

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2797
ANSWERED ON 8TH AUGUST, 2024**

COLLAPSE OF SILKYARA TUNNEL

**2797. Shri Karti P Chidambaram:
Shri Shafi Parambil:**

**Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्री**

be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has included a clause in its contract with Navayuga Engineering Company Limited (NEC) for the Silkyara tunnel to construct an escape passage, as mandated by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;**
- (b) whether the Government was aware of findings from multiple reports that identified construction risks due to the presence of shear zones and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) the reasons for approving the project despite these identified risks; and**
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to ensure safety standards in such infrastructure projects?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

(SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI)

- (a) National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) has included the clause to construct escape passage**

in the Contract Agreement of construction of 2-lane bi-directional Silkyara bend – Barkot tunnel on NH-134 (Old NH-94) as mandated by the Cabinet Committee.

The tunnel being constructed is a single tube tunnel with a partition wall in the center leading to use of both the lanes in case of emergency as an escape passage for each other.

(b)&(c) Shear Zones are common in the Himalayan Regions; therefore, construction works in hills are carried out taking into account the same.

The project was approved considering the risks, such as shear zones, to be addressed through scientific technology and methodology as per the Contract Agreement.

Further, the Silkyara tunnel project is crucial for the socio-economic development of the region and provides for connectivity to Yamunotri, a main pilgrimage site on Chardham, throughout the year. The project also serves important strategic purposes of the nation.

(d) Safety measures are an integral part of highway / tunnel projects during different stages of design, construction and Operation & Maintenance (O&M). Appropriate safety measures in accordance with IRC codes/guidelines are adopted for the design, construction and maintenance of NHs/tunnels.
