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Title: Demand to make slight change in alignment of Moothakunnam-Edapally stretch pertaining to NH-66 in Kerala.

SHRI HIBI EDEN (ERNAKULAM): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a very important matter related to the National Highway Authority of India in my constituency. The NH66 which commences from Panvel in Maharashtra to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu goes through Kerala. It is a stretch of 1608 kilometres.

A major stretch of which this highway through Kerala, that is, from Trivandrum to Kasargod. The Kerala State Government had acquired 30 metres for the highway widening in 2005 but, unfortunately, the Central Government norms have changed to 45 metres. Later, according to the norms, 45 metres was agreed and in 2017, the detailed project report was submitted.

Sir, the Moothakunnam-Edapally stretch in my Constituency is a major stretch where there is a lot of local resistance for a small stretch of 1050 metres, starting from Mesthirippadi junction to Sheduppadi in Alangad Panchayat where the State Government already acquired 5.5 acres of land which is underutilized.

If a minor change can be made in the alignment, 27,500 square feet of buildings like houses and commercial establishments can be protected. Also by utilizing the 5.5 acres of land, a huge amount of land acquisition cost can also be saved. As we all know, land acquisition cost is exorbitant in Kerala, especially in my place Cochin.

So, I urge upon the Central Government to make necessary changes in the alignment to get the confidence of the local populace and expedite the project. There is a lot of ambiguity in two of the major National Highway Authority projects passing through my constituency, one that starts from Angamaly to Kundanoor and another from Kochi to Theni NH 85 bye-pass. Both these highways intersect through Tripunithura where the people fear that there would be two land acquisitions separately. I would like urge upon the Government to direct the authorities concerned to ensure that land acquisition is done in a unified manner instead of the present mode.