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Title: Need to take steps to make our footpaths, roads and transportation systems inclusive for all categories of road users including persons with disabilities.

SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER (CHANDIGARH): Hon. Speaker Madam, according to the Census 2011, 2.68 crore persons with disabilities and 9.68 crore senior citizens reside in India. Despite this, the specific needs of such vulnerable road users during commuting have not been addressed by the existing transport system. The concerns have aggravated, particularly in metropolitan cities due to bad road design along with neglect of pedestrians in the urban and transport policies.

Our roads are designed only keeping motorized vehicles in mind. As we are all aware, majority of roads do not even have usable footpaths. So, road users are forced to walk on the roads making them vulnerable to road accidents. This situation is especially dangerous for people with disabilities. We, therefore, need a significant overhaul of the urban design and road engineering standards in India.

The NDA Government is already taking proactive measures in this regard. On 3<sup>rd</sup> December, the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, the hon. Prime Minister introduced the *Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan* to make environment, public transport and IT infrastructure completely accessible for all. I am delighted to learn that the hon. Minister of Road Transport and Highways has also committed to introducing the safe system approach in road design and engineering.

Along with these initiatives, I appeal to the hon. Ministers of Road Transport and Highway and Urban Development to establish minimum safety standards, incorporating universal design for all roads, footpaths and other walking spaces. It is imperative that we make our footpaths, roads and transportation system inclusive for all categories of road users.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Keshav Prasad Maurya, Shri P.P. Chaudhary, Shrimati Poonam Mahajan, Shri Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Ashwini Kumar Chaubey, Shri Shivkumar Udasi, Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, Kumari Shobha Korandlaje and Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shrimati Kirron Kher.

â€¦(व्यवधान)