

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1227
ANSWERED ON- 29/07/2026

QUALITY OF NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AND EXPRESSWAYS

1227. SHRI IMRAN PRATAPGARHI:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the recent cave-in on the Delhi–Dehradun Expressway;
- (b) the findings of the inquiry regarding the causes of the incident;
- (c) the names of officials and contractors against whom disciplinary action has been initiated; and
- (d) whether Government proposes to conduct an independent structural safety audit of all recently constructed expressways?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

(SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI)

- (a) Two number of potholes were observed and rectified by the contractor at its own cost under its contractual obligations.
- (b) The potholes occurred due to localised failure caused by waterlogging. At this location, local resistance hindered completion of the requisite drainage connections and slope protection works. Consequently, the drainage integration could not be completed in time, resulting in accumulation of water during heavy rainfall leading to formation of potholes.
- (c) Show cause notices have been issued to the Authority's Engineer and the Contractor. The Team Leader of the Authority Engineer and Project Manager of the Contractor have been suspended.
- (d) An independent structural and pavement audit of the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor has been conducted by the Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) follows an established policy framework for structural safety audits of National Highways and Expressways as under:
 - i. Road Safety Audits (RSA):** NHAI mandates formal, independent Road Safety Audits, comprising a systematic examination of road projects by qualified independent auditors to

identify potential safety hazards, in accordance with IRC:SP:88 (Manual on Road Safety Audit).

ii. Preventive Structural Inspections: Specific inspections of structures such as bridges, retaining walls and RE walls are mandated to assess design, structural safety and construction methodology, with a view to preventing premature failures. For bridges in severe environments, IRC: SP:80-2008 is adopted for corrosion prevention and monitoring audits at the design, construction and maintenance stages.

iii. Audits of Failed Structures: In the event of a structural failure such as a bridge collapse or expressway cave-in, NHAI constitutes an Independent Expert Committee of three experts drawn from an empanelled list of bridge and structural specialists. The Committee is required to visit the site within 24 hours of the incident, submit a preliminary report within 3 days, and a final detailed report within 7 days, covering root-cause analysis, remedial measures and fixing of responsibility on the contractors or officials concerned. Following major structural incidents, Project Directors are directed to have similar structures across their projects re-inspected for compliance with applicable IRC Standards.
