



June 22, 2021

The Joint sitting of the parliament today adopted the Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) recommendation on the need to establish and institutionalize road asset and information management system to enhance planning and prioritization of road maintenance. The Royal Audit Authority's (RAA) report found that road maintenance works were not given importance as required in its performance audit report of road maintenance works carried out from 2013-2018.

The RAA review report found that the Department of Roads lacked proper maintenance planning, prioritization of roads for maintenance, assessment of achievements and challenges. This slowed down prompt decisions and improvements in performing their maintenance operations. For that reason, the RAA had proposed developing a comprehensive information management system.

"Only base course and blacktopping the roads will not help enhance quality and sustain the roads, we also need to study the situation of a place to understand proper planning and implementation," said Yeshey Penjor, the Agriculture and Forests Minister.

"Be it quality of the road or other things, the problem is mainly with the farm roads. When we look into the Royal Audit Authority's report, the farm roads are not included in it. Meanwhile, we can see there are more than 4,783 kilometres of national highway mentioned in it but about 9,082.2 kilometres of the farm roads are not included in the report," said Tashi Samdrup, Trongsa's Member of Parliament.

The MPs also deliberated on the safety aspects and issues of roads.

"When we talk about maintenance, we also need to focus on the safety aspects of the road. I feel there is a need to include monitoring the safety aspect also," said Kinga Penjor, Gangzur Minjey constituency's MP.

Meanwhile, the Works and Human Settlement Minister said to increase the life span of roads, the government is working on micro-surfacing the roads. Micro-surfacing is the surface treatment for roads where asphalt is laid over the top of the existing surface to seal and protect it.

The Minister added the wage rate for labourers working under the Department of Roads has also been revised to a minimum rate of Nu 460 per working day. Further, the Ministry is also continuing to work with the Granular Sub-Base (GSB) project while Road Safety and Transport Authority (RSTA) monitors the road safety.

Meanwhile, the joint sitting of the parliament also adopted the PAC's recommendation on the need to coordinate and monitor the quality of roads as per the Road Act and Guidelines and to explore an appropriate mix of labour and equipment in the routine maintenance work to improve enabling working environment and cost-effectiveness.

Kinzang Lhadon