

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was launched by the Govt. of India to provide connectivity to unconnected Habitations as part of a poverty reduction strategy. Govt. of India is endeavoring to set high and uniform technical and management standards and facilitating policy development and planning at State level in order to ensure sustainable management of the rural roads network. According to latest figures made available by the State Governments under a survey to identify Core Network as part of the PMGSY programme, about 1.67 lakh Unconnected Habitations are eligible for coverage under the programme. This involves construction of about 3.71 lakh km. of roads for New Connectivity and 3.68 lakh km. under upgradation.

Rural Road Connectivity is not only a key component of Rural Development by promoting access to economic and social services and thereby generating increased agricultural incomes and productive employment opportunities in India, it is also as a result, a key ingredient in ensuring sustainable poverty reduction. Notwithstanding the efforts made, over the years, at the State and Central levels, through different Programmes, many Habitations in the country are still not connected by All-weather roads. It is well known that even where connectivity has been provided, the roads constructed are of such quality (due to poor construction or maintenance) that they cannot always be categorised as All-weather roads.

With a view to redressing the situation, Government had launched the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana on 25th December, 2000 to provide all-weather access to eligible unconnected habitations. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana 1 (PMGSY) is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme. ` 0.75/ liter out of the Cess on High Speed Diesel (HSD) is earmarked for this Programme.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES:

The primary objective of the PMGSY is to provide Connectivity, by way of an All-weather Road (with necessary culverts and cross-drainage structures, which is operable throughout the year), to the eligible unconnected Habitations in the rural areas with a population of 500 persons and above in Plain areas. In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand), the Desert Areas (as identified in the Desert Development Programme), the Tribal (Schedule V) areas and Selected Tribal and Backward Districts (as identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Planning Commission) the objective would be to connect eligible unconnected Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above. The PMGSY will permit the Upgradation (to prescribed standards) of the existing roads in those Districts where all the eligible Habitations of the designated population size have been provided all-weather road connectivity. However, it must be noted that Upgradation is not central to the Programme. In Upgradation works, priority should be given to Through Routes of the Rural Core Network, which carry more traffic.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PMGSY:

The spirit and the objective of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) are to provide good all-weather road connectivity to the eligible unconnected Habitations. A habitation which was earlier provided all-weather connectivity would not be eligible even if the present condition of the road is bad.

The PMGSY shall cover only the rural areas. Urban roads are excluded from the purview of this Programme. Even in the rural areas, PMGSY covers only the Rural Roads i.e., Roads that were formerly classified as 'Other District Roads' (ODR) and 'Village Roads' (VR). Other District Roads (ODR) are roads serving rural areas of production and providing them with outlet to market centres, taluka (tehsil) headquarters, Block headquarters or other main roads. Village Roads (VR) are roads connecting villages / Habitation or groups of Habitations with each other and to the nearest road of a higher category. Major District Roads, State Highways and National Highways cannot be covered under the PMGSY, even if they happen to be in rural areas. This applies to New Connectivity roads as well as Upgradation works.

The primary focus of the PMGSY is to provide All-weather road connectivity to the eligible unconnected Habitations. An All-weather road is one which is negotiable in all seasons of the year. This implies that the road-bed is drained effectively (by adequate cross-drainage structures such as culverts, minor bridges and causeways), but this does not necessarily imply that it should be paved or surfaced or black-topped. Interruptions to traffic as per permitted frequency and duration may be allowed. PMGSY does not permit repairs to Black-topped or Cement Roads, even if the surface condition is bad.

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