

No. RW/NHIII/COORD/36/84

Dated the 17th May, 1984

To

The Secretaries of all States/Union Territories
(Department dealing with National Highways)

Subject : Recommendations of the Vohra Committee — Protection of National Highway land against encroachment

I am directed to say that the Committee on the Agency System for National Highways had, *inter-alia*, recommended as under :

"All National Highways land should be completely cleared of encroachments and fenced off as a protection against further encroachments. These lands should then after be properly landscaped by bringing in earth from elsewhere and planted with variety of trees and shrubs selected for their economic, visual and environmental qualities."

2. The Government of India have since accepted this recommendation. It may be mentioned that the National Highway road lands are being encroached upon on wide scale. Apart from this, such lands are often disfigured by the State PWDs themselves by being dug up for the earth required to raise road levels thus creating ugly and insanitary 'Borrow' pits along National Highways. The committee observed that it is only in places where road lands are free from encroachments and misuse and where trees have been planted that they provide an attractive back-drop of greenery to the highway which makes motoring a pleasure and reduce the strain of travel.

3. Attention is also invited to this Ministry's letter No. NHII/P/72/76 dated the 13th January, 1977 containing guidelines to control the ribbon development and removal of encroachments (copy enclosed for ready reference). Attention is also invited to this Ministry's letter No. NHIII/P/10/76 dated the 19th April, 1984, containing the views of the Union Law Ministry regarding application of the provisions of the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 for the removal of encroachments. According to them, the provisions of the Public Premises Act, 1971 can be applied for tackling the problem of removal of encroachments on National Highways which vest in the Government of India in terms of National Highways Act. I am accordingly to request that suitable action may kindly be taken to protect the National Highway land against encroachments in the light of these instructions. Action taken or proposed to be taken may also be intimated to this Ministry.
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