

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 81
ANSWERED ON 20/07/2026**

DIG-ONCE POLICY TO EXTEND URBAN ROAD LIFE

81. SHRI RAJINDER GUPTA:

Will the Minister of *Housing and Urban Affairs* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken cognisance of the fact that repeated uncoordinated excavations by water, power, telecom and gas utilities significantly reduce the designed life of urban roads and if so, Government's assessment thereof;
- (b) whether a coordinated 'dig-once' or joint utility corridor policy mandating advance co-ordination among utility agencies before any road excavation has been formulated or is under consideration;
- (c) the number of road-cutting permissions issued to utility agencies in major cities during the last five years; and
- (d) the steps proposed to mandate uniform structural restoration standards after utility cuts and assign accountability for reduction in road life?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI TOKHAN SAHU)**

(a) to (d): As per 12th Schedule of the Constitution of India, urban planning including urban roads, water supply, sewerage and other municipal services are the function of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/ Urban Development Authorities. Accordingly, planning and maintenance of urban roads, grant of road-cutting permissions to utility agencies, coordination among water, sewerage, electricity, telecommunications and gas agencies, and restoration of roads after excavation fall within the domain of the respective State Governments, Urban Local Bodies, Development Authorities and road-owning agencies.

Government of India supplements the efforts of the States through schematic interventions/ advisories. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has published the Urban and Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation (URDPFI) Guidelines 2014, Chapter 8 – Infrastructure Planning, provides guidance for coordinated planning of transportation and physical infrastructure services and recommends that the right of use for various infrastructure services be assigned within the road right-of-way at the stage of finalising the road network and hierarchy.

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Further, the Ministry of Communications, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has taken following measures to prevent damage to underground utilities during laying of Optical Fibre Cable, thereby helping to preserve the designed life of roads, including urban roads.

- i. The Telecommunication (Right of Way) Rules, 2024 ("RoW Rules") have been issued under the Telecommunications Act, 2023 to enable public entities to specify their terms and conditions at the time of grant of right of way permissions and to provide for safeguards for undertaking telecommunication infrastructure deployment works
- ii. The Call Before u Dig (CBuD) mobile app has been made available to facilitate better coordination between excavation agencies and underground utility owners before any excavation and to prevent accidental damage to underground utility infrastructure such as optical fibre cables, drinking water pipelines, electric cables.
