

Expansion of National Highway 52

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The State Government has decided to propose the Centre for expansion of NH 52 along the northern bank of the river Brahmaputra which would facilitate diversion of commercial and heavy vehicles from Jakhalabandha on the southern bank across the existing Kaliab Bhomora bridge and at Gohpur on the northern bank across a new bridge connecting Bokakhat.

Forest Minister Pradyut Bordoloi said the decision has been taken in the light of suggestions made by renowned wildlife experts from across the world for overcoming new challenges in the management of the world heritage site Kaziranga. The experts had identified increasing traffic flow along the highway passing through the park as the biggest challenge to the park animals and rich biodiversity of the sanctuary.

On an average 55 animals are killed by speeding vehicles along NH 37 every year. The Minister said that the flow of traffic would increase many times if it is converted into a four-lane express highway and would pose a grave threat to animals, which migrate to highlands across the highway for shelter during flood. Once the Centre agreed to diversion of traffic of heavy vehicles, the 80-km stretch of NH 37 would be regulated by allowing only tourist vehicles and small cars.

KOUSHIK HAZARIKA

editor

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