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Title: Need to provide special financial package to Government of Tamil Nadu for Erode-Palani State Highway.

SHRI S. SELVAKUMARA CHINNAIYAN (ERODE): The expansion of Highway connecting Erode and Palani via Kangeyam and Dharapuram is very important for the people of Kongu region. A survey for expansion of Erode-Palani Road via Kangeyam and Dharapuram was undertaken through Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project.

The Erode-Dharapuram Highway (SH 83A) being one of the high-traffic density roads is being considered for the Public—Private-Partnerships (PPP) for expanding the road width from the existing seven metres to 10 metres.

The project would help substantially since the bottleneck and traffic jams created at many places would be removed. The road is divided by a median, but there is meagre scope for simultaneous passage of two vehicles on either side.

The road is very important for hundreds and thousands of Devotees who perform *padayatra* during *Thai Poosam* and *Pan guni Utthiram* festivals along the 100 Kms road stretch between Erode and Palani via Kangeyam and Dharapuram. This road stretch being narrow at many places become root cause for many accidents and death of several pilgrims every year. It will be very useful for pilgrims as well as for regular pedestrians if the road is extended on both sides and a pathway is constructed with provisions for resting and relaxing, particularly toilets along this road.

Therefore, I urge the Union Government to provide a special financial package to Government of Tamil Nadu to execute the expansion of the road on both sides from Erode to Palani via Kangeyam and Dharapuram.