

National Highway in Assam

387. SHRI SYED ABDUL MALIK : Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the deteriorating condition of the National Highway in Assam, particularly from Gauhati to Dibrugarh;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the delay in completing the construction of bridges and culverts on the National Highway; and

(c) by when these are likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (DR. G. S. DHILLON) :
(a) to (c) A statement giving the position is laid on the table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) The condition of National Highway 37 from Gauhati to Dibrugarh was not considered upto the mark and a critical assessment was made by the Senior Technical Officers of the Ministry in 1975. Based on their report the following steps have been taken/are being taken to improve the road : —

(i) Five estimates for special repairs costing Rs. 26.28 lakhs have been sanctioned in February/March 1976;

(ii) One estimate costing Rs. 46 lakhs for improvement of deformed stretches has been sanctioned in July 1976;

(iii) Another estimate costing Rs. 53 lakhs for improvement of deformed stretches is expected to be sanctioned shortly;

(iv) Estimates for works costing about Rs. 200 lakhs are awaited from the State Public Works Department.

(v) In addition to the above measures, funds are also allotted to the State Government from time to time for normal maintenance and repairs of the National Highways.

(b) and (c) Out of the 24 bridge works sanctioned during the Fourth Five Year Plan period for the stretch of road from Gauhati to Dibrugarh, 21 bridges have already been completed. Out of the remaining three minor bridges, two are in progress and are likely to be completed shortly. The work on the third bridge is expected to be taken up in near future.

Six estimates involving construction of 213 culverts at a cost of Rs. 31.88 lakhs were sanctioned during the Fourth Five

Year Plan period. Out of these 56 culverts have already been completed. The progress of remaining culverts was retarded firstly due to shortage of construction material like steel, cement etc. and secondly due to financial stringency. Only the inescapable works were taken up. Although the position of availability of construction material has improved, the estimates for the sanctioned works would need revision due to cost escalation before substantial progress can be made. The State Public Works Department are seized of the problem and are processing the revised estimates. The remaining culverts are likely to be completed by 1978-79.

*388. [Transferred to the 26th August, 1976.]

Issue of Passports

*389. SHRI D. Y. PAWAR :

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV :

SHRI PIARE LALL KUREEL
uruf PIARE LALL TALIB :

SHRI BRAHMANANDA
PANDA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of passports issued by the Regional Passport Office, New Delhi during the years 1974, 1975 and so far in 1976;

(b) what is the number of cases referred by the R.P.O. to the Ministry for approval during the above period;

(c) what is the average time taken by the R.P.O. in issuing a passport;

(d) whether it is a fact that enquiries from applicants about the issue of passports are not attended to promptly and that the applicants have to make frequent visits to the office for making enquiries;

(e) whether Government propose to introduce a pre-paid postal service under which applicants could be informed about the progress of their passport applications;

(f) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(g) what other steps Government are contemplating for the expeditious disposal of passport cases by the R.P.O. ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN) :

(a) *Passports Issued*

1974 . . . 27060

1975 . . . 54605

1976 . . . 34536

(upto 31-7-1976)