

>

Title: Need to repair N.H. 53 and deploy para-military forces along N.H. 39 to provide safe passage to transporters carrying essential commodities to Manipur.

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (INNER MANIPUR): The cost of living in Manipur has been exceedingly high for the last few months. There is acute shortage of essential commodities in the state. People of Manipur are buying essential commodities from black market at sky-rocket price. For instance, Petrol Rs. 110-150/litre, Diesel Rs. 70-90/litre, Cooking gas Rs 1500-2000/cylinder and Rice Rs. 30-45/kg.

One reason for this scarcity is our transporters' reluctance to ply on NH 39 even after lifting of blockade by Naga students as transporters are facing extortions and frequent bandhs by Naga insurgents/organizations on this route.

Another reason is that the other two National Highways i.e. NH 53 and NH 150 connecting Manipur with Assam and Mizoram respectively are in pathetic conditions.

At the moment, Manipur Government is managing with NH 53 which is affected by regular landslides and bridges on it are dangerously dangled. I urge upon the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways and NHA to take up the improvement of NH 53 on war footing.

Also, NH 150 is still at a nascent stage and it is too narrow for any traffic.

At this juncture NH 39 remains the only viable option for transportation of essential commodities.

I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government, particularly the Union Home Ministry to set up a National Highway Protection Force for manning sensitive NHs like NH 39. Till a National Highway Protection Force is mobilized and put in place, for the time being adequate Para-military forces may be deployed along NH 39 for providing a safe passage to our transporters. Immediate action is the need of the hour.