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Title: Need to convert the stretch of National Highway No. 49 between Madurai and Dhanuskodi in Tamil Nadu into a four lane road.

**SHRI A. ANWHAR RAAJHA (RAMANATHAPURAM):** Infrastructure augmentation in the country got a boost with enhanced road connectivity when previous NDA government gave a thrust to it. Laying of 4 Lane highways under the Golden Quadrilateral Project proved to be a land mark achievement. National Highways Authority of India entrusted with this responsibility had announced then the linking of Delhi-Rameswaram with much fanfare. Unfortunately that remains incomplete even now. Recently, another announcement was made linking Madurai-Dhanuskodi through NH 49 and laying a 4 lane road to a stretch of 192.7 kms. This would meet a purpose of linking headquarters Madurai with Ramanathapuram, linking pilgrim centres Madurai and Rameshwaram that draw pilgrims from all over the country and linking strategically important border point Dhanuskodi with the National Capital. It is learnt that even this latest project is sought to be curtailed and only up to Paramakudi a 4 lane road (87 kms) will be laid while Ramanathapuram will only get a 2 lane with paved shoulder for a stretch of 120 kms. It is totally disappointing. At a time when the Union Minister of Roadways is talking about laying a Sky Road between India and Sri Lanka across the Gulf in the Bay of Bengal it is necessary for the Union Government to complete entire stretch up to Dhanuskodi without any further delay. Hence, I urge upon the Centre to take urgent and immediate steps in this regard considering the overall benefits.