

Date of order: 03.11.2022

Coram:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjib Banerjee, Chief Justice
Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Diengdoh, Judge

Appearance:

For the Respondents : Mr S. Sengupta, Adv. [For R 1]
Mr K. Khan, Sr GA

To begin with, the National Highways Authority of India says that work on NH6 to repair the damage caused during the monsoon season would be completed by December 15, 2022 as submitted earlier and not by November 15, 2022 as erroneously recorded in the order of September 29, 2022.

The submission is accepted.

At the same time, NHAI is requested to ensure that more funds are allotted for the creation, maintenance and upkeep of roads in the State, whether by taking over State highways as a part of the national highways network as has been done elsewhere in the country or by building new roads to ensure greater connectivity in the hilly terrain.

The State submits that a report has been prepared, but the State fairly concedes that nothing of any significance may have been indicated in the report. The State seeks some time to indicate a more concrete road-map. The State is reminded that the need here is for roads and roads that

can last as concrete roads would, because of the incessant rains in the State.

While it is appreciated that funds may not be available to have the ideal road connectivity, yet the State must strive to complete the work, including the maintenance work, within a time-frame. A bar-chart may be prepared indicating the areas where the work would be taken up or completed and other areas where maintenance work would be undertaken, whether on a regular or periodic basis. There is no doubt that the quantum of money allocated for roads has to be ascertained after assessing the requirements on several other important fronts, including healthcare, education and the like. Yet, it cannot be ignored that access to adequate roads is a basic right that has to be reached to the citizens in the State.

Let the matter appear five weeks hence for a more concrete and time-bound road-map to be indicated by the State.

List on December 13, 2022.

(W. Diengdoh)
Judge

(Sanjib Banerjee)
Chief Justice

Meghalaya
03.11.2022
"Sylvana PS"