

Chennai - Salem: Green Express Way Corridor

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- The proposed Greenfield highway between Chennai and Salem has run into opposition from various farmer organisations.

\n

- This is the latest in a series of protests against major projects in Tamil Nadu that include Kudankulam power plant and the Tuticorin copper plant.

\n

\n\n

What is the project about?

\n\n

\n

- **Proposal** - The proposed eight lane road is estimated to cost is Rs 9,106 crore, with a tentative Rs 415 crore for rehabilitation of the displaced people.

\n

\n\n

\n

- It will run 277 Km and is slated to pass through Kancheepuram, Tiruvannamalai, Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri districts.

\n

- The region is mostly agrarian with a few industrial zones and most of the land proposed to be usurped is fertile agricultural fields.

\n

\n\n

\n

- **Why** - There are three existing but twisty road routes between Chennai and Salem, two of which are already heavily trafficked, leading to abnormal delays.

\n

- Hence, Tamil Nadu CM Mr. Palaniswami is said to have written to the centre, suggested a highway that directly links the two cities and reduce fuel costs.

\n

\n\n



\n\n

\n

- A subsequent feasibility report noted that the project is expected to generate development and employment in the towns along the route.

\n

- Hence, considering the business potential and other benefits, the centre is said to have approved the proposal and called it “Green Express Way Corridor”.

\n

- Notably, government’s feasibility report states that extensive public consultations were done and suggestions were also invited in the design stage.

\n

\n\n

Why are farmer organisations protesting?

\n\n

\n

- Contrary to the government’s claim, many farmer organisations claim that they were not consulted in finalising the project.

\n

- Farmer leaders have asserted that these regions do three crops a year and destroying these highly fertile lands for a highway cannot be accepted.

\n

- Also, the state that government’s promised maximum compensation in some regions is more than 10 times lower than the prevailing market rate.

\n

- It is being felt that the government is taking unusual interest in rushing a project that is likely to affect the livelihood of over 1 lakh people.

\n

- The protesters have planned multiple peaceful demonstrations against the project in stages.

\n

\n\n

How has the government responded?

\n\n

\n

- The revenue department is engaging retired officers to complete the survey and kick off the project due to staff shortage in its ranks.

\n

- Police have been arresting protest leaders, including Salem-based activist Piyush Manush and Valarmathi.

\n

- Sources say at least 10 people are in judicial custody for mobilising people, and protest participants across villages are also being arrested.

\n

\n\n

What is the stand of the opposition DMK?

\n\n

\n

- Opposition leader M K Stalin has said that his party will launch strong protests if the government tries to implement projects using police and force.

\n

- DMK has also moved a petition before the vigilance and anti-corruption wing, alleging that the CM has made malicious gains through the project's tender.

\n

- The allegation is that contracts running into crores of rupees were given to people closely related to the CM's family at inflated costs.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n\n

\n



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering