

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

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *272
ANSWERED ON 18th DECEMBER, 2025**

**HIGHWAY PROJECTS IN TRIBAL/BACKWARD DISTRICTS OF
MAHARASHTRA**

***272. Adv Gowaal Kagada Padavi:**

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्री

be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken note of the statement by the Minister that road quality is non-negotiable and that officers and contractors will be held accountable for highway works after the national highway network grew 60% to 1.46 lakh kilometres with projects costing 12.20 lakh crore, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the number of kilometres of new highways or State highways in Maharashtra especially in tribal or backward districts currently under construction or being upgraded and the budget allocation for such works;

(c) whether the Government has introduced special quality monitoring or maintenance programmes for highways traversing tribal or remote terrains where slopes, drains and access are more difficult to ensure durability and safety, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the timeline by which the Government expects all major highway projects in tribal/backward districts to meet the quality and completion norms and the time by which the first public audit report covering these districts will be available?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
(SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI)**

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 272 ANSWERED ON 18.12.2025 ASKED BY ADV GOWAAL KAGADA PADAVI REGARDING HIGHWAY PROJECTS IN TRIBAL/BACKWARD DISTRICTS OF MAHARASHTRA

(a) Yes, Sir. National Highways (NH) network length in the country has increased by about 60%, from 91,287 km in March, 2014 to 1,46,560 km and at present, NH projects are ongoing in about 28,000 km length in the country, costing about ₹ 7.70 Lakh Crore.

All efforts are made to ensure that the NHs are constructed as per stipulated quality standards specified in the Indian Roads Congress (IRC) specifications and codes. In case of sub-standard works/ projects where major deficiencies against quality are observed, actions against defaulting agencies have been taken up as per the provisions of the Contract/ Concession agreement, such as termination of contract agreement, levying of penalties/ liquidated damages, debarment/ blacklisting, declaring as non-performers etc.

Penalties against damages have been imposed on Contractors/ Concessionaires in 25 nos. of projects, Defect Liability Period (DLP) has been extended in 3 nos. projects, Contractor has been blacklisted/ debarred or Contract Terminated in 11 nos. cases, Authority's Engineer/ Independent Engineer (AE/IE) or their key Personnel have been blacklisted/ debarred for 11 nos. projects and Performance Bank Guarantee forfeited/ encashed for 2 nos. projects.

11 officers were removed from service on account of performance assessment and other disciplinary actions taken on 11 officers for various reasons including negligence and dereliction of duties.

(b) to (d) The Government in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is primarily responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways. Development and maintenance of NHs is a continuous process. Works on NHs including for NHs providing connectivity to aspirational and tribal districts and other districts and their capacity augmentation are taken up based on the traffic density, connectivity requirement, condition of the road and synergy with PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP).

At present, NH projects in total length of 3,840 km and costing ₹ 51,029 Crore are ongoing in the State of Maharashtra. Out of these, projects in total length of 1,952 km costing ₹33,408 Crore either pass through or are in tribal / aspirational districts which are scheduled for completion in a phased manner by June, 2027.

Funds for development and maintenance of NHs are allocated State/ Union Territory (UT) / Agency-wise and not project-wise.

To ensure that highway construction in the country (including for NHs passing through tribal or remote terrains) adheres to stipulated quality standards, Consultants (AE/IE) are appointed by the executing agencies for day-to-day supervision of works at site. Inspections are undertaken from time to time and ensure adherence of conformity of quality of the work done by the Concessionaire/ Contractors with stipulated requirements

The Government has taken the following initiatives for improvement of quality control systems in implementation of NHs works: -

- i. Policy for Adoption of Automated & Intelligent /Machine-aided Construction (AI-MC) in NH projects issued;**
- ii. Assessments of road conditions through Network Survey Vehicle (NSV) mandated for all NHs and Expressway works at the time of completion and every six months thereafter, which is monitored through electronic platform. NSV system for road condition assessment has further been revamped using analytics for enforcement of contractual provisions during Operation and Maintenance (O&M) through dedicated central cell;**
- iii. Operationalization of a centralized system called NHAI One App for Monitoring and rectification of highway defects which enables geo-tagging of defects along with photographs;**
- iv. Analysis of High-Resolution Imagery collected from Drone Surveys in Drone Analytics Monitoring System (DAMS) integrated with Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning algorithms for periodic evaluation of progress and quality of ongoing NHs works from time to time;**

- v. **Deployment of Mobile Quality Control Vans (MQCVs) equipped with Non-Destructive Testing Equipment on pilot basis in four States, namely in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Odisha and Karnataka, for diagnostic assessments of overall health and quality of works from time to time during project implementation phases. Decision has been taken to diversify this initiative in some more States;**
- vi. **Deployment of Third-Party Quality Auditors for independent quality audits of NH works on a case-to-case basis and follow up corrective action by concerned agencies based on such Audit Reports.**

Remedial work to repair or reconstruct damages during construction or in the Defect Liability Period (DLP) is the responsibility of the Contractor/ Concessionaire at their own cost as per provisions of contract agreement except in those cases where the Contract Agreement has been terminated in which case the securities provided are forfeited.
