

JUSTIFICATION FOR LOCATING PROJECT IN FOREST AREA.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORT&H) is poised to develop remote and strategically important roads in hilly terrains to perennial routes. In continuation to these developments, National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) work under the aegis of MORT&H to implement these projects.

NHIDCL has been assigned the work of Consultancy Services for Preparation of Detailed Project Report of NH-244, Sudhmahadev-Dranga Tunnel and Vailoo Tunnel, providing pre-construction activities and construction/upgradation of NH-244 including construction of Sudhmahadev-Dranga Tunnel and Vailoo Tunnel on NH-244. The construction of Sudhmahadev Dranga Tunnel via Goha Khellani, Khellani -Chattru-Signpura-Khanabal-Vailoo-Tunnel portion NH-244 in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir Greenfield Section and Upgradation of existing is inter-alia package for construction of Two-lane with paved shoulder .

The NH-244 (Chenani-Sudhmahadev-Goha-Khellani-Kishtwar-Sinthanpass-Khanabal) with length of 274 Kms has been entrusted to NHIDCL vide Gazette notification dated 20.03.2015. This is an alternative route to connect the Srinagar and border areas in J&K with all-weather Strategic road to ease the traffic volume on Jammu-Srinagar Highway via Jawahar Tunnel i.e., NH-44 after construction of this alternative route to reach the Srinagar via NH-244. Directorate General of Military Operation (MO IHQ of MoD (Army) DHQ PO New Delhi vide letter A/40076/MOS dated 11.01.2021 has requested for development of NH-244 on priority to enable smooth movement of military traffic. National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) vide letter 67/2020-Mit-II dated 22.07.2020 and 25.08.2020 has requested NHIDCL that NH-244 highway should be completed on fast-track mode including all tunnels on this road in next three years.

The Sudhmahadev Dranga Tunnel via Goha-Khellani, Khellani Chattru Road is part of upgradation of NH-244 whose Km. 0.00 starts from the starting of Sudhmahadev -Dranga Tunnel and Design Chainage Km. 185 at Khanbal, Anantnag. The development of NH-244 package wise is being undertaken by NHIDCL in which Khellani Chattru Pkg-I is one of such packages. The details of the alignment of NH-244 is attached for reference.

The existing Batote-Khellani road is sinking due to falling in the catchment of reservoir of Baghlihar dam. Further, to avoid the accident due to land slide on the present khellani Chhatru Singhpura kishtwar road and to avoid poor geometry of this road, a new alignment has been

proposed from the end of the Sudhmahadev-Dranga Tunnel to Khellani town, Prem Nagar town, thathri which is a part of the upgradation of NH-244 which would further connect to Kashmir valley through Doda, Kishtwar and Anantnag District. Doda District with total population of 442,589 is being connected with existing National Highway. which will reduce the travel time in surroundings area and would further ensure the development and main stream connectivity to National Highway.

The new alignment of Khellani-Chhatru (Design Km. 31.449 Khellani, Pariyot to Km. 51.700- Prem Nagar) have to pass through the proposed alignment through forest land to avoid the land slide of existing Khellani-Chhatru-Singhpura Road, poor geometry of the existing Khellani Chattru road and black spot areas since no other alternative route is available. Mitigation measures and slope protection measures for the alignment passing through forest, state land and private land has been finalized and incorporated in Technical Schedule. The Diversion of forest land is bare minimum and unavoidable. The gradient of the new alignment has been maintained as per IRC norms and standard. This Khellani-Chattru-Kishtwar Road Package- I alignment passes through Bhadra, Bhela, Daron Kerani, Hud, Paryote, Saras, Shaerna Kalan, Hamerapur, Haneja Shibnot, Jangalwar, Sohanda, Kehlote, Bhadra, Shaja, Thalela, Balasu, villages in Doda tehsils and connects most of the habitation in this area.

Hence, it was not possible to avoid forest land falling in the Construction and Upgradation of road from design Chainage 31.449 (Khellani, Pariyot) to Km 51.700 (Prem Nagar) (Design length 20.251 Km.) in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir Package-1 of National Highway Number -244

Divisional Forest Officer, Bhadarwah Seal

Date:

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