

and road works are in progress. Construction of a students' hostel and workshop buildings will be undertaken shortly.

(b) According to the information furnished by the Principal of the college, office is situated at Silchar, and Camp office at Shillong for liaison with P.W.D. and State Government. Camp office will be abolished after P.W.D. approves the estimates for construction of buildings and State Government finalises proposals for land development.

**Opening of national highway from
Shillong to Manipur Via Silchar**

784. SHRIMATI JYOTSNA CHANDA : Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (NAUWAHAN AUR PARIWAHAN MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Highway from Shillong to Manipur via Silchar has been opened, and

(b) if not, when it will be opened ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, AND SHIPPING & TRANSPORT (SANSADIYA KARYA TATHA NAUWAHAN AUR PARIWAHAN MANTRI) (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR) : (a) and (b). Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to the Shillong-Silchar-Imphal road. It is not a National Highway but it is an Inter-State road lying partly in Assam and partly in Manipur. The road within Assam from Shillong to Jiribam is an existing road but the Government of India have recently approved a loan assistance of Rs. 56 lakhs for the further improvement of the Silchar-Jiribam section of the road and the construction of a bridge over the river Jiri at Jiribam. A new road (new Cachar Road) within Manipur from Jiribam to Imphal is under development. The work on this new road to a limited

standard is in various stages of progress and has the following target dates for completion;

Information cut and	
improvement	May 1971
Surfacing	May 1973

This section of the road is expected, however, to be opened to restricted traffic only after the current monsoon.

Repairs to Qutab Minar

785. SHRI G VISWANATHAN : Will the Minister of CULTURE (SANSKRITI MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether Qutab Minar appears to be tilting slowly; and

(b) if so, the action taken to repair it ?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE (SIKSHA AUR SAMAJ KALYAN MANTRI AUR SANSKRITI VIBHAG MANTRI) (SHRI SIDDHARATHA SHANKAR RAY) : (a). The Minar has a tilt of 63 cms. but so far, there is no evidence to conclude that it is further tilting.

(b) Government appointed an Expert Committee to examine the Minar and suggest ways and means to preserve it for posterity. In accordance with the recommendations of the Expert Committee a phased programme for strengthening the foundation by injecting liquid cement mortar, and for carrying out repairs to the super-structure has been drawn up. The first phase of the work is proposed to be taken up during the current financial

year in consultation with the Expert Committee Tenders have already been received in respect of the first phase of the work. In the meanwhile the area around the base of the Qutab Minar has been covered with brick work to prevent seepage of water into the foundation.

Restrictions imposed by the Reserve Bank regarding agriculture finance to small farmer.

786 SHRI P VENKATASUBBAIAH Will the Minister of FINANCE (VITTA MANTRI) be pleased to state

(a) whether the Reserve Bank has imposed certain restrictions on the nationalised banks with regard to agricultural finance to the small farmers,

(b) whether it is coming in the way of small farmers in getting the maximum benefit from the nationalised banks, and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (VITTA MANTRI) (SHRI YESHWANT-RAO CHAVAN) (a) No Sir. Actually the Reserve Bank of India, in the 'guidelines' issued to the commercial banks on financing of agriculture, has impressed upon them to re-orient their agricultural lending more towards financing of small and potentially viable farmers with effective post-credit supervision. In the Conference of the Custodians of the nationalised banks held in the last week of April, 1971, the Finance Minister again re-emphasised the need for adequate credit planning in each bank with a view to meet credit requirements of the hitherto neglected sectors including the agriculture sector.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Opening of branches of nationalised Banks

787 SHRI P VENKATASUBBAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE (VITTA MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) the ratio of increase in the number of branches of the nationalised banks opened in the rural areas to the number of branches opened in urban areas after the nationalisation of banks,

(b) the percentage of assistance got from the nationalised banks by the small farmers and weaker sections, and

(c) whether any guidelines were given to the Custodians of the nationalised banks with regard to giving financial assistance to the weaker sections who are hitherto being denied assistance on the ground that they do not have enough property to offer as security ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (VITTA MANTRI) (SHRI YESHWANT-RAO CHAVAN) (a) Between July 19, 1969 and end of March, 1971, 1671 new offices have been opened by the fourteen nationalised banks in rural (population of not more than 10,000) and semi-urban (population between 10,000 and 1 lakh) centres. Offices opened in urban (including metropolitan) centres during the same period numbered 290. Thus, for every one office opened in urban and metropolitan centres about 5.7 new offices were opened in rural and semi-urban centres by these banks.

(b) Information about bank credit given to small farmers' and 'weaker sections' as such is not available.

(c) Yes, Sir. Guidelines have been issued for special credit schemes operated by the banks for small borrowers particularly those with employment potential as also for financing of agriculture.