

**Title:** Need to declare road between Gopalpur in Orissa and Raipur in Madhya Pradesh as National Highway.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (KALAHANDI): Sir, this is to demand that the road from Gopalpur Port to Raipur should be declared as National Highway for its importance of connecting the Steel City of Bhilai with the Port of Gopalpur, which will open up a vast hinterland rich in minerals and a poverty-stricken population to developmental activity. This Highway will also be part of our Government's policy to strengthen the infrastructure to boost our economy in the backward pockets like the KBK districts.

A proposal was also sent by the State Government to the Central Government in Works Department Letter No.14058 dated 12/6/98. A little modification has to be done regarding the route of the road. Previously, it was going from Rampur to Amat-Belgaon, but as the Bargarh-Boriguma road has been declared as National Highway, it will overlap if the road is taken to Belgaon. Therefore, I suggest that the road be taken to Bhawanipatna-Khariar-Khariar Road-Mahasamund and at Mahasamund to join National Highway No.6, thereby developing backward areas of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

I request the Union Government to look into the matter.