



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
Chief Minister's Monitoring Cell

Physical verification report of the project namely
"Improvement/Upgradation & Construction of Mandi-
Phagla-Buffliaz Road"
District Poonch



By
Joint Director,
CM's Monitoring Cell.

Name of the Project:	Improvement/upgradation & Construction of Mandi Phagla Buffliaz Road, Poonch.
Source of Funding	Central Assistance (CRF).
Executing Agency	R&B, Division Poonch.
Year of start of Work	June, 2010.
Target date of completion	March, 2013. (three years from the date of start of work)
Expected dated of completion	June, 2014

District Poonch is a border district being one among the remotest districts of the state with mountainous topography and hilly road network. The population is mostly inhabited on the hilly terrains of the district in a scattered manner. The population residing on the hilly areas of Mandi-Phagla-Buffliaz have been demanding since long for providing road connectivity with the district headquarters and it was purely in this backdrop, that the government has started the work of construction of Mandi-Phagla-Buffliaz road way back in 1973 under district and state plan funds but the programme was reportedly abandoned due to some financial and other constraints after doing some work on the scheme. However the present government taking the cognizance of the felt needs of the public of the area, got the project namely "Improvement/ upgradation and Construction of Mandi-Phagla-Buffliaz Road" approved under CRF.

Financial Status:

The financial progress of the project is indicated hereunder: -

Cost of the Project	Rs. 4281.52 lacs
Funds released ending Jan. 2012	Rs. 605.00 lacs
Cumulative Expenditure ending Jan, 2012	Rs. 487.00 lacs

Physical progress:

The physical progress ending January, 2012 on the major components of the project is reproduced hereunder: -

Component of work	Target	Achievement
Fair weather (New)	31 Kms	11 Kms
Fair weather (widening)	21 Kms	14 Kms
Const. of Culverts/ Drainage Crossings	220 Nos.	16 Nos.
Construction of Breast/ Protection walls	5600 Rmts	1495 Rmts.

Observations/findings and Problem areas

The scheme has been approved by the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways, GoI under CRF at a cost of Rs. 4281.52 lacs in March 2009 and the work on the project has been put to execution in June, 2010.

The actual distance from Mandi to Buffliaz is 62 Kms but the initial road stretches of 5 Kms length from each side has already been constructed. But the condition of these 10 kms of black topped road stretch has also worsened over a period of time and certainly requires improvement. Taking due consideration of this aspect, the government has projected the upgradation of this 10 Km of road length under NABARD. The remaining 52 Kms of length is targeted for improvement/upgradation and construction under the scheme in question which includes 31 Kms of new construction and 21 Kms of

widening of the exiting road. The formation width of road shall be 6 Mtrs with a carriageway of 12 feet. However the formation width at the curves shall be 7.5 Mtrs to facilitate the free movement of the vehicular traffic

The upgradation/construction of the Mandi-Phagla-Bafliaz road assumes tremendous amount of significance because on its completion, it will provide road connectivity to 23 small and big hamlets / villages, the population of which comprises around 1,20,000 souls. The full stretch of 52 kms of road length is being constructed around the hill along river suran right from the start to tail end. The necessity of the execution of the scheme can further be substantiated by this fact that the population which is inhabited on the up-hill side and down-hill side had have to trek a long distance to reach either Buffliaz or Mandi for availing of transport facilities to reach the district headquarters. The construction of the road will also ameliorate the economic condition of villagers whose main activity within their villages is agriculture and cattle farming who otherwise had to face hardships to transport their agriculture produce from villages to city markets.

The construction of full stretch of 52 kms road length demands acquisition of land and structures. It involves acquisition of forest land for a stretch of 10 kms length which accounts for 13.07 hectares and proprietary land including structures for rest of the length. The forest land has already been acquired for which the compensation in full to the tune of Rs. 155.00 lacs has been released by the executing agency to the Forest Department. More than 100 Nos. of structures mostly the house structures are also coming in the alignment of the road which need demolition.

It was reported by the Executive Engineer concerned that in the beginning there has been much reluctance on the part of the land owners in sparing out their proprietary land for execution of the project in absence of the compensation cost. But the personal influence and hard persuasion of the Executive Engineer has ultimately prevailed upon as the land owners have now started sparing out their proprietary land on the assurance that the compensation which becomes due shall be paid to them in the due course of time.

The executive agency has tentatively worked out the compensation cost for acquisition of the proprietary land with fruit bearing and other trees, forest land, structures etc; at Rs. 1406.28 lacs. But against the compensation cost, an amount of Rs. 251.00 lacs only has been released on this account which stands disbursed in full as per the details indicated hereunder: -

Item of acquisition	(Rs. in lacs)		
	Total Demand	Funds Released/ Disbursed	Balance requirement
Forest land	155.00	155.00	0.00
Structures	224.00	71.00	153.00
Proprietary land/ fruit bearing & Other trees	1027.25	25.00	1002.25
Total	1406.25	251.00	1155.25

The forest land of 10 Kms road length acquired for the purpose is housing number of trees and the process of cutting down of trees by the forest department is underway. However, the felling of trees has been completed for a length of 6 kms.

It was reported that most of the land acquisition cases for acquisition of proprietary land at the different places are under process in the office of DC, Poonch. The revenue officials are not in a position to prepare the final award on this account as the same shall be prepared only when there is a certificate to the effect of funds availability of land compensation cost by the executing agency. Since as of now no funds for meeting out the compensation cost is available with the agency, and ,therefore, the authorities have to accord priority to address the issue of releasing compensation cost for acquisition of land and structures. It was further reported that some cases for title verification of structures to be acquired for construction of the road is still pending with the revenue officials. Similarly few cases are under process with SE, PWD(R&B) Poonch for according technical sanction to the valuation/assessment of different types of structures.

The execution of the project appears to be a stupendous task as it envisages a lot of earth cutting and cutting of different types of big & small hard & ordinary rocks almost all along the full road stretch of 52 Kms. The inspecting officer interacted with the locals of the area residing on the downhill side who complained that as a result of blasting of the hard rocks their land and house structures are suffering damage for which they are demanding compensation but at the same they are very eager to see that the project is completed as quickly as possible. It was observed on spot that the executive agency is taking care to ensure that minimum damage is caused to houses and land as a result of this activity.

The project also has the provisions for improving the already constructed stretches of road by way of erecting walls at critical locations and new construction by way of fresh earth cutting in order to connect the two ends of the road. It also demands shifting of the PHE utilities at various spots and PDD utilities at few places. The executing agency has already requested the Xen PHE and Xen PDD for expediting the needful.

On the day of inspection the work on the scheme was found under-way as the men & machinery was seen working at various spots. Further, the quality of works executed by way of earth cutting, construction of breast and protection wall, culverts, drainage crossings etc. was found satisfactory. The signboard indicating the project details was seen erected from Mandi side at the off take point. The locals of the area revealed that good supervision is maintained by the agency in executing the work.

By going the pace of the work it appears that the project shall get completed within the expected date i.e. June 2014 provided the funds flow sufficiently during this period for meeting out the project cost and compensation cost as well.

Suggestions

The Administrative Department should provide sufficient funds under state plan for meeting out the compensation cost during the current financial year and also should keep adequate provision in the next financial year for acquisition of land and structures coming in the alignment of the road. However if the provision of funds may not be available with the department at the present juncture, at least the release of 50% of the balance amount required which works out to Rs. 6 crores (approximately) can be taken care of at the time of re-appropriation of funds which activity is normally carried out at the end of the financial year. This is really an area of concern for the executing agency and if there remains any laxity on this account it may create problems for further execution of the project as the agency has to give a certificate of availability of funds for land compensation before preparation of the final award for land acquisition by the revenue officials.

The Administrative Deptt. should also pursue the case at the required level to get the upgradation of the initial stretch of 10 Kms of road length (5 Kms each from Mandi and Buffiliaz side) approved under NABARD, if already projected.

The revenue officials should complete the process of title verification of the pending cases of the structures to be acquired for road construction.

SE, R&B, Poonch should expedite the process of according technical sanction to the structure valuation cases submitted to him by Executive Engineer, R&B, Division Poonch.

It is apprehended that there may be reluctance on the part of few house owners whose houses need demolition as a result of coming in alignment of the road even after settlement of the compensation. Under such circumstances, the district Administration should provide police assistance to executing agency for removal of such structures.

The Forest Department should ensure that the felling of trees for the remaining stretch of 4 Kms is immediately completed for which the work is under progress so that the executing agency is in a position to take up the work on this road length also.

The Executive Engineer, PHE and PDD Poonch should immediately prepare the estimates for shifting of the PHE and PDD utilities coming in the alignment of the road and submit the same to Executive Engineer, R&B Division Poonch for necessary action. They should simultaneously ensure that the utilities are shifted so that the executing agency does not face any kind of hindrance on this account in execution of the project.

Physical Verification Conducted by :	Altaf Ahmad Zargar, Joint Director Planning, Monitoring Cell, Chief Minister's Secretariat.
Officers of Executing Agency who accompanied the inspecting officer:	i) Shri Mohammad Abdullah, Executive Engineer, R&B Division Poonch. ii) Shri Harvinder Singh, AEE iii) JEs Concerned.
Date of conduct of physical inspection:	30-01-2012 & 31-01-2012



Machinery at work (Buffliaz side)



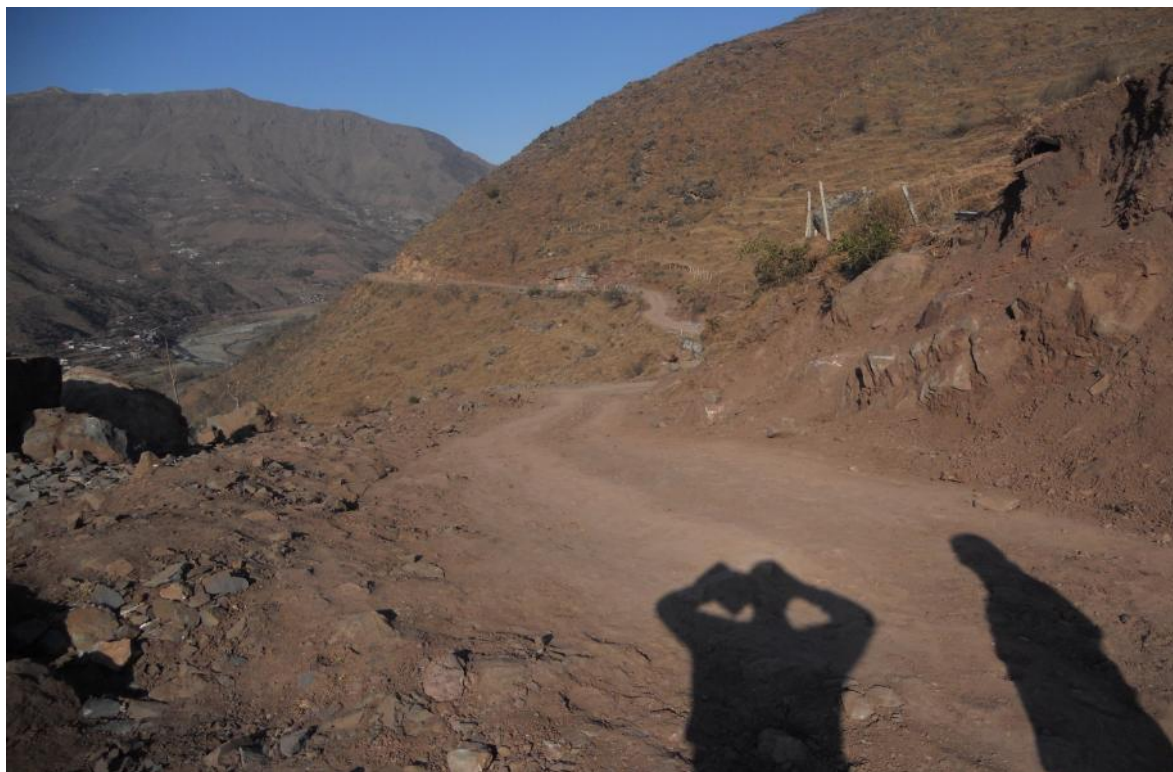
Men & Machinery at work (Mandi side)



Structures coming in the widening of the road (Mandi side)



Work on construction of retaining wall under progress



View of the fair weather road around the mountain



A house structure coming in the alignment of the road