to pay, are on the very high side. For a mere distance of 300-400 km, the user has to pay a high amount of Rs. 1000/-. I urge the Government to review this and revise it so that the common man does not suffer. In fact, it would be appropriate if the toll charges are reduced by at least 60 percent.

Waterways tourism is required to be promoted from Kanyakumari to Rameshwaram via Tirchendur. For this, the Government may conduct a study report.

With these words, I thank you very much.

SHRI T. N. PRATHAPAN (THRISSUR): Sir, in response to the Budget, I see a huge part of allocation went into NHAI. But NHAI is lagging in most of their projects in the country. People always suffer. Construction company always gains. I can give you an example from my constituency. The construction of NH-544 is not completed even after eight years and more than 60 deaths have happened on the road which is constructed unscientifically.

Anyway, I extend my thanks and gratitude to the Hon. Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji for the meeting that we had on the national highway issues in Kerala, especially on NH-544 *Mannuthy-Wadakkanchery* and Kuthiran Tunnel in my constituency Thrissur. I request that the Union Government should make all possible efforts to complete the construction work on National Highway-544. It has been eight years since this project started, still it is incomplete. The decisions and the recommendations made in the meeting should be followed. The Union Government should direct National Highways Authority of India regarding this.

Currently, one important thing that we need to take immediate action on the construction area. The sand bags used temporarily in the area where sand erosion is happening will not be secure. The strong water flows from the hilltop will destroy them. It will cause huge accidents and may cause casualties. So, a proper fencing wall

to protect the road transportation should be built immediately. When will the construction work start and when will it finish?

There is one more important issue. The Government should consider The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 instead of considering the Act of 1956. This is a common issue. Whenever the Government take over land for road construction, people suffer. I have a close experience in my constituency relating to NH-66 Kuttippuram-Edappally. The Government should listen to the people's representatives and people who are affected due to land acquisition for national highways and solve their disputes. The current 3D notification In Thrissur coastal belt also should be dismissed along with restructuring the alignment.

I need to invite the attention of Hon. Minister, through the Hon. Chair, to the toll booths working in the country. They are looting people in the daylight. All the written agreements are violated by toll booths under B.O.T.

That is a naked truth. The rule which demands that the construction work should be finished before starting work at the toll booth, is also being violated in almost all the cases. I can give you an example of my Constituency. There is a toll plaza at NH-544 in Paliyekkara, Trissur. This toll plaza in Paliyekkara is one of the toll

booths, which is looting people. If somebody protests against this loot, they would deal with him physically using their muscle power. Sometimes, they are cheating the courts and other authorities also.

So, I would request the Hon. Minister to investigate this issue, especially about the Paliyekkara toll plaza, in detail. A high level investigation is a must in this case. We are ready to handover the evidences also.

Sir, there is a need to do BMBC work in Valppad, Palappetti to Andathode, Kappirikkad stretch on NH-66. The Government should take special safety measures at Chettuva bridge on National Highway 66.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Now, please conclude.

SHRI T. N. PRATHAPAN: Sir, I am concluding. There is just one more point.

There is a need to construct an underpass on National Highway-544 near Mullakkara-Mulayam junction. Similarly, there is also a need to construct a flyover at Puthukkad on National Highway-544. There is also a need to do beautification work along with footpaths at Thriprayar, Kothakulam, Thalikkulam, Vadanappally, Chettuva, Ethai, Nalam Kallu, Orumanayur, Chavakkad, Manatthala,

Edakkazhiyoor, Panchavadi, Mandalamkunnu on National Highway-66.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You want beautifications at all the bridges and all the roads!

SHRI T. N. PRATHAPAN: Yes, Sir.

There is also a need to have foot overbridge at Chavakkad on the National Highway-66.

Then, there is also a need to provide drainage facility at 10-kilometre long stretch from Valappad to Chavakkad, Kappirikkad road on National Highway-66. There is a need to develop the road from Vadannappally on NH 66 to Thrissur, Padinjarekotta.

Lastly, there is also a need to do BMBC work from Thalikkulam to Snehatheeram, a three kilometre road through CRF on NH 66.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

[*]**DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA):** I support the Demands for Grants 2019-20 on Road Transport and Highways.

India has the one of the largest road network across the world, spanning over a total of 5.5 million km. This road network transports 64.5 per cent of all goods in the country and 90 per cent of India's total passenger traffic uses road network to commute. Road transportation has gradually increased over the years with the improvement in connectivity between cities, towns and villages in the country.

The Indian roads carry almost 90 per cent of the country's passenger traffic. In India sales of automobiles and movement of freight by roads is growing at a rapid rate.

The construction of highways reached 9,829 km during FY 2018 which was constructed at an average of 26.93 km per day. The Government of India has set a target for construction of 10,000 km national highway in FY 2019.

Total length of roads constructed under Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) was 47, 447 km in 2017-18.

The Union Minister of State for Road, Transport and Shipping has stated that the Government aims to boost corporate investment

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

in roads and shipping sector, along with introducing business-friendly strategies that will balance profitability with effective project execution. According to data released by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), construction development including Townships, housing, built-up infrastructure and construction-development projects attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows worth US $ 24.91 billion were recorded in the construction development sector between April 2000 and December 2018.

Some of the key investments and developments in the Indian roads sector are as follows:

- A total of 892 km and 2,345 km national highway projects were awarded and constructed, respectively between April-August 2018.
- The first phase of construction work of Mumbai's 29.2 km long coastal road is expected to begin in May 2018, after bids are finalized in March.

Some of the recent Government initiatives are as follows:

- As of October 2018, total length of projects awarded was 6,400 kms under Bharatmala Pariyojana (including residual NHDP works).

- As of August 2018, a total length of 34,800 km road projects have been proposed to be constructed, under Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I.
- As of August 2018, Government of India has approved highway projects worth Rs.2 billion (US$ 29.83 million) to improve connectivity among Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Diu.

Following are the achievements of the Government in the past four years:

- The total national highways length increased to 122,434 kms in FY 2018 from 92,851 kms in FY 2014.
- The length of national highways awarded increased to 51,073 kms between FY 2015-FY 2018 from 25,158 kms in FY 2011-FY 2014.
- The construction of national highway per day increased to 26.9 kms per day in FY 2018 from 11.6 kms per day in FY 2014.

The Government, through a series of initiatives is working on policies to attract significant investor interest. A total of 200,000 km national highways are expected to be completed by 2022.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has fixed an overall target to award 15,000 km projects and construction of 10,000 km national highways in FY 2019. A total of about 295 major projects including bridges and roads are expected to be completed during the same period.

With these words I conclude.

[Translation]

*__SHRI RAJU BISTA (DARJEELING):__ I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport presented by the Government of India in the Budget. Over the past five years, our Modi Government has placed special emphasis on road transport. Investment in the road sector, which stood at Rs. 51,914 crore in 2014–15, increased to Rs. 1,58,839 crore in 2018–19. In the Budget for the current year, a provision of Rs. 1,64,448 crore has been made for this sector. As a result of this step, not only has there been unprecedented development of road transport infrastructure across the country, but a large number of employment opportunities have also been generated. Due to the Government's dedicated efforts over the last five years, India's road network has expanded to 59.49 lakh kilometres. The Government is committed to constructing high speed, international quality National Highways across the country, and in line with this vision, the year 2018 was declared as the 'Year of Construction'. It is well known that road construction faces several challenges, such as land acquisition and financial investment, which often lead to significant delays. Despite these constraints, through relentless efforts, the Government has increased the pace of highway construction from 12 kilometres per

* Speech was laid on the Table.

day in 2014–15 to 30 kilometres per day at present. To further accelerate this work, the Government has now decided that during the current financial year, 135 kilometres of roads will be constructed every day. A notable aspect of this initiative is that green technology, waste plastic, and cold mix technology are now being used in road construction. As a result, not only will the carbon footprint be reduced, but it will also significantly contribute to environmental conservation in the country.

Not only this, the Union Government will upgrade 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads over the next five years, on which an amount of Rs. 80,250 crore will be spent.

On this occasion, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to certain issues related to road transport in my Darjeeling *Parliamentary Constituency*.

In the year 2009, National Highway 55 was closed due to landslides at three locations. Although repair work on this highway is ongoing, the extremely slow pace of work has caused severe inconvenience to the people living in the adjoining areas. Therefore, I request that the repair work be expedited and completed at the earliest.

Siliguri is the second largest city of West Bengal. In order to resolve the severe road traffic problem in the Siliguri region, it is

essential to construct a flyover from Khaprail More to Siliguri Court More. This flyover should be constructed on the lines of Maa Setu in Kolkata. Once completed, it will provide significant relief to people travelling to Siliguri from the surrounding areas.

Due to the increase in tourism and the growth of population, Darjeeling has expanded considerably. During the monsoon season, National Highway 55 connecting Darjeeling to Siliguri and National Highway 31 connecting Kalimpong to Siliguri often get closed due to landslides. As a result, both local residents and tourists face severe difficulties. Therefore, there is an urgent need for the construction of new four lane alternative National Highways from Siliguri to Darjeeling via Balason, Dhotrey, and Ghoom, and from Siliguri to Kalimpong via Bagarkote, Gorubathan, and Lava. I request the Government to conduct the necessary surveys for the development of these alternative highways and to initiate immediate action in this regard.

With these words, I once again support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and thank the Hon. Finance Minister for making such a substantial provision in the Budget to strengthen the road construction infrastructure in the country.

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR (KAUSHAMBI): Hon. Speaker Sir, you have given me the opportunity to speak, for which I thank you. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please do not thank me, speak directly. It is your right. This House belongs to you.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR: Sir, Sir, the work carried out by the Hon. Minister over the past years, as well as the work presently underway, is admired across the country. I do not wish to repeat what my colleagues before me have already stated. I will conclude my remarks by placing two brief requests. First, with regard to NH 24B from Rae Bareli to Prayagraj, due to the dual policy of the previous Government, the stretch from Lucknow to Rae Bareli was four laned, but the road from Rae Bareli to Prayagraj could not be converted into four lanes. The DPR for this stretch has already been prepared. I request that it be sanctioned at the earliest so that construction may commence without further delay.

Secondly, the Government has awarded the four laning work from Kokhraj to Chakeri. However, in my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*, there is a dispute concerning the compensation for land acquisition from Atsarai to Kokhraj. I have repeatedly approached the officials, but no hearing has taken place

so far, due to which resentment is building up among nearly 4,000 farmers. I request the Hon. Minister to depute the Project Director to the site and ensure that this issue is resolved at the earliest.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to make one final point. The CRF was a fund through which the road related requirements of all Members were addressed. However, it has now been shifted elsewhere. ... (*Interruption*s) Hon. Speaker Sir, I also seek your protection and support in this matter, that the CRF funds should once again be placed under the Ministry, so that the work of all Members can be carried out effectively. ... *(Interruptions)*

[*]The Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019–20 represent not only the requirements of the present but also a roadmap for the next ten years. Due to the lack of foresight of previous Governments, the level of development and modernisation that the road transport and highways sector ought to have achieved could not be realised. As a result, Indian roads and highways lagged behind global standards and pace. The Government has presented a strong and forward looking Budget, which has been welcomed by all sections of society. Along with high quality construction of roads, highways,

[*] .....* This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

and flyovers across the country, numerous significant initiatives have been undertaken. The major achievements, in particular, are as follows:

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had declared the year 2018–19 as the Year of Construction. This was a year aimed at consolidating the gains achieved through major policy decisions taken over the previous four years, strengthening monitoring of ongoing projects, resolving issues relating to road bottlenecks, and further building upon the impressive pace of work achieved in the preceding year. The Ministry decided to carry forward all ongoing projects that had been awarded up to the year 2015–16, and to construct at least 12,000 kilometres of National Highways during the year. In comparison, during the year 2017–18, the target of constructing 9,829 kilometres of National Highways had been achieved. At present, road projects covering approximately 61,300 kilometres, at a total cost exceeding Rs. 6.48 lakh crore, are under various stages of implementation. Out of the ongoing works, that is projects which have been awarded, for which target dates have been fixed and where site work is in progress, construction work of more than 30,200 kilometres of roads remains pending during the year. In the first nine months of the financial year 2018–19, construction of 5,759 kilometres of roads was completed, as compared to 4,942

kilometres of roads constructed during the corresponding period of the previous year.

To achieve this target, the Ministry formulated policies, issued guidelines, and established procedures to expedite pre construction activities and to bring greater efficiency and transparency into the process. A Bidder Information Management System (BIMS) was developed to streamline the pre qualification process of bidders for contracts under the EPC mode. To accelerate the notification process for land acquisition, extensive use is being made of the Bhoomirashi portal. The BIMS portal and the Bhoomirashi portal have been integrated with the Public Finance Management System (PFMS) in order to ensure real time payments to beneficiaries.

This year will also be remembered for several initiatives undertaken in the transport sector, with a focused emphasis on reducing the carbon footprint, enhancing road safety, promoting efficient utilisation of roads, and improving convenience for road users. The major initiatives undertaken by the Ministry during the year include the following: signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Transport for London to strengthen public transport in the country; construction of wayside amenities at toll plaza locations; establishment of a quality based ranking system for all toll plazas; simplification of procedures for driving licence

applications; notification of emission standards for construction equipment vehicles and tractors; issuance of guidelines for setting up accredited driving training centres at the district level; providing financial assistance to non governmental organisations for the promotion of road safety measures; launch of the Sukhad Yatra mobile application and a toll free emergency helpline number; permitting vehicles to pass free of charge in the event of failure of the electronic toll collection system; provision of compensation of Rs. 5 lakh to road accident victims; issuance of a notification regarding blending of gasoline with methanol to reduce vehicular emissions and lower the import burden; and integration of vehicle emission data with State and Central vehicle registers. The construction of National Highways is as follows:

Awards/Construction related Data

year	Award (km)	Construction (km)
2014-15	7972	4410
2015-16	10098	6061
2016-17	15948	8231
2017-18	17055	9829

NOTE: In the financial year 2018–19, up to 30.11.2018, construction of 5,759 km of National Highways was completed, whereas during the corresponding period of the previous year, 4,942 km of National Highways were constructed. The Ministry is focusing on ensuring that all pre construction activities are completed before projects are awarded.

A two day review exercise was undertaken to assess more than 700 National Highway projects across the country, on the basis of which over 300 projects were identified that could be completed in the year 2019. This constituted the highest such target fixed for any financial year, including the financial year 2018–19. Details of the status of construction of National Highway projects in previous years are given in the table below.

A project has been approved for the construction of a new 9.9 kilometre long six lane bridge over the river Ganga on NH 96 at Phaphamau in Allahabad, with a total capital cost of Rs. 1,948.25 crore. The construction period of the project has been fixed at three years, and it is likely to be completed by December, 2021. The new bridge will address the problem of traffic congestion on the existing old two lane Phaphamau bridge on NH 96 in Allahabad. The new

bridge will also facilitate the movement of large crowds during the Kumbh, Ardh Kumbh, and other annual ritual bathing events at the Sangam in Prayag. This will promote tourism and boost the local economy of the holy city of Prayag. The new six lane bridge will also be beneficial for traffic coming from Madhya Pradesh via the Naini bridge through National Highway 27 and National Highway 76, as well as for traffic bound for Lucknow and Faizabad. In addition, this bridge project will generate direct employment opportunities amounting to approximately 9.20 lakh man days during the construction period.

This is a comprehensive programme for the highway sector, launched in the year 2017–18, with the objective of bridging critical infrastructure gaps and maximising road transport mobility across the country. Under the first phase of this programme, during the period from 2017–18 to 2021–22, a total of 34,800 kilometres of National Highways are to be constructed in a phased manner at an estimated cost of Rs. 5,35,000 crore. This includes 5,000 kilometres of National Corridors, 9,000 kilometres of Economic Corridors, 6,000 kilometres of Feeder Corridors and Inter Corridors, 2,000 kilometres of Border Roads, 2,000 kilometres of Coastal Roads and Port Connectivity Roads, and 800 kilometres of Greenfield Expressways.

This project provides for the development of easy access to the four major Dhams located in the State of Uttarakhand, namely Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath. These four Dhams are among the most significant pilgrimage sites in the country. The project envisages the development of 889 kilometres of roads with a two lane configuration along with paved footpaths, at an estimated cost of approximately Rs. 12,000 crore. The projects are being undertaken under the EPC mode and are targeted for completion by March, 2020.

Two peripheral expressway projects around Delhi were completed during this year. These include the 135 kilometre Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) and the 135 kilometre Western Peripheral Expressway (WPE), which connects NH 1 and NH 2 through the western and eastern parts of Delhi. These projects were inaugurated by the Hon. Prime Minister in May 2018 and November 2018 respectively. The Eastern Peripheral Expressway was constructed by the National Highways Authority of India, while the Western Peripheral Expressway was constructed by the Government of Haryana. Both expressways were conceptualised with the objective of diverting traffic not destined for the National Capital Delhi towards their respective destinations from outside the city, thereby preventing congestion and pollution in the National

Capital. The EPE stretches from Kundli on NH 1 to Palwal on NH 2 and has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 4,617.87 crore. In addition, Rs. 5,900 crore was spent on the acquisition of 1,700 acres of land. The project was completed in a record time of approximately 500 days, as against the stipulated target of 910 days. This is a fully access controlled six lane expressway equipped with a tolling system. Major features of the expressway include weigh in motion devices at all 30 entry points, use of solar energy along the entire stretch, eight solar power plants with a total capacity of 4,000 kilowatts, rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, and 36 replicas of monuments reflecting Indian culture and heritage. This project has generated employment opportunities amounting to approximately 50 lakh man days.

The Delhi–Meerut Expressway aims to provide fast and safe connectivity between Delhi and Meerut, and further onwards to Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The alignment of the DME begins from the Nizamuddin Bridge in Delhi and extends up to Dasna on the existing NH 24. One phase of the DME will continue on NH 24 from Dasna to Hapur, while another phase has been planned as a greenfield alignment from Dasna to Meerut. The expressway is being constructed in four packages. The total length of the project is 82 kilometres, out of which the first package, measuring 27.74

kilometres, will be a 14 lane stretch, while the remaining length will be a six lane expressway. An 8.36 kilometre long stretch of Package I was inaugurated by the Hon. Prime Minister in May this year. This section, which is 14 lane and access controlled from the Nizamuddin Bridge to the Delhi–Uttar Pradesh border, was completed in a record time of 18 months as against the stipulated period of 30 months, at an approximate cost of Rs. 841.50 crore. This 14 lane stretch is the first National Highway of its kind in the country and incorporates several features aimed at reducing pollution. These include a 2.5 metre wide cycle track on both sides of the highway, a vertical garden on the Yamuna bridge, solar lighting, and irrigation of plants exclusively through drip irrigation systems.

This 1,250 kilometre long expressway is being developed along a new alignment between Delhi and Mumbai, passing through backward and tribal districts of Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat. An amount of Rs. 1 lakh crore will be spent on the construction of this expressway. It will reduce the distance between Delhi and Mumbai via NH 8 from the present 1,450 kilometres to 1,250 kilometres, and will also reduce the travel time by up to 12 hours. The tendering process is underway for the proposed highway sections from Delhi to Dahod in Rajasthan,

while the section between Vadodara and Ankleshwar in Gujarat has already been awarded. Detailed Project Reports are currently being prepared for the remaining sections.

The Hon. Prime Minister inaugurated Phase I of the Varanasi Ring Road on NH 56, measuring 16.55 kilometres at a cost of Rs. 759.36 crore, and the Babatpur–Varanasi Road, measuring 17.25 kilometres at a cost of Rs. 812.59 crore, in November. This has reduced the travel time from Varanasi to the airport and has ensured convenient access to Sarnath, an important site for Buddhist pilgrimage, thereby providing significant relief to the people of Varanasi as well as to tourists.

There is also a project for the construction of a 14.150 kilometre long, two lane bi directional Zoji La Tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir. This will be India's longest road tunnel and Asia's longest bi directional tunnel. The construction of this tunnel will ensure all weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil, and Leh, and will help in the economic and socio cultural integration of these regions.

According to the Ministry's Annual Report, based on data reported by police authorities across the country, a marginal decline in road accidents was recorded in the year 2017. This can be seen in the table given below:

Criteria	**2016**	**2017**	**Change compared to the previous year (percent)**
Number of road accidents	4,80,652	4,64,910	(-) 3.3
Number of persons killed	1,50,785	1,47,913	(-) 1.9

The Ministry is making sustained and concrete efforts to address the issue of road safety through multiple measures, including road safety audits, identification and rectification of accident black spots on roads, strengthening automobile safety standards, organising road safety awareness programmes, and ensuring robust enforcement. Some positive outcomes of these efforts have already begun to emerge.

So far, the Ministry has identified 780 road accident black spots across various States. Of these, 651 are located on National Highways and 138 on State roads. The works initiated for rectification of these black spots are at different stages of completion.

The Ministry is working in collaboration with States, vehicle manufacturers and non governmental organisations to strengthen

the driving training ecosystem. Institutes of Driving Training and Research ITDRs, Regional Driving Training Centres ITTCs and Driving Training Centres DTCs have been established, which are functioning as model driving training centres equipped with state of the art infrastructure. The Ministry has launched a scheme to establish driving training centres in all districts of the country and to strengthen refresher training programmes for drivers of heavy commercial vehicles. The Ministry is also implementing a scheme for the establishment of Model Institutes of Drivers Training and Research IDTRs by States and Union Territories. So far, 24 IDTRs have been approved across various States and Union Territories, of which 16 have been completed and are operational.

The Ministry has issued guidelines for involving non governmental organisations NGOs in promoting road safety awareness under a programme titled Promotion of Road Safety Advocacy and Provision of Financial Assistance and Awards for Outstanding Work in the Field of Road Safety. It is envisaged that NGOs will undertake activities aimed at creating awareness on road safety among citizens.

A mobile application developed by the NHAI for highway users and the toll free emergency number 1033 were launched in March this year. The Sukhad Yatra mobile application provides

information about toll plazas. The key features of this application include providing users with information related to road quality and enabling them to report any accident or pothole on highways. This service has also been integrated with roadside ambulance and tow away services. To assist insurance companies in ensuring timely and appropriate compensation to accident victims, the Ministry amended the relevant rules of the Motor Vehicles Act. Under these provisions, every accident victim or, in the event of death, the next of kin is entitled to compensation of Rs. 5 lakh in cases of death and up to Rs. 5 lakh, in proportion to the extent of injury, in cases of grievous hurt and disability. This rule ensures that even the poorest individuals receive prompt and fair compensation.

With a view to making road travel more convenient for the public, the Ministry undertook several new initiatives in the transport sector during the year. Details of some of these measures are given below.

To further simplify the licensing process, the Ministry has rationalised the driving licence application form. Four separate formats, namely (a) Learner’s Licence, (b) Driving Licence, (c) Renewal of Licence, and (d) Update of Address, have been consolidated into a single form. The new form provides for Aadhaar

based verification of the applicant and offers online services for renewal, change of address and related requirements.

The permissible safe axle weight of goods vehicles was revised, and an increase of approximately 15 Percent to 20 Percent was allowed for different axle configurations. This decision was taken to enhance the carrying capacity of freight vehicles and to bring down logistics costs. As a result of this revision, the carrying capacity of goods vehicles is expected to increase by about 20 Percent to 25 Percent, while logistics costs are likely to be reduced by around 2 Percent. This measure will also help in curbing instances of overloading. Although there have been significant improvements in automobile technology and road construction quality in recent years, axle load norms had not been revised since 1983. There was a clear need to harmonise axle load standards in line with international norms.

The National Highways Authority of India has developed a matrix based methodology for ranking toll plazas on parameters such as electronic tolling, the time taken for FASTag lane clearance, display panels, staff behaviour, cleanliness and related aspects. Data for this matrix will be collected by the regional officers, who will use it to rank toll plaza locations within their respective jurisdictions. Meanwhile, on 10 February 2018, NHAI launched a

nationwide drive across more than 300 toll plaza locations to address issues affecting highway users.

The Ministry, through a notification dated 6 April 2018, revised the maximum speed limits for different categories of vehicles. This notification prescribes speed limits for various classes of vehicles. Accordingly, passenger vehicles having more than eight seats including the driver are permitted a maximum speed of 120 kilometres per hour on expressways and 70 kilometres per hour on municipal roads.

The Ministry has issued an advisory to all States and Union Territories, requesting them to accept documents in electronic form through the DigiLocker platform of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, and the mParivahan mobile application of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Keeping in view the need to promote electric mobility and alternative fuels, the Ministry, through a notification issued on 18 October 2018, has exempted battery operated vehicles and vehicles running on methanol fuel or ethanol fuel from the requirement of permits for carrying passengers or goods.

The Ministry has also developed and tested a system to integrate Pollution Under Control (PUC) data with the vehicle database.

To provide a distinct identity to electric vehicles, it has been decided that their registration numbers shall be displayed on number plates with a green background.

The Ministry has issued a notification regarding the blending of methanol with gasoline, with the objective of reducing vehicular emissions and also lowering the burden of imports of crude petroleum, from which gasoline is produced. Methanol can be used as an alternative transport fuel, thereby reducing import dependence to some extent.

The Ministry has requested the Managing Directors and Chairpersons of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and all general insurance companies to ensure that no third party insurance policy is issued or renewed without verifying the availability of a valid Pollution Under Control certificate.

The Ministry has notified emission standards for construction equipment vehicles and tractors. These standards will be implemented from 1 October 2020 under Stage IV and from 1 April

2024 under Bharat Stage (CEV/Stage) V. This will help ensure environmentally sustainable construction and mining activities.

A project titled “INAM-PRO”, initiated by NHIDCL, a Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry, has been conferred the National Award by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances for its contribution to e governance. The project has been honoured with the Gold Award in Category I for Excellence in Government Process Re engineering.

There has been rapid growth in the sale of FASTag units for electronic toll collection as well as in the quantum of user fee collected electronically. With a total of 440 toll plazas, more than 34.3 lakh FASTag units had been issued by October this year, and nearly 25 to 27 Percent of the total revenue is being collected through the Electronic Toll Collection mode. A significant increase in the usage of FASTag has also been recorded.

The Ministry has issued an advisory under which citizens may present transport related documents such as registration, insurance, fitness and permit, driving licence, pollution under control certificate and, where required, other relevant documents, either in physical or electronic form, when demanded by a police officer in uniform or by any other officer authorised by the State Government in this regard. This will enable the use of digital platforms for

carrying and verifying documents. This is a step towards enhancing citizen convenience, with the objective of ensuring that citizens do not face any difficulty or inconvenience.

Finally, while extending my support to this Budget, I place the following demands before the House and request their approval. The four-laning of the road from Lucknow to Raebareli has already been completed, and the DPR for the four-laning from Raebareli to Prayag has also been prepared. This DPR should be accorded approval and tenders should be invited so that the work may commence at the earliest. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has included Kaushambi district in the Buddhist Circuit, and a proposal has been sent to the Government of India for the construction of a four-lane road from Prayagraj Airport to the excavation site in Kaushambi. This proposal should be approved and the work should be started expeditiously. In conclusion, while supporting the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019–20, I bring my remarks to an end. The Ministry of Finance has decided that the CRF funds will now be given directly to the State Governments. As a result, the roads that were earlier constructed in Members' constituencies on the basis of proposals submitted through the Ministry will no longer be taken

up. I urge the Hon. Finance Minister that, as was the practice earlier, the CRF funds should be allocated to the Ministry.*

[*]**KUMARI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE (UDUPI CHIKMAGALUR):** Over the past five years, the work on National Highways has progressed rapidly under the leadership of Shri Nitin Gadkari. All Members, irrespective of party affiliation, have congratulated Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Hon. Nitin Gadkari in this very House. It was the vision of the late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to connect this country through four-lane highways, and over the last five years, our Government has worked tirelessly to realise that vision and has also pledged to further complete the country's road network. For this purpose, an allocation of Rs. 83,000 crore has been made in the Budget. My *Parliamentary Constituency*, Udupi Chikmagalur, is a unique combination of hilly terrain and coastal areas. Over the last five years, several roads have been declared as National Highways and their DPRs have also been prepared. The people of my constituency demand that basic infrastructure facilities be enhanced so that the construction of highways in this region can proceed at a faster pace. Therefore, today, while participating in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, I place the following demands of my constituency before the House.

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

National Highway No. 66 has been under construction for the past ten years, yet the work has still not been completed. In many stretches, bridges, service roads and flyovers remain incomplete. This NH-66 is the lifeline of our coastal districts. At present, due to the monsoon and the damaged condition of the roads, frequent accidents are occurring, causing severe hardship to the public. As a result, public protests are taking place demanding completion of this road. Therefore, my earnest demand is that NH-66 be completed at the earliest. The contractor, Navayuga Construction, should be issued strict directions to expedite the work, and if there is any further delay, appropriate action must be taken against the contractor.

Further, National Highways NH-373 and NH-173 pass close to my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Chikmagalur, but a stretch of about 25 kilometres within my constituency has not been included in these National Highways. Hence, I request that the 25-kilometre stretch covering Chikmagalur and Belur be declared as a National Highway and that construction work be commenced there at the earliest.

Chikmagalur is a major tourist hub. It has an international market for coffee and black pepper. The Kadur to Mudigere stretch has been declared as National Highway No. 173. I request that this entire stretch be developed as a four-lane highway.

National Highway No. 169-A connects Malpe to Shivamogga through my constituency. Work is currently underway on a stretch of about three kilometres. The DPR for the Malpe to Thirthahalli section has been prepared and the road has also been declared a National Highway. I request that construction work on this stretch be commenced within this year itself.

National Highway No. 206 runs from Tumakuru to Honnavar, and the Tarikere town limit falls within my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Tarikere is a major centre for areca nut, black pepper and onion trade. Therefore, I demand that the Tarikere town limit stretch of NH-206 be widened and developed as a four-lane road.

[English]

[*]**SHRIMATI POONABEN MAADAM (JAMNAGAR):** First and foremost, I would like to congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji for presenting a Budget that focuses on 'gaon, gareeb, and kisan.' This is the first time ever that we see that development has been given a holistic view when gaon, gareeb, and kisan translate into rural and urban development. There is connectivity at every step; a step to connect the rural hubs to global centers, and for this, infrastructure development is of utmost importance. The budget 2019 duly emphasized the importance of infrastructure and connectivity to the Indian economy—in terms of enhancing and taking forward programs across various key infrastructure sectors. An investment of Rs.100 lakh crore in the infrastructure sector is to be infused over the next five years, as it has been proposed in the Budget to augment Indian infrastructure. With a view to maximizing transparency, an expert committee will be set up to recommend the structure of financing for the same.

The budget has been distinct in its unprecedented detail and thrust towards the development of road transport and highways of this country. This is reminiscent of the Vajpayee era and in sharp

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

contrast to the UPA Government of 10 years, which was marked by slow approvals, disputes, and poor implementation. I support the demand for grants for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

The NDA Government has a credible history in developing roads and highways. Way back in 1999 itself, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government had launched the National Highways Development Project (NHDP). Six years of the NDA regime (1998-2004) have been considered a golden period in terms of infrastructural growth. The finance ministry had already allocated the highest-ever budgetary support of Rs.83,016 crore to the highways sector in the interim budget announced earlier this year.

When we discuss infrastructure and connectivity, roads are considered the lifeline of India. The Government has set an investment target of Rs.80,250 crore for the third phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna, aiming to build 1,25,000 km of village roads. The earlier phases of this scheme led to the construction of 30,000 km of village roads with green technology, which will continue. Not only has investment increased, but the progress and quality of work have also improved significantly. Road construction has increased to 30 km per day in 2018-19 from 12 km per day in 2014-15. During the tenure of the UPA Government, highways were constructed at the rate of 11

kilometres per day, whereas at present highways are being built at the rate of 23 kilometres per day.

Each village should be connected by the road as well as block to district roads need to be connected because farmers reach to APMC. This had been facilitated by our State as done by our Hon'ble the then Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Narendra Modi ji. In our Gujarat the farmers reach by car or by two wheelers to main road and the same vision is being implemented across India through PMGSY. Connecting rural India, both physically and digitally, is another positive step for the economy.

Further, clear emphasis has been laid on the infrastructure development along with a massive push to every connectivity avenue including industrial corridors, dedicated freight corridors, 'Bharatmala,' 'Sagarmala,' 'UDAAN,' and 'PMGSY.' Announcement of streamlining multiple labour laws is a progressive step. Building sustainable and resilient infrastructure has been given due importance with sector specific flagship programmes such as SAUBHAGYA scheme, PMAY.

Further, remarkable achievement has been made in the 'Ease of Doing Business' where India has made a leap of 65 positions during the past 5 years, from a ranking of 142 in 2014 to 77 now due to the progressive policies undertaken by the Government.

Since, I am discussing the ease of doing business agenda, it is important to mention in this context that just 3 years back, the Road, transport and highways sector was a sick sector. There were hardly any takers for projects. Thanks to the policy paralysis and corruption of the previous Government no players intended to venture in infrastructure projects. However, under the leadership of our Prime Minister, the sector is flourishing like never before. Timely completion of projects and restarting of delayed projects have always been prioritised by the Government.

This Government has decided to follow that work culture to finish the projects that have been started during our time. And even if a project has been delayed even then the advantage from it can be taken in one of two elections, a foundation stone is laid, people may get garlanded, their photos can be printed in news papers then it can help in one or two elections. But the project cost goes up by thousands of crores of rupees if the project gets stuck, the project cost swells by thousands of crores of rupees and then there are loss to the objective of the work due to that incomplete project. The entire economy of the country was being consumed by these incomplete schemes. Our Government has put in much effort to restart these schemes that have been largely stuck in policy paralysis.

The Budget has also proposed an investment of Rs.50 lakh crore in augmenting railways infrastructure by 2030 as well as substantial investments for roadways upgradation and connectivity. The Government's emphasis on investing Rs.20 lakh crore every year in infrastructure development will certainly help in increasing steel consumption and will facilitate the growth of the domestic steel industry.

Apart from operations aspect, policy announcements were also made in the Budget 2019-2020. In her budget speech, the Finance Minister made the following announcements regarding the roads sector. Fresh PSU Bank recapitalization of Rs.70,000 crore will be a big positive for the banking ecosystem and it came as more than a pleasant surprise. This will go a long way in terms of getting lending back on track to stimulate growth in core sectors like Infrastructure.

The Indian subcontinent is surrounded by oceans on three sides and hence it is necessary to develop the ports of India. Along with the development of the ports it is equally necessary to develop surface transport facilities in India.

I am sure that no compromise shall be made in developing the infrastructure related to roads and highways. In addition to infrastructure development, the issue of water logging should also

be considered. Hence I request the Hon'ble Minister that before building such roads with proper planning must be ensured and passages must be kept at proper places so as to avoid such kind of problems.

The budget is good for infrastructure as it touches on all aspects that the investors wanted to hear across sectors like coal, steel, power, roads, airports and ports. This budget underlined his Government's focus on reviving India's economy by giving an impetus to the infrastructure sector. Not only did the finance Minister make large allocations to infrastructure, she also set the tone for a better policy framework for execution of projects as she looks to tap private sector resources for the capital-intensive sector. The task is very challenging because as there is need to revive growth to raise adequate resources for developmental goals. But I am sure that under the leadership of our Prime Minister and the pace at which our Hon'ble Minister Shri Gadkari Ji is working, this Government will be able to push development in infrastructure sector.

I thank the Hon'ble Minister of Road, Transport and Highways for conversion for giving my constituency three national highways under the Bharatmala Project where Dwarka – Khambaliya to Devaliya national highway is being constructed. Secondly, Dhroll-amran to pipaliya national highway is also being converted. Finally

(Dhoraji – jam Kandorana) Kalavad to Jamnagar is also being converted to national highways. These are gifts to the common citizens of not only my constituency but to the State of Gujarat where people can travel across with better connectivity and reach for better resources. Further, the Datarana – Juvanpur way is also being converted into an air strip.

The Government is providing Broad Gauge Rail linkage to Old Bedi Port under Sagarmala with 50% funding of total project cost by MoS. I would like to highlight that Saurashtra and Kutch are two very important regions in the state of Gujarat. The Kandla, Vadinar and Mundra ports are situated in Jamnagar and Kutch region and play significant role for industries located in entire state of Gujarat. I request that Vadinar port be developed under Sagarmala project. Also, creation of dedicated coastal infrastructure to promote movement of coastal cargo/passenger by sea at Porbandar Port has helped in the Ministry of Shipping under Coastal Berth Scheme.

Further, Jamnagar district of Saurashtra region is industrial hub for Brass industries and corporate giants such as Reliance, Essar and Tata Chemicals have their refineries/plants located in this constituency. At present, the Kutch and Saurashtra regions of Gujarat are connected via State/Coastal highways and NH 8A, which are not suitable for movement of heavy vehicles. The vehicles from Jamnagar need to take the alternate route via Rajkot

to reach Kutch region. This not only increases the length of journey by 45 Kms but also has resulted in very heavy traffic on the Rajkot-Jamnagar-Dwarka-Okha state highway.

This steps taken towards developing infrastructure will significantly help SMEs and Corporates, which are also the main sources of employment for the people of Jamnagar constituency, will be benefited and encourage business activities. Apart from trade activities, this step will also help in improving the tourism activities of both Saurashtra and Kutch regions. Infrastructure investment reduces poverty significantly and opens avenue of employments. Consistent with the macroeconomic effects, countries show a reduction in poverty over the medium to long run following an increase in public infrastructure investment.

This is an era of revival for the road infrastructure and highways in this Country as envisaged by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji. The provisions for road infrastructure and highways sector in this budget not only augurs well for the sector but would be a key catalyst for the growth of the industry and manufacturing infrastructure in this country. If more facilities and more emphasis are given to development in India, then they will have the power to transform India and we have already embarked on the journey towards building a ‘New India,’ and to make development permanent infrastructure is the first thing needed.

With this I would like to conclude by quoting our Hon'ble PM, Shri Narendra Modi ji, "To take India to newer heights, the role of infrastructure, railways and roads is very important." Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJENDRA AGRAWAL (MEERUT): Sir, I am deeply grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Several Hon. Members have already expressed their views, and there is a broad consensus among all Hon. Members that road construction is taking place across the country. The picture has changed, and the transforming nation we witness today owes a substantial part of this change to the construction of roads. Undoubtedly, this transformation is the result of the leadership of our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Jairam Gadkari, and their political will, vision and tireless efforts. An entire work culture has undergone a transformation, and its outcome is clearly visible today in the changed national landscape. To illustrate how this work culture has changed, I would like to briefly refer to my own region. While Hon. Pinaki Misra was presenting his remarks, he referred to the Meerut–Delhi Expressway.

Sir, if I may elaborate briefly, the National Capital Region was constituted in 1985, and discussions were initiated regarding its development. The basic concept was to connect cities and towns

within a radius of 100 kilometres through high-speed corridors, so that the burden on Delhi could be reduced to some extent. Meerut also fell within this ambit. However, despite this vision, no substantive work was undertaken on the construction of roads at that time.

In 2009, with the blessings of the people, I entered the Lok Sabha for the first time. From that point onwards, I began to raise this issue. If I were to recount that period, it would be quite interesting. I consistently raised the demand that since the National Capital Region was constituted in 1985, a road connecting Delhi and Meerut ought to have been constructed. I met Ministers repeatedly, wrote letters, and raised the matter through every available parliamentary device, whether during Zero Hour or through other permissible procedures. I was repeatedly assured that the Meerut–Delhi Expressway would be constructed. I do not wish to go into the detailed list of questions that I raised. On one occasion, I was informed that the road would be completed by December 2014. When I raised the issue again the following year, despite no work having commenced, I was told that it would be completed by December 2015. In effect, only the dates kept changing. Ultimately, a rather curious situation arose. Elections were due in 2014, and prior to that, in July 2013, the then Hon.

Prime Minister issued a priority list of projects that were to be undertaken on an urgent basis. The Meerut–Delhi Expressway was included in that list, and it was announced that it would be completed by 31 March 2014. I once again raised this matter during Zero Hour in Parliament, thanked the Government for the announcement, and expressed the hope that it would not turn out to be merely an electoral declaration and that at least some tangible work would begin, if not the foundation stone being laid. However, nothing of the sort happened. The year 2014 passed without any progress. Subsequently, the Government changed, and a new Government was formed under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Modi.

Sir, I would like to highlight how the work culture has changed. After the formation of the Government in 2014, I did not raise this issue repeatedly. However, on 31 December 2015, the foundation stone of the Meerut–Delhi Expressway was laid by the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Jayaram Gadkari. That itself reflects the change. Today, the work on this Expressway is nearing completion. Had the Government led by our Hon. Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath come into office two years earlier, the issues relating to land acquisition would have been resolved

much sooner, and the Meerut–Delhi Expressway would by now have been fully completed.

Sir, a folk tale comes to my mind, which I would like to recount. There was a saint who had a disciple. The disciple served him devotedly for many years. Pleased with his service, the saint said to him, “Ask for whatever you wish.” He said, “I have two conch shells.” The disciple asked about their significance. The saint explained that one conch shell would fulfil one wish per day. The disciple then asked about the other conch shell. The saint replied that whatever one asked from it, it would grant double. For instance, if one asked for Rs. 100, it would give Rs. 200, and if one asked for Rs. 200, it would give Rs. 400. The disciple did not listen carefully to the saint’s explanation and said that he wanted the second conch shell. He took it with him and said to it, “I want the Meerut–Delhi Expressway.” The conch shell replied, “Why one? I will give you two roads. If you ask for two roads, I will give you four roads.” In this manner, nothing actually happened. After four or five days, a frustrated disciple returned to the saint and said, “This is a useless conch shell, a hollow one. Please give me the first conch shell instead.” The saint replied, “For the period for which you have taken this conch shell, you must stay with it. Only then will I give you the other one.” In the same manner, like a hollow conch shell,

the UPA Governments kept functioning. As a result, the pace of road construction, which we had inherited in 2004, kept declining and came down to 12 kilometres per day. When our own Government came to power under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, as many Hon. Members have already mentioned, roads are now being constructed at the rate of 30 kilometres per day, and today a vast network of roads can be seen spreading across the entire country.

Sir, if I once again turn to Meerut, you will observe that today the Eastern Peripheral Expressway has been completed. In the other direction, the Western Peripheral Expressway has also been completed. As a result, a route has been created around Delhi which ensures that anyone travelling from Uttar Pradesh to Haryana, Rajasthan or Punjab is no longer compelled to enter Delhi. This has reduced travel time and fuel consumption. Consequently, diesel savings to the tune of Rs. 50 to Rs. 55 crore are being achieved. Today, the roads surrounding Meerut have either been completed, are under construction, or are slated to be constructed. In other words, for the comprehensive development that has taken place in the entire region, I extend, on behalf of my *Parliamentary Constituency*, my heartfelt congratulations and sincere gratitude.

Hon. Chairperson, indeed, we all know that when the NDA Government came to power in 1998 under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, work on road infrastructure began with great determination. This has also been referred to here by Shrimati Kiran Kher. The Golden Quadrilateral project was implemented, under which roads were constructed from north to south, from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, and from east to west, thereby creating a nationwide road network. Alongside this, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was also launched to provide connectivity to villages. These schemes continued for some time. However, if one examines the data, it becomes evident that after 2004 the pace of road construction slowed down. As I mentioned earlier, we had earlier achieved a construction speed of 20 kilometres per day, which later declined to just 12 kilometres per day. As I have already pointed out, within a single term, we have now increased this pace to 30 kilometres per day.

Hon. Chairperson, now that the Government under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Modi has come into office, a very major programme has been approved which has further accelerated the pace of road construction. This is the Bharatmala Project covering 24,800 kilometres. In this context, I would like to mention two or three brief points which clearly reflect our transformed work

culture. First, within this programme, special emphasis has been placed on border roads and coastal roads, areas which were generally neglected in the past. In border regions, from the point of view of national security as well as the overall development of those areas, it is essential that roads are constructed with a comprehensive vision. However, this was not done earlier. We have now included a plan to construct 2,000 kilometres of roads as border roads and another 2,000 kilometres of roads in coastal areas under this programme.

Sir, in this regard, I would like to mention two other small things, which have been mentioned before. Until the year 2009-10, the expenditure and the ratio of revenue and CAPEX used to be 50:50. If the Government gave 100 rupees, then 50 rupees were spent on revenue and 50 rupees were spent on CAPEX. Now, this situation has changed significantly. Due to this, roads are seen being constructed. Now, 87 percent of the amount is spent on construction, and only 13 percent is spent on revenue. This has increased our efficiency, possibly because we have introduced transparency throughout the entire system. Our Finance Ministry has brought transparency. As per the instructions of our Prime Minister, transparency has been brought into the scheme. Previously, when one rupee was spent, only 15 paise used to reach

the ground. Today, if one rupee is spent, one rupee reaches the ground instead. This has also increased our efficiency.

Hon. Chairperson, you have rung the bell and indicated that my time is up. I therefore do not consider it necessary to speak at greater length. As far as our economy is concerned, we are currently at the sixth position globally and aspire to move further up, and we are progressing rapidly in that direction. Road construction plays a very significant role in this journey. Many Hon. Members have already quoted the words of President Kennedy. If one visits Shri Gadkari Ji's office, one will find the words displayed there "American roads are not good because America is rich, but America is rich because American roads are good." Roads are truly the foundation of a nation's prosperity. Therefore, I only wish to submit that road expansion should continue further, our economy should reach the five trillion dollar mark, and with these words, I strongly support this Demand.

[English]

[*]**SHRI RAMULU POTHUGANTI (NAGARKURNOOL):** I am representing from Nagarkurnool Constituency, Telangana State, which is a reserved constituency. My constituency has huge tribal area and it has 7 Assembly segments. The following roads may be sanctioned as a special case.

- Road from Kalwakurthy to Telkapalli – Balance road. It was previously sanctioned under CRF (Central Road Fund). Now, the remaining road is 18 kms, it may kindly be sanctioned.
- Road from Devarakonda, Kalwakurthy NH to Srisailam NH via Sarambanda Thaanda – 10 kms.
- Road from Vanguru to Rangapur – 10 kms.
- Srisailam NH to Rekya Thaanda via Vasudevapur, Balajinagar, Chellampalli, Makthamaadaram – 15 kms.
- Khilaghanapur to Gouraram via Parwathapur, Mamidimada – 15 kms.
- NH 7 to Venkatapur 25 kms – widening of road.

[·] Speech was laid on the Table.

- Construction of B.T. Road from Ganganapally to Kuchinerla via Shivarangapur, K.T. Doddi Mandal.

[*]**SHRI B.Y. RAGHAVENDRA (SHIMOGA)**: I would like to express my views **o**n the discussion on the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

At the outset I would like to express my gratitude to the Union Government for sanctioning of a Bridge at Singadhoor in my *Parliamentary Constituency*.

The union budget has attached great significance for the development of Physical connectivity. It included moving goods and people by roads, rails and air cheaply and efficiently. One can understand the intentions of the Government by looking at the figures mentioned in the budget. The Government has reiterated its commitment to spend Rs.1 Lakhs 5 Thousand Crore on infrastructure over the next five years.

The budget has allocated for the roads and highways has seen an increased amount of Rs.1,11,691 crores for the year 2019-20 from an allocation of Rs.99,322 for the year 2018-19. It has raised by a significant 12%. Support to Sagarmala and schemes under this to boost inland water transport fell to Rs.757 Crores, from Rs.891 Crores in the previous year.

I would like to mention that the Government has also proposed to improve in the efficiency of National Corridors, development of

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Economic Corridors, Inter Corridors and Feeder Routes along with integration with Sagarmala and “Bharatmala Pariyojna”.

Another very important announcement made in the Union Budget is that the NDA Government will carry out a comprehensive restructuring of National Highway Program to ensure that the National Highway Grid of desirable length and capacity is created using financeable model. This is a welcome step as it will boost the building of National Highways at a greater speed.

The union budget has also proposed for the second phase of Bharatmala which will focus on helping states develop state road networks. I congratulate the Government for proposing the development of state roads.

The NDA Government approved Bharatmala Pariyojna Phase-I in October, 2017. Under this programme the Government proposed to take steps for development of road stretches with an aggregate length of about 34,800 km. Total number of projects under this programme is 225. These road projects having total legth of about 9,613 km. Out of total 225 road projects 178 projects having aggregate length approximately 8,000 km have been awarded till March, 2019. This is big achievement of our NDA Government under Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

Now let me draw the attention of the Union Government to some important demands of my people of Shivamogga *Parliamentary Constituency*. I would like to request for construction of a Railways Under Bridge (RUB) at ch 525.25 km of NH-13 (LC 46) in Shimoga city.

I would also like to request that all the railway level crossings at National Highways in my Lok Sabha constituency should be converted as ROB/RUB on the lines of Kumsi, Anandpura, Talaguppa, Yadehalli, Bhadravathi, Savalanga Road of Shimoga City.

Further, I would request for the approval for the construction of 4 lane NH road in Sagar Town limits on new number NH 68 (Old No.206) from 278 to 284 km on National Highway. Approval of the DPR is required for NH 766C from Byndoor via Hosanagara, Shikaripura to Ranebennur. In principle approved NH from Shimogga , Shikaripura, Hanagal, Tadasa (IP No: 27) and Shimogga, Honnali, Malebennur, Harihara road (IP No:28) to be upgraded as National Highways immediately. Sagara to Avinahali, Holebagilu, Sigandur to Markutaka junction is newly declared as NH 369 E. The DPR to improve this road should be approved as early as possible.

In Bharatmala Pariyojna Phase-I Programme a number of roads and highways projects are taken up in the state of Karnataka.

Some of the important roads and highways projects are 23.60 km long ShiradiGhat Tunnel, which provide links from Bengaluru/Hassan to Mangaluru port through Shiradi Ghat on NH-48, built at a tentative cost of Rs.10,000 Crores. 117 kms Banglore – Mysore Section of the Bangalore – Mallapuram economic corridor is being developed as a six laned, access controlled highway at an estimated cost of Rs. 7000 crores. Chennai-Bangalore Expressway identified as one of the priority projects under Chennai – Bangalore Industrial Corridor, providing connectivity to the proposed Multimodal Logistic Park at Dobaspet. This expressway passes through three states – 76 kms in Karnataka, 91 kms in Andhra Pradesh and 94 km in Tamil Nadu, and is being built at an approximate cost of Rs. 16,000 crores. Another important ongoing NH projects in the state includes Bangalore Ring Road, where NHAI has taken up the work of balance portion of STRR for Bangalore (West side) to Hosur in Tamil Nadu (connecting NH-4 to NH-7) under Bharatmala.

One of the major inter-state projects is the connectivity to neighboring state capitals Hyderabad and Amravathi. The Amaravathi – Bengaluru link proposed to develop through two routes – via Ananthapuramu and via Tirupathi and Hyderabad.

These are very significant projects for the development of inter-states connectivity. Hence the works should be expedited to be completed as per the schedule. One of the important ongoing NH projects in the state includes Bangalore Ring Road, where NHAI has taken up the work of balance portion of STRR for Bangalore (West side) to Hosur in Tamil Nadu (connecting NH-4 to NH-7) under Bharatmala.

I would like to suggest the union Government to ensure that the road projects are built within the time frame an appropriate monitoring mechanism should be put in place to oversee the progress of projects. I would also like to suggest that it would be effective if the Government make provision to use latest technology such as LIDAR survey, Drone Imaging, Satellite Imaging, etc to ensure for expeditious execution of projects.

As far as funding is concerned, the capital outlay for roads, railways, and metro projects was increased by 12-19% in the budget over the 2018-19. However, the increased capital outlay is proposed to be supported by higher budgetary allocation for railways and metro projects.

The budget has allocated for the roads and highways has seen an increased amount of Rs 1,11,691 crore for the year 2019-20 from an allocation of Rs 99,322 Crores for the year 2018-19. It has raised

by a significant 12%. The budgetary support to NHAI has been increased from Rs 68563 Crores to Rs 72,058 crore, the Government wants the highways authority to redouble efforts through other fund-raising routes, such as toll-operate-transfer and infrastructure investment trusts.

For National Highways the arrangement of fund is tasked with turning to internal and extra-budgetary resources for building roads. Government through Toll-Operate-Transfer (TOT) has received an amount of Rs 9,681.50 Crores from the concessionaire and the same has been deposited in Consolidated Fund of India (CFI). The entire proceeds of Rs 9,681.50 crore under TOT was released to National Highways authority of India (NHAI) during FY 2018-19. However, toll plough-back is a small component of the overall allocation for the sector. Another very important and also the matter of concern for all of us is the road traffic injuries and accidents. It is very unfortunate the number of accidents are increasing every year. I am shocked to see the rising figures of number of persons killed in road accidents in India during the last three calendar years i.e. 146133 persons killed in the year 20145, 150785 in the year 2016 and in 2017 it is 147913. I urge the Union Government to take a serious step to see that the number of accidents is ZERO.

The Union Government has taken various measures to facilitate Transporters. The Government has increased Axle load limits,

allowing carriage of higher payloads, Increase in fitness periodicity from one year to two years, Simplification in terms and conditions of National Permit, Allowing Transporters to carry documents in electronic form and many other measures would certainly help the transporters to operate comfortably. However, the demand for change in the Toll charge slab is not addressed in the budget.

I would like to request the Union Government to take necessary steps address to the issue at the earliest.

SHRI KESINENI SRINIVAS (VIJAYAWADA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demand for Grant of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Due to constraint of time, I would not go into the fact and figures, survey reports and committee reports. I would like to confine myself to my constituency and my State.

My city, Vijayawada is the centre of the State and almost of the whole of South India.

Sir, there are two national highways – National Highway No. 16 and National Highway No. 65 which passes through my city, Vijayawada, and that too, from the centre of the city. For the last few decades, this city needs bye-passes. Seven years back, one bye-pass has been sanctioned. Due to some financial problem of the contractor, that project has been stalled. After that, Hon. Gadkari Ji has helped us. He has terminated that contractor and now, the proposals for the new contractor has to be sanctioned. Whatever the tendering process that generally happens, has not taken place.

I would request the Hon. Minister, through you Sir, to immediately sanction that tendering process and complete that project. My city is getting choked heavily due to the commercial vehicle traffic on both the highways – NH-16 and NH-65. I also

thank Mr. Gadkari Ji because he supported me a lot in the last term. He has sanctioned many projects which were pending for a very long time. One of such projects is Kanaka Durga flyover which is a long pending project. That work is almost complete.

Another flyover which is again on the National Highway in the Benz circle is in the heart of the city and is also considered as the heart of the State. It is in the geographical centre of the State. He has sanctioned that flyover. On that, one wing has been completed but the second wing is still pending. So, I would request the Hon. Minister to issue orders immediately so as to start the second wing work of the flyover and complete it as soon as possible.

The transport sector is facing a lot of problems. It is not only because of the toll roads but also for many other things. This sector is facing problems due to an increase in the fuel prices and also because of the imposition of many toll taxes.

Sir, in some places, toll contract has already been expired. Even then also, people are collecting toll fees. Some vehicles are overloaded. For those vehicles, they are permitted to collect penalty from the overloaded vehicles. The private operators are maintaining these toll plazas. The money which they are collecting is benefiting those private people and not the Government. So, I would request the Minister to take proper steps to stop this. Imposing penalty by

the Government is different from the penalty that is taken by private operator. So, I would request the Hon. Minister to make appropriate changes in the imposition of penalties so that the money so-collected should come to the Government rather than to the private operators.

Sir, I think there is a need to act proactively for whatever Grants we are giving to these roads and for infrastructural improvements. Right now, we are doing these things reactively. So, when an MP or an MLA approaches for a road or a flyover or a road extension, then only we are acting. But I request the Minister to act proactively. We should also have a research and analysis wing to determine as to when the need for a flyover or for a road extension is arising. We must also have a roadmap for the next 25 to 50 years. I think this approach will help the country. Once we start a project, it will take 10-13 years to get complete. By the time that project is completed, the traffic increases by ten times. So, it will not help us. At that time again, road expansion becomes necessary.

I conclude my speech by requesting the Minister once again to complete the second wing of Benz Circle flyover second wing and also a bye-pass for the city. A bye-pass has been sanctioned for 48 kilometres but it is still pending because of the tendering and other processes. If that road gets completed, we will be very happy. I do not want go into the State issues because we are in the Opposition

now. Last time, we were in the Government and we were in alliance at the Centre, we have achieved a lot. We have already got many projects sanctioned through Gadkari Ji and through the Government of India. I support this Demands for Grants.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH (SATNA): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I rise to express my support for the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. If there is any true measure of a country's development, it is the quality of its roads.

We all travel abroad, and by observing the condition of roads there, we assess how far those countries have progressed. The volume of road construction carried out from 2014 till now is itself proof of the transformation that has taken place. It can be stated with confidence that between 2009 and 2014, about 24,579 kilometres of roads were constructed, whereas between 2014 and 2019, this figure rose to 38,386 kilometres. The National Highways Authority has set a target of acquiring more than 10,000 hectares of land during the financial year 2019–20. I was also a Member of this House during the period 2009 to 2014. A major national highway, National Highway–7, passes through Madhya Pradesh. At that time, it was full of potholes. The Jabalpur High Court had even directed that the potholes on the road be filled. The UPA Government was in power then, and the person who is now the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh was the Minister in charge of national highways at that time. Yet, nothing was done. I travelled on that road again in 2014, after the Government led by Hon. Narendra Modi came to

power. It was then that work began to convert that highway into a six-lane road. Today, the condition of that road has been completely transformed.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, during the financial year 2019–20, the Indian economy will reach the level of three trillion dollars. In the next five years, it is poised to become a five-trillion-dollar economy. India has now emerged as the sixth largest economy in the world, whereas during the UPA Government it stood at the eleventh position. When the economy becomes strong, road construction will naturally progress at a faster pace. The goal of national development has been set by Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, and the specific target for the development of roads has been defined by our Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari. Mahatma Gandhi often spoke about the importance of having a goal. He used to say that we should serve the country of our birth with happiness, because nature itself has assigned us this goal. However, this was not realised during the UPA Government. If there is any Government that has truly followed the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, it is our Government. I am reminded of another philosopher, Emerson, who said about goals that a person who sets a high objective before himself will surely succeed in achieving it one day, provided he moves steadily and continuously towards that goal. During the Congress regime, roads were being built at a snail's

pace, but today the extensive network of roads laid across the country has transformed its very image. In the year 2013–14, the length of national highways was 92,851 kilometres, which has now increased to 1,20,543 kilometres in 2017–18.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to place before the House some figures relating to the targets set for road construction. When our Government assumed office in 2014–15, awards for 7,972 kilometres were issued, and 4,410 kilometres of roads were constructed. Earlier, roads were being built at the rate of about 12 kilometres per day. In 2016–17, the pace increased to 23 kilometres per day, in 2017–18 it rose to 27 kilometres per day, and in 2018–19 road construction commenced at the rate of 30 kilometres per day. We are presently discussing the Budget for the year 2019–20. Under this Budget, an allocation of Rs. 83,016 crore has been made, which will certainly further accelerate the pace of road construction. Owing to paucity of time, I am unable to place many more facts before the House. There is a verse in the Manusmriti which states that work once undertaken and seeds once sown inevitably take their rightful time to bear fruit. Today, the picture of India is changing and development is taking place at a rapid pace, in which roads play a very significant role. Lord Mahavira had also said words that are most apt for Shri Gadkari Ji, that blessed is the person

who never hesitates in undertaking work, for prosperity itself finds its way to his home.

19.00 hrs

There has never been any shortage of funds for road construction. I would like to mention a few of the important projects that are currently underway. Under the Bharatmala Project, a target has been set to construct 34,800 kilometres of national highways during the period from 2017–18 to 2021–22, at a total cost of Rs. 5,35,000 crore. Through the Setu Bharatam programme, approval has been granted for the construction of 91 out of 174 Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges, at a cost of Rs. 7,104.72 crore. The work on the 1,250-kilometre-long Delhi–Mumbai Expressway is in progress at a cost of Rs. 1 lakh crore. Through this project, the distance between Delhi and Mumbai via NH-8 will be reduced from the present 1,450 kilometres to 1,250 kilometres, thereby cutting travel time by nearly 12 hours. At Phaphamau near Allahabad, a 9.9-kilometre-long six-lane bridge over the River Ganga on NH-96 is being constructed at a total capital cost of Rs. 1,948.25 crore. This six-lane bridge will connect to National Highways 27 and 76 via the Naini Bridge, providing substantial benefits to connectivity with Madhya Pradesh. In Jammu and Kashmir, where road connectivity was almost non-existent earlier, the construction of the 14.150-kilometre-long, two-lane Zoji La Tunnel is being undertaken, which

will be completed and will significantly improve all-weather connectivity in the region.

We recently visited Kedarnath Dham, where the work of road widening is underway, and it is truly remarkable. A target has been set to complete the construction of 889 kilometres of roads by the year 2020 at a cost of Rs. 12,000 crore. The 135-kilometre Eastern Peripheral Expressway and the Western Peripheral Expressway have been constructed at a cost of Rs. 4,617.87 crore. As has just been mentioned by my colleagues, the Delhi–Meerut Expressway is the country's first 14-lane national highway. It is 82 kilometres long and has been completed at a cost of Rs. 4,975.17 crore. Plans are in place for several major expressways, including the 473-kilometre Vadodara–Mumbai Expressway, the 260-kilometre Bengaluru–Chennai Expressway, the 500-kilometre Delhi–Amritsar Expressway, the 940-kilometre Nagpur–Hyderabad–Bengaluru corridor, and the 75-kilometre Kanpur–Lucknow Expressway. The 17.25-kilometre road connecting Varanasi Airport has also been completed. In Gujarat, a 2.32-kilometre Signature Bridge is being constructed at a cost of Rs. 689.47 crore to connect Beyt Dwarka with Okha and link the Gujarat coast. In Bihar, a 6.930-kilometre-long four-lane bridge is under construction over the River Kosi at Phulaut. Plans are also in place for the Silkyara–Barkot tunnel. Similarly, several highway projects

are underway in the North-Eastern region. In the North-East alone, roads spanning a total length of 12,000 kilometres are being constructed at a cost of Rs. 1,66,026 crore.

Sir, these figures truly reflect the vision of India that people had imagined for a very long time. I would like to place one suggestion before the House. Hon. V. K. Singh Ji is present here. Although there is no shortage of funds, I still wish to make a small suggestion. While ample resources are already being provided to national highways from the abundant treasury under the leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, I would nevertheless like to propose an additional idea. In our country, there are several temples where very large amounts are received as offerings. This money often remains accumulated there. My suggestion is that such funds may also be utilised for nation-building. We can use these resources for road development, promote the concerned shrine or pilgrimage centre, name the road accordingly, and even return the toll revenue generated from that road to the same purpose. If such an approach is adopted, it could result in substantial and meaningful development.

The issue of road accidents is a matter of serious concern. The Hon. Minister is himself deeply concerned about this issue. The Hon. Minister has taken several safety-oriented measures to prevent accidents, yet much more needs to be done. In my area, accidents

occur daily on NH-7 and NH-75. After such accidents, people are often left lying in distress, and ambulances arrive very late, as the National Highways Department has not provided adequate ambulance services to us. Our demand is that ambulances and cranes must be provided in our area. There is a stretch of nearly 200 kilometres of national highway, and adequate emergency response facilities are urgently required.

In my *Parliamentary Constituency*, the work on National Highway 7 has come to a halt at several locations. Many farmers have still not received their due compensation. Although awards have been passed by the Arbitration Tribunal, their implementation has not been carried out properly. National Highway 75, stretching from Satna to Bela over a length of 47.4 kilometres, has been approved at a cost of Rs. 658 crore. It has been stated that nearly 70 Percent of the work has been completed. However, neither has a bridge been constructed over the railway line, nor over the river, nor at other critical crossings. There is an urgent need to commence and expedite the remaining works at the earliest.

In my *Parliamentary Constituency*, the work on National Highway 7 has come to a halt at several locations. Many farmers have still not received compensation. Although awards have been passed by the Arbitration Court, their implementation is not taking

place properly. National Highway 75, from Satna to Bela, has a length of 47.4 kilometres and has been approved at a cost of Rs. 658 crore. It has been stated that 70 Percent of the work has been completed. However, neither has a bridge been constructed over the railway line, nor over the river, nor at other crossings. There is an urgent need to commence and expedite the work at the earliest.

There is an urgent need to restart the work there so that it may be completed at the earliest. The Satna–Panna–Bamitha road, with a length of 97.804 kilometres and an approved cost of Rs. 148 crore, also remains incomplete. Khajuraho is an international tourist destination, yet several serious difficulties persist there as well. Under the Rampathgaman Yojana, the road from Ayodhya to Chitrakoot via Maihar was approved, but the Detailed Project Report for the stretch between Maihar and Chitrakoot has not yet been prepared.

Similarly, approval was granted for the road connecting Satna to Semaria, Sirmour, Jawa, Shankargarh and Allahabad, linking two States, but its DPR has also not been prepared so far. In the same manner, National Highway approval was granted for road construction from Nagod to Jaso, Dureha and Damoh, but that project too remains incomplete.

On the previous occasion, I had obtained approval for several roads in my *Parliamentary Constituency* under the CRF fund. When I inspected these roads on the 13th, I found that the pace of work was extremely slow. On the Bankuiyan Marg to Goraiya stretch of 46 kilometres, only about 25 Percent of the work has been completed. On the Sajjanpur–Chhibaura road, with a length of 21.56 kilometres, only 50 Percent of the work has been completed. On the Rampur to Rehunta road, which is 35.92 kilometres long, merely 20 Percent of the work has been carried out. Near Khohar, three major bridges were to be constructed over the Tamsa River, the Semarawal River and the Gorasari River, but work on these bridges has not even begun so far. I would like to draw the attention of the House to an important issue. Earlier, the CRF fund used to be allocated to national highways. Out of the cess collected on petrol, 57.50 Percent was earmarked for the construction of national highways, 12.50 Percent for the construction of Railway Road Over Bridges, and 30 Percent was allocated to the CRF. However, the CRF amount is now being retained by the Finance Department. I strongly believe that the CRF funds should once again be allocated to national highways, because Members of Parliament used to meet the Hon. Minister and propose specific roads in their constituencies that could not be constructed under any other scheme.

In conclusion, I once again express my sincere gratitude to Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, to Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji, and to Shri V. K. Singh Ji, with the hope and confidence that the present pace of road construction will be further accelerated. Under the CRF, since the Hon. Minister is not present in the House at this moment, I shall submit in writing the proposals for the roads that I intend to recommend.

In conclusion, I fully support these Demands for Grants. Thank you very much. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Minister, the Hon. Member has made a good suggestion regarding the CRF and the role of Members of Parliament in selecting roads under the CRF.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (GEN. DR. V. K. SINGH (RETD.)): Sir, CRF has now become CRIF and is totally under the control of the Finance Ministry. They will decide the allocation. So, we have to discuss this with them. We would also be very happy if the CRF comes back in its old form so that we could assist the States. At the moment, the control is totally vested with the Ministry of Finance.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: He has made a suggestion regarding the selection of roads. That may also be looked into. He has talked about the role of Members of Parliament in selecting the roads. Most of the time, Members have no role in selecting the roads. That is to be looked into.

GEN. DR. V. K. SINGH (RETD.): At the moment, there is no role for Members because now it is Central Road and Infrastructure Fund.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I am not talking about the funds; the selection of roads in a particular State should be done in consultation with the concerned Member of Parliament from the local area. That will be beneficial for the State as well.

GEN. DR. V. K. SINGH (RETD.): It is something that the Members will have to decide with the State as to whether the State wants to do it or not.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri E.T. Mohammed Basheer.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM JARDOSH (SURAT):** When the Government led by Hon. Narendra Ji Modi assumed office, only about 8 kilometres of roads were being constructed daily across the country. Today, owing to the long-term vision of Hon. Narendra Modi and the organisational capability and able leadership of Hon. Nitin Gadkari Ji, between 130 and 135 kilometres of roads are being constructed every day. When roads are built, it is not merely roads that come up, but development reaches even the farthest end of villages.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, 30,000 kilometres of roads have already been constructed using green technology. In the third phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads will be upgraded over the next five years.

I come from the region through which the revered Mahatma Gandhi Ji undertook the historic Dandi March. The route of the Dandi March passes through the Olpad taluka of my *Parliamentary Constituency*, Surat. On the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Gandhiji, I urge the Government that, in view of its heritage

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

significance, the Dandi route should be redeveloped in a well planned and aesthetically appealing manner. Further, along the route from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi village, wall paintings and tableaux depicting that historic event should be installed so that its historical importance is preserved and future generations, while travelling on this route, may remember and draw inspiration from revered Bapu and the Dandi March for years to come.

At the same time, from Surat city to Hazira, there are thousands of industries of national importance operating at an international level. If their economic value were to be assessed, it would exceed even the national budget. However, in the event of any untoward incident, access is possible only through the Surat route. I therefore request that an escape route be developed from Hazira to ensure safety and efficient connectivity.

[*]**SHRIMATI RANJANBEN BHATT (VADODARA):** Road transport forms an integral part of an integrated multi modal transport system. It provides vital links to airports, railway stations, ports and other logistics hubs, and plays a crucial role in supply chain management while acting as a catalyst for economic development. Compared to railways, air traffic and inland waterways, it remains the dominant mode of transport, accounting for approximately 3.14 Percent of Gross Value Added (GVA), nearly 69 Percent of the country's total freight movement and about 90 Percent of passenger traffic.

In this Budget, an announcement has been made for a comprehensive restructuring of the National Highways Programme to ensure the creation of a National Highway grid of desirable capacity. An allocation of Rs. 100 lakh crore has been made for the development of infrastructure.

The objective of our Government is to develop environmentally friendly National Highways with the cooperation of communities, farmers, non governmental organisations, the private sector, institutions, government agencies and the Forest Department. To this end, our Government has formulated the Green Highways Policy encompassing plantation, transplantation, beautification and

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

maintenance, and remains fully committed to its effective implementation.

According to official figures, over the past five years, our Government has made substantial investments in the road sector. This investment has increased more than threefold from Rs. 51,914 crore in 2014-15 to Rs. 1,58,839 crore in 2018-19.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) had declared 2018-19 as the Year of Construction and undertook sustained efforts to expand and upgrade the national highway network across the country. As a result of these initiatives, the pace of road construction increased significantly from 12 kilometres per day in 2014-15 to 30 kilometres per day in 2018-19.

The National Expressway connecting my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Vadodara with Ahmedabad is operational. It was inaugurated in the year 2003 by the former Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and this National Expressway is also known as the Mahatma Gandhi National Expressway. I would like to express my gratitude to the then Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways for this significant contribution.

I would once again like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari, as

the Golden Quadrilateral National Expressway, which will benefit my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Vadodara, is also proposed to be implemented in the coming period. This National Expressway will commence from the national capital, Delhi, and extend up to Chennai. It will pass through six States of the country and connect major cities such as Jaipur, Udaipur, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat, Mumbai, Pune and Bengaluru. This National Expressway may also be referred to as the Golden Corridor. As the Golden Quadrilateral Expressway will pass through villages such as Dodka, Rayka, Nandesari, Angadh, Koyali, Sevasi, Bhayli, Sherkhi and Savli in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Vadodara, it will directly and indirectly benefit the residents of these villages. Since this Expressway is proposed to be constructed as a six-lane corridor, it will significantly enhance ease and convenience for commuters travelling from Vadodara. It will also facilitate smoother movement of goods for the trading community and generate employment, both directly and indirectly, thereby contributing to value addition in the market economies of major cities across six States of the country.

I would also like to place a demand before the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways regarding my Lok Sabha Constituency of Vadodara, where the country's second international-level integrated green airport (NITB) has already become operational. Keeping in view international airport

standards, a key requirement for initiating and operating international flight services at this integrated airport terminal is the availability of an adequate runway (airstrip).

The existing runway (airstrip) at Vadodara Airport is presently 8,100 feet in length. There is a proposal to extend it to 10,500 feet, which would enable the operation and accommodation of international aircraft. With a view to commencing international flight operations to nearby countries such as Dubai, Thailand, Malaysia or Singapore, I have also addressed a letter to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and have raised this demand at various levels. In order to complete this project, it will be necessary to provide a diversion of National Highway No. 08 from its present alignment. Alternatively, I request that the feasibility of constructing an underpass on NH-08 by the National Highways Authority of India be actively examined. In this regard, the Airport Authority has already held a meeting with the Chief Secretary of the Government of Gujarat, in which the National Highways Authority of India was also present. For this purpose, an additional stretch of land measuring 2,000 metres in length and 500 metres in width, approximately 2 kilometres, is required from the National Highways Authority of India along National Highway No. 08. The acquisition of land over a length of 2 kilometres is, in itself, a time-

consuming and prolonged process. Therefore, as an alternative to land acquisition, I earnestly request that all possible administrative procedures be initiated to examine the option of constructing an underpass on NH-08 at Vadodara by the National Highways Authority of India, so that a valuable contribution may be made towards the comprehensive development of international air traffic facilities at Vadodara Airport.

[*]**SHRI RAVINDRA KUSHWAHA (SALEMPUR):** I would like to place my views on the Supplementary Budget of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

The extent of road construction and widening that has taken place over the past five years is, in itself, a matter of pride for all of us. Most of the major roads in the country that were earlier in a dilapidated condition have now been improved. The target set by the Government to connect all villages with roads within this year under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, aimed at linking cities and rural areas, and the plan to connect the entire country through National Highways, are commendable initiatives. The development of villages will transform the overall picture of the nation.

On 10 March 2015, several roads were converted from State Highways to National Highways in the Budget. However, work on these roads has not commenced so far. These roads are as follows: 1. Navalpur–Ubhav, Sikanderpur–Maniyar, Basdih–Revati, via Majhighat, connecting Bihar. 2. The road known as the Ram Janaki Marg, passing through Ayodhya Cantonment, Kalwari, Badhhalganj and Barhaj, connecting Bihar up to Sitafee. 3. The road connecting Fazilnagar–Tamkuhi, Bhore, Bhangari and

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Bhatpar to Majhauli Raj, thereby linking my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Salempur. I urge the Government to kindly ensure that construction work on these roads is commenced immediately in the larger public interest.

[*]**SHRI C.P. JOSHI (CHITTORGARH):** I am grateful for the opportunity given to me today to present my views on the Budget of the country for the year 2019–20. I would like, at the outset, to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting this Budget before the nation after keeping in mind the interests of every section of society.

In this election, the people of the country have given a very clear mandate. After assessing the performance of the Government during its first term, the citizens of the nation have, for the second time, extended even stronger support. By doing so, the people have given a mandate to ensure that the journey of development, which began in 2014, continues uninterrupted and moves forward at an even faster pace.

This Government remains firmly committed to the vision of nation-building, the foundation of which was laid in the year 2014. While fulfilling the basic needs of the people, the Government is now moving ahead in the direction of building a strong, secure, prosperous and inclusive India in line with their aspirations. This journey is inspired by the core spirit of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas".

[·] Speech was laid on the Table.

For the year 2019–20, the total estimated expenditure on road and highway construction under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is Rs. 83,016 crore. This represents an increase of 6 percent over the Revised Estimates for 2018–19.

In 2019–20, the Ministry's revenue expenditure is estimated at Rs. 10,957 crore, while capital expenditure is estimated at Rs. 72,059 crore. In 2014–15, the ratio between revenue expenditure and capital expenditure stood at 50:50. However, in 2015–16, this ratio underwent a change, with the Ministry allocating a higher share of funds towards capital expenditure. Since then, the Ministry has significantly enhanced its capital spending. In 2019–20, it is estimated that 87 percent of the Ministry's total expenditure will be devoted to capital expenditure.

Infrastructure will play a vital role in the construction of a prosperous India. The Government is making sustained efforts to ensure that infrastructure development is eco friendly. Along with concrete, greenery is being integrated into highway and expressway projects. Under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, approximately 35,000 kilometres of National Highways are to be constructed or upgraded by the year 2022. Similarly, under the Sagarmala Pariyojana, a robust network of better roads is being developed in the coastal regions of the country and around ports. Through initiatives such as

Bharatmala, Setu Bharatam, the Char Dham Highway Development Project, Peripheral Expressways, the Delhi–Meerut Expressway, the Vadodara–Mumbai Expressway, the Delhi–Mumbai Expressway, the Bengaluru–Chennai Expressway, the Delhi–Amritsar–Katra corridor, highways such as Nagpur–Hyderabad–Bengaluru, and landmark projects like the Dwarka–Okha Bridge, bridges over the Ganga and Kosi rivers, the Zojila Tunnel and the Barkot Tunnel, the Government has achieved numerous historic milestones. Alongside highways, the Government is also undertaking large scale work in the sectors of railways, airways and inland waterways. The extent of development witnessed in the highways sector during the tenure of former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and under the present Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is perhaps unparalleled in the post Independence period. Atal ji envisioned the expansion of the national road network, faster mobility and enhanced road safety, laying the foundation for the transformative progress we witness today.

As a result of this vision, the Golden Quadrilateral as well as the East–West and North–South Corridors were constructed. I consider myself fortunate that the Golden Quadrilateral and the East–West Corridor pass through my *Parliamentary Constituency*, and they have made a significant contribution to the development

of my region. Over the past five years, during the tenure of the Modi Government, a comprehensive network of roads has been laid across my *Parliamentary Constituency*. The six lane Kishangarh–Ahmedabad highway has become the backbone of the region. Whether one travels from Kishangarh to Chittorgarh via Bhilwara, or from Chittorgarh to Udaipur, this highway now enables swift, smooth and comfortable travel for the people.

The Gulabpura–Chittorgarh section is being constructed at a cost of Rs. 1,240 crore, and the Chittorgarh–Udaipur section at a cost of Rs. 1,100 crore. The foundation stone for these projects was laid by the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, in the gracious presence of the Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari. The work of constructing this six lane highway is progressing at a war footing, and I am hopeful that it will be completed at the earliest. However, information has been received that in some stretches, such as from Narpat ki Khedi to Ajolia ka Kheda, service roads have not been constructed. I would therefore urge that service roads be built along with the six lane highway in these sections as well. Under the Central Road Fund, seven roads have been constructed in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, with a total length of approximately 260 kilometres and a total cost exceeding Rs. 360 crore.

Whether it is the road from Hoda Chauraha to Bhadesar via Avrimata and Nikumbh up to Badi Sadri and Bansi, from Mangalwad to Badi Sadri via Dungla, from Keer ki Chowki to Tana, Akola and Fatehnagar, from the Power House at Gudli via Khemli and Ghassa to Mavli, from Keli to Kanera, from Barodia near Bhainsrorgarh to Shrichhatarpur, or from Katunda to Rawatbhata Road, the construction of these roads has infused new energy into the lives of the people.

At the same time, roads have also been constructed for villages and towns that had earlier been deprived of road connectivity due to the alignment of new highways or the construction of bypasses. As a result, populated areas such as Eklingji, Chirva, Debari, Bhatewar, Daroli, Nimbahera and Chhoti Sadri towns, as well as villages like Badi and Dhamotar, have now been provided with proper road access.

In addition, approval has been granted for a National Highway passing through my *Parliamentary Constituency* along the route Kota–Rawatbhata–Bhaisarodgarh–Singoli–Mandsaur–Pratapgarh–Dhariyawad. Approval has also been accorded for the route from Bhatewar via Mavli to Nathdwara, Kumbhalgarh, Garhbor, Charbhuja Ji and Desuri. Further, approval has been granted for the construction of a bypass in Pratapgarh city to provide relief from

heavy and through traffic. Apart from these, I would request the Hon. Minister that certain highly important routes should also be developed as National Highways, including the Nimbahera–Mangalwad road as a National Highway, the Karohi–Kapasan–Bhadsoda route as a National Highway, and the Bhatewar–Bhinder–Kanod–Dhariyawad route as a National Highway.

I humbly request the Hon. Minister to kindly accord approval to all these works so that they may be implemented on the ground at the earliest and the people of my *Parliamentary Constituency* may derive due benefit from them. Along with these, there are several other routes for which the residents of the constituency are aspiring for durable and good-quality roads, including the Bassi to Amba Bhilwara road, the Deta to Nagri Bassi new bypass road, Akola to Bhadsoda, Fatehnagar to Dariba via Kunraj up to the Kankroli–Bhilwara road, Chanderia to Karohi Chauraha, Pratapgarh to the Ratlam border via Dalot, Pratapgarh to the Mandsaur border, Bambora to Bhinder, and Delwara to Khemli. If the Union Government undertakes widening and strengthening works on these routes as well, then there would remain no further demand in my *Parliamentary Constituency* with regard to roads.

With these words, I extend my full support to the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019-20. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI E.T. MOHAMMED BASHEER (PONNANI): Sir, I thank you very much.

Today, we are discussing the Demands for Grants of two most important Departments under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways which can be called the nerve system of the country. We are all having a lot of ideas and dreams for the development NHs and roads, but when we translate all our ideas into action, there are hurdles. These hurdles are mainly the hurdles on account of delay. Most of the speakers have mentioned about that. Delay in implementation of a project really needs to be addressed in a serious manner. As a result of this, cost escalation and hardship to the people cannot be undermined. There are delays at all the stages – land acquisition, resettlement of affected persons, paying compensation, utilities-related issues and environmental clearance issues.

So, in all these sectors, you can find a lot of delays. Until and unless we sit together and find out a solution to these kinds of problems, our dream cannot become a reality.

Land acquisition process is really a cumbersome one. It takes 20 to 30 months to make the land available for starting the work. It starts from the survey. Even in this digital era, our revenue records

are being maintained in the old format. I request the Government to be on the fast track and digitize the revenue records at the earliest.

19.11 hrs (Shri Kodikunnil Suresh *in the Chair*)

Another burning issue is the compensation given to the persons who vacate the land. The victims are suffering like anything. It also affects the credibility of the Government.

With regard to CALA, the Competent Authority for Land Acquisition, I request you that it should be given some flexibility in fixing the rate of compensation because situation varies from State to State. As far as Kerala is concerned, the situation is special because of its geography and also because of non-availability of land and high cost of land. All these things have to be taken into consideration while fixing the rate of compensation as far as Kerala is concerned.

Of course, in all these things we are following the national pattern. But at the same time, the variations that prevail in different States should also be taken into consideration. Then only we will be able to ensure justice.

With regard to NH 66, which passes through the heartland of my constituency, Ponnani, I understand that was in the top priority,

but unfortunately it was downgraded to the second position in the priority list. I am told that again you have decided to give it number one priority. According to my information, orders have not yet been given on this. I humbly request you to maintain the status quo and maintain this in the number one priority in the list. In NH 66, the problem is the same which I told you earlier. The uncertainty is still prevailing over the compensation to be paid. Similarly, rehabilitation and resettlement are also problems. That also may kindly be addressed.

I would like to mention some more points. Road safety and maintenance are the main issues that we should take care of. Most of the Members did mention them. Of course, you have hiked the allocation for road safety. But that is not sufficient. The road accidents are increasing day by day. So, road safety and maintenance are very important things. Along with that, sustainability is also important. We are showing all the interest in building the roads. At the same time we have to also ensure sustainability and durability of the roads. I urge upon the Government to give adequate Budgetary support for that.

We have to foresee the climate changes and weather variations, like heavy rains, floods, etc. while planning. That is also an important thing which I would like to mention.

Coming to the CRF, Shri V.K. Singh was saying that its name has been changed. When you allocate funds for CRF, it should be done in a judicious manner. As far as Kerala is concerned, we have a strong case for that. Shri Premachandran also mentioned that Members must have a say in deciding the CRF work. That is a very good suggestion and I also support that. We should have adequate number of roads and bridges.

In the end, I would like to say that contract management and enforcement related issues are very vital and significant. I hope that the Government will address this issue also.

With these few words, I conclude my speech. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

*__SHRI TIRATH SINGH RAWAT (GARHWAL):__ I would like to place my views on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari. I would go to the extent of conferring upon Hon. Gadkari the title of Sher Shah Suri, because the moment he assumed charge of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the pace of road construction accelerated significantly. During the UPA Government, several companies had abandoned projects midway. All road construction activities had come to a standstill. It was difficult to even distinguish whether there were roads with potholes or potholes with roads. Road accidents were occurring on a daily basis. After our Government assumed office, not only did the improvement of roads gain momentum, but corruption was also effectively curbed.

Several companies were blacklisted. More than 400 National Highway projects were stalled. Banks had stopped extending financial support. The Hon. Minister took a firm stand, work

* Speech was laid on the Table.

resumed, and transparency was introduced into the system. I would like to cite a few examples in this regard.

In Uttarakhand, work on the road connectivity project to the four Dhams, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri, is progressing at a rapid pace. Roads of such quality are being constructed that it is difficult to tell whether one is travelling through mountainous terrain or plains. At several locations, the roads are so wide that even a small aircraft could land there. This will benefit not only Uttarakhand but the entire nation, as people will gain immensely through pilgrimage and tourism. Under the All Weather Road programme and the National Roads and Bharatmala roads, initial instalments of Rs. 12,000 crore and Rs. 12,500 crore respectively were released, and work has commenced.

An investment of Rs. 15 lakh crore is being made in National Highways, including the Delhi–Meerut Expressway. Work is progressing rapidly on the Meerut–Dehradun and Meerut–Haridwar corridors. Plantation is being undertaken on both sides of the highways. Projects that were stalled during the UPA Government have now resumed, and vehicles are moving swiftly on improved roads. In the coming time, Delhi to Haridwar will be reachable within three hours, and Delhi to Dehradun within three and a half hours. Work on the Tankapur–Pithoragarh–Dharchula

highway under the All Weather Road project is also progressing rapidly.

The Bharatmala Project was launched in 2017-18. This comprehensive programme is strengthening transport mobility in the national interest. Our Government is actively engaged in constructing 34,800 kilometres of National Highways during the period from 2017-18 to 2021-22 at a total cost of Rs. 5,35,000 crore.

I urge the Hon. Minister to initiate the Paudi–Thelisain–Birokhal–Ramnagar National Highway and to include Satpuli and Pokhra in the National Highway network.

Under the All Weather Road project to Badrinath, the highway between Pipalkoti and Joshimath should be aligned in such a manner that it passes outside the Joshimath market area.

Similarly, on the Rudraprayag–Kedarnath road, instead of demolishing Tilwara market, the road should be taken from outside the market area. With these words, I conclude my remarks by conveying my thanks to the Hon. Minister through you. Thank you.

[*]**SHRI PARBHUBHAI NAGARBHAI VASAVA (BARDAULI):** I beg to move for leave to lay my suggestions for discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Under the dynamic leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Nitin Gadkari has ushered in a revolution in the transport sector across the country. Wherever one travels in any corner of the nation, the presence of a resurgent India is clearly visible. If this pace of progress continues, the day is not far when India will emerge as the leading nation in the world. The transport facilities now available to every citizen are so extensive that it would take at least an entire day to describe them in full. The scale of development taking place in the country today under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has not been witnessed earlier. Had such development occurred in the past, we would have progressed much further by now. I come from the Bardoli *Parliamentary Constituency* in Gujarat, the sacred karmabhoomi of Sardar Patel. In our constituency, on the Ahmedabad–Mumbai National Highway NH-48, there is an urgent need to construct vehicle underpasses at Karan, Baleshwar and Vav junctions. On the same highway, incomplete service roads should

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

be completed at the earliest. On Surat–Dhule NH-53, due to the non-construction of service roads at Uva, Karchaka and Utra, the general public is forced to take wrong routes, leading to frequent and fatal accidents. Construction of these service roads should be commenced without delay. On NH-56, the highway connecting Rajpipla to Vapi links the districts of Narmada, Surat, Tapi, Valsad and Dang. Traffic has increased significantly on this route, making the construction of a four-lane road absolutely essential. Development work is underway at some locations, but the pace is slow. I am confident that all stalled works will be completed within this year, and rivers of development in the transport sector will continue to flow across our country and State. In conclusion, I extend my full support to the Demands for Grants brought forward by the Government.

SHRI AJAY MISHRA TENI (KHERI): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants presented under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. While presenting the Budget for the year 2019-20, the Hon. Finance Minister has reflected the vision of the Hon. Prime Minister to build a five trillion dollar economy. In doing so, while adopting several measures such as reducing the fiscal deficit and ensuring stable GDP growth, she has also clearly indicated through this Budget the resolve to rapidly build infrastructure in the country by strengthening roads, railways, educational institutions and healthcare facilities, so that the stated targets may be achieved. Undoubtedly, our Government and our Party have played a major role in the construction of roads. Whenever our Government has been in power, whether it was the earlier NDA Government under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee or the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi from 2014 to 2019, significant work has been carried out. Be it the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana or the visionary conception of the Golden Quadrilateral by Shri Vajpayee, continuous efforts have been made to expand road connectivity across the country. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is primarily responsible not only for the development and maintenance of National Highways but also for expanding road transport facilities across the country, strengthening the network, and undertaking procedures

and actions related to safety and the prevention of accidents. This is undoubtedly a continuous process, which requires sustained and consistent efforts.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, under ‘the Bharatmala Pariyojana’, the Ministry has initiated a comprehensive review of the National Highway network, including its integration with the Sagarmala programme, development of roads in border areas, and exploration of other related possibilities. It has proposed the development of 26,200 kilometres of economic corridors, along with 8,000 kilometres of inter-corridors, 7,500 kilometres of feeder roads, 5,300 kilometres of border roads, and 4,100 kilometres of coastal roads. In addition, proposals include 1,900 kilometres of expressways and the construction of ring roads in 28 cities, all of which are targeted to be completed by the year 2021-22. Our Government has set clear objectives to complete all these works through the National Highways Authority and the Border Roads Organisation. In this regard, land acquisition and the related procedural work have also been expedited significantly by the Ministry. Special proposals have been made wherein, while adopting these measures, the Ministry has also emphasised environmental protection, and has set goals to explore international cooperation and other opportunities. At the same time, indications

have been given that the Ministry will also extend support for the development of State Highways. With the objective of reducing transportation costs, there is a proposal to strengthen the framework of internal trade by connecting major highways to ports through initiatives such as Sagarmala and utilising National Waterways. Alongside this, to enhance rural connectivity, efforts are being made to establish coordination with roads constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, so that major rural markets and important rural routes may be linked with the main road network. The Ministry is also committed to ensuring better road quality through the use of modern technology. Our visionary Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari, consistently brings forward new ideas. With Shri V. K. Singh now serving as the Minister of State, and keeping in view the Hon. Prime Minister's vision, the Government is continuously deliberating upon and striving to adopt new technologies to ensure that the quality of roads is also of a high standard.

From 2014 to 2019, during the NDA Government and also under the present Government led by Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Nitin Gadkari has been the Minister in charge of this Ministry, and it is owing to his commitment that we are today in a position to even contemplate and undertake such extensive initiatives. When we

assumed office in 2014, the condition of roads in the country was far from satisfactory and the pace of construction of new roads was extremely slow. Emerging from that situation, our Government began its work in 2014 with renewed resolve. Alongside the construction of roads, we introduced new ideas and adopted modern technologies to ensure better quality of roads, faster execution of projects, and enhanced convenience for the people. It is through these concerted efforts that significant progress has been achieved in the road sector.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, your allotted time of five minutes is already over.

… (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI AJAY MISRA TENI: Sir, after the formation of the Government in 2014, while significant efforts were made to enhance road connectivity by expanding National Highways, widening roads, strengthening the Central Road Fund and implementing the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, an equally important initiative was introduced by the Hon. Minister to reduce transportation costs in trade and commerce. With the announcement of 101 new inland waterways, it was proposed that affordable

transport facilities would be made available for both passenger movement and the carriage of goods through these waterways. Several steps were also taken through the development of expressways to substantially reduce travel time.

Sir, through you, I would also like to mention that I heard an advertisement on the radio in which Shri Gadkari himself was speaking about road accidents. When I heard his voice, I was genuinely taken aback, as it reflected his deep sensitivity towards this issue. We were also instructed to organise similar awareness programmes at the district level. I would like to inform the House that in my Lakhimpur district, we organised an art gallery created by children, which proved to be effective in spreading awareness and contributing to accident prevention.

Sir, I would also like to thank the Hon. Minister because my *Parliamentary Constituency* lies on the Nepal border and is a highly backward area. Earlier, there was only one National Highway, NH-730, in this region. The widening of this highway has been approved, and we have also been granted National Highway-731. I request that State Highway No. 21, the Bhira–Panwari road in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, which has already been proposed by our State Government for conversion into a National Highway, may be duly converted, and that the bridge at Pachkeri Ghat may also be

constructed. A proposal for Inland Waterway No. 40 originating from my district of Lakhimpur has also been submitted. Through you, Sir, I urge the Hon. Minister to kindly take steps to implement this project as well. While supporting these Demands for Grants, and considering the manner in which our Government and the Hon. Finance Minister have presented the Budget for 2019-20, including the comprehensive restructuring of National Highways and the creation of a National Highway grid of desired capacity, I am confident that roads across the country will be improved, public convenience will increase, and road accidents will reduce. With these expectations, I express my full support for this budgetary allocation.

SHRI RAJAN BABURAO VICHARE (THANE): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I extend my congratulations to the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari, and the Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, General Dr V. K. Singh, for presenting a Budget that has been welcomed by every section of society. Within my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Thane, the important Gaymukh–Bhiwandi Coastal Road project, being implemented by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), has been pending for over ten years. As a result of this prolonged delay, the project cost has escalated from Rs. 400 crore to Rs. 1,200 crore. Through you, Chairperson, I urge the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways to kindly allocate funds for this crucial project from the present Budget at the earliest and ensure that the work is commenced without further delay.

Hon. Speaker, through you, I would also like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways to the proposed underground corridor between Thane and Borivali falling within my *Parliamentary Constituency*. This project has

been pending for a long time. After its completion, the distance between the two National Highways, which currently takes more than one and a half hours to traverse, will be covered in just 25 minutes. Therefore, through you, I urge the Hon. Minister to make an appropriate budgetary provision for this project.

Further, within my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Thane, the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has prepared a proposal to develop an eight-lane road along the creek in two phases, measuring approximately 10.5 kilometres from Belapur to Vashi and 16.5 kilometres from Vashi to Thane. Through you, I request the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways to kindly make the necessary budgetary provision for this project as well.

Within my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Thane, I also urge the Hon. Minister to accord early approval to the proposal submitted for the construction of a grade separator on the expressway and to make the necessary funds available for the same. I have met the Hon. Minister on several occasions in this regard and have also submitted written representations.

I support the Demands for Grants under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, the Hon. Minister for Road Transport

and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari, and the Hon. Minister of State General Dr. V. K. Singh.

[English]

SHRI VE. VAITHILINGAM (PUDUCHERRY): Hon'ble Chairman Sir, I am very much thankful to you for having given me an opportunity. I would like to present the traffic problems being faced by the people of Puducherry.

Puducherry is a tourist destination. It attracts more tourists. It is facing heavy traffic congestion due to increasing traffic. The volume of traffic is very high and the maximum traffic intensity is of the order of one lakh PCU. Two of the major Highways - NH-66 and NH-32 - and the East Coast Road which are passing through Puducherry are experiencing heavy traffic congestion. Heavy traffic congestion is increasing day by day.

There are four major road junctions in Puducherry which were studied for construction of flyovers. There is an urgent need to address traffic jam issue at many locations. The Government of Puducherry has planned to provide flyovers at important road crossings along the National Highways. Approximately an amount of Rs. 200 crores is required for construction of flyovers at all these four junctions. All the above schemes have been examined and technically scrutinized based on the Detailed Project Report (DPR) by the ministry of road transport and highways.

I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Road transport to

clear the above schemes on priority. Also considering the traffic intensity in the stretch of NH-32 - Villupuram-Puducherry-Cuddalore - which is presently two lane, should be widened as four lane carriage way immediately with paved shoulders. I would request the Hon. Minister to explore the possibility of providing a parallel road to ease traffic congestion along the Puducherry - Cuddalore road by forming a new road which will reduce the travel time considerably.

In Chennai-Trichy National Highway, a very busy junction called Kooteripattu is there, where a lot of accidents have taken place. We need a flyover at Kooteripattu. Kindly execute this project also at the earliest.

I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Road Transport to kindly consider the issues raised by me and extend support to the people of Pondicherry.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RAMA DEVI (SHEOHAR): Hon. Chairperson, I rise to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Sir, I would like to say just a couple of lines.

Andhera tha ghana, lekin koi deepak bhi jal nikle,

Lade jo bihu ghuskar, vahi hokar safal nikle,

Tapaya dhup ne jitna, chamak chehre par badhai,

Chunauti se jo takrae, vahi hokar sabl nikle.

[In essence, the verse emphasises that struggle refines individuals, adversity brings out true leadership, and success belongs to those who do not retreat from hardship but face it with determination.]

Today, we are speaking about Shri Nitin Gadkari ji. When one compares the work done over the past fifty-five years with the achievements of these last five years, it genuinely appears that a sense of hope has been rekindled among the people. There is a widespread belief that our Ministers work with remarkable speed and, more importantly, that the outcomes of their work are clearly visible on the ground. For some time now, wherever I go and wherever I listen, there is only one sentiment that echoes

everywhere: when will our road finally be built? All Members visit their Parliamentary Constituencies. When we go among the people and witness the deplorable condition of roads, the public holds us accountable and questions us sharply. They ask why they elected us, reminding us that they sent us here not merely to occupy seats, but to ensure development and deliver tangible results. However, the work carried out by Shri Nitin Gadkari ji over the last five years instils confidence that roads across the country will indeed be completed. It reinforces the belief that whoever comes to power must work with unwavering commitment, always keeping the needs and welfare of the people at the centre of governance.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, the Modi Government, which has returned to power with a clear resolve and commitment towards rapid and inclusive development, has placed strong emphasis on strengthening the country's infrastructure in the very first Budget of its second term. Under this approach, the Government's foremost focus has been on expanding the network of roads and improving overall connectivity. For this purpose, an allocation of Rs. 80,250 crore has been made available to the road transport sector for the years 2019 and 2020. What is even more significant is the fact that over the past five years, the pace of road construction has increased fivefold, and despite expenditure exceeding Rs. 11 lakh crore, not a

single instance of corruption has come to light. This, indeed, stands out as a major achievement of the Modi Government. There has been neither any scam nor any complaint from anyone suggesting that they faced undue problems or irregularities during the process of road construction. In such a scenario, if a Minister like Shri Nitin Gadkari ji continues to work with this level of commitment and efficiency, I firmly believe that roads across the country will truly appear well-built, modern and shining.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, in this Budget, an action plan has been presented for large-scale restructuring of the National Highways Programme. This will lead to the creation of a National Highway grid that will connect different parts of the country. The Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, has set a clear target of investing Rs. 15 lakh crore in highway construction. He has taken a firm resolve to work with full dedication and to ensure that this substantial investment is utilised effectively. Today, a sense of hope has emerged among all Members. Everyone wishes to speak as much as possible, and even if the House were to sit till midnight, Members are willing and eager to participate in this discussion. This itself reflects the enthusiasm and confidence inspired by these initiatives. Indeed, this is a historic step.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, while presenting the Budget, the Hon. Finance Minister stated that in the second phase of Bharatmala, State-level development would be encouraged, and through schemes such as Bharatmala and Sagarmala, efforts have been made to bridge the gaps between rural road regions. Until recently, many of us were not even familiar with the concept of Sagarmala or what it truly entailed. However, when we discussed it with Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, it became clear how commendable and forward-looking this vision is, particularly the manner in which the Sagarmala scheme integrates rivers and the sea into a unified transport and logistics framework. This reflects the farsightedness of the Hon. Prime Minister and is a result of his leadership, which offers a clear glimpse of New India. We believe that today every individual aspires to earn respect by delivering meaningful work in their respective areas. It is for this very purpose that the people have sent us to this august House.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Now, please conclude.

SHRIMATI RAMA DEVI: Hon. Chairperson Sir, please give me a little time. I speak only occasionally. Suresh ji is very kind. ... *(Interruptions)*

I would like to thank the Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari ji for granting approval, under the Bharatmala scheme, for the

construction of a new National Highway from Chakia to Bairgania in my *Parliamentary Constituency*.

I would further request the Hon. Minister to ensure that construction work on this road is commenced at the earliest. I also express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister for reducing the GST rate on electric vehicles from 12 Percent to 5 Percent in order to promote electric mobility. This reduction to 5 Percent will provide significant relief to the poorer sections of society. In addition, an additional income tax exemption of Rs. 1,50,000 has also been announced. These measures have increased public interest in electric vehicles, which are also beneficial for the environment. With the expectation of revival of private investment in the road sector, the Government has made a major policy intervention. This year, it has been decided that around 10 to 20 Percent of National Highway projects will be offered under the Build Operate Transfer (BOT) model. For this purpose, nearly 12,000 kilometres of highway stretches have been identified, which will be awarded under the BOT model, and private operators will undertake construction and operate these projects for the duration of the concession period.

The Union Government has taken a historic decision by initiating the Char Dham Mahamarg Vikas Project, which is most welcome. Through this project, easy access has been ensured to the four major Dhams located in the State of Uttarakhand, namely Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath. This project, with an estimated cost of approximately Rs. 12,000 crore and involving the construction of 889 kilometres of two lane roads, is providing immense convenience to pilgrims and tourists alike. ... (*Interruption*s) Sir, please allow me another half a minute to speak. The Government has reiterated its commitment to complete all ongoing highway projects within 100 days. I would like to place a demand before the Hon. Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari ji that the road project under construction in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, namely National Highway 104, stretching from kilometre 40 to kilometre 79.400, is currently completely blocked due to heavy rainfall. As a result, the movement of people has become extremely difficult. I request the Hon. Minister to make sincere efforts to ensure that the construction of this road is completed at the earliest. In addition, within my *Parliamentary Constituency*, in Sheohar district, there is a road from Janar village to Dekuli Dharmapur Dham via Dubba Ghat, with a total length of approximately 40 kilometres. This road connects an ancient and religious site. I request the Hon. Minister to include the Janar village to Dekuli

Dharmapur Dham via Dubba Ghat road in the National Highway network, so that people may benefit from improved connectivity and ease of travel. I would like to state that today the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is functioning with full alertness and promptness. The Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for this year will certainly improve the lives of the common people of the country and will prove to be supportive of our nation’s progress. Thank you very much, Sir.

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR PINTU (SITAMARHI): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. All the Hon. Members present here have continuously praised and congratulated the Hon. Minister, but since due attention has not been given to my *Parliamentary Constituency*, I am unable to convey my congratulations with the same enthusiasm. I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, the work on National Highway 77 from Hajipur to Sonbarsa has not yet been completed. Despite this, toll tax is being collected on this road, and the local people are being put to considerable inconvenience.

Secondly, I would like to state that under NH 77, land was acquired in Phase I, Phase II and Phase III. While payments are being made to landowners under Phase I and Phase III, those whose land was acquired under Phase II have not received any payment so far. It is being stated that funds have not yet been allocated for this purpose.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, the Hon. Minister is present in the House, and I wish to draw his attention to National Highway 104, which, as mentioned earlier by a Hon. Member, runs from Chakia through Sitamarhi and Sursand up to Nepal. NH 104 forms a crucial link on

the road connecting Ayodhya with Janakpur Dham. However, the tender for NH 104 was awarded three years ago, after which the contractor abandoned the work. Over the past three years, neither has the project been re-tendered nor has any construction commenced. Today, the condition of this road is so dilapidated that calling it a National Highway amounts to doing injustice to the very dignity of a National Highway.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, the Hon. Minister has resolved that all pending works and stalled highway projects will be completed within 100 days. Through you, I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that National Highway 77 and National Highway 104 should also be included in this 100-day programme. Both these projects should be accorded priority, the construction of NH 104 should be commenced, and the unfinished work on NH 77 should be completed at the earliest. Through you, I would also like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to a small but extremely important bridge. At present, if one has to travel from Sitamarhi to Motihari in East Champaran, the distance is about 160 kilometres. However, if a bridge is constructed at Adauri Khori Pakar, the distance between Sitamarhi and Motihari would be reduced to merely 60 kilometres, providing enormous relief to the people of the region.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that this will result in a reduction of nearly 100 kilometres, which will not only ease heavy traffic but will also save people's time and fuel. I would further like to submit that while National Highway 77 has been developed as a four-lane road from Hajipur to Muzaffarpur, the stretch from Muzaffarpur to Sitamarhi is still a two-lane road. I urge that this stretch should also be upgraded to four lanes. Another issue I wish to raise is regarding National Highway 527C, which has already been approved but remains only on paper. I request that this project be brought on the ground at the earliest. Further, while FASTag facilities are being provided for our vehicles, the FASTag system is not functioning at any toll plaza in Bihar. I request that this issue be resolved immediately and FASTag services be made operational without delay.

Sir, finally, in conclusion, I would like to say that our region is currently facing floods. Due to water coming from Nepal, the roads in the entire Sitamarhi district, including NH 77 and NH 104, have been severely damaged. If these roads are not restored immediately as the water starts receding, movement from the blocks of Sitamarhi to the district headquarters and outside the district through the National Highways will become impossible. Therefore, once again, through you, Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to urge the Hon.

Minister to give special attention to my district Sitamarhi, the birthplace of Sita Ji, which holds no less importance than Ayodhya. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak in support of this Budget.

SHRIMATI RITI PATHAK (SIDHI): Thank you, Hon. Chairperson Sir. Today, I wish to place my views during the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji, and our Hon. Minister of State, General V. K. Singh Ji, for the Budget that has been presented to secure the future of the nation under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister and with the guidance of the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, education, health and transport are important indicators of development in any region, and when we speak specifically of roads, they make a special and significant contribution to strengthening the country's economy. With regard to this Budget of Rs. 83,016 crore, and particularly the provisions related to road transport and highways, I would like to place a few points before the House, which I, along with all of us, have clearly observed.

I, along with all of us, have observed this clearly. When all Members in this House have discussed the subject and placed their respective views, it has become evident that this Ministry and this Budget have made a significant contribution to strengthening the country's economy. Adequate financial provision has been made

for the construction of National Highways. At the same time, arrangements have also been made in this Budget for the maintenance of those National Highways that have deteriorated. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, provision has been made for the construction of 130 to 135 kilometres of roads per day, and the required funds have been earmarked for this purpose. If I speak of the Bharatmala Programme, this Budget provides for the construction of up to 35,000 kilometres of National Highways by the year 2022. Under the Sagarmala Programme, arrangements have also been made for road construction in coastal areas and around ports. We all know that special provisions for development have been made in this Budget.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to say this much that the manner in which concern has been shown in this Budget for the North-East and its connectivity deserves heartfelt appreciation, and through you, I wish to sincerely thank the Hon. Minister for this. If I speak from my personal experience, I spent fourteen years in the North-East. There, I have seen that even for a journey that should take half an hour, it often takes one to one-and-a-half times longer. When the roads deteriorate, it is seen that the same journey can take three to four times longer. If our Government and the Hon. Minister, Shri Gadkari Ji, are taking special initiatives on this issue, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and gratitude for the same.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to share one more point on a personal note. My *Parliamentary Constituency* is known as Sidhi. If Sidhi is viewed from the perspective of connectivity, it appears to be severely deprived. There is no railway connectivity there. As far as National Highways are concerned, earlier it was NH-75, which has now been renamed as NH-39. I recall that before the year 2014, when we used to travel from Rewa to Singrauli, the journey would take nearly eight to nine hours. However, when the Government led by our sensitive Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji, came to power in 2014 and Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji took charge of this Ministry, we received a special gift. Between Rewa and Sidhi, there used to be a bridge which we all knew as the Kuldah Bridge. Over time, instead of being called the Kuldah Bridge, it came to be known as the accident-prone bridge, because several major accidents had occurred there. The condition of this bridge was such that during the rainy season, when water would accumulate on it, it would take three to four days for the water to recede. Owing to its narrow width, numerous accidents occurred on this bridge and the route would often get blocked, causing immense hardship to the people. I sincerely thank Shri Gadkari Ji for taking cognisance of this issue. Along with doing so, he expedited the construction of the road from Rewa to Sidhi, and also ensured the construction of this bridge, which was like a dream come true for

us. I see in this Budget the outcome of development for the nation. It is undoubtedly a very good Budget and one that will determine our future. … (*Interruption*s)

Hon. Chairperson, please allow me to place my submission on record, as this is a very important matter. For me, the national Budget is important, but the issues of my own region are equally important. … (*Interruption*s) Sir, kindly grant me one more minute and allow me to complete my point. I state this with a heavy heart that for the past two weeks, the route for movement between Sidhi and Singrauli has been completely blocked. I have earlier also tried to bring this matter to the notice of the Hon. Minister. Through you, I humbly request that this issue be taken cognisance of with utmost seriousness. This road has been under construction for nearly ten years. I wish to submit that the people there are facing severe hardships. Several large potholes have developed, accidents occur frequently, and Singrauli being an industrial area, developmental activities have come to a standstill.

Therefore, I request that this House may kindly direct the Hon. Minister to ensure the early construction of the bridge. Further, the CRF fund, which was earmarked for our small but essential works, has now been converted into CRIF. This is not merely a change in name, but the nature of works has also changed. I would like to

submit that since it has now been subsumed under the Ministry of Finance, if it is restored in its earlier form, many important works of all Members could be taken up, and such possibilities would certainly emerge.

In conclusion, I would like to say only this much that, with these very expectations, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on this Budget, which is decisive for shaping the future of the nation’s development, and I convey my best wishes to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Thank you.

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving this opportunity to speak on Demand No.83, that is the Demand pertaining to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

First of all, I would like to place it on record the wonderful and the exemplary work done by the Hon. Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari in building up the road infrastructure. It was widely accepted by all in the country. Even in the 16th Lok Sabha also, we had all appreciated the wonderful and the exemplary work done by the Hon. Minister.

The annual Budget presented by the Hon. Finance Minister aspires to have a three trillion dollar economy by 2019 and five trillion dollar economy by 2025. In order to achieve this three trillion dollar economy, the country has to achieve an economic growth of 11.11 per cent. If we want to achieve five trillion dollar economy by 2025, the similar figure will have to be achieved. In order to achieve this economic growth, minimum 200 billion is required for the infrastructural investment. This is the vision which is being envisaged in the Economic Survey of 2019.

At present, India is spending only $100 billion to $110 billion in infrastructure development. It means there is a deficit of around

$ 90 billion per annum. That being the statistical data elucidated in the Economic Survey, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, especially the Hon. Road Transport Minister, how is he going to achieve the economic growth as envisaged in the Budget for the year 2019-20.

Coming to Demand No.83, all the Hon. Members have stated that roads are part of an integrated multi-model system of transport which provides crucial links to airports, railway stations, ports, and other logistical hubs. Road infrastructure acts as a catalyst in the economic growth of our country. Road infrastructure is playing a pivotal role in building up the economy in a better way.

One of the major constraints in making investment in the road sector is the non-availability of funds. That is the main problem which the country is facing. We have to depend on the private investment. Irrespective of our political differences with the Government, we all support the road infrastructure development. Private investment can be attracted and the entire House supports it, irrespective of having political differences. Even if fund is available with the Government, due to lengthy processes involved in the acquisition of land, payment of compensation to the beneficiaries, environmental concerns, and the cost overrun due to the delays in the implementation of the project, we are not able to achieve the goal. This problem has to be addressed by the

Government. I am not going into the details of what is to be done, for what the Hon. Minister and his Ministry is doing is really appreciable. In my opening remarks, I had no hesitation in admiring or accepting the remarkable work done by the Hon. Minister and his Ministry.

Sir, I would like to flag two issues. One is the issue regarding the Central Road Fund. The CRF is amended by the Finance Act of 2018. Hon. Minister, General (Retd.) V. K. Singh has already replied to my query - when I was in the Chair- that by the Finance Act of 2018, the Central Road Fund has been changed to the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund, that is, CRIF. Now, the CRF has become the CRIF. This is a major source of budgetary support to the highway sector. But the Budget outlay for the scheme of States' finances from the CRIF is less than that of the previous year.

Sir, if you go to the Budget Estimates, the Budget Estimates for the year 2018-19 was Rs. 7,891 crore. In the year 2019-20, it has come down to Rs. 7,308 crore. That means it is a loss, or a deficit, or a shortfall of approximately Rs. 500 crore as far as the CRIF is concerned. You may kindly see that in this Financial Year, in the Budget, there is a new proposal by which you are imposing an infrastructure cess each by one rupee a litre on petrol and diesel. You are enhancing or imposing an infrastructure cess each by one rupee per litre on petrol or diesel. In the CRIF, as far as the

highways are concerned …*(Interruptions)* No, no, I am looking at the Hon. Minister and at the same time, I am addressing the Chair. …*(Interruptions)* You are imposing a levy. The CRIF Budget outlay, which is being decreased and declined by approximately Rs. 500 crore, has to be looked into.

Through you, I would like to bring another issue to the kind attention of the whole House regarding the role of the Hon. Members of Parliament, especially the Hon. Members of the Lok Sabha. Yesterday also, I had the bitter experience. The Hon. Ministers are coming and inaugurating the projects which comes under CRF. The Hon. Members of Parliament have no role. The PWD Minister of the particular State is saying that the MPs have no role in the allocation of funds. They have nothing to do with that. These are all being done by the State Governments. This is the Central Fund and it is being administered by the Government of India. I do admit that the administrative sanction and the technical sanction is being given by the State Governments, but what is the role of the Hon. Member of Parliament. The Hon. Member of Parliament is a mere spectator as far as the Central Road Fund is concerned. That has to be changed. The Hon. MP concerned should be taken into confidence in selecting the roads in their particular constituency or in their particular district. Then, what is the meaning of a representative of the people? If there is a political tiff

or opposition, then the Hon. MP concerned is not even informed regarding the inauguration of the project or regarding the commencement of the project. This is situation prevailing. So, I suggest the Hon. Minister to kindly do something regarding this issue. Kindly issue some guidelines. Some guidelines or strict norms have to be complied with regarding selection of roads.

Finally, I come to my constituency. I would like to talk about the Kollam bypass, which was inaugurated by the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji in the month of January, 2019. It is a two-lane road that has to be developed as a four-lane road so as to avoid accidents. Now, there are a number of accidents which are taking place. Within six months, about seven persons have already died in road accidents. There is no service road. Nothing is there.

So, I urge upon the Government to immediately take initiatives so as to build the National Highway Kollam Bypass as a four-lane road so as to avoid the accidents and to make the road more efficient and in an effective manner. With these words, I conclude. Thank you very much, Sir.

SHRI TOKHEHO YEPTHOMI (NAGALAND): Thank you, Hon. Chairperson, Sir, for allowing me to participate in the discussion regarding the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for 2019-20.

Hon. Chairperson, on behalf of my State and the people of Nagaland, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister, Shri Nitin Jairam Gadkari Ji for having a concern for the people of Nagaland, especially in the road sector.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, on 3rd of November, 2015, the Hon. Minister Gadkari Ji laid the foundation stone at Chumukeidma to start a road construction between Dimapur and Kohima.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, way back in the year 2003, Hon. Prime Minister, late Shri Vajpayee Ji, visited Nagaland. When he landed at Dimapur, weather was so bad and he could not go to Kohima. The security personnel and all the agencies asked him not to proceed to Kohima by road.

20.00 hrs

But the late Hon. Prime Minister said that since he has come to visit Nagaland he will go even by road and he reached Kohima late in the evening. While staying in Nagaland for three days he committed to give four lane road from Dimapur to Kohima. But it took 12 years to start the construction of this road. In 2015, Hon.

Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji laid the foundation stone for construction of this road. The construction started in 2016 and the time stipulated for completion of this four-lane road was three years. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Sir, a large number of Hon. Members wish to speak on this subject. If the House so agrees, the time of the House may be extended by a further two hours.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, it is 8 o'clock and I have a long list of speakers to speak on the Demand for Grant relating to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. If the House agrees, the time may be extended by another two hours.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI TOKHEHO YEPTHOMI: The construction work was given to two contractors – one was ECI and another was Gayatri. The ECI was given two packages. Gayatri has been given one package. Under the ECI contractors they have black-topped at four

places in four locations. But potholes have developed in those locations. This incident has been reported to the concerned Ministry. Even before the road has been completed if the black topping of the road is developing potholes, then it is understood that the construction of the road is not as per specifications. So, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister and also the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to kindly look into the quality of the four-lane construction of the road from Dimapur to Kohima.

20.02 hrs (Shri A. Raja *in the Chair*)

Sir, another road, National Highway No. 702 from Mokukchung to Phek had been taken over by the Ministry of Road Transport six years back. That road was under Defence and the road was called the General Staff Road. After this National Highway 702 was taken over by the Road Transport Ministry, till today there has been no maintenance of the road and the people of three districts have been facing hardship in travelling. Now, it is not even possible for heavy vehicles to ply on that road. I would like to, therefore, draw the attention of the Hon. Minister and the concerned Department to kindly at least provide funds for maintenance of that National Highway No. 702.

Sir, the State of Nagaland is bordering Myanmar and there are three trade centres, namely Avakhu in Phek district, Pangsa in

Tuengsang district and Longwa in Mon district. On the side of Myanmar road construction is going on and it is about to reach those trade centres. But the National Highway from Kohima to Melori and to the trade centre has not been taken up so far. I, therefore, would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister and the Department to kindly complete all the formalities and expedite the construction of the road at least to connect the trade centre with India and Myanmar.

My last point is this. When roads are taken over as National Highways, specially in my district, road maintenance is given on a lumpsum amount. But I think road maintenance must be given on the basis of the length of the road. If road maintenance is given only on a lumpsum basis, I think it will be very difficult for the Department to continue to maintain the roads. Therefore, I would request the Department to kindly give the maintenance charges depending upon the length of that particular Highway.

With these few words, I thank you, Sir, and I support the Demand for the Grant, No. 83.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA (AMRELI):** I rise to present my views on the Demands for Grants relating to the Central Road Transport and Highways Budget.

Our Government is now placing strong emphasis on strengthening infrastructure. Through the Bharatmala Project, all-weather roads are being provided up to every village in the country and National Highways are being constructed at an unprecedented pace. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, roads measuring 30,000 kilometres in length have already been constructed using green technology, resulting in a significant reduction in transportation costs. Under the Bharatmala Project, approximately 35,000 kilometres of National Highways are to be constructed or upgraded by 2022. Further, under Phase III of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads will be upgraded over the next five years at a cost of Rs. 80,250 crore.

I would urge the Hon. Minister to take note of the project underway in my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Amreli, wherein the Una–Dhari–Bagasara–Amreli–Babra–Jasdan to Chotila route

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

has been proposed as a National Highway, with a total length of 280 kilometres.

The Una–Dhari–Bagasara–Amreli–Babra–Jasdan to Chotila highway passes through the districts of Gir Somnath, Amreli, Rajkot and Surendranagar, and a large number of tourist destinations and religious temples fall along this route. As a result, the inflow of tourists on this highway remains exceptionally high.

It is pertinent to mention that the Hon. Prime Minister, on 7 March 2017, during a public function in Gujarat, had announced from the dais that this route would be developed as a National Highway. Subsequently, the Government of Gujarat has forwarded a proposal to the Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India, for reconsideration of this matter.

Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to kindly take note that this is a very important route and, keeping its significance in view, to declare the said route as a National Highway.

I further urge the Hon. Minister that the Mahua–Savarkundla–Amreli–Bagasara–Vadiya–Jaitpur route has been proposed as National Highway No. 351, with a total length of 181 kilometres. For the construction of this National Highway, an estimated budget of Rs. 1,502 crore has already been approved. The survey and the Detailed Project Report have also been completed. For

commencement of construction, it is now necessary to undertake land acquisition and bring the project into the tendering process.

Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to allocate the required funds for land acquisition and to initiate the tendering process for this project, so that construction work may begin at the earliest.

Further, the Nagesari–Khambha–Savarkundla–Lilia–Lathi–Dhsa route has been proposed as a National Highway, with a total length of 160 kilometres. The estimated cost for construction of this National Highway is Rs. 1,120 crore. However, the progress of this project is negligible so far. Neither has land acquisition been completed nor has any construction work commenced.

The local residents have very high expectations from this highway project, as its construction will greatly ease connectivity and transportation for the people of the region.

The survey and the Detailed Project Report for this route have been prepared and forwarded to the Ministry for approval. After finalisation of the survey and technical examination, the construction process of this highway can be taken forward.

Therefore, I respectfully request the Hon. Minister to kindly take cognisance of this matter and accord approval at the earliest for declaring this route as a National Highway, so that the tendering process for construction of this highway may be expedited.

Just as arteries function within the human body by enabling the operation of vital organs in every part, in the same manner India’s road transport and highway network has been working continuously for the development of the nation, establishing exemplary standards of public service. In conclusion, I extend my sincere gratitude to all the employees of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, and I wholeheartedly congratulate Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, who is working tirelessly day and night to maintain the momentum of development in the road transport and highways sector and to achieve the vision of a Developed India under the leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji. I am deeply grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to place my views on this important subject before the House. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI NITESH GANGA DEB (SAMBALPUR): Sir, I thank you for giving me the time to speak on the Demand for Grant pertaining to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways in this august House.

Firstly, I will talk about my constituency and State, and then I will go ahead with the Budget. I have been elected to this august House from Sambalpur *Parliamentary Constituency*, which is located in the western part of Odisha. Western Odisha has always been neglected, but thanks to our Government and our Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari, some work has been going on.

The Hon. Minister has laid the foundation stone on 21st July 2017 for the four-laning of Sambalpur – Teleibani on NH-53 and Teleibani – Keonjhar on NH-49. I was privileged to be part of that programme as I was an MLA then.

There is a public demand for underbridges in these highways, with hospitals and schools on one side and villages on the other side. Through you, Sir, I would like to request the Hon. Minister to construct underbridges as they would not cost much. I am not asking for an overbridge or a flyover. Underbridges are a public demand. Hence, it should be taken care of by the Hon. Minister.

The progress of projects is going on at a snail's pace. As the contractors are not repairing and maintaining these NHs, it is resulting in a lot of accidents claiming innocent lives.

Also, the work on Sambalpur-Angul on NH-53 and Angul-Cuttack on NH-55 should be expedited. There are some more new projects in my constituency. A new NH should be taken up on Sambalpur-Khariamal via Lykera. Then there is a demand for a new NH on Bolangir-Dhantari linking Odisha and Chhattisgarh. One more demand for a new NH is there on Junagarh-Badiamal Chowk-Raipur.

The General Budget 2019-20 is a growth-oriented Budget as well as a fillip to the infrastructural development of the country. The allocation of Rs. 1,64,448 crore is the highest budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways as compared to the previous years. The year 2018-19 was declared by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways as the year of construction.

India has a road network of about 59.98 lakh kilometres as of 31st March 2017, with rural roads constituting 70.65 per cent, while the National Highways constituting only 1.94 per cent.

As you know, India is a country of villages. If each and every village is connected with good roads, then the standard of living of the people living in the villages will improve.

A good and all-weather road work will give a 'multiplier effect' in the growth of the economy. A farmer, an artisan, a weaver, or a fisherman can easily reach nearby towns and cities to sell their products at a better price if there are good roads and better connectivity.

Under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has identified 26,200 kilometres of stretches for development as economic corridors, 8,000 kilometres as inter-corridors, 7,500 kilometres of feeder routes, 5,300 kilometres as border and international connectivity roads, 4,100 kilometres as coastal and port connectivity roads, 1,900 kilometres of expressways, and has identified the National Corridor Efficiency Improvement project by development of ring roads in around 28 cities, and development of 35 Multimodal Logistic Parks.

Sir, it is under the leadership of an efficient and competent Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari*ji* that the road construction work of our country has gone up from 12 kilometres per day in 2014-15 to 30 kilometres per day in the year 2018-19.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI NITESH GANGA DEB: Sir, please give me two more minutes.

This increase in the pace of construction was achieved by introducing proactive policy, mechanism for Inter-Ministerial coordination, innovative project financing, both public and private funding, streamlining land acquisition processes etc.

Investment worth Rs. 1,58,839 crore have been financed from the budgetary support, Internal and External Budgetary Resources, that is IEBR and private sector investment. The budgetary support accounted for 48 per cent of investment while the IEBR accounted for 38 per cent. The remaining 14 per cent were financed by private investments.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI NITESH GANGA DEB: Sir, I will conclude in two minutes.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, that is CCEA, has approved investments worth Rs. 6,92,324 crore for Phase – I of Bharatmala Pariyojana and other ongoing projects during its meeting held on 24th October, 2017.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI NITESH GANGA DEB: This includes development of 9,000 kilometres length of economic corridors, about 6,000

kilometres length of inter corridors and feeder roads, about 5000 kilometres length of National Corridors Efficiency Improvement, about 2,000 kilometres length of border and international connectivity, about 2,000 kilometres length of coastal and port connectivity roads, about 800 kilometres length of expressways and the balance length of about 10,000 kilometres of roads under National Highway Development Programme. The main aim is to improve the speed of the traffic flow on key corridors by providing uniform four-lane roads between two identified points.

It is under the dynamic leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi*ji*, our country has been consistently moving upwards and creating new records in agricultural production, industrial growth, trade and commerce, science and technology, and satellite and moon mission. India now plays an important role in international diplomacy and on multilateral platform.

I take this opportunity to thank you for giving me time to speak. I support the Demand for Grant under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for 2019-20.

*SHRI KARADI SANGANNA AMARAPPA (KOPPAL): I wish to draw the kind attention of Hon'ble Minister and congratulate him for sanctioning some of the major work in the last Government in my constituency as: NH 50 Kushtagi flyover and 80% of the work has been completed: NH 63, four lines express highway from Bellari to Hubi via koppal: Bhanpur to Geddinkeri cross work and work is going on: Sindhnur city limit for 6 Km with the budget of 70 crore: Takkalkoti-singhgeri, ten meter road at NH 150 with the budget of 96 crore.

I wish to continue the same journey for granting the work into this year also, and I would like to submit some of the pending work as mentioned.

Regarding the alignment of NH from Ginigera-Gangavathi-Manvi-Sindhanur-Kalmal-Raichur length 161.560 Km in the state of Karnataka has been approved in principal.

Consultancy services for feasibility study, detailed project report, survey and land plan for upgradation of State Highway to National Highway by adopting lidar or similar technology from Naragund – Belavanki-Gajendragad-Kushtagi-Tavarkere-Singhanur on NH 150 A in the state of Karnataka.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

Consultancy services for feasibility study cum DPR survey and preparation of land plan by adopting lidar or similar technology for the road from Koppal-Belagatti-Munargi-Bagewadi-Gudgeri-Shiggaon in the state of Karnataka on EPC mode.

Approval of variation proposal of Koppal city limits work from Km 248/300 to 255/160 on NH 63 Ankola-Gooty section in the state of Karnataka.

Providing service road to Halavarthi village of Koppal district at chainage 262+100 and263+980 on NH 63 between Koppal and Hosapete stretch in Karnataka.

Tender process for the stretch comes under Bharatmala project (A) Koppal – Metgal: final DPR submitted and 3d is in progress. (B) Hospet – Sindhanur: DPR under progress.

Bypass for the Sindhnoor city at NH 150.

Sindhanur City Bridge for widening of 4 lane.

I shall be very grateful if the hon'ble Minister would look into all these matters personally, and do the needful for the sanction of these jobs for the betterment of the people of Koppal Karnataka.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRISH CHANDRA (NAGINA): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Budget of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Sir, through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister to take note of an important issue concerning toll plazas on our highways. At many toll plazas, although several lanes have been constructed for traffic movement, the toll plaza staff keep nearly half of the lanes closed and operate only a few lanes. As a result, traffic congestion builds up. Due to this congestion, travellers often face serious inconvenience, and on many occasions, even ambulances get stuck in these traffic jams. When ambulances are trapped in such congestion, the patients inside are forced to struggle between life and death. In some unfortunate cases, due to the delay caused by traffic jams, patients have even lost their lives.

Sir, I therefore urge the Hon. Minister, through you, to issue strict directions to the companies operating these toll plazas to ensure that all lanes meant for traffic movement remain operational at all times. Proper arrangements must be made so that traffic is not disrupted and such dangerous congestion does not occur.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister to pay attention to an important issue concerning my

Parliamentary Constituency of Nagina. There is a road which connects Uttarakhand via Jaspur to Syohara, Noorpur, Chandpur, Datiana and Hastinapur, and further links up with Delhi. As one travels from Uttarakhand, from Jaspur towards Syohara, the Ramganga river flows in between. A bridge has already been constructed over the Ramganga, and the road is also in place. However, during last year's floods, the road on both sides near the river was washed away. As a result, the flow of water was diverted towards nearby villages, leading to severe flooding and submergence of those villages.

Through you, Sir, I request that a strong and durable road be constructed there by installing stone embankments, so that the road is not washed away again in the future and the villages are protected from flooding. I would also like to request, through you, that an overbridge be constructed at the railway crossing in Syohara. Due to the absence of an overbridge, people face significant inconvenience and traffic disruption at this crossing. If an overbridge is constructed, traffic movement will improve considerably. Therefore, I request that necessary steps be taken to construct this overbridge

I would also like to request the Hon. Minister that the road connecting RSM Dhampur Chauraha to Nahtaur and Bijnor be

widened and beautified. I place this demand before the Hon. Minister on behalf of my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Further, through Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that while the construction of National Highways is progressing at a rapid pace, accidents on these highways are also increasing at the same rate. There should be effective arrangements to prevent accidents on these highways. In order to curb accidents, speed governing for all vehicles should be made mandatory. If speed governing is enforced and vehicle speeds are regulated, accidents will certainly reduce.

Several companies awarded tenders for highway construction often do not adhere to timelines. As a result, projects get delayed and the public has to face considerable inconvenience. To ensure that projects are completed on time and the public does not suffer, companies should be strictly directed to complete their work within the stipulated time and ensure timely construction of highways.

[English]

[*]**SHRIMATI LOCKET CHATTERJEE (HOOGHLY):** I would like to congratulate Shri Nitin Gadkari ji for the phenomenal work done by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India. The vision and dream of the united India is being fulfilled by projects like Bharat Mala and Sagar Mala. The ministry not only launched new and ambitious projects but also was able to revive long pending projects worth Rs 3.85 lakh crores. The road construction per day has reached 30 km which is a huge increase from the previous Government. My Government's focus is to build a New India and the ministry is working hard to ensure that the New India gets the best infrastructure that it deserves.

The Bharatmala Pariyojna is one of the most important projects which aims to connect 550 districts in the country through national highway linkages. It is an umbrella program that aims to optimize and increase efficiency of freight and passenger movements in the country by bridging all the gaps. The development of Economic Corridors, Inter Corridors and Feeder Routes, National Corridor Efficiency Improvement, Border and International connectivity roads, Coastal and Port connectivity roads and Green-field

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

expressways are steps towards the same. I am very sure this project will help us realise those dreams.

The ministry is also working towards improving the waterways infrastructure in order to reduce the pressure on road and rail transportation. The ministry has taken many steps to ensure inland transportation of freight and passenger through waterways help us in achieving so. Even in my state the ministry is working on developing multi model terminals are being developed in various parts of the country including Haldia in West Bengal. These will help to bring down the cost and pressure on existing transporting mediums available in the country.

Through Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna we are trying to ensure that the rural connectivity develops further. This will not only help us in connecting the villages but will also help us to bring forward the farmers of those villages. This will give them opportunity to connect them to unexplored markets and help in realising the vision of doubling their income by 2022.

We are not only focused towards infrastructure, but we are also committed towards doing it in a sustainable way. The Ministry is doing its best to ensure minimum damage to the environment. Adopting and developing eco friendly ways to construct plastic roadways is an initiative towards the same. We are not stopping there; the ministry plans to plant around 125 crore trees along the roadways to achieve the same. This will help us to negate the effects of construction and build a better and greener India for generations to come.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SANDHYA RAY (BHIND): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

I also extend my heartfelt congratulations to my Government and to the Hon. Minister for presenting an excellent Budget. Significant work has been undertaken to ensure that all States across the country receive better roads. If I speak specifically about Madhya Pradesh, earlier, whenever we had to travel from Gwalior to Bhopal, the very thought of the journey was daunting. It used to take several hours; if one started in the morning, it would often be night by the time one reached. However, today, travelling from Gwalior to Bhopal via Shivpuri, Guna and Biaora has become extremely convenient, and similarly, travelling from Gwalior to Jhansi via Dabra and Datia has also become much easier.

The Union Government has declared 43 new National Highways across the country, including a new highway connecting Sheopur, Morena and Bhind. This project was known as the Chambal Expressway. If this highway is constructed, the present distance of 276 kilometres will be reduced to 185 kilometres. With the construction of this route, towns such as Goras, Porsa and Ater

will be directly integrated into the mainstream. The prospects for developing tourism centres, including the historic Ater Fort and other heritage sites falling along this route, will significantly increase. The ravine regions of the Chambal area can be utilised for developing industrial zones, which will help create new employment opportunities for unemployed youth.

Secondly, I urge that the three State Highways together forming a 310 kilometre stretch from Sheopur to Bhind be declared and developed as a National Highway at the earliest by the Union Government. This will be a new National Highway for the Chambal division. The proposed highway will run from Sheopur through Goras and Shyampur, then via Sabalgarh in Morena, crossing National Highway Number 3 at Morena Barrier Chauraha. Thereafter, it will pass through Ambah and Porsa, reach Ater and finally Bhind, where it will connect with the Etawah Highway. The total length of this route is 310 kilometres. Once declared as a National Highway, the towns located along this road will witness economic development. Employment opportunities for unemployed youth from nearby villages will increase, and the ongoing migration from villages will be reduced.

I would respectfully request that the roads in my area also be connected accordingly. Our Aroli Road from Shivcharan Singh ka Pura to Bijasen, where the revered Mata temple is located and

where thousands of devotees visit regularly, should have a road of about five kilometres constructed. A bridge should be constructed over the Kwari River. Similarly, a road of approximately five kilometres from Ghorka to Anlo should be built. The Mau–Mehgaon road via Kohar Birganwa to Barason should be developed. A five kilometre road from Mehra Amayan to Kaserua should be constructed, along with a five kilometre stretch from Mehra Road to Nibsai Khera. The road from Patlikhari via Bharoli Bhusavali to Gaurai Raun should be completed. Roads connecting Lavan, Namigaon, Barason and Kanathar should be constructed, as these connect three Assembly constituencies. Likewise, the Ater–Mehgaon–Gohad road will also connect three Assembly constituencies.

There are several villages which have been left out of the Pradhan Mantri road connectivity. I would request the Hon. Minister that such villages, where the roads are damaged or incomplete, should also be connected through proper roads. I thank you sincerely for giving me the opportunity to speak, and I also extend my heartfelt thanks to the Hon. Minister.

SHRI INDRA HANG SUBBA (SIKKIM): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I rise to support the Budget for 2019–20 of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I represent a State which is one of the North Eastern States. This small State of Sikkim is located near Darjeeling. Through you, Sir, I would like to place a suggestion before the Hon. Minister. The entire economy of this State is dependent on tourism. The revenue that the State earns from tourism is directly dependent on transportation and highways. Till date, Sikkim is connected with the rest of India through only one State Highway, namely NH-10. If this highway gets closed, a very difficult situation arises for Sikkim. Sikkim is a State where the monsoon lasts for more than five months. Due to heavy rainfall, frequent landslides occur, as a result of which NH-10 remains closed for most of the monsoon period. Even at present, because of multiple landslides, NH-10 is closed, causing severe hardship in transportation. If we look at transportation in India, about 60 percent of goods transportation and 85 percent of passenger traffic takes place through roads. However, Sikkim is a State where 100 percent of goods transportation and 100 percent of passenger traffic depends entirely on road transport. There is no railway connectivity, and there is only one airport, which at present remains closed due to weather conditions.

I would like to request the Ministry that an alternative highway, which was notified in 2015–16, may be completed at the earliest. A 242-kilometre highway from West Bengal to Gangtok was sanctioned, and its early completion is essential. If one highway gets closed, transportation to Sikkim would become easier through the other highway, and the people of Sikkim would receive much-needed relief and convenience. Sikkim is a State that shares international borders with three countries, of which the border with China is the most sensitive. Sikkim was in the news during the stand-off between India and China at Doklam. The highway leading towards the China border is also in a very poor and pathetic condition.

Through you, Sir, I request the Hon. Minister to kindly take steps to improve this condition. This highway runs from North Sikkim up to the China border. I further request the Hon. Minister that, in addition to this, all highways leading up to the border areas should be improved and strengthened. This would be a very significant step towards strengthening the security of the nation. Thank you.

SHRIMATI JASKAUR MEENA (DAUSA): Hon. Chairperson Sir, perhaps after the 13th Lok Sabha, today in the 17th Lok Sabha I have the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants presented by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I wish to state with complete conviction and sincerity, and to express my gratitude, that the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways is performing truly remarkable and transformative work. His style of functioning is so commendable that perhaps his praise is being voiced not only by all political parties across this House, but also by the entire nation.

In every State of the country, National Highways and link roads are being constructed with great strength and high quality. These roads are being built at an exceptionally fast pace, and the speed of construction itself is equally impressive. For nearly 50 years, the party that ruled for the longest period saw rural people like us merely hoping that one day we too would witness the expansion of roads or see paved black roads, because in those times, villages were deprived even of basic black-top roads. During that period, a great poet had once said something, and I would like to recall and repeat those words here.

Atka kahan hai sawaraj, bol delhi tu kya kehti hai,

Tu rani ban gai, vedna janata kyon sehti hai?

[It highlights the disconnect between governance and the people, pointing out that political power has become centralised and elitist, while the promises of Swaraj remain unfulfilled for the masses. It captures the frustration of citizens who feel that independence changed rulers, but not their lived realities.]

This sentiment truly reflected the state of mind of the rural populace at that time. I would further say, where indeed had Swaraj come to a standstill?

Makhmal ke pardon ke bahr, phoolon ke uss par

Jyon ka tyon hi khada hua tha, gaon mein marghat ka sansaar.

[It highlights that freedom and development failed to reach rural India, and that self-rule existed only in appearance. For the village population, Swaraj was not a lived reality but a distant promise, stalled far away from their daily hardships.]

Hon. Members, all the Members, the Hon. Members, have certainly praised the Hon. Minister for Road Transport, but along with that, they have also voiced the grievances of their respective regions.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, through you, I would like to say that the soul of India resides in its villages. This realisation has been strongly conveyed and articulated by the Hon. Finance Minister. We are moving steadily towards fulfilling Mahatma Gandhi's

dream. To achieve this very objective, the Hon. Minister has envisaged the Bharatmala Project, covering 30,000 kilometres of road connectivity. I believe that its primary focus should be on rural areas. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that just as a substantial financial outlay has been earmarked with a clear target for road expansion over the next five years, the roads in rural regions under this target must be fully adequate, durable and well planned.

During the tenure of the Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji, when we were Members of this House, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was inaugurated and introduced for the first time. It is because of this initiative that today we see paved roads reaching villages with populations ranging from 3,000 to 5,000. Under this scheme, it was decided that the same contractors would be responsible for the maintenance of these roads for a period of five years. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that even today, many of these roads are awaiting proper maintenance.

The condition of their upkeep is neither as neat nor as satisfactory as it ought to be. I would also like to make a submission to the Hon. Minister regarding my *Parliamentary Constituency* under the Bharatmala Project, particularly for connecting internal corridors. One such corridor is the Mehndipur Balaji corridor, a major pilgrimage centre that attracts devotees from all corners of

the country. If Mehndipur Balaji is connected from Sikrai to Lalsot via Piplaj Mata, it would undoubtedly prove to be an extremely useful corridor for us. Hon. Chairperson Sir, you have always supported me, and therefore I request you to kindly allow me to complete my submission.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, the Delhi–Mumbai road that has been taken up is a monumental project that will be written in golden letters in the history of our country. This project passes through my entire Dausa *Parliamentary Constituency*. I would like to commend the Hon. Minister, as well as our visionary Hon. Prime Minister, who has conceived this ambitious idea of completing the 1,250 km journey from Delhi to Mumbai in just 12 hours. However, near Bhandarej in my *Parliamentary Constituency*, a flyover is proposed to be constructed over the Agra–Jaipur route. ... *(Interruptions)* This will involve the acquisition of inhabited land. Even today, those whose land is being acquired are not receiving fair compensation, and disputes continue to arise.

Sir, with regard to residential structures, I wish to submit that if 20 Percent of a house is damaged, compensation is not granted. I ask, can a person live inside a house if 20 Percent of it has been demolished? Through you, Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that if even 10, 20 or 30 Percent of a house is damaged, full compensation for the house should be provided.

Where land is acquired in its entirety and permanent houses are demolished in this manner, the affected persons must undoubtedly receive just and adequate compensation.

Along with this, I would also like to state that under the Road Safety Act, a trauma centre should be established in my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Since the entire road passes through my area, a trauma centre should be set up at Lalsot Basti, which is centrally located, so that comprehensive safety arrangements can be ensured. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI P. RAVEENDRANATH KUMAR (THENI): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on behalf of the AIADMK Party, Hon. Chief Minister, and Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. I welcome and support the Demand for Grant under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I also congratulate the Hon. Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, for declaring 2018-19 as the 'Year of Construction' and for the effective steps taken by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to expand and upgrade the network of the National Highways in the country. As a result of this, road construction grew at 30 kilometers per day in 2018-19, as compared to 12 kilometers per day in 2014-15.

It is pertinent to mention here that the first and foremost major policy decision was taken by the former Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, to widen the National Highways, having a network of 7,142 kilometers, connecting Srinagar to Kanyakumari after 50 years of Independence. Now, our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji's Government, is taking more innovative steps to increase the road length infrastructure in India.

India has a road network of about 59,03,000 kilometers. If we see the last five years of the Government, we can understand that

the Government has made huge investments in the road sector, with the total investment increasing more than three times from Rs. 51,914 crore in 2014-15 to Rs. 1,58,839 crore in 2018-19.

I assure you, Sir, that the Tamil Nadu Government will certainly support the NHAI in overcoming the hurdles in the implementation of the projects.

I appreciate the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for taking a decision to sanction road safety works on State roads with an earmarked allocation of 10 percent of funds allocated to the State roads under the Central Road Fund.

Our Tamil Nadu Government has already sent a proposal to this Ministry to lay 586.70 kilometers of road and bridges during 2019-20, with an estimated cost of Rs. 3,500 crore, requesting nodal approval from the Union Government, duly declaring the following State Highways as National Highways: Kallakurichi – Thiruvannamalai Road, Palani – Dharapuram Road, Arcot – Dindivanam Road, and Vallioor – Thiruchendur Road.

In my constituency, Theni, I also request replacing four level crossings on NH49 extension, that is, Theni, Bodi, Usilampatti, and Chekkanoorani. So, I urge the Government to take necessary actions in this regard.

With these words, I conclude my speech, supporting the Demand for Grant for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, and I wish you a successful completion of all projects, duly overcoming the challenges and ensuring sufficient investments for sustainable road safety and highways development in our country.

Thank you.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI HAJI FAZLUR REHMAN (SAHARANPUR):** I would like to place before the House the problems relating to the roads in my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* of Saharanpur. The construction of National Highway No. 709 on the Delhi–Shamli–Saharanpur stretch should be completed at the earliest so that travel from Saharanpur to the national capital, Delhi, becomes easier. This road was first announced in 2010, and again its construction was announced in 2012, yet the work has still not been completed. The portion of this National Highway falling within Saharanpur district has, over the last ten years, been constructed and then dug up repeatedly. At an estimated cost of about Rs. 98 crore, this road has been rebuilt as many as seven times, but even today it remains incomplete. The Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari, and the Hon. Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Adityanath Yogi, inaugurated this National Highway on 11 September 2018. However, due to issues related to land acquisition at some places and other obstacles elsewhere, there has been persistent delay in the construction of this highway. It is, therefore,

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

absolutely essential that the construction of this National Highway be completed at the earliest.

On National Highway No. 344, on the Roorkee–Panchkula route, the bridge constructed in the year 1885 over the Nagdev River near Naugaja Pir, before entering Saharanpur city, has reached a highly dilapidated condition and has outlived its structural life. Owing to the narrow width of this bridge, traffic congestion remains a constant problem, and even patients referred to higher medical centres often get stuck in traffic jams, which has, on several occasions, resulted in loss of life. This bridge serves as a crucial route for people travelling from Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir to Dehradun and Haridwar in Uttarakhand, as well as to the holy shrines of Kedarnath Dham and Badrinath Dham. Therefore, it is imperative that a new bridge be constructed at this location at the earliest.

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL (NAGAUR): Sir, kindly allow me one or two additional minutes; I will conclude my speech shortly.

Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for granting me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I sincerely thank you for this privilege.

It is absolutely true that road transport is one of the largest ministries in this country. Undoubtedly, the condition of roads in any district, state or the nation itself reflects the situation of that region and the level of its development. I would like to express my gratitude to former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who envisioned and initiated the scheme to connect every village of the country with roads. The principle behind this scheme was that villages which were not connected by roads from any direction should be given priority, followed thereafter by villages with populations of 1,000, 500 and even 250. This marked a very significant transformation in the country, and for this I sincerely thank Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

The Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari, recently stated that there is a plan to invest Rs. 15 lakh crore in this sector and that all pending targets of road projects would be completed within the next 100 days. There is no doubt

that under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, the Government will take many decisive and forward-looking steps in the times to come. India today has the largest road network in the world, with a total length of about 4.7 million kilometres, which includes National Highways, NH expressways, State Highways, district roads, MDR roads, PWD roads and project roads. In India, more than 60 percent of goods transportation and about 85 percent of passenger transportation takes place through roads. This clearly shows how deeply dependent we are on road connectivity.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, with the objective of ensuring that roads across the country, from villages and hamlets to cities, are well developed, a former Prime Minister of the nation had initiated this vision. I express my gratitude to Shri Nitin Gadkari, who, under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, has laid an extensive network of roads across the country, bringing immense benefits to the people of India. It is indeed true that the NDA Government returned to power with the promise of rapid and inclusive development and announced an investment of Rs. 100 trillion to strengthen the nation’s infrastructure. The greatest emphasis within this initiative has been on expanding road and metro networks in major cities and modernising the railway network. This clearly demonstrates the scale and depth of Shri Narendra Modi’s vision, a vision that is poised to take the country to new heights.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, in this Budget, under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, it has been proposed to upgrade 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads across three phases at a cost of Rs. 80,250 crore. This represents a significant and far-reaching step towards expanding the road sector. The Budget further states that a National Highway Grid will be developed to interconnect different parts of the country. This, indeed, will be a landmark initiative.

I would like to place before this august House an example of road development and works undertaken under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister. Taking note of the rapid progress in the road sector, the Reserve Bank of India, in its Annual Report for the year 2016–17, commended the highway infrastructure development sector. It observed that there had been a reduction of Rs. 1.5 billion in both cost and time, and that allocations and construction of highway projects, including the addition of daily road length, had reached their highest levels. The year 2017 witnessed several major achievements. It was truly a year of engineering excellence. Iconic projects such as the Dhola Sadiya Bridge in Assam and the Chenani–Nashri Tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir were inaugurated, connecting remote regions and paving the way for their social and economic development. To ensure safe and convenient transportation, the Ministry has also planned, under the Setu

Bharatam Scheme, to replace level crossings on National Highways through the construction of Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges. This initiative will go a long way in relieving traffic congestion and enhancing the overall efficiency of road transport.

Hon. Chairperson, as the discussion pertains to roads, the question arises as to how road safety can be ensured. Undoubtedly, over the past five years, there has been a decline in the number of fatalities caused by road accidents in this country. According to reports, in the year 2016, the number of road accidents declined by 4.1 Percent. Up to September 2017, there was a reduction of 5.2 Percent in the number of road accidents and a decline of 4.4 Percent in the number of deaths. Except for Assam, Bihar, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, all other States have recorded a reduction in road accidents ranging between 2 and 10 Percent.

The mandatory introduction of the Anti Lock Braking System in two wheeler vehicles is a welcome and progressive step. I would like to suggest that rural roads connecting rural areas to National Highways should also be included, so that potential accidents can be further reduced. For this purpose, adequate budgetary provisions should be made.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, improvements at road junctions on National Highways should be carried out in accordance with IRC

norms. Cuts and dangerous curves on National Highways must be minimised. Many accidents occur due to vehicles being driven in the wrong direction; therefore, service lanes should be constructed so that such accidents can be reduced and road safety can be significantly enhanced.

In urban areas, particularly in densely populated localities through which National Highways pass, proper lighting arrangements should be ensured to enhance safety and visibility.

I would like to place before the House two or three specific suggestions pertaining to my own *Parliamentary Constituency*. In my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Nagaur, the stretch from Mundwa to Merta Road up to National Highway No. 39, covering approximately 60 kilometres, should be converted into a double lane. On the same road, Road Over Bridges should be constructed at the Merta Road and Mundwa railway crossings, so as to ensure seamless connectivity between the district headquarters Nagaur and Merta Road, which is one of the major railway junctions of western Rajasthan.

Further, on State Highway 39 itself, the road stretch from Gaguda village to Gotan, measuring approximately 25 kilometres, and similarly the stretch from Run village to Asop in Jodhpur district, also about 25 kilometres, should be converted into double

lanes. Gotan is a major industrial township of Nagaur district, while Asop is the largest town in Jodhpur district and houses a significant commercial mandi. Strengthening these road links will greatly facilitate industrial, commercial and regional development.

The Hon. Minister has already accorded in-principle approval for the road stretch from Phalodi to Dudu, via Jaipur–Jobner–Kuchaman–Nagaur, and further from Phalodi through Nagaur–Kuchaman–Nawa up to Sambhar–Dudu. However, this project is presently pending with the Government of India. Therefore, I urge that this road be declared a National Highway so that the necessary approvals may be formally issued and the project taken forward without delay. In this regard, I would like to submit a further suggestion. While this road has been approved from Bhatipura to Dudu, it should be extended via Jobner up to Jaipur and included accordingly. This road would also serve important defence purposes and, at the same time, provide vital connectivity to Ramdevra, the largest religious destination in Rajasthan. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Now, please conclude. Your time is up.

[Translation]

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL: Hon. Chairperson Sir, I have one suggestion to make, and the remaining points I shall submit to the Hon. Minister in writing. In the State of Gujarat, private vehicles are exempt from toll, and there are one or two other States in the country with similar provisions. In Rajasthan, we carried out a major movement demanding a toll-free Rajasthan. At that time, when there was a Bharatiya Janata Party Government in the State, the State Highways were made toll-free. I urge the Hon. Minister that all private vehicles across the country should be exempted from toll. This demand is being raised by Hanuman Beniwal on behalf of the soldiers and farmers of this nation. The resolve and determination of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Modi are such that once this issue finds acceptance in his mind, it will certainly be implemented and the country will move towards being toll-free. If electricity can be provided to every hamlet and habitation, and if drinking water can be ensured for every household in every village, then a toll-free nation is also possible. I, therefore, strongly demand that this country should be made toll-free.

SHRIMATI QUEEN OJA (GAUHATI): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the discussion relating to the Demands for Grants of Road Transport and National Highways in this development-oriented General Budget.

In this development-oriented Budget, the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, has announced an investment of Rs. 100 trillion to strengthen the country's infrastructure, which we wholeheartedly welcome. Through this, our Government will place the greatest emphasis on expanding the network of roads and metro systems. The Hon. Finance Minister stated that in the second phase of Bharatmala, States will be encouraged to develop State-level roads. A comprehensive framework will also be prepared for the development of the National Gas Grid, Water Grid, Information Highways and airports. She further stated that freight transportation on the Ganga will increase fourfold over the next four years, which is a very significant achievement. Shrimati Sitharaman ji observed that schemes such as Bharatmala, Sagarmala and UDAN are bridging the gap between rural and urban areas and improving transport infrastructure. At present, a metro rail network of 657 kilometres has become operational in the country, approval has been granted for 300 kilometres of new metro lines, and special concessions have

also been extended for electric vehicles, which is an important step from the perspective of transportation. The announcement of an investment of Rs. 100 trillion to strengthen the nation's infrastructure will be highly beneficial in achieving the Government's development-oriented objectives. The Government's primary focus is on expanding road and metro networks and strengthening the rail network, which will help bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the country. This is because, under Phase III of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, an investment of Rs. 80,250 crore has been proposed, which is indeed a very significant step. This has never happened before. The allocation of Rs. 80,250 crore to the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana will be seen as an important milestone in achieving the Government's development goals for the nation. The Hon. Finance Minister also stated that under Phase III of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads will be upgraded at a cost of Rs. 80,250 crore. The Government will restructure the National Highway Programme so that the National Highway Grid can be developed in accordance with its full potential. Earlier, four-laning work in Assam had been discontinued. After our Government came to power, this work has been restarted, which is a very significant development, as the condition of roads here was extremely poor. There are some

difficulties being faced in acquiring land for the project, but I believe that this work will also be completed by next year.

[*]SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY (PALI):

“Safar ka ek naya silasila banaana hai,

Ab aasamaan talak rasta banaana hai."

[“A new chapter of journeys must be written,

Now pathways must be built that rise up to the skies.”]

These words have today been given true meaning by the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji. A few years ago, when connecting the entire country seemed impossible, the far-sighted vision of the Hon. Prime Minister not only accomplished what appeared unattainable but also laid such an extensive network of roads across the body of this nation that the vehicles traversing them have infused the veins of the country with progress and development.

I would like to congratulate our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, and state that they have realised the dream envisioned by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji. Inspired by his vision, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana has been

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

accelerated at such a remarkable pace that the targets set for the year 2022 are now set to be achieved three years ahead of schedule, in 2019 itself. Under this Scheme, 30,000 kilometres of rural roads will now be constructed using green technology, with the use of waste plastic and cold mix technology. In the new India, new goals are being set, and our Government fully understands the importance of national development through the development of roads. Our Government has set a target for the upgradation of 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads, which in itself is a significant and decisive step towards strengthening the country's infrastructure and overall progress.

The Bharatmala Project is being widely discussed and recognised across the world. Under Phase I of this project, 34,800 kilometres of roads will be constructed. This includes 5,000 kilometres of National Corridors, 9,000 kilometres of Economic Corridors, 6,000 kilometres of Feeder Corridors, 2,000 kilometres of Border Roads, 2,000 kilometres of Coastal Roads, along with 800 kilometres of Greenfield Expressways. Under this project, there is also a plan to establish 35 logistics parks, which will provide essential infrastructure facilities to the country's industrial sector and significantly strengthen logistics efficiency.

Further, under the Setu Bharatam Scheme, there is a proposal to construct 174 new Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges across the country. Of these, 91 have already been approved and will be dedicated to the people of the country at the earliest.

Today, keeping in mind the religious sentiments of crores of countrymen, the Char Dham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojana is being implemented for Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath, under which a road network of 889 kilometres is being constructed at a cost of Rs. 12,000 crore. As an ambitious and time-bound target, it has been decided to complete this project by March 2020. I am fully confident that our Government will complete this project well before the stipulated time.

It is also a matter of great pride for our Government that India's longest tunnel, the Zoji La Tunnel, with a length of 14 kilometres, has been completed under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Modi ji. With its completion, all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Jammu and Leh will remain uninterrupted. Not only this, the construction of the country's largest bridge has also been made possible during the tenure of our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Today, the dream of ring roads for almost all major cities is also gradually being realised. I am happy that ring roads are being constructed in cities like Jodhpur and Jaipur.

In the North Eastern Region alone, 12,000 kilometres of roads are to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 1.90 lakh crore. This, in itself, is a significant step.

For road safety, our Government has taken several measures. Along with increasing public awareness, roads are today being developed to world-class standards. All safety measures are being implemented by providing road markings, signboards and other facilities. The Hon. Minister has constituted committees on road safety in each district under the chairmanship of Members of Parliament, in which all local road safety measures are discussed and effective steps are being taken with seriousness to prevent accidents.

I have a few suggestions regarding road safety. Most accidents occur due to overspeeding. I suggest that digital devices should be used to prevent vehicles from being driven at high speeds, so that sustained overspeeding can be controlled. Although speed limits are prescribed, it is necessary to regulate vehicle speeds according to weather conditions. For example, during foggy and rainy conditions, the speed limit should be reduced to nearly half. In

foggy conditions, information regarding accidents, traffic congestion and related issues on the road should be conveyed through LED displays.

There are some important issues related to my *Parliamentary Constituency* on which the Hon. Minister needs to take immediate action:

The damaged stretch of the Sanderav to Koselav and Mokalsar road (MDR 203) from kilometre 9/0 to 19/0 requires widening and repairs at the earliest under the CRF Scheme.

Sojat city has been divided into two parts by National Highway No. 162. To commute between the two sections, people are required to cross the Highway. Recently, in view of the repeated accidents occurring on this stretch, the cut on the Highway has been permanently closed, due to which people now have to travel up to the next culvert for crossing. There has been a long-standing demand for the construction of an underpass near the Ganga Petrol Pump on this Highway. Therefore, it is essential that this important work be taken up at the earliest.

In the Sumerpur Assembly area, approximately 100 kilometres of the Beawar–Pindwara National Highway No. 62 passes through. Several deficiencies were left at the time of construction of this Highway, the consequences of which are now being borne by the

public in the form of loss of lives due to accidents. There are the following deficiencies on National Highway No. 62, which must be addressed urgently in the interest of the public.

In the Sumerpur Assembly area, the main entry route from the National Highway is through the Jakhanagar Jakheda Road, where the construction of an overbridge was necessary, as it is a major commercial town with heavy movement of all kinds of vehicles. Due to the absence of an overbridge, there is a constant risk of accidents at this location. Therefore, it is essential to construct an overbridge near the Jakhanagar entry point and to provide road lighting on the stretch passing through the town, so that accidents can be prevented.

On National Highway No. 62, two overbridges have been constructed on the Sanderav bypass road at Takhatgarh Road and Koselav Road. Between these two overbridges, there was an old road passing through Sanderav village, which has been closed after the construction of the bypass. Nearly 70 Percent of the village’s agricultural land lies on the other side of the Highway. Farmers do not have any alternative route to transport their produce or to take heavy vehicles for agricultural activities. As a result, they are compelled to cross on foot and to use uneven and pothole-ridden routes for their vehicles, which always poses a risk of accidents. If service roads are constructed on both sides between the Takhatgarh

overbridge and the Koselav overbridge, it will facilitate easy access for villagers to their agricultural land and also help in preventing accidents.

On National Highway No. 62, an overbridge has been constructed at Indira Colony in Sindru village, but service roads on both sides have not been built till date. On one side of this road are Indira Colony, a school, a gurdwara, Mamaji ka Mandir, crusher industries and agricultural land, while on the other side are Sarvodaya Nagar, a petrol pump, an NG plant, an electricity sub-station, hotels and other establishments. People are required to cross from one side to the other for their daily activities, but due to the absence of service roads, they cross the road by moving in the wrong direction, which leads to a high risk of accidents. Therefore, on National Highway No. 8 at Indira Colony overbridge in Sindru village, there is a need to construct service roads and to install road lighting, as it is a densely populated area.

On National Highway No. 62, near Sindru village, a new bridge has been constructed on one side over the drain emerging from the dam, while on the other side the old bridge still exists and is in a dilapidated condition. Due to the difference in height between the new bridge and the old bridge, vehicles crossing the road are not visible, and accidents keep occurring repeatedly. These accidents

can be prevented by constructing a new bridge in place of the old one.

On National Highway No. 62, in the Sirohi Assembly area, on one side of the Chandana overbridge in Shivganj town lies Shivganj city, and on the other side are the villages of Kanpura, Saloderia, Bamnera, Poyna and others in the Sumerpur Assembly of my Lok Sabha constituency. Service roads have not been provided on this overbridge, due to which people face severe hardship and inconvenience. Therefore, in the public interest, it is extremely necessary to construct service roads on both sides of the Chandana overbridge.

On this Highway, passengers from all the villages situated along it have to come onto the Highway in order to board buses. Neither the National Highways Authority of India nor the L and T company has made any arrangement for bus stands or sheltered seating on the Highway outside any village. As a result, passengers have to face considerable hardship during summer and the rainy season. Therefore, it is extremely necessary to construct bus stands at villages located along the Highway.

At the level of the National Highways Authority of India, the work on the Beawar–Pali–Pindwara stretch of NH-14 is in progress

and nearing completion. This project will undoubtedly play an important role in the development of western Rajasthan.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways for presenting this revolutionary Budget, and I hope that prompt attention will be given to the suggestions made by me and necessary action will be ensured. I strongly support the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019–20.

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR HANSDAK (RAJMAHAL): I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I would like to place before the House some very long-pending demands of my region. The foundation stone of the Sahibganj–Manihari Bridge was laid by the Hon. Prime Minister three years ago, but the work has not yet commenced. This has been a long-standing demand of ours, and the work should be started at the earliest, as there is no other difficulty at that location. National Highway No. 80 passes through our area and is a major Highway connecting West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand, but its condition is extremely poor. Even in the previous Lok Sabha, I had raised the issue that work is undertaken only in patches of two to three kilometres, which adversely affects the quality. Whenever work is taken up, it should be executed in a continuous stretch so that quality is maintained. The work on the Sahibganj–Davenport stretch should be carried out at the earliest. Pakur–Godda has been accorded the status of a National Highway, but the work has not yet commenced. Funds need to be allocated for this, and the work should be started without delay. In our area, the Mehrama–Bhagaiya–Mirzachauki road is a PWD road, but it carries very heavy traffic due to the presence of coal mines, resulting in frequent movement of heavy vehicles. In addition, there are a large number of stone mines. This road needs to be taken over from the PWD and brought under the National

Highway network, and it should be accorded priority. Pakur–Barharwa is the main district road of our area, and it should also be brought under the National Highway network, as it faces several constraints. With regard to the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, I would like to state that sometimes, when objections arise, Members of Parliament are asked to give letters indicating priority. Everyone will agree that we, as Members, travel more extensively in our areas than officers do. We can better indicate which roads should be constructed first in our constituencies, and the priorities conveyed by us in writing should be accorded the highest importance. With these submissions before the Hon. Minister, I conclude my remarks.

[English]

DR. K.C. PATEL (VALSAD): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grant under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I am thankful to the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, and Hon. Ministers, Shri Nitin Gadkari and Shri V.K. Singh. I come from the State of Gujarat where the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, was the Chief Minister. [Translation] Gujarat has become the number one State, due to the development of roads. Gujarat has very good roads.

Former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji introduced the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, as a result of which even the villages in our State were connected by roads. Former Chief Minister Shrimati Anandiben Patel introduced the Mukhyamantri Gram Sadak Yojana, under which Rs. 10,000 was allotted. Under the Gram Sadak Yojana, a provision of Rs. 20 crore each was made through the MLAs for the development of rural roads. This has led to the construction of good roads there. I bow in reverence to the Hon. Prime Minister ji, because this has contributed to the development of Gujarat.

Sir, I would like to elaborate on my point. In our area, an express highway is passing from Vadodara to Mumbai. Navsari and

Valsad districts, which fall along this corridor, are known for mango cultivation. We grow Alphonso mangoes, which are known as the King of Mangoes. Due to the construction of this express highway, nearly six lakh trees are being cut. In the coastal area from Vadodara to Bharuch, the express highway has been proposed. I humbly request that this road be constructed through the coastal area.

Shri Nitin Gadkari ji is a visionary leader. He had proposed an express highway by constructing a tunnel under the sea from Surat to Mumbai, on the lines of the road tunnel constructed between Hong Kong and Macau.

I request that two or three alternative roads for the express highway be constructed through the coastal area. These should be built over National Highway Nos. 8 and 56. The cement concrete road constructed from Kaprada to Peth, and the remaining stretch from Peth to Nashik, the work of which is presently underway, should be completed at the earliest.

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MONDAL (BARDHAMAN PURBA): Hon. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demand for Grant of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

In my constituency, 38 Bardhaman Purba, West Bengal, there is no national highway. But there is a single 120 km connecting road from Katwa to Gurap via Kalna Baichi. This road, being single lane, becomes very busy and leads to accidents very frequently. If this single-lane road is converted into a four-lane national highway, then the local people will benefit a lot.

There was a proposal by the National Highway Authority previously to connect Kharagpur with Baharampur National Highway via Bardhaman Katwa. I will be grateful if you let me know the status of the proposal. When will the work start for this?

In National Highway 2, that is NH 2, from Durgapur to Kolkata, there are four toll tax booths. In the evening time, starting from 5 p.m., there is a huge traffic jam which makes normal people suffer a lot. Even ambulances find it difficult to pass through the area, which sometimes leads to the death of patients. The reason behind the traffic jam is that the people who work here lack basic

computer knowledge, which leads to errors and results in traffic jams.

So, I would request the Minister, through you, to bring out a rule to employ only those people who have completed a certified computer course in order to avoid such a situation in the future. Thank you.

[Translation]

[*]**DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR (TIKAMGARH):** In the construction of a New India, the importance of roads has increased manifold. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, and owing to the deep and far-sighted vision of the Hon. Nitin Gadkari ji towards the development of roads, this work has progressed significantly.

Former Prime Minister, the respected Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, initiated a new era by launching the Golden Quadrilateral Project and four-lane express highways. Today, under the leadership of Hon. Gadkari ji, the work of six-lane and eight-lane highways is being carried out at a rapid pace across the country. From the perspective of road infrastructure, India is gradually establishing a distinct identity at the global level. Along with roads, cargo transportation through the inland waterway route from Varanasi to Kolkata has been given a new dimension, which has led to a substantial reduction in transportation costs. The vision of Hon. Gadkari ji regarding proposals for buses operating on both roads and waterways is set to script new chapters of development in the times to come.

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

By connecting places of historical, religious and tourism importance through roads and enhancing their accessibility, there has been an increase in the number of tourists, along with growth in revenue generation and expansion of employment opportunities.

Due to the substantial increase in the length of National Highways, bus and truck drivers are saving travel time, while there is also a reduction in wear and tear as well as diesel consumption. Road travel is becoming smoother; however, it is being observed that with the improvement in road quality, the number of road accidents and fatalities is increasing. Therefore, if bypass roads are constructed outside habitations located along Highways, and fencing is provided on both sides of the road near such habitations, the movement of people and animals across the road will be prevented, and accidents will consequently be reduced.

Trauma centres have been established at several places. This is a good initiative; however, due to the lack of adequate availability of doctors and the absence of blood banks, many patients end up losing their lives. Therefore, there is a need to hold discussions with State Governments to ensure proper medical arrangements at all trauma centres.

There are several routes where, due to forest land falling in between, construction either has to be undertaken by taking long

diversions or remains pending because No Objection Certificates are not granted. This results in a waste of both time and money. In my *Parliamentary Constituency*, the Orchha–Chandrapura–Prithvipur–Tikamgarh route falls under the Jhansi–Orchha–Tigela to Tikamgarh–Shahgarh–Chhattisgarh NH-12A project. On this route, between Orchha and Chandrapura, there are old bridges from the royal era over the Jamni and Betwa rivers, which are very narrow and have become old. For safety reasons, these bridges are closed from June to October, forcing people to take a longer route via Niwari, thereby increasing inconvenience. Therefore, the proposed Orchha–Tikamgarh–Shahgarh–Chhattisgarh National Highway should be developed along the old alignment itself by obtaining the necessary No Objection Certificate from the Forest Department and by constructing new bridges. This will ensure that devotees visiting Lord Ram Raja do not have to take long detours. Further, at the time of construction of this road, plantation should be carried out on both sides of the road, as is done presently, so that coolness is maintained and the natural beauty of the area is preserved.

I thank you for the construction work of the Jhansi–Khajuraho four-lane express highway and would like to request the Hon. Minister that its pace be accelerated so that this work is completed

within the stipulated time. Bypasses should also be constructed near habitations. Further, the existing route up to Chhatarpur should continue to be retained and maintained by the National Highways Authority of India itself, because although a bypass will be constructed outside Chhatarpur, the importance of this route is very high due to its connectivity with the Chhatarpur–Sagar–Nagpur–Indore corridor.

Fruit-bearing trees should be planted on both sides of all National Highways across the country, which will provide shade as well as help in maintaining environmental balance. Along with this, I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

[*]**SHRI KANAKMAL KATARA (BANSWADA):** Sir, as I have not been given time to speak in support of the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, I beg to lay on the table the demands relating to my *Parliamentary Constituency*. I request that approval be granted.

(1) I request the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways to expedite and ensure the completion of the approved highway work on the Swarupganj–Som–Kherwara–Deval–Dungarpur–Sagwara–Garhi Banswara–Ratlam (Madhya Pradesh) route.

(2) The work on the approved road from Patiya Mod to Padardi Badi, Saroda and Sagwara Nursery Mod, which was sanctioned by the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, has come to a halt. I request that this work be completed at the earliest.

(3) Beneshwar Dham is a renowned religious site of the Udaipur Division and the Vagad region. Due to the water flow of the Som, Mahi and Jakham rivers, access to the Dham becomes extremely difficult. As the existing culvert is small, there is severe inconvenience during the monsoon season, and devotees often remain stranded on the island for five to seven days. There is a need

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

for a one-way, elevated culvert and proper road connectivity at this location. This will require a substantial allocation of funds. I request that a survey be conducted either by the Government of Rajasthan or by the Union Government and that approval be granted accordingly.

[English]

DR. RAJDEEP ROY (SILCHAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you. I stand here to support the Demand for Grant for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways placed in the Budget 2019-20 by Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji.

I come from Silchar in the North-East. It is bordering Bangladesh, and if you go a further distance of 180 kms, we are on the Moreh border, which is in the Indo-Myanmar border. The roads and highways of the North-East have started seeing development in the last few years. Only after Shri Nitin Gadkari took over as the Minister of Road Transport and Highways under the visionary leadership of Shri Narendra Modi ji are we seeing development.

The cries and the clamour of the people of the North-East were hardly felt by the people who were sitting in Delhi for a long time. It was only after Atal ji, who led a very historic Government for six years, that he started the Ministry of DoNER – that the people of the North-East started feeling at ease with other parts of the country as far as development issues were concerned. Development has now become sarva vyapi, sarva sparshi, and sarva samaveshi. This is why the people of the North-East today are very happy because of the development schemes that have been introduced by Shri Narendra Modi ji's Government.

21.00 hrs

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would just like to draw your attention to the work that the Ministry has been doing for the last three years. During the last three years, in the State of Assam, roads of 10,199 kilometres were sanctioned, out of which the work of 10,153 kilometres has been completed. The sanctioned amount was Rs. 9,171 crore, out of which almost Rs. 8,500 crore has been utilised for the development of roads under PMGSY.

Today, most of the villages of Assam are connected by good roads, and people have no hesitation in travelling to cities for issues relating to health, education, and others. I will be failing in my duty if I do not bring to the notice of Parliament the issues with which I am concerned.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I come from Silchar, which is a land-locked area. We are surrounded by hills on 270 degrees. On one side, there are the Lushai hills of Mizoram. There are the Manipur hills on the eastern side. There are the North Cachar Hills, which we have to cross to come to Guwahati. There are the Khasi Jaintia Hills connecting to Meghalaya.

There was an international rally that took place in 2013. …*(Interruptions)*. Sir, please give me one minute.

I need to explain it. It is a serious issue. That rally started from Kolkata and was called the BCIM - Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar - rally. It was an international rally. The rally travelled through Bangladesh, came to Agartala, then Silchar, and from there, it went to Moreh, which is on the Manipur border. Then it went into the Hunan province of China, which is also a land-locked province.

If we can utilise our influence with the Government of Bangladesh and start a two-lane expressway connecting Kolkata and Agartala, it will open up the floodgates of development because if that road is developed from the Moreh border in Manipur, we may have two roads. One road will go up to the Hunan province of China. The other road will go to Myanmar and up to Thailand. Sir, you can imagine the situation in the next five years. Someone can start a road journey from Delhi, go via Kolkata, Agartala, Silchar, Moreh, and drive into Thailand within seven days.

Sir, I would like to request the Ministry to look into this and take it up on an international basis so that the road can be developed. Today, the North Eastern part is a new gateway of the country …*(Interruptions)*. Please give me two minutes' time.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: One minute more and then, please conclude.

DR. RAJDEEP ROY: Guwahati is the gateway to the entire Asian countries, and that gateway can never be fulfilled if we do not connect the dots. One of the most important dots happens to be Silchar. Why I am saying all these things is because of this reason.

There are other roads that can be developed in my home State. One is, being Atal Ji's dream, a 4-lane expressway connecting Silchar and Saurashtra. There are about 600 plus kilometres of that road lying in Assam, out of which 31 kilometres of road was not developed because of clearance from the Department of Forest and Environment. This clearance has now been achieved. I would request the Government to take it up on an urgent basis to finish the work so that Silchar gets connected with Guwahati. That is around 400 kilometres. …*(Interruptions)*

Sir, I will mention about two other roads. One is Mangaldai bypass and other is Khonsa-Naharkatia bypass. …*(Interruptions)* If these two roads are taken up, they will do wonders to the people of North East. Thank you.

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI (NAWGONG): Sir, I stand here to speak and to assure the Treasury Benches and the Hon. Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji that we, here in the Opposition, are not heartless people.

In fact, I would like to compliment the Ministry and the Minister for making us believe that this Ministry is very vibrant, alive and are on the job. Shri Nitin Gadkari is perceived as a very benevolent person. I will give you later a few examples of his benevolence towards North East.

Sir, we all know that the North Eastern region is connected with the main land of India by a very narrow strip of land of 12 miles which is known as 'Chicken Neck'. That is why, to bring the North East to the core, the connectivity has to be enhanced. Successive Governments have been doing this. When you talk about connectivity and bringing the North East to the core, we have a few options like aviation, integrated highway network, railways, the inland waterways, optical fibre cabling and the net connectivity.

But if you see at the macro-level, taking all the factors of connectivity together, then until now only 40 per cent has been fulfilled.

The most important among all the factors is the integrated highway network. Today, as per the figure given by the Ministry,

the designated length of the national highways in the State of Assam is 6,000 km. But out of this figure, only 2,600 km. have been developed so far. So, in the coming years, the remaining 3,400 km. have to be developed. Hence, I would like to urge the Ministry to take up this programme in the right earnest and let us know about the target and by when these remaining kilometres will be developed in Assam.

We have noted that the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), a newly started company for the North East, is a very North-East specific subsidiary company. But unfortunately, we are given to understand that this company has its headquarters in Delhi. Instead of Delhi, the headquarters of this subsidiary company that is looking specifically after the North East Region should be shifted either to Guwahati or Shillong. Why am I raising this issue? It is because this subsidiary that is looking specifically after the North East Region should have people who have domain knowledge. If we implement the all-India norm in a region like North-East, then it will not work because one cannot equate the soil condition of Haryana or Tamil Nadu with the North Eastern region. It is because the soil condition at our place is different; we have excessive rains; and it is frequently inundated by flood waters. Hence, we need to have uniform maintenance plan in the State of Assam.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI: Sir, I would just request your indulgence for another two minutes to mention a couple of examples more.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No, I would be able to give you only one more minute to speak.

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI: Sir, the normal gestation period in any project, where land acquisition is not an issue, is 3 to 4 years. The contractors do not look after the maintenance aspect when they carry out the road projects. As a result, the condition of roads is very bad.

The integrated highway project has to be linked to the Asian highways. Hence, it is very important that when we talk about the 'Act East' policy if we do not develop the integrated highways and link them to the Asian highways, the entire 'Act East' policy will be futile.

As regards the East West Corridor, one feels as if it has been a physically-challenged baby. The stretch from my Constituency of Nawgong to Harangajao to Silchar is still incomplete even after more than a decade now. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The next speaker is Dr. Sujay Vikhe Patil.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI: Sir, kindly allow me to conclude my speech. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: But you are not concluding. Please conclude right now.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI: Sir, we would like to see that this grant is given, but there is a rider to it. The Ministry is constructing these roads after spending huge amount of money, but the Ministry also has to ensure that the overladen and overloaded trucks and trailers do not ruin the condition of the roads. This thing has to be ensured by the Ministry. Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

[*]**DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR (DINDORI):** I extend my congratulations to the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, for having successfully fulfilled the assurances given over the past five years.

Across India, work on National Highways is progressing rapidly. In my Nashik region as well, work on National Highways is underway, for which I express my gratitude.

I request that the National Highway projects proposed in my Dindori Lok Sabha constituency be approved at the earliest.

[English]

Kindly requesting you,

a) Please direct the concerned authorities of NH-3 to make minor changes in the design of the underpass, considering the traffic conditions, and to construct a new underpass near Sant Janardhan Swami Ashram at Ozar mig, Tal-Niphad, Dist.-Nashik on NH-3.

b) The following are principally declared National Highways in my Dindori *Parliamentary Constituency*:

(i) Nashik-Dindori-Vani Road (Linking NH-848 to NH-953)

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

(ii) Umrane-Deola-Kalwan-Borgaon-Surgana-Vazda (Maharashtra-Gujrat Border).

Hence, it is requested to declare the above-mentioned roads as National Highways and give them numbers.

c) Inclusion of EPC work under the Annual Plan – 2019-20 of MORT and H, New Delhi: i) NH-No-953 ii) NH-No.-848 iii) NH-No-753J iv) Construction of ROB on NH-No-753J

DR. SUJAY VIKHE PATIL (AHMEDNAGAR): Thank you, Chairperson, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to participate in this discussion on the Demand for Grant for the year 2019-20 pertaining to the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways.

Sir, with your permission, I would like to incorporate certain phrases in Marathi during the course of my speech for the benefit of the people of my constituency. Firstly, I would like to thank our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, and the Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, who in her maiden Budget speech made certain announcements that I would just like to mention here.

The budget for the Ministry of Road Transport has been increased by six per cent. Under the Bharatmala II project, the Government intends to invest over Rs. 100 lakh crore in infrastructure in the next five years. A National Transport Card has been launched; a National Highways Grid has also been launched. Many such innovative steps have been taken by the Government in this regard.

[*]I would like to thank our Hon. Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, under whose leadership and under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, in the last five years, the

[*] ....* English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

Department has invested three times more than the investment made in 2014-15. The rate of construction of highways has grown at the rate of 30 kms. per day. In 2014-15, it was 14 kms. per day. While launching the Bharatmala project in 2019, 225 road projects with the aggregate length of about 9,613 kms. were included, and the same has been approved.

[*]We feel proud that in Maharashtra alone, Hon. Gadkari ji has sanctioned 308 proposals amounting to Rs. 55,866 crore in the last three years.

I would just like to bring to your kind notice three issues concerning my constituency.

In National Highway 222, which goes to the Andhra Pradesh border from Kalyani, if we construct a flyover here, we can completely reduce the heavy traffic on this highway.*

Acquisition of land is being delayed. Hence, I would request the Government to expedite the acquisition of land in that regard. The construction of a bypass road, again on the same National Highway, is delayed due to land acquisition.

Here, land acquisition work should be expedited.

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[*] ….. * English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

My native place is Shirdi, which is the holy place of Sai Baba. Initially, the Government had constructed a four-lane highway. But since the number of devotees has increased, you can see the huge traffic jam on Saturdays and Sundays on the entire road. Hence, I would request the Government to at least construct an eight-lane highway, especially from Pune to Shirdi, and further ahead so that the devotees would find it easy to access Shirdi.

My constituency lies between Pune and Aurangabad. I would like to thank Shri Narendra Modi ji and Shri Nitin Gadkari ji for taking up the eight-lane highway project from Pune to Aurangabad under Bharatmala II. But my request would be that that particular aspect has been covered earlier as the last priority. I would request the Government to take this project on top priority because Aurangabad and Pune are two hubs - one is a MIDC hub, and the other is the IT hub.

With this, connectivity would increase, and youth from my constituency...

21.14 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

I would like to bring to the notice of the Government that this particular eight-lane highway project from Pune to Aurangabad should be taken on priority basis under *Bharatmala* II phase. Finally, I would like to thank the Hon. Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to raise the issues concerning my constituency.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT (RATNAGIRI-SINDHUDURG): Hon. Speaker Sir, for the first time since Independence, with the blessings of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and the Hon. Nitin Gadkari ji, the four-laning work of the Mumbai–Goa Highway, NH-66, has commenced. I am pleased that work on this route is progressing at a very fast pace. However, through this medium, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that my region, Konkan, receives very heavy rainfall. On the Mumbai–Goa National Highway, several bridges were constructed during the British period. Among them, at Chiplun, there is a bridge over the Vashishti River which was constructed 120 years ago. At Sangameshwar also, there is a bridge over the Vashishti River which is at least 128 years old. The British authorities have already stated in writing to the Government of India that once the life span of this bridge is over, an alternative bridge should be constructed immediately.

The work on the alternative bridges had commenced there, but it has been stalled for the last one to one-and-a-half years. Due to heavy rainfall this year, the condition of these bridges has deteriorated significantly. I request that, in order to prevent any accident in the future, directions be issued to complete the

unfinished work on both these bridges at the earliest. Thirdly, through the Hon. Gadkari ji, provisions of funds have been made for the Konkan region. I wish to state that the coastal road from Alibag to Sindhudurg is essential in the interest of tourism, as tourists make extensive use of this route. There is a strong demand from the local people that this road be converted into a four-lane road. I humbly request that this demand be fulfilled.

Lastly, the Hon. Premachandran ji raised the issue of the CRF Fund. In this regard, I would like to make a humble request. The CRF Fund was the only fund through which all of us, as public representatives, could request one or two roads for our respective constituencies. For the first three to four years, adequate funds were made available under this provision, but unfortunately, I do not know what happened thereafter. The entire CRF Fund was restructured in the year 2000 as the CRF (Central Road Fund). ... (*Interruption*s) At that time, funds were generated by levying a cess on petrol and diesel. From this, funds were allocated to the NHAI, some were given to the Railways, and some were utilised for other works. Over the last two years, the distribution of the CRF Fund has been routed through the Ministry of Finance to the State Governments. With the State Governments, the avenues are not open for all of us Members of Parliament. I humbly submit that you

are well aware of the difficulties faced by Members of Parliament and the numerous problems we are required to address.

Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I request the Hon. Minister that the earlier mechanism for the distribution of the CRF Fund should be restored, so that funds for the constituencies of Members of Parliament are made available through your Ministry. We also wish to request the Hon. Prime Minister ji to take steps in the interest of Members of Parliament. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI BENNY BEHANAN (CHALAKUDY): Sir, due to the high density of population and increase in the vehicle population, the use of the National Highways there has increased by more than 100 percent.

Sir, I have four points to make. I request the Government to expedite the execution of the construction of Ernakulam Bypass from Angamaly, NH-544 to Kundannoor, NH66. The alignment and the DPR have already been principally approved by the State of Kerala and the NHAI.

The proposal for the development of Tripunithura Bypass, which is 8.5 km on NH-85 and Kochi-Madurai National Highway, was announced under the Bharatmala Project, but the alignment and the land acquisition formalities have been completed only on the stretch of 3.5 km. The workers have been working on the construction of the underpass in Chalakudy on NH-544 for 12 months, but it is not completed yet. I request the Government to look into it. The proposal for the upgradation of Thrissur-Edappally Highway, NH-544 from four lane to six lane was also announced under the Bharatmala Project. The widening of NH-66 is also not done yet. Lastly, the compensation for land acquisition must be

given as per the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act of 2013.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Guman Singh Damor. Hon. Member, you may state the issues relating to your area.

SHRI GUMAN SINGH DAMOR (RATLAM): Hon. Speaker sir, I express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I also wish to thank the Hon. Prime Minister ji for the route decided for the Bombay–Delhi Express Highway, which passes through a predominantly tribal region. You are aware that the most backward areas of the country are tribal regions. This Express Highway opens the gateway to development for us. Therefore, I convey my gratitude and thanks to the Hon. Prime Minister ji and the Hon. Gadkari ji.

Sir, I would like to make one more request. In my Lok Sabha constituency, there is a road which is presently a State Highway and connects Baroda to Nagpur. I request that the road connecting Chhota Udaipur–Alirajpur–Dhar–Khargone–Khandwa–Betul be declared a National Highway.

Sir, I have two or three small requests to place before the House. In compliance with your directions, I am presenting these briefly. In my Lok Sabha constituency, there is the Salakhedi–Bhatpachlana–Ujjain road connecting Ratlam to Ujjain. This road is in extremely poor condition, and pilgrims travelling from Rajasthan to Mahakal use this route. Through you, I request the Government to get this road repaired immediately. The Indore–Ahmedabad National Highway No. 47 is incomplete at three

locations, yet toll collection has been started here for nearly the last one year. The worst sections of this Highway still remain in a dilapidated condition.

The Hon. Minister had stated in 2018 that this work would be completed within six months, but the work has not yet commenced. Through you, I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the three sections of the Indore–Ahmedabad National Highway, namely near Dhulet village at Sardarpur, the Machaliya Ghat section, and the Phoolmal section. These three sections should be completed immediately so that traffic can move smoothly. At present, National Highway No. 47 passes through tribal areas, where the road has been constructed well. However, as you are aware, there are several small villages on both sides of the road, and there are no safety measures in place. As a result, accidents are occurring here almost every day.

Sir, through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that fencing be provided on both sides of this road so that accidents can be reduced. On our National Highway No. 47, traffic density is very high and, therefore, accidents occur frequently. At present, there is no trauma centre in our area. This National Highway passes through our district headquarters, hence a trauma centre should be established at the district headquarters. Our State Government is not

able to provide doctors. I request the Hon. Minister that a trauma centre along with doctors be made available to us. At present, the DPRs being prepared for National Highways are for four-lane highways. I request that instead of four lanes, six-lane highways should be constructed and that this should be made mandatory for National Highways. This would increase the cost by only about 5 to 10 Percent, but keeping future requirements in view, it is extremely necessary. The DPR should also mandatorily include plantation work, so that the loss of trees due to construction can be adequately compensated.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I request all of you not to leave the House immediately after speaking. This is also mentioned in our rules and procedures. Therefore, I urge you to remain seated in the House even after delivering your speeches.

Shri Rajveer Singh.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (RAJU BHAIYA) (ETAH): Hon. Speaker Sir, I had been sitting with the hope that I would certainly get an opportunity to speak. I will take only two minutes, and I am perhaps the first Member who has never given an occasion for the bell to be rung.

Sir, you have given so much time to both new and senior Members to speak in the House, as has never been given before. In matters of time allocation, you have been extremely generous.

Sir, in the last 60 months, there has been an unprecedented surge in road development in this country. There would hardly be any area left where roads have not been constructed. A vast network of roads now exists across the country. However, in my area, the proposal for the widening of the Aligarh–Narora road has been pending with the Hon. Minister for the last two and a half years. I request the Hon. Minister to kindly accord approval for the widening work between Aligarh and Narora.

Sir, this is a Government of villages, the poor and farmers. This is a Government dedicated to the welfare of the poor. What could not be achieved in 60 years has been accomplished by the Hon. Prime Minister in 60 months. The entire country takes pride in this achievement.

The widening work between Aligarh and Narora will not require land acquisition. The work can be carried out on the existing land itself. The Hon. Minister Shri V. K. Singh ji is present here. I express my gratitude to him, to the Hon. Prime Minister ji, and to the Hon. Gadkari ji.

One of our Hon. Members has raised the issue of the CRF Fund. I have not received anything from the CRF Fund in my area. Through you, I would like to request that if the CRF Fund of the last five years is now given to me in a consolidated manner, it would greatly benefit my constituency.

Sir, the Hon. Minister is present here. I would like to request, through you, that I come from a backward district. My Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* is highly backward. The work between Etah and Aligarh has been approved, but its progress is very slow. I request that the pace of this work be accelerated.

Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

[*]DR. (PROF.) KIRIT PREMJIBHAI SOLANKI (AHMEDABAD WEST): I present my views on the Demands for Grants relating to National Highways and Roads. Babasaheb Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar had spoken about the construction of highways and roads for the development of the country.

I congratulate our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and the Government that highway construction is progressing across the country at a pace of more than 30 kilometres per day. In this development, the contribution of our Cabinet Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari ji is immense. Through his distinctive working style, highway construction has gained significant momentum. During the period of the Congress, highways were being constructed at a pace of less than two kilometres per day. I express my sincere gratitude to our Hon. Prime Minister ji.

Roads do not merely connect places; they make a vital contribution to the development of the nation. We need to give serious thought to road safety. Today, more deaths occur due to highway accidents than from diseases such as heart attacks, cancer or kidney ailments. Shri Nitin Gadkari ji has placed an insurance scheme before Parliament in this regard. We must ensure that we

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

find an effective solution to the problem of deaths caused by accidents. Trauma care centres should also be constructed along Highways. Land acquisition for highway construction takes a great deal of time and also involves high costs. I submit that in such locations, elevated highways should be constructed. In my *Parliamentary Constituency* of Ahmedabad, National Highway No. 8 passes through the area. From Narol to Vishala Circle, up to Sarkhej Rola and beyond the S. P. Ring Road, an elevated highway should be constructed. This stretch is heavily congested from a traffic perspective, and many fatal accidents and mishaps occur here repeatedly. Considering this serious situation, an elevated road should be constructed at this location. There are several State Highways in Gujarat, which should be developed as National Highways. The Ahmedabad–Vadodara Expressway, which is a model road, should be extended up to Mumbai at the earliest.

[*]SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA (BHARUCH): I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Under the leadership of the country's development-oriented leader, the respected Shri Narendra Modi ji, the Union Government has consistently focused on strengthening the nation's infrastructure. In the Budget for the year 2019–20, schemes such as Bharatmala, Sagarmala and UDAN are working towards bridging the gap between rural and urban areas. The target of upgrading 1.25 lakh kilometres of roads at a cost of Rs. 80,250 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is commendable and welcome. These schemes will also help in generating employment opportunities for the unemployed youth of the country.

In Bharuch district of Gujarat, roads at several locations from Ankleshwar to Valia, Netrang, Dediapada and Sagbara, up to the Maharashtra border at Khapar, have been damaged. From our region, National Highway No. 753B passes through Netrang, Dediapada and Sagbara and extends up to Maharashtra. At Netrang, the large bridge over the Karjan river near the Beda company, and the Tarav Valiya bridge at the entry point of Dediapada, have been damaged. In this regard, I request the Hon. Minister for Road

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, to kindly ensure the reconstruction of the said National Highway along with the rebuilding of these two major bridges.

In my *Parliamentary Constituency* in Gujarat, under the Dediapada area, apart from the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and the Chief Minister's Road Scheme, no other road construction schemes can be implemented due to the area falling under a reserved forest zone. In such a situation, I request the Government to establish coordination and consultation with the local Forest Department so that a way may be paved for the construction of permanent roads in that area as well.

With these submissions, I once again strongly support the development-oriented Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Thank you very much.

[English]

ADV. DEAN KURIAKOSE (IDUKKI): Thank you Speaker Sir, for giving me this opportunity. As a flood affected State, we are expecting more support form the Union Government for developing our National Highways.

Sir, whatever steps have been taken by the Union Government for the development of National Highways are supported very much. I will not take much time. I would like to draw the kind attention of the Hon. Minister regarding some important works that have to be done in my constituency. The Government is very much aware of the destruction of some roads, bridges due to the natural calamities and floods in my constituency.

There are three National Highways which are passing through my constituency. In NH-185, the major Cheruthoni bridge has been severely damaged by the heavy water flow from Cheruthoni dam at the time of flood. It has to be replaced by a new one. A proposal is there in the Ministry but till now, we did not get the final sanction. In connection with this major work, I am requesting for completion of work of small bridges like, Churuli, Karimban and Thadiyampadu, which have to be constructed. So, I am requesting for the final sanction for these works because these bridges were

damaged due to the natural calamities. Another monsoon has arrived and it is very strong this time.

I am also requesting for another work. The NH-85, Kochi-Dhanushkodi National Highway, in my knowledge, has already been included in the Bharatmala Project flagship programme. But I am requesting for a stand-alone work for the Kothamangalam and Muvattupuzha bypass road because Bharatmala Project will be delayed. Taking into account the heavy traffic jam and the increase in rate of accidents, it should be considered on priority basis. Kothamangalam bypass starts from Mathirappilly to Kozhippilly and Muvattupuzha bypass starts from Kadathy to Karakunnam. You should consider it urgently. Also, I am requesting for the final approval for the Vijayapuram to Oonnukal proposed National Highway. In principle, we got the approval but we want the final approval. We are also seeking approval for Palani to Sabarimala highway.

Finally, I am requesting for one more National Highway because it is the most important. We want the approval for Muvattupuzha to Theni National Highway. It will be helpful for the pilgrims from Tamil Nadu to Sabarimala and also for the tourists. If it is fulfilled, it will be the shortest way from Kochi to Theni. With these words, I am concluding.

Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

[Translation]

SHRI PASHUPATI NATH SINGH (DHANBAD): Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. At the same time, I also support these Demands.

Sir, this is an emotional moment for me as well. I was a Member of the Fifteenth Lok Sabha and also a Member of the Sixteenth Lok Sabha, and this is the first occasion on which I have been given an opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants. For this, I would especially like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our Chief Whip, Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, for giving me two to four minutes to speak in my eleventh year.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I will not take much time. I wish to place before the House a few issues relating to my area. If permitted, I may raise a few more points later. My area is Dhanbad–Bokaro. Two National Highways pass through this region. One is NH-2, which was earlier known as the G.T. Road, and before that it was called the Sher Shah Suri Path. Historians say that it was originally built during the time of Emperor Ashoka. Sher Shah Suri ruled for four years, and the road stretched from Kolkata to Peshawar. In those days, it was the era of bullock carts, and travelling such long distances was extremely difficult, yet this Sher Shah Suri Path came

into existence. Today, the Sher Shah Suri Path has been converted into a National Highway. In the Jharkhand region, this road stretches for about 250 kilometres. It starts from Chauparan and ends at the Bengal border at Maithon in my area. The accident rate on this stretch is very high, but there is not a single trauma centre across the entire 250 kilometres.

In our area, six-laning of the road from Barwadda to Maithon was started, but even after two years, the work has not been completed. The contractor has absconded. At some places, the road has been constructed for one kilometre, at others for two kilometres, while the old road is damaged at several locations. Necessary repairs should be carried out immediately. The National Highway passes through Dhanbad city and goes through the court, kachahari, railway station and the main market areas. There is no bypass road here. The demand for a bypass road has been raised for a long time, but it has not yet been constructed. I place this demand before the House.

The ring road in Dhanbad was approved not today, but several years ago; however, work on the ring road has still not commenced. Our Hon. Minister for Road Transport is a capable Minister. Our country is the second largest in the world in terms of road length. Whether it is freight transport or passenger transport, nearly 80

Percent of transportation in the country takes place through roadways. At a time when there were only 10 to 20 vehicles in Dhanbad, along with a few bullock carts and tongas, and when the railway underbridge was constructed, the population there was hardly 10,000. Today, it is a city with a population of 10 lakh. I have been repeatedly raising the demand for an underbridge here in this House and continue to do so. Through this House, I urge the Hon. Minister to ensure that this work is completed at the earliest.

There is a very important road in our area. We are placing our demands; we are not delivering a speech. I am only speaking about my constituency. As I mentioned earlier, this is also an emotional moment for me. New Members may have come in and received their first opportunity, and they too would have wished to speak for two minutes. In the Lok Sabha elections, our opponents, who were earlier in our own party and later joined the Congress, alleged that I had not spoken. I have spoken many times; it is another matter that they lost by five lakh votes. They raised this issue daily before the media through press conferences. I did wish to speak, but the very fact that I have now received this opportunity is sufficient for me. Thank you.

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): Hon. Speaker Sir, I express my heartfelt gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this subject.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the problem faced by two crore people of Delhi, who get stuck in traffic jams every day. As regards the work that was carried out in Delhi during the earlier five years, ... *(Interruptions)* nothing will go on record, which is the difficulty.

The UPA Government remained in power for ten years, after which the NDA Government came to power. In the last five years, the historic work that has been carried out in Delhi, which was actually the responsibility of the State Government, has been accomplished through the Union Government, under the leadership of Hon. Gadkari ji. On behalf of the two crore people of Delhi, I express my heartfelt gratitude to you in particular for giving me the opportunity to raise this issue, so that initiatives could be taken and work could move forward. The Eastern Peripheral and Western Peripheral Expressways were projects conceived 12 years and 20 years ago respectively. The Eastern Peripheral Expressway was constructed at a cost of Rs. 11,000 crore, and the Western Peripheral Expressway was completed in three years at a cost of Rs. 6,400 crore. Hon. Gadkari ji and the Hon. Prime Minister laid the

foundation stone for these projects and also inaugurated them, which could not be achieved for over 12 years earlier. Earlier, 1.27 lakh vehicles used to enter Delhi every day, causing pollution, and the people of Delhi had to struggle with traffic jams on the Ring Road. Now, they have been relieved of this problem.

Members of Parliament also travel towards the airport. Earlier, people used to get stuck in traffic jams for an hour at a stretch while travelling beyond Dhaula Kuan. The work of widening that road has been carried out. Similarly, for the Meerut Highway, in order to develop the National Capital Territory towards Meerut, road construction work covering 97 kilometres has been undertaken. A project costing Rs. 3,500 crore has been executed to provide a six-lane road connecting DND Noida to KMP, passing via Badarpur and Jaipur. Nearly five lakh people, who were earlier deprived of proper connectivity with Delhi due to an intervening canal, have benefited from this work undertaken by Shri Gadkari ji. These five lakh people will remain indebted for life for this initiative.

Secondly, in September 2017, Shri Gadkari ji convened a meeting. The Hon. Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Minister were invited. The Chief Minister did not attend, but the Transport Minister attended. From NH-2 to NH-8, there is a stretch of about 20 kilometres, where nearly 30 lakh people reside. This stretch is

the backbone of the South Delhi *Parliamentary Constituency*. The Metro Phase IV was to come up there, but the Government did not move forward on this. Shri Gadkari ji had stated that NH-2 would be connected from Badarpur to NH-8. This is a project worth Rs. 10,000 crore.

Sir, through you, I once again request that this is the NCT, the National Capital Territory. Its notification should be issued. This road should not be constructed by the Delhi Government. When people travel from Gurugram towards Tigri, Khanpur, Ambedkar Nagar, Saidulajab, Ayanagar, Chhatarpur and Ghitorni, they get stuck in traffic jams for two hours at a time. Therefore, this road must be constructed. Similarly, with regard to NH-2, the Sher Shah Suri Marg, which Hon. Pashupati Nath ji mentioned earlier, when we travel from Faridabad towards Ashram, Shri Krishan Pal ji had made considerable efforts earlier. Attention should be given to the road from Badarpur through Mathura Road up to the Ashram intersection, where traffic jams lasting up to one and a half hours occur.

Similarly, if we proceed from Nelson Mandela Marg towards Mahipalpur Shivji, an underbridge has been constructed at Mahipalpur at a cost of Rs. 200 crore, for which I express my gratitude. Important and historic work has been carried out there. In

the same manner, people descending from Nelson Mandela Marg near the statue of Shivji get caught in traffic jams. On M.G. Road from Gurugram as well, traffic jams last for up to one and a half hours. People travel from there towards Haryana for their livelihoods. There is a 200-foot-wide road from Jonapur via CDR Chowk up to Gurugram. I request that attention also be paid to this road. I am deeply grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to place these problems before the House. Thank you very much.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (SARAN): Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. In our childhood, when we travelled on roads and saw something beautiful, we would see a bridge. It felt as though the bridge existed to cross a river. Recently, when I was travelling from Nagpur to Pench, I noticed a National Highway there. On that Highway, I saw very long bridges built at places where there was neither a river nor a stream. I kept discussing this with my driver and wondering why bridges stretching 20 to 30 kilometres had been constructed. When I enquired, I learnt that this Government does not build roads only for human beings; it also creates space beneath these bridges for tigers and elephants to cross. Such is the vision. The Hon. Minister is not present here today, but the General is present. What a remarkable way of thinking!

I would like to speak about road accidents. There are so many Members of this House who used to sit with us on this side or that side, whose names I have brought in a list today. Today is a day to remember all of them. Some Members even served as Ministers in the Government of India. I would like to inform the House about how many of them lost their lives in road accidents. You will be astonished to hear this.

I await the day when every National Highway will have a helipad, and when a poor person meets with an accident, there will be a provision for evacuation by helicopter. On that day, all of us will applaud Shri Nitin Gadkari ji. This is extraordinary. Nowhere in the world are 40 kilometres of roads constructed in a single day, but the Government of India is doing so. However, I do have certain concerns, and these concerns are shared by all of us, as we observe these issues closely. Crash barriers are constructed on National Highways, with iron railings installed. Now, the people of this country must decide whether National Highways are meant for travel or for the construction of roadside line hotels. It must be decided that where unauthorised line hotels are constructed, trucks halt there, move to the edges, and damage the land. For a distance of one hundred yards on either side of such line hotels, construction activity continues unchecked, and it is unclear whether electricity bills are even being paid. In India, it must be decided whether people are allowed to break crash barriers at various places and park trucks to run businesses. The Government of India allocates funds and designates specific locations for line hotels and shops. Roads are not constructed for opening shops; there are separate designated places for commercial establishments. As soon as roads are constructed, activities begin along the roadside to fill land and build

houses and shops. In this matter, the NHAI must act with strictness, and State Governments must also take firm action.

Sir, there is also the problem of speed breakers. When roads are constructed in rural areas, people demand that roads be built, and once vehicles start plying on them, accidents occur. Then they demand that speed breakers be constructed. What all is a public representative expected to do? The responsibility of safety also rests upon us. We say that vehicles should be driven in a safe manner. We are all public representatives.

We are facing a serious predicament, and it is for this reason that I am speaking here. This is an issue pertaining to my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Shri Sigriwal ji is not present here. Since the year 2008, the construction of a road has been going on. I have committed no wrongdoing. I have not disrespected anyone in my constituency, I have not caused hardship to anyone, I have not spoken falsely, nor have I behaved in a discourteous manner with anyone. I wish to ask those officials of the Government, who, even after directions from Ministers, merely listen with sweet words, what is my offence? When I go before the people, they hold me responsible for matters in which I have no fault. If a road is not constructed for nine years, if children have to wait for six hours to go to school and are unable to return home on time, if people using

that road have to endure dust and dirt for nine long years, then how the people will treat the Member of Parliament of that area, you can well imagine.

This matter relates to NH-19. When political persons are in positions of power and a road is under construction, people do not know whom I contest elections against or whom I defeat or lose to, but the person I used to defeat wielded such influence that during the construction of a four-lane road, if the alignment passed near the house of a leader of his caste who supported him, the alignment would be altered arbitrarily, like bending a tool, and diverted through the pathways of the poor. This is the kind of influence politicians exercise. I do not wish to name them, as they are not present in this House. Not a single Member of their family or party has been elected now. When such decisions are taken, it is evident that certain politicians misuse their power, but it is the common people who hold us responsible for it.

Sir, we have discussed crash barriers and speed breakers. In my area, there is NH-19. You may not believe it, I am not a television anchor, but if you look at my Facebook and Twitter posts over the last two years before the elections, the Hon. Minister will also agree with what I am saying. There would hardly be any officer of the NHAI before whom I have not sat for hours and argued like a

lawyer. Everyone agrees that the work should be done, but sometimes the NHAI releases funds and the bank does not, and when the bank releases funds, the NHAI does not. If the contractor does not work, how can I be held responsible for it? That is your responsibility. For nine years, funds have not been released. I am making this appeal. The Hon. Minister is with me. When he explains his difficulties, I cannot even imagine them. I will not say much more on this subject. There is a stretch of Maker–Garha, which is being constructed by the NHAI.

I have been speaking to the regional officer for the last three years. He speaks very well in both English and Hindi. I have been discussing this road with him for three years, but till date, the construction of that road has not taken place. The project gets approved by the Government of India, but where the funds go is not known. A proposal for a bypass at Revelganj has been lying pending with the Government of India. I am only waiting. This matter does not pertain to the Hon. Minister but to the officers, because the files come to the officers. We place the papers before them. I request the Hon. Minister that all these schemes are connected to one area and are meant for the people of that region, who for years have elected representatives like us.

I do not wish to take the discussion further. Road accidents are also a very important issue. In India, approximately 405 people die every day in road accidents. This matter also falls within the purview of this Ministry, and it is a matter of grave concern. In India, there are around 4,64,000 roads. Safe roads should be constructed everywhere.

I would like to place before the House a few names. I will not take much time. It is a small list in this country, and for me it is a privilege to stand in this House and remember all those who once sat with us. This is an emotional moment for the House as we remember them. In this country, even a President of India has died in a road accident. Perhaps you may not be aware that Giani Zail Singh lost his life in a road accident. Shri Gopinath Munde, who worked with us in this House and whose daughter sits here today, also died in a road accident. Former MP Nandamuri Harikrishna, who was a Member from the southern region and sat in this House, S. Rajendra, who was a Member of the Sixteenth Lok Sabha, and our Congress colleague and leader Rajesh Pilot, whose son is today the Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan, all lost their lives in road accidents. We forget that all politicians, men and women alike, who worked alongside us, and even you, Sir, spend nearly 90 Percent of political life on the road, in vehicles, travelling from place to place,

yet we do not adequately reflect on how critical road safety is. Sahib Singh Verma, former Chief Minister and Union Minister, whose son sits with us here today, lost his life in a road accident while crossing a divider. Shri Yerran Naidu, whose son also sits in this House, also died in a road accident. It is striking how many fathers of those sitting with us here have lost their lives in road accidents. Shri S. P. Muthukumar, Shri Shrikant Jichkar, Shri Mahendra Singh Bhati, Sir, your friend, a 26-year-old young man who entered this House in 1996, he was a bright boy from Rajasthan. He was my friend. I reached Bikaner for his last rites. One morning at 3 a.m., the news came that he was returning and had lost his life. Shri Dayanand Sahay, who was once a Member of the Rajya Sabha from the Congress, Shri S. M. Laljan Basha, whom we used to see walking around the Central Hall, passed away four years ago. Shri Ram Gopal Reddy, Shri Ram Pyare Panika, Shri Dinesh Goswami, Shri V. V. Radhakrishnan, Shri Munawwar Hasan from Uttar Pradesh, and Shri Ajit Kumar Singh from Bihar, all lost their lives in road accidents. This list is very long. We have forgotten many of our friends who stood like us in the politics of this country, delivered speeches in this House, and have since passed away. Road accidents are, in themselves, a deeply serious issue. Therefore, every year, in memory of all these Members of Parliament, we organise a road safety rally across the country. You, Sir, are also

associated with this initiative. Every year, we pay floral tributes to them and alert the entire nation that even those who sat in this House, delivered speeches and ran the Government, lost their lives in road accidents. Therefore, road safety is an issue of paramount importance for all of us.

Sir, the Government of Bihar has sent a proposal to the Government of India for the construction of bridges at Sherpur and Dighwara. For the construction of these bridges, the Bihar Government has assigned the work of preparing the DPR. I fail to understand why the NHAI takes so long to prepare DPRs. Several DPRs are pending. There is one major project; I would like to conclude my remarks by narrating a brief incident.

Sir, my area is located near Patna, adjacent to the Gandak river.

Sir, in my region, a tiger reached close to Patna, nearly 300 kilometres away. If we consider how a tiger could travel 300 kilometres close to Patna, it followed the riverine route from the Valmiki Nagar Reserve and reached the outskirts of Patna. If a tiger can come from Valmiki Nagar to the limits of Patna, then why cannot the people of Patna travel to Valmiki Nagar and Nepal through the same route? Therefore, I demand that NH-19, NH-722 and NH-28B should be extended up to the border of Uttar Pradesh.

If a tiger can reach Patna, why cannot a human being travel on foot up to Nepal?

Sir, with all these demands, I am confident that whatever I am stating in this House is based on the fact that I have taken time from the Ministry, carried bundles of papers, and discussed these matters for hours. As the Hon. Minister has said, I am not an artist; I make videos, I go to bridges, I go to roads. The Hon. Prime Minister has indeed taught us this. I make videos and take them along. The Hon. Minister once told me that I should have been a television anchor. He even laughs and says that he has never seen a Member of Parliament who brings photographs from every location. But what can the Hon. Minister say? He agrees with what I say, yet thereafter, those sitting at that level should also understand these issues. We understand it, leaders also understand it. They know how much pain Rudy ji is going through. But those sitting at that level must also understand our concerns and extend their cooperation. The Government of the country and the Hon. Prime Minister have resolved to build the nation, and they understand everything and are aware of all issues. The Hon. Prime Minister has said that we have come to serve the nation and to serve the people, and we are engaged in that very task. Our appeal is to those officers as well. Please remember, the Prime Minister of the country is able to

identify such officers who believe they can throw dust in the eyes of others. Even we, when we raise these issues from time to time, will place the truth before everyone, because the strength of this House, through which we have been elected, enables us to take the truth to the people as well. We will convey the truth behind the formation of this Government, and we will contribute all our strength to the building of this nation. To adorn this seat once again by making Shri Narendra Modi ji the Prime Minister, we are all engaged in nation-building. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, I am confident that your support and protection on this entire issue will also be assured. Thank you very much.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Sir, it must have already been announced that those Hon. Members who have not yet taken their meal may please do so in Room Number 74.

HON. SPEAKER: Please make the announcement once again.

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL: Sir, I am doing so. Dinner is ready in Room Number 74.

HON. SPEAKER: If dinner is ready for everyone, then the House can continue for quite some time.

[English]

[*]**PROF. RITA BAHUGUNA JOSHI (ALLAHABAD):** I would like to express my views on the demand for the grant of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Over the last few years, under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, the construction of national highways has increased tremendously.

Until May 2014, the construction rate of highways stood at 11.67 km per day. The Modi Government has raised the construction rate to the present 30 km per day in FY 2018-19 and aims to take it up to 40 km a day.

Additionally, the Government is actively addressing policy issues that hinder highway development. It has streamlined the exit policy, which will enable developers to invest in new projects, land acquisition has been expedited, and a one-time fund infusion scheme has been introduced, which aids in resurrecting languishing projects.

The road sector accounts for about 69% of India's freight traffic and 90% of passenger traffic. We are happy that the major road projects taken up in the last five years included the Eastern

[*] Speech was Laid on the Table

Peripheral Expressway, Delhi-Meerut Expressway, and Dhola-Sadiya Bridge.

Most satisfying is that Shri Narendra Modi is the first PM who gave great importance to the construction of roads in the North East to accelerate development in that region.

India has the world's largest road network with a length of about 47 lakh km. The length of this road includes National Highways (NH), Expressway, State Highway (SH), District Roads, PWD Roads, and Project Roads.

I would like to thank our Finance Minister for allocating 3,071 crore for the maintenance of roads and highways in the budget. The Budget of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been increased to Rs 83,016 Crore, which is 6% more than the previous year.

To optimize the efficiency of freight and passenger movement, the Bharatmala Yojana of about 35,000 kms of road network for economic growth will go a long way in building New India.

Likewise, the vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister to connect each corner of the country and provide for road security is commendable.

Shri Narendra Modi, as Prime Minister, has achieved in 5 years what some could not do in 55 years of the rule of one Party. A

grateful nation shall always remember the PM as the builder of 21st Century India. I shall now place my demands for my constituency. I request that the following roads in the Allahabad *Parliamentary Constituency* be declared as National Highways (NH) and built by the Government of India: NH 7 to Kondi (Bharatganj – Pratappur Road) Belan Sampark Road construction a total of 59 kms; Kaua – Baraun – Dhadhua – Itwa – 26 kms; Basehra – Laltara – Paipatti – Dehwa (up to NH 30); Hanumanpur – Sehra to Sandwa 35 kms.

With these words, I support the passage of the demand for the grant on the Ministry of Road and Transport and Highway.

DR. A. CHELLAKUMAR (KRISHNAGIRI): Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to highlight the issues pertaining to my constituency, Krishnagiri, as far as National Highways are concerned. Traffic in the National Highways has increased by leaps and bounds. Due to the heavy increase in traffic, public safety is at risk. NH-7 (new NH 44), stretching from 33/130 kilometres to 93/000 kilometres, covering Hosur to Krishnagiri in the State of Tamil Nadu, is in my constituency. The number of vehicles is increasing day by day. This road has nine black spots. Accidents are becoming common. Many fatal accidents are taking place daily. To protect one's life and prevent accidents, there is a need for nine flyovers at the following nine vulnerable points. They are:

1. SIPCOT Junction, Hosur
2. Bathalapally-TVS Academy Junction
3. Gopachandram
4. Sappadi
5. Sundagiri
6. Chinnaru
7. Samalpallam
8. Chikkarimedu
9. Near Powergrid of Shoolagiri

Sir, I would like to highlight the situation in NH 66, which extends from Tindivanam to Krishnagiri via Thiruvannamalai. This project was sanctioned by the Congress Government, and work was initiated at a rapid pace. This work has been stalled for unknown reasons. For the last seven years, people are suffering immensely. To facilitate a quick and comfortable journey, I request the Hon. Minister to reinitiate and speed up the project at the earliest.

Sir, there is a long-pending demand of the people of Krishnagiri regarding the shifting of the Krishnagiri Toll Plaza on NH 44 (Old NH 7) between Krishnagiri and Hosur, after the Collectorate, which is after the Municipal limit. The local people of Krishnagiri are facing difficulties. Even to go to the Collectorate, they are forced to pay the toll charges, and there is wastage of time as well. This often creates a law and order problem.

The number of vehicles is increasing day by day. The revenue generation for the concessionaire is also increasing. If the Government looks at the public interest, the revenue generation does not affect the concessionaire. So, I request the Government to take immediate steps to shift the toll plaza.

The maintenance of roads should be given top priority as it increases the lifespan of the roads. An effective monitoring mechanism for the repair and maintenance of the roads should be

put in place. There should be a penalty for contractors and engineers in case of poor quality of roads, repairs, maintenance, and construction. The Government should monitor the toll collection. Thank you.

[*]**SHRI G.M. SIDDESHWAR (DAVANAGERE):** Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, Highways are the lifelines of the country. During the last five years of NDA regime, under the able leadership of shri Narendra Modi ji the work on connecting the country through highways had maintained a very good pace with quality. As a result of significant increase in Public Private Participation and Foreign Direct Investment the total length of the National highway was increased from 92,851 km. in 2013-14 to 120,543 km. in 2017-18. The speed of construction also increased from 12 k.m. per day in 2013-14 to 30 k.m. per day in 2017-18. This was possible with the motivation of Hon'ble Prime Minister and also the hon'ble Minister for Highways.

Speaker, Sir, the construction of highways in the country is going on at a very fast pace. On the contrary, it was going on at a snail's pace in my parliamentary constituecy Davanagere in Karnataka. During the UPA Government it took almost 8 years to complete 60 km. highway from Chitradurga- Davanagere under the Golden Quadrilateral project. Even after the project was completed by National Highway Authority, it is still causing a lot of inconvinients to the people.

[*] English translation of the speechoriginally laid on the Table in Kannada.

Now, the said highway has been taken to be of Six-Lane under NHDP-V and the work started from January 2017. This project is also moving very slowly. People of neighboring villages staged protest seeking appropriate measures to overcome inadequacies that occurred while constructing the previous project of Four-lane highway. The negligence on the part of Highway Authority has led to the loss of many precious lives and the villagers have expressed their concern and won't appropriate steps to prevent the repetition of such incidents.

Sir, while constructing National Highways in my *Parliamentary Constituency* the Under Bridges are being constructed unscientifically near villages namely, Halekunduvada, Banashankari and lay out in the city of Davanagere, Avaregere cross, Honnuru Gollarahatti, H.Kalpanahalli, Lakkamuttenahalli, Mallashetty halli, Hunasekatte, Haluvarthi, Neerthadi. The representations have been submitted to the Authority concerned to take corrective measures with regard to the unscientific construction of Under bridges, while constructing Six-Lane highway project. Though I have been constantly in touch with the Highway Authority and I met the hon'ble Minister on many occassions to seek his intervention in sanctioning of the works, it has not been done till date. Hence I would like to request the Government, through you, to take steps to sanction the works.

The Highway authority has not sanctioned an Under bridge to facilitate the entry into Davanagere city through the national highway. It is a matter of regret that a proper Entrace is not facilitated to Davanagere city, which is being developed under the Smart city scheme. The huge electric poles are laid for high tension electricity transmission, on the service road of Vidyanagar in Davanagere, which is causing road accidents. There is need to replace the huge electric poles with alignment of single poles and construct a service road. Though I requested the Highway authority, the said works have not been taken up.

Sir, the following roads are passing through my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Road passing via Mariyammanahalli- Itagi- Harapanahalli – Honnali- Shivamogga, 186 km. From Channagiri to Davanageri 60 km. These two state highways were given technical clearance for upgradation in 2015. However there is no progress in the work. With regard to approval of allignment of Mariyammanahalli- Shivamogga highway the Consultants said that the request was sent to the Ministry of Highways, but it was not approved. About Channagiri- Davanagere highway the DPR is not yet ready.

Hon’ble Speaker Sir, through you I would like to request the union Government to take steps to start the works at the earliest.

I would also request to merge Channagiri- Davanagere highway with Bilichodu-Jagaluru- Nayakanahatti-Challakere near the national highway 150. And the Chitradurga –Bhimasamudra-Sasalu-Basavapattana-Honnali-Shikaripura-Soraba-Siddapura-Kumata Highway should be upgraded. I have written many letters and met the hon'ble Minister thrice for seeking his interventin to sanction the work. However, it is not sanctioned. Sir, through you I would like to request the union Government to take steps to start the work at the earliest.

Sir, my Lok Sabha constituency is in the middle of Karnataka state and all the major roads and highways are passing through this region. So the development of the 461 km of roads in my constituency is very much essential. It requires Rs. 442 crores, for which a proposal was sent to the Ministry for Highways, Government of India about two years ago. Even then the grants are not sanctioned under Central Road Fund. Sir, through you, I would like to request the union Government to take steps to start the work at the earliest.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the above said proposals of my *Parliamentary Constituency* would be essential for the benefit of the general public, therefore, through you I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to take steps to start the works at the earliest.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL (DOMARIYAGANJ): Hon. Speaker Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways presented by Hon. Nitin Gadkari ji and Shri V. K. Singh ji. I would also like to express my gratitude for the fact that this issue is being discussed at great length in the House and that you are giving opportunities to all Hon. Members to speak. I too consider myself fortunate that you have given me an opportunity to speak, so that, through you, I may draw the attention of the Government to some important points in this House. I do not wish to go into figures, because whether they are Members from the Treasury Benches or from the Opposition, everyone has spoken about the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. If I were to repeat that today we have a road network of 59 lakh kilometres, that 40 kilometres of roads are being constructed every day, that the budget is Rs. 83,016 crore, that 85 Percent of passengers travel by road and 60 Percent of goods are transported by road, all these points have already been elaborated in detail by Shri Rudy ji and several other learned colleagues. I wish to speak about outcomes. I believe that many Members have already placed statistics before the House. Today, the House will

bear witness to the fact that the manner in which the Budget for the year 2019–20 has been presented, and the evaluation of the performance of the Budgets of the previous years, has led both the Treasury Benches and the Opposition to appreciate the work done by the Ministry in the past years. This, in itself, is historic and will stand as a record. In matters of development, Shri Gadkari ji does not ask any Hon. Member whether he or she belongs to the ruling party or the Opposition. As far as National Highways and related issues are concerned, I would like to say only one thing: our Government, under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister ji, has focused on areas that no Government since Independence had ever paid attention to. When the NITI Aayog identified 115 districts as Aspirational Districts, there was a lack of basic infrastructure and a lack of roads. The people of those districts could not even imagine National Highways or State Highways; there were only district roads or other district roads. ... (*Interruption*s) I am coming to my point. I am neither among the junior-most nor among the senior-most Members; I am somewhere in between. Kindly grant me five minutes.

HON. SPEAKER: You are a senior Member.

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL: I would like to state that those districts were identified where there were no National Highways or

State Highways. Work has been undertaken in those districts, as some of our colleagues have already mentioned. Earlier Governments used to upgrade roads from two lanes to four lanes, and where required, to six lanes. However, constructing roads on entirely new alignments is something that has also been undertaken by this Government. The new road being constructed from Delhi to Mumbai is being built on a completely new alignment, passing through tribal areas. No existing road is merely being converted into four lanes or six lanes. This, in itself, is a record of this Government, that it is connecting the administrative capital, Delhi, with the economic capital of the country. Out of those 115 districts, one Aspirational District is in my area. Kapilvastu is the birthplace of Gautam Buddha and also forms part of the Buddhist Circuit. I would like to thank this Government for including Kushinagar, Kapilvastu and Shravasti in the Buddhist Circuit. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, if the House so agrees, the time may be extended by another half an hour.

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL: If there are Hon. Members wishing to speak, you may extend the time.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

HON. SPEAKER: The time of the House is extended by half an hour.

22.00 hrs

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL: I am extremely grateful to you for being kind to me and for seeking the consent of the House to extend the time.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, the half an hour has not been extended for you alone. There are still 20 speakers listed for the discussion. Please conclude your remarks.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR): Hon. Speaker Sir, the consent for extending the time by half an hour is not only for Shri Jagdambika Pal ji.

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL (DOMARIYAGANJ): Sir, I was under the impression that I was the last speaker.

HON. SPEAKER: Please conclude your remarks. Many Hon. Members are yet to speak.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, within these 30 minutes of extended time, kindly consider us also.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL: That Buddhist Circuit has been connected with National Highway No. 30, and Hon. Gadkari ji himself visited the site along with Hon. Chief Minister Yogi ji. I would like to submit that today, in this Buddhist Circuit, thousands and lakhs of pilgrims who follow Buddhism from countries across the world are visiting. At present, traffic there has crossed more than ten thousand vehicles. There must also be a prescribed traffic standard for the road. National Highway No. 233, which originates from Nepal and connects Kathmandu to Varanasi, is under construction. However, no new bridge has been constructed there, and just yesterday the old bridge was washed away. As a result, our district headquarters has been cut off from the national connectivity routes. I would like to draw the attention of the General Sahib to this issue as well, as the route has been blocked. Traffic from Nepal, which used to pass through Siddharth Nagar towards Basti, Lucknow or Varanasi, has now been disrupted. I request that immediate temporary arrangements be made to restore connectivity on this route, and that the work on National Highway No. 233 or National Highway No. 730, for which Hon. Gadkari ji had also promised four-laning as part of the Buddhist Circuit, should be commenced at the earliest.

Sir, you will also agree that whether it was the Fifteenth Lok Sabha, the Sixteenth Lok Sabha or the present Seventeenth Lok Sabha, if Hon. Members of Parliament had the capacity to get important roads constructed in their constituencies, it was only through this Ministry. It was through the Central Road Fund, and Shri Gadkari ji never displeased anyone in this regard. If the CRIF has been transferred to the Ministry of Finance, then I believe that those district roads which are neither covered under National Highways nor under State Highways are covered only under the CRF. Therefore, I would submit that you should also intervene to ensure that the CRF remains with this Ministry, so that the proposals of Members of Parliament can be approved.

With these words, and thanking you for giving me time, I conclude my remarks while extending my support.

COL. RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (JAIPUR RURAL): Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I thought I might be the last speaker.

HON. SPEAKER: There are still many speakers to speak after you.

COL. RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE: Hon. Speaker Sir, this is the first time that I am speaking while you are presiding over the Chair, and for that reason also, I feel a sense of great pride. The

manner in which the House is functioning late into the night gives the impression that we are being given the time to place the concerns of the people of the country before this House, and for this, I thank you sincerely. At the outset, I would like to commend Hon. Gadkari ji and General V. K. Singh ji for the unprecedented expansion of roads across the country, the extensive spread of the National Highways network, and the remarkable pace at which the work has been carried out.

Sir, I would like to place before the House issues relating to my own area. The National Highway that connects Delhi to Jaipur is one which you too must have travelled on. Among all State capitals, Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, is the closest to Delhi, and it is also extremely important from the tourism perspective. When tourists travel on this road, or when people commute for work, the overall standard of road infrastructure in the country becomes clearly visible. When our Government came to power in the year 2014, there were 19 flyovers pending on this National Highway, which were originally supposed to be completed in 2011. I am pleased to state that before the last election, 18 out of these 19 flyovers were fully completed. For this achievement, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Ministry.

I would like to draw attention to the flyover at Shahpura, which remains incomplete and also appears unsightly. If the Ministry pays attention to it and ensures its early completion, it will provide considerable relief to the public. If you travel to Jaipur, you will find a large number of trucks parked along the stretch between Shahpura and Manoharpur. There are many people who own these trucks, and repair and maintenance work is carried out there. Since no alternative facility exists, such maintenance is being undertaken on the National Highway itself.

There has been considerable discussion about the construction of a transport nagar. Land for this purpose has already been identified. The State Government has identified the land, but work has still not commenced on it. Once the transport nagar is developed, it will provide relief to those engaged in maintenance activities, and truck drivers will also be able to get proper rest and recuperation facilities.

In our region, the Dausa–Manoharpur National Highway has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 160 crore. The Paota–Nareda road has also been constructed at a cost of Rs. 60 crore. However, these National Highways are not meant only for those who travel on them by vehicles. The planning carried out earlier did not adequately take into account that these roads cut through villages. In many places, agricultural fields lie on one side while houses are on the other.

Schools are on one side, and residential areas are on the opposite side. You will appreciate that vehicles travel at speeds of up to 100 kilometres per hour on these roads, while children with school bags, women and elderly persons carrying goods are compelled to cross the Highway. Every year, on average, about one hundred accidents occur on the Delhi–Jaipur National Highway. A complete list has been prepared for the construction of foot overbridges and vehicle underpasses at such locations. I would urge the Ministry to give due attention to this issue so that, just as Highways are being constructed in an excellent manner across the country, the Delhi–Jaipur National Highway also becomes a world-class Highway. This is my humble request.

SHRI DEVAJI PATEL (JALORE): Hon. Speaker Sir, I wish that you continue in the office of Speaker and keep giving us opportunities to speak.

I extend my gratitude to the respected Hon. Prime Minister ji, the Hon. Nitin Gadkari ji and the Hon. V. K. Singh ji. I became a Member of Parliament for the first time in 2009. At that time, it took a full five years merely to get a 30-kilometre road repaired. However, during the period from 2014 to 2019, under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, nearly 800 kilometres of roads were constructed in my area. A National Highway of about 200 to 250 kilometres has been developed from Sanderav to Balotra via the Aahor bypass. Another National Highway from Rohit to Sanchore has been announced, but I would request Shri Singh Sahib to ensure that adequate budgetary allocation is made from here so that this road is completed in full, as this is the main highway of my district.

The Sanderav to Balotra stretch has been declared a National Highway, but it has been taken only up to the Jalore bypass. As a result, the main railway level crossing C-48 of Jalore has become a major bottleneck. The National Highways Authority says that it will not construct it, as the National Highway passes through the bypass, while the State Government says that it should be constructed by the National Highways Authority. I request Shri Singh Sahib that if

a Road Over Bridge is constructed at C-48, a very major problem of Jalore will be resolved.

In Bhinmal, a National Highway is being provided from Rohit to Sanchore. Bhinmal is a large town. Hon. Speaker Sir, perhaps you have also visited it. Passing through Bhinmal town means getting stuck in very heavy traffic. If a ring road is provided at Bhinmal, it will lead to significant development. Bhinmal has 72 Jain temples, and the route to Sunda Mata also passes through it. Therefore, I would like to place this demand before you as well.

Sir, on the previous occasion, Hon. Gadkari ji had announced the road from Rohit to Jalore, along with its linkage from Jheda to the Sirohi National Highway, and the construction of the Manda–Revdhar bypass road. If we are provided with this road, it would be a matter of great good fortune for us.

Sir, earlier you had introduced the Bharatmala Scheme, under which our canal-irrigated area was included, as a result of which, for the first time, we saw water in our Jalore district. However, due to this water, a very large amount of agricultural land belonging to farmers of the canal area is being acquired under the Bharatmala Scheme. We had made a request to the Hon. Minister in this regard. The Hon. Minister had stated that the Bharatmala alignment would be re-surveyed and that there was a discussion on diverting it

towards the Kutch region, which is a saline area. I would request that, after conducting a re-survey, if the alignment is taken towards that side, it may help in saving the land of farmers and would greatly benefit our farming community.

I would also like to submit that when PMGSY Phase II was launched, you too were a Member of Parliament at that time. During that period, we obtained approval from the Zila Parishad. Under that approval, we prepared and forwarded a proposal for nearly 1,500 kilometres of roads from Jalore to Sirohi. If this road is sanctioned, it will help compensate for the losses caused by the floods that occurred in my area in the years 2015 and 2017, and the existing roads there will also be renovated. I would also like to mention the issue of steel barricades, which was referred to by Shri Rudy ji as well. A National Highway has been constructed within Sanchore, but the steel barricade installed there was broken in an accident three years ago and has remained in the same damaged condition for the last three years.

All lands belonging to National Highways are facing encroachment. People are illegally occupying these areas and selling goods. We have lodged complaints several times. As Shri Rudy ji mentioned, it appears that the officials remain unmoved; this situation prevails everywhere. I am not making any allegation,

but it seems that some kind of arrangement is being made, allowing such encroachments so that these activities continue within towns. I request that strict action be taken at such places so that they do not turn into accident-prone zones and accidents can be prevented. I would also like to submit that whenever you visit Udaipur and Abu Road, my Assembly segment, Pindwara, falls on that route. Vehicles coming from Udaipur towards Abu Road and intending to enter Pindwara often travel on the wrong side, because to reach Pindwara legally they have to take a detour of at least 15 kilometres. If a proper system is provided to allow vehicles to descend and access Pindwara safely, accidents at that location can be prevented. We have raised this demand several times, but it has not yet been addressed. Through you, I request the Hon. Minister to find a solution to prevent accidents at this spot.

Hon. Speaker Sir, in my State, Mount Abu is the only hill station. Hon. Gadkari ji had sanctioned a road up to Guru Shikhar. A survey was conducted and several meetings were also held. In those meetings, we were assured that this road would be started at the earliest and would be widened. When floods occurred, the entire town of Mount Abu was cut off, which caused immense difficulties. I request the Hon. Minister to ensure that the Guru Shikhar road is

constructed so that Mount Abu can be safeguarded and, in the event of any such disaster, relief can be ensured.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak.

HON. SPEAKER: Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen. Dhal Singh ji is perhaps speaking for the first time.

DR. DHAL SINGH BISEN (BALAGHAT): Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you.

Sir, this is the first time I am speaking in the House in the form of a speech, although I had earlier been given an opportunity to speak during a discussion held under Rule 377, for which I am very grateful to you. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the respected Hon. Prime Minister ji and the respected Shri Gadkari ji. I come from the Balaghat–Seoni Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*, which is home to two National Parks, Pench and Kanha. The road stretch from Seoni to Nagpur, which also falls in the constituency of Shri Gadkari ji, had remained stalled for the last ten years since the time of the Congress Government. The work had been stopped by citing an unnecessary forest-related issue. The Hon. Gadkari ji and the Hon. Minister for Environment and Forests, Shri Javadekar ji, cleared this issue, and today the construction of that road has resumed.

Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to submit that this is National Highway No. 7 on which our road is being constructed. In the coming time, difficulties will arise because no service roads have been provided and there is also no provision for Foot Over Bridges. There are two major villages in my area, Khurai and Khukhasa, where service roads should be provided. From my area,

NH-7 goes towards Nagpur and further from Nagpur towards Raipur. If, on the Seoni–Balaghat route falling in my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*, a connecting road linking NH-6 and NH-7 is constructed, traffic on the Nagpur-bound route will reduce and people travelling from Balaghat to Kanha will get the facility of passing through Seoni. Therefore, my demand is that the Seoni–Balaghat road be included in the National Highway network and be made a four-lane road.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to place one more demand. On the Seoni–Bhandara and Seoni–Jabalpur routes, there is a Gun Carriage Factory at Seoni and Bhandara. If the Seoni–Bhandara route via Katangi and Tumsar is also included in the National Highway network along with the Bhandara route, then there will be no difficulty in the future. Therefore, a new alternative route should be constructed for access to the Gun Carriage Factory.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to speak for one more minute. Reference has been made to roads under the CRF. Earlier also, roads were constructed under the CRF, and we had succeeded in getting approvals for them. I am saying this because, for us Members of Parliament, this is the only such channel through which roads can be constructed on the basis of our representations. If these are placed in the hands of State Governments, there is often

arbitrary distribution. The roads will not be constructed in the manner in which we wish them to be built. Sir, traffic pressure in these areas is increasing, and therefore, wide roads under the CRF are necessary there.

SHRI JUGAL KISHORE SHARMA (JAMMU): Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you. I wish to express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I also express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister for allocating substantial funds for Jammu and Kashmir. The work on the National Highways from Jammu to Akhnoor and from Akhnoor to Rajouri–Poonch is progressing at a good pace. In particular, the work from Jammu to Akhnoor is underway; however, the work from Akhnoor to Rajouri–Poonch has not yet commenced. This work has been entrusted to the BRO. The preparation of its DPR is progressing at a slow pace and has not yet been completed. I request the Hon. Minister to ensure that the DPR is prepared at the earliest so that work at the site can begin without further delay.

Sir, additionally, along with this, I would like to state that a ring road is being constructed around Jammu. Farmers' land has been acquired there, but they are being given very low compensation. Today, land prices have risen considerably. I humbly request that farmers be paid the full and fair value of their land, so that they are not rendered destitute. On the road from Jammu towards Udhampur, there is a toll plaza where toll is being charged on small vehicles and buses at a very high rate. A toll of Rs. 170 is being

charged for one side. Sir, I request that the toll amount there be reduced. Along with this, through you, I would like to request the Ministry that in Samba, Vijaypur and the areas around Jammu where there are military colonies, there is an urgent need for flyovers or Road Over Bridges. Accidents are occurring frequently there. Sir, Road Over Bridges should be constructed near the city in these areas.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak.

SHRIMATI RANJEETA KOLI (BHARATPUR): Hon. Speaker Sir, I express my heartfelt gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak in this House. I thank you for allowing me to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. I commend the dynamic working style of the Hon. Minister for Road Transport and Highways. Today, across every State in the country, the construction of quality National Highways is progressing at a rapid pace. Keeping in view the financial provisions made in the Budget, I humbly submit that it is extremely necessary to give full attention to the rural areas of India. I fully appreciate the target set for constructing 1,25,000 kilometres of roads. It was the dream of our former Prime Minister, the late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, to connect villages with one another and to link all villages with National Highways. This will benefit every individual, whether a farmer, a trader or a common citizen. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a problem pertaining to my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency*. The National Highway that comes to Bharatpur via Nagar D. Kumer from Alwar district connects both the districts. The condition of this road is very poor, due to which the people of my Lok Sabha *Parliamentary Constituency* face great inconvenience. Through you, I request that the work on this road, which connects the two districts of Alwar and

Bharatpur, be carried out at an accelerated pace, so that farmers, traders and other people of my *Parliamentary Constituency* may benefit.

SHRIMATI RANJANBEN BHATT (VADODARA): Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you. I am very grateful to you for giving me time to speak. I am thankful to Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, and I am also grateful to the Minister of State, Shri V. K. Singh Sahib. I wish to place only two demands before the House. The Ahmedabad–Vadodara Express Highway was constructed by the revered former Prime Minister, the late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, through his own efforts. On this Express Highway, near Vadodara, there is the Dumad Chokdi. For travelling from Ahmedabad to Surat, the new National Highway No. 08 passes through Dumad Chokdi. A large number of accidents occur at this location.

I have also written a letter to Shri Gadkari ji. Through you, I wish to place this demand before the House. Though it is a small matter, it is very necessary to get it addressed. The Hon. Minister of State is also present here. My submission is that on the Dumad Chokdi highway, while travelling from Vadodara to Surat and from Surat to Ahmedabad, many accidents take place. Therefore, I request that the issue of Dumad Chokdi be resolved without fail.

Secondly, I would like to place one more demand. Vadodara Airport is now going to be upgraded into an international airport. Therefore, an inner bypass highway should be constructed. This would be the first such bypass highway in Gujarat, which would

enhance the prestige of Gujarat as well as that of our country. Hence, I place the above demands before the Hon. Minister.

SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA BAHERIA (BHILWARA): Hon. Speaker Sir, thank you. A National Highway No. 158 passes through the Asind area of my constituency. This Highway could be taken through a bypass, but instead it is being routed through the town by the officials. As a result, several residential houses are being adversely affected. I request that this bypass be taken outside the town.

Secondly, the work of upgrading from four lanes to six lanes is underway between Kishangarh and Udaipur. Wherever there are cuts on this four-lane stretch, underpasses must be provided, because some of these cuts are being closed, causing considerable inconvenience to the public.

Thirdly, under the CRF, a 75-kilometre road from Pander to Kotdi Chauraha was to be constructed. However, due to shortage of funds, the work could not be completed and about 12 kilometres still remain. The State Government is stating that since this road was taken up under the CRF, they cannot complete it, and therefore the work has come to a standstill. I request that this work also be ensured to be completed at the earliest.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this debate.

Sir, you are aware of Kuttanad which is a backwater area. It is in my *Parliamentary Constituency*. Everybody knows it and I think most of the MPs have visited Kuttanad. It is a backwater area. So, during flood and other natural calamities, people cannot escape from Kuttanad to the mainland because of shortage of roads and bridges. We are facing severe problems. In the recent flood also, we faced problems. So, I would like to request the Hon. Minister, through you, Sir, to allot a package of Rs.1,000 crore for Kuttanad to construct bridges and roads. Then only our children, the old age people and other people can escape from the problem of natural calamities.

Another important issue is that a National Highway is proposed by the Ministry which will be connecting backwater tourism to hill tourism, that is, from Alleppey to Kodaikanal.

Alleppey is a backwater province and Kodaikanal is a hilly area. These two points should be connected by highways for promotion of tourism. A DPR worth Rs.200 crore has already been prepared. But it has not been materialized so far. I would request the Hon. Minister to consider it.

I would also like to mention that two national highways pass through my constituency. They are Kollam- Thirumangalam and Kollam-Theni. They are in worst condition and traffic congestion is too high. We need certain bypass roads to decongest these highways. I also request the Government to convert them into four-lane highways. These two national highways are very important. I would request the Hon. Minister to consider it as well.

Sir, there is a proposal for new national highways Kayamkulam-Mavelikkara-Thiruvalla to Munnar and also Nandikkara to Vandiperiyar. They are under consideration of the Ministry of Road Transport and National Highway. I would request the Hon. Minister to take it into consideration.

[Translation]

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (PASCHIM CHAMPARAN): Hon. Speaker Sir, you have given me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants for Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019, presented by the Hon. Finance Minister. Hon. Speaker Sir, the vision of Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji regarding the East–West Highway, the North–South Highway and the Golden Quadrilateral was implemented by levying a cess of one rupee on petrol for National Highways, of which the share was 57 Percent. Under that arrangement, the CRF fund was decided for highways. However, as the Chief Whip, I am conveying the collective sentiment of all Members of Parliament that since the Central Road Infrastructure Fund came into existence, only 10 Percent of the fund is being allocated. It is the desire of all Members of Parliament that the Hon. Finance Minister should once again place this fund under Road Transport, so that Shri Gadkari ji may be able to address the small but important works of all Members of Parliament. I will conclude my remarks by making only two points. In my area, there was NH-28A, which is the direct highway connecting Kathmandu. A new bypass was constructed on it, and the old road was abandoned. The Bihar Government took over that road, but till date, it has not been able to commence the work. However, no authority is willing to

take responsibility for the Maitri Bridge at the India–Nepal border and the adjoining no-man's land. Therefore, I request Hon. Gadkari ji that since it was earlier a part of the National Highway and is the only road connecting Kathmandu, the Maitri Bridge and the remaining portion of the National Highway through the no-man's land should be constructed as part of the National Highway. There is no other solution. Secondly, the Bettiah–Pakhnaat–Ankui Highway, NH-727AA, should be completed at the earliest in coordination with the Bihar Government. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY: (GODDA): Hon. Speaker, ... (*Interruption*) *

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I am stopping you for a minute. I will explain the reason to you. You are holding the book of procedure and rules. Since you have already submitted your speech, you cannot speak now.

Your speech will not go on record. A separate opportunity will be given to you later.

Shri. Jayakumar.

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* Not recorded.

[English]

DR. K. JAYAKUMAR (TIRUVALLUR): Thank you, Hon. Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak in this august House. It is indeed a great pleasure to speak under your chairmanship at this hour. I just want to record a few lines regarding the requirements of my constituency. I hope and trust the Hon. Minister will make a note of them.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Today, it was the learned Members themselves who were violating the rules and procedures of the House.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

DR. K. JAYAKUMAR: Sir, my Constituency falls in the northern part of Tamil Nadu. Tirupati is a holy shrine where a lot of people from Chennai go every year. Even people from Delhi take flight till Chennai and go over there. You fly nicely and then the road journey is very bad. Kindly take care of it. It is a four-lane road but only two lanes have been completed yet. Work on other two lanes has not been done. I request the Hon. Minister to take care of it for the sake of people of the North if not for the people of the South.

Chennai to Tada road is the east coast road. It is a six-lane road. But work on only four lanes has been completed. Work on rest two

lanes has not been done. On the whole, only 50 per cent of the work is completed. I request the Government to take care of these roads also.

It is an East Coast road with six lanes proposed, but only four lanes have been done and another two lanes have not been completed. On the whole, only 50 per cent of the road has been completed. I would request the Hon. Minister to take care of this road. This road is used by people to go out on the eastern sector.

Another road is Chennai-Bengaluru connecting road. It was a good road. It was done very well earlier, but over the period, due to lack of proper maintenance, too many potholes have developed and cars cannot go beyond the speed of 60 kilometres per hour. So, a lot of accidents are taking place between Sriperumbudur and Maduravoyal which is just like a valley. I would request the Hon. Minister to take care of this road also.

Sir, thanks a lot.

[*]**DR. UMESH G. JADAV (GULBARGA):** I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways to demand on Transport and Highways for the development of my *Parliamentary Constituency* i.e, Kalaburagi/Gulbarga in Karnataka State.

I would like to bring it to your kind notice that the Kalburagi is one of the fastest growing city in Karnataka and the important Roads intersecting Kalaburagi are as follows and initiation of these below mentioned roads are need of the hour for Kalburagi: NH-150 E (Kalburagi to Solapur Via Afzalpur, Akkalkot); NH-50 (NH 2018) Humnabad Vijayapur Section; NH-150 Kalaburagi – Wadi-Kadecchur upto Andhra Pradesh.

There is one Existing road at present having a periphery of 22.50 kms with a radius of 3.00 KM approximately which is used by through traffic intersecting the city to bypass the city. Since the city has outgrown beyond the existing ring road at an alarming rate, the thorough traffic of NH 150E, NH 50 and 150 have to travel on the existing ring road along with the local city traffic, which results in heavy traffic congestion and poor riding quality. The traffic intensity of the existing ring road is about 45000 PCU during peak Hours. Hence the new bypass is necessary between (Kalburagi

[*] Speech was Laid on the Table

Afzalpur Section) to NH 50 (Kalaburagi Jewargi Section) via NH 150 (Kalburagi – Andhra Border Section).

The alignment is approved and the consultant has submitted the final DPR and the submission of Final DPR. Therefore, keeping above facts in mind it is necessary to upgrade the above roads as National Highway before the work can be taken up.

I will come to a very important scheme by the Government of India to connect the various state through "Greenfield Bharatmala Pariyojana", I request the Hon'ble Minister for the initiation of work to be started from Akkalkot to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu Border in specific I would like to state that work to be taken up in Kalaburagi District covering Aland Afzalpur Jewari Kalaburagi Talukas in my Constituency. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister for the completion of NH 218.

There is long pending demands of 6 Flyover in the Kalaburagi City to ease the heavy traffic congestion in various part of the Town. I would also like to request the Connection of NH 65 to NH7 via Chincholi which is passing through Manaekhelli – Chincholi – Tandur – Jadcherala.

My last request to the Hon'ble Minister but not the least is submission for providing confirmation of Existing ROW Details. Consultancy service for feasibility study cum DPR. Survey and land

Plan for upgradation of Road from Sastapur – Narayanpet and Chincholi to Shapur to National Highway by adopting Lidar or Similar technology in the state of Karnataka. With reference to this details of the roads are as follows of SH 15 (Chincholi to Shiroli Via Sulepeth), SH 32 (Kandagol Cross to Kodli Cross) and SH 125 (Kodli Cross to Kalagi Side)

I would also like to thank Shri Nitin Gadkari ji, for creating history in Road Transport and Highway Development in record rate of constructing highways in the country. I would like to conclude my speech by the *quote of Barack Obama- He said "If you were successful, somebody along the line gave you some help… Somebody helped to create this unbelievable American system that we have that allowed you to thrive. Somebody invested in roads and bridges. If you've got a business -you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen."* - Barack Obama

Thank you .

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again on Tuesday, the 16 July, 2019 at 11 a.m.

22.30 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, July 16, 2019/Ashadha 25,1941 (Saka)

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