

# Standing Committee Report Summary

## Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

- The Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (Chair: Mrs. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi) submitted its report on 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana,' on July 27, 2023. Launched in 2000, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is a centrally sponsored scheme to provide road connectivity to eligible rural habitations. The scheme has four verticals, (i) PMGSY I, (ii) PMGSY II, (iii) Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Areas (RCPLWEA), and (iv) PMGSY III. Key observations and recommendations include:
  - **Progress on PMGSY I and II:** PMGSY I, launched in 2000 and PMGSY II, launched in 2013 was scheduled to be completed by September 2022. As of January 2023, 96% of the target was achieved for PMGSY I and 97% for PMGSY II. The Committee noticed that the delays have adversely affected the livelihood and developmental prospects of the rural population. These delays have also led to an escalation of costs. The committee recommended that the remaining pendency of the two phases should be completed on priority.
  - **Emphasis on RCPLWEA:** RCPLWEA, ensures socio-economic development in areas affected by left-wing extremism. It was launched in 2016 and was targeted to be completed by 2020. It has been extended till March 2023. As of January 2023, only 56% of the work has been completed. The Ministry noted that the delay in progress is due to, (i) law-and-order issues, (ii) forest clearance, (iii) difficult terrain, and (iv) non-availability of contractors. The Committee recommended the Ministry of Rural Development (DoRD) to think of innovative solutions and guide states for timely completion.
  - **Centre-State Coordination:** PMGSY started as a 100% centrally sponsored scheme. The funding pattern was revised to a 60:40 ratio between Centre and State in 2015-16, and a 90:10 ratio for North Eastern States and Himalayan States. The Committee noticed delays in project implementation due to logistics or non-timely fund releases by states. 41% of the total roads are in a poor state because of the non-provisioning of adequate funds by the State. The Committee recommended the DoRD to periodically follow-up with State Government, and ensure better Centre-State coordination.
- **Quality of Roads:** The Committee recommended DoRD to ensure strong measures regarding the quality of roads, and raw material used. There is a mandatory provision of quality control labs at the ground level. However, there are instances of alleged non-existence or non-functioning of them at many locations. The Committee recommended a thorough evaluation of sites. This would ensure stricter compliance with the presence of the labs, and maintain road quality.
- **Issues with Tendering and Contractors:** Under PMGSY, bidding is carried out for road construction projects. The Committee observed that contractors use a practice called "low-tendering," where they submit very low bids to win the projects. This leads to a compromise in the quality of materials. As a result, the roads built through this approach tend to wear out quickly. The Committee recommended that the DoRD create stronger measures for the bidding process to prevent low-tendering. Additionally, it suggested implementing a rigorous monitoring system.
- **Post-Construction Maintenance:** As per PMGSY, a road is constructed for a design life of 10 years. Under the Standard Bidding Document (SBD), the contractor is responsible for road maintenance for the first five years. The State government is responsible for the maintenance over the next five years. However, contractors do not adhere to this which results in degraded road quality. The Committee recommended that DoRD ensures strict compliance with the provision of SBD, concerning the maintenance of roads. Any contractors not abiding by this should be blacklisted. It also recommended DoRD to coordinate with the Ministry of Finance for the timely release of funds. In addition to this DoRD should also supervise States for a consistent flow of funds.
- **Inclusion of 2011 census figures:** Habitations under PMGSY are based on the 2001 Census. This has led to many eligible habitations being left out. The Committee recommends DoRD to introduce a new vertical in their domain for the inclusion of habitations as per the 2011 Census.

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