

No. NHIII/P/15/75

Dated 3rd August, 1979

To

1. All State & Union Territories Govts.
(dealing with National Highways)
2. Chief Engineers & Additional Chief Engineers of all State PWDs & Union Territories dealing with National Highways
3. Engineer-in-Chief, CPWD, New Delhi
4. Director General Border Roads, New Delhi

Subject : Plantation, maintenance and cutting of trees on National Highways

Please refer to this Ministry's detailed circular of even number dated 20.5.1976, on the subject cited above.

2. Certain difficulties in implementing these instructions have been brought to this Ministry's notice by Forest Department Officials. To remove these difficulties, it has been decided to amend the instructions earlier issued, to the extent given below :

- i) Location of trees — Though the first row of trees should be placed at a minimum distance of 10 to 12 metres from the centreline of the extreme traffic lane, the second row of trees may be placed closer than 6 metres depending upon the species of trees planted after obtaining the advice of forest officials. There shall be no limitation about the number of rows of trees to be planted beyond the first row.
- ii) While borrowing earth from the roadside land for normal maintenance of road, care should be exercised to see that excessive earth is not removed from around the roots of trees. This may cause ponding of water and ultimate uprooting of trees. In this connection the advice of Forest Department officials should be taken. Earth should be borrowed by scraping the surface uniformly to create a proper graded roadside area. Ugly deep pits should be avoided. Guidance given in IRC : 10-1961 "Recommended Practice for Borrow Pits for Road Embankment Constructed by Manual Operation" should also be kept in view.
- iii) Where available roadside land is inadequate for large scale plantation, at least one row of fruit bearing trees should be planted along the highway. In addition to this orchard type plantation might be done in local areas where more land is available as consequent to realignment, approaches to bridges, in the compounds of rest houses etc.
- iv) As far as possible, the trees planted should be fruit bearing.
- v) Rest areas and landscaped spots may also be developed at intervals along the route, especially in portions where roadside land is available due to change in alignment.

3. In cases where the roadside avenue tree plantation is handed over to the Forest Department, care should be taken that the existing row of trees are not felled before handing over. The Plantation programme in each state should be coordinated between the PWD and the Forest Department. The Chief Engineer and the Chief Conservator of Forest in each State should meet at least twice a year to discuss the budgeting and plantation programme. Through these meetings, it should be ensured that areas which are likely to be used for widening of roads within the next 10 years are not planted and other requirements of geometrics, sight distances, borrowing of earth etc. are kept in view while planning tree plantation. Normally the Forest Deptt. should be able to provide funds for tree plantation along the National Highways from their own budget, except in the initial stages when they have just taken over the work and provisions have not been made in their plan for this work. The understanding with the Forest Deptt. shall be that even though the entire cost of plantation will be borne by the Forest Deptt., the ownership of land will still remain with the National Highway Authority. They will also agree to remove any tree which obstructs the sight line or is otherwise required to be removed for any other reasons by the Chief Engineer of the State.