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Title: Need to take steps to reconstruct the National Highway No. 744 at Ezhukon, Kerala to avoid serious road accidents due to its high elevation.

**SHRI KODIKKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA):** The Kollam-Thirumangala National Highway No 744 (previously 208) which connects Kerala and Tamil Nadu has been witnessing serious road accidents resulting in death and injury to innocent people. The rate of accidents is increasing with each passing day. Most of these accidents happen at Ezhukon junction. The main reason is that the National Highway at Ezhukon has been built at a considerable height. Shops, temples, Government offices and educational institutions are located at both sides of the National Highway. The local people have to cross the National Highway for their day to day work. At the same time, traffic along the highway is very heavy. The highway is one of the main arteries through which commodities from Tamil Nadu enter the State. Heavy vehicles laden with consignment form bulk of the traffic. Vehicles ply on this road at a very high speed. A person coming from one side of the road cannot spot the approaching vehicles. Hence, fatal accidents happen on this stretch.

There has been a long pending demand from the local people to reduce the height of this National Highway by reconstructing it. But sadly, the National Highway Authority of India has not taken any step in this regard. Every time, an accident happens here, the traffic is held up for hours together. People are agitated at the callous behavior of the concerned authorities and have held demonstrations to press for their demand.

I, therefore, request the Union Government to take urgent steps to reconstruct the road and reduce its height in Ezhukon town taking the interests of the people in view.