

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

Rural Road Connectivity is not only a key component of Rural Development in India, it is also recognised as an effective Poverty Reduction Programme. Notwithstanding the efforts made, over the years, at the State and Central Levels, through different Programmes, even after five decades of Independence, about 40% of India's villages do not have proper Road connectivity.

Keeping in view the fact that Rural Roads are vital to economic growth and measures for poverty alleviation in the villages, Government has launched a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme called the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. The Programme seeks to provide connectivity to all Unconnected Habitations in the rural areas with a population of more than 500 persons through good All-weather roads by the end of the Tenth Plan Period. In respect of the Hill States (North-

East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttaranchal) and the Desert Areas, the objective would be to connect Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above. According to figures made available by the State Governments, about 1.58 lakh Unconnected Habitations need to be taken up under the PMGSY.

In order to achieve the objectives of the Programme, a requirement of Rs. 60,000 crore has been estimated for the Programme. For the present, available source of funds, is 50% share of the Cess on High Speed Diesel (HSD) amounting to approximately Rs. 2500 crore per annum, which is clearly inadequate to finance a Programme of this magnitude in a definite time-frame (2000-2007). For achieving this objective, it would be imperative to generate additional financial resources. Efforts are



Providing rural Connectivity through All-weather Roads



Strengthening and black topping of road under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

underway to find additional sources of funds

For the year 2000-01, the Planning Commission had allocated Rs. 2370 crore as per details in Annexure-VIII, which has been maintained in the current year. A sum of Rs. 130 crore is to be distributed amongst the States to address the special requirements of different areas. Depending on the availability of additional funds, these would be allocated to the States/UTs depending, *inter-alia*, upon the timely submission of Project Reports, status of preparedness, the speed of execution of the projects in hand and the absorption capacity, so as to optimise the utilisation of the available resources. In the process, it would be ensured that the requirements of the North-East and of Special Problem Areas (including Border Districts and Naxalite affected Areas) are adequately met, subject to preparation of suitable Project proposals, in accordance with the Guidelines and

as per the assessment of need, by the Ministry of Rural Development, from time to time.

For the year 2001-02, a sum of Rs. 2500 crore had been earmarked for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. All State /Union Territory authorities were requested in June 2001 to forward the Project Proposals for the current year, by the end of July, 2001 and based on the District Rural Roads Plans, Project Proposals have since been received from all the States and 2 Union Territories and after consideration by the Empowered Committee, the Ministry has, till date, cleared Project Proposals for Rs.4273.12 crore pertaining to 26 States and 2 Union Territories. Remaining proposals are expected to be cleared shortly.

Keeping in view the necessity to significantly increase the absorption capacity under the Programme, by way of expeditious execution of works, project proposals for twice the amount of the allocation have been cleared by the Ministry during the current year. It has been made clear to the States that while projects so cleared may be tendered, the actual release in 2001-02 would be limited to this year's allocation and the next year's releases will be made from April, 2002 onwards, depending on the progress of works.

On clearance of the Project proposals, the relevant packages are executed through the Executing Agencies (such as the Public Works Department / Rural Engineering Departments) and efforts are being made to complete the road works

within the approved time-frame. The well-established procedure for tendering, through competitive bidding, is being followed for all projects under the PMGSY. Time/Cost over-runs and, consequent, cost escalations are not permitted and the concerned Agencies would have to bear the additional expenditure, if any, on this account.

The Programme is being executed as per the technical specifications prescribed by the Indian Roads Congress. The Ministry has also identified 37 State Technical Agencies in consultation with the State Governments and the Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi (Annexure-IX), to scrutinise the project proposals prepared by the State Governments, provide requisite technical support to the State Governments, and to undertake Quality Control tests for the State Governments.

Quality Control is, primarily, the responsibility of the respective States/Union Territories. A three-tier Quality Control system is being set up in which the Executing Agency would be primarily responsible for maintaining the quality through its Executive Engineers as well as through an independent Quality Control Agency, whether departmental or otherwise, which is responsible to the officers of the Executing Agency or the Nodal Department independent of the Field Engineers. On its part, as a third tier, the Ministry of Rural Development would, appoint Monitors to verify at random the quality of road works. Infringement, detected by the Monitors,

would have to be rectified before making further payments.

The Detailed Estimates of the Project Proposals cleared have been prepared/ are being prepared and after technical scrutiny by the State Technical Agencies, the works are being tendered. Works are expected to commence on the ground in almost all States after completion of all formalities by January- February, 2002 and completed, to a large extent, by June, 2002. In case of the Hill States, it may take slightly longer.

The Ministry has completed all formalities regarding the setting up of a National Rural Roads Development Agency (NRRDA), and the registration under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, is expected to be completed by early January, 2002. The Agency would extend support to the Programme through advice on technical specifications, project appraisal, appointment of part-time Quality Control Monitors, Management



Road Constructed under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana



Depicting submersible bridge constructed under PMGSY to provide connectivity

of Monitoring Systems and submission of Periodic Reports to the Ministry of Rural Development.

The Ministry has also finalised the logo of the Programme and the same has been communicated to the State Governments. C-DAC, Pune, is currently working on the development of

a suitable software for the proposed “On-line Management & Monitoring System” for PMGSY. The Institute of Public Auditors of India have also been engaged to report on a suitable Accounting system for PMGSY. The Scheme provides for a projectised approach and tight monitoring of the performance by States.