

## Chapter 12 - Tribal Welfare Department

### 12.1 Department profile

Tribal Welfare Department is responsible for implementation of all tribal developmental programmes in the State. The department is also responsible for ensuring constitutional safeguards provided to the scheduled tribes and scheduled areas in the State. Principal Secretary to Government, Tribal Welfare, being the administrative head of the department, assists the Government in formulating, implementing and in reviewing tribal welfare policies and programmes.

Tribal Welfare Engineering Department is responsible for speedy and effective execution of road works, educational building works, drinking water works and other works undertaken by the Government in Tribal Areas in the State. The Department is headed by the Engineer-in-Chief at the State level and consists of one QC division at State level, three circles (Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam and Warangal) and nine divisions supported by sub-divisions and sections.

During the year 2010-11 we reviewed the '*Provision of road connectivity in tribal areas*' while conducting audit of Tribal Welfare Engineering Divisions. Our audit revealed that road works were taken up without obtaining the mandatory forest and other requisite clearances, which led to closure of works mid-way after incurring an expenditure of ₹ 2.88 crore thus, resulting in denial of the intended benefit of all weather road connectivity in tribal areas. Detailed audit findings are given below.

### 12.2 Road connectivity works in tribal areas

State Government accorded administrative sanction in April 2005 for 45 road works in tribal areas at an outlay of ₹ 42 crore. The works were funded through loan from NABARD<sup>1</sup> (₹ 32.78 crore) and the State budget (₹ 9.23 crore). The works involved provision of all weather BT road facility and were to be completed by March 2007. Superintending Engineers (SEs) at Circle level and Executive Engineers (EEs) at Division level were responsible for timely execution of the works under the overall supervision of the Chief Engineer (CE), Tribal Welfare (TW) Engineering Department. The special terms and conditions of NABARD loan specified that the Government should comply with the conditions required for environmental and forest clearances.

Scrutiny (May 2010-September 2010) of the records of Tribal Welfare Engineering Divisions under the jurisdiction of all the three circles in the State, viz., Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam and Warangal, revealed that, nine out of forty five of these works remained incomplete as of August 2011, involving a time over run of over four years in each work. Of these nine works, eight works<sup>2</sup> were foreclosed midway, after incurring an expenditure

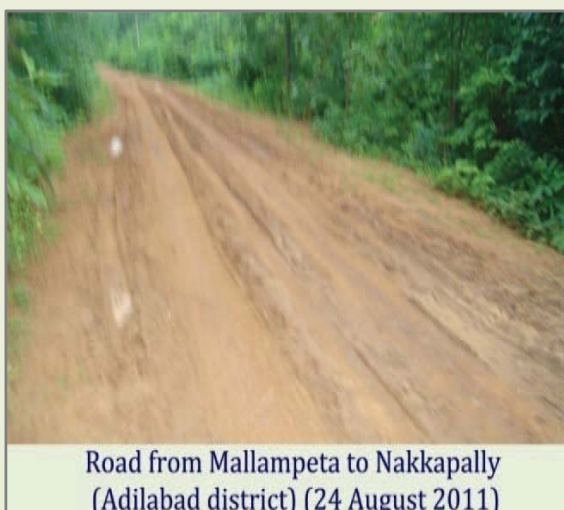
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<sup>1</sup> Under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF-X)

<sup>2</sup> One road work (Pippaldhari to Chichdhari – Khanapur, Utnoor Division) was revived and balance works sanctioned under another scheme

of ₹ 2.88 crore (estimated cost: ₹ 8.18 crore) and one work was not even taken up (expenditure: ₹ 0.24 lakh), resulting in the expenditure becoming largely unfruitful. Out of the eight works where contracts were foreclosed, BT as envisaged was not laid in respect of seven works; in respect of one work it was laid on 7 out of 15 km proposed. Details of these nine works are given in *Appendix-12.1*. In the mean time, NABARD's financial assistance (under RIDF-X) was closed in March 2009.

As per the codal provisions, SEs at Circle level and EEs at Division level are also responsible for obtaining all the requisite clearances before the estimates are submitted for technical sanction. Further, Chief Engineer (CE) should accord technical sanction after satisfying himself about the suitability of land, adequacy of designs, correctness of estimates, permissions/clearances from GoI/Ministries and preparedness for immediate execution. We however, observed that such diligence was lacking at both the EEs and the SEs level; yet the CE had accorded technical sanction. The EEs had taken up the road works without obtaining forest and other requisite clearances and, after commencement of works, failed to get the necessary forest-clearances due to their non-compliance with the mandatory requirement of giving non-forest land for compensatory afforestation. This led to closure of the works midway.

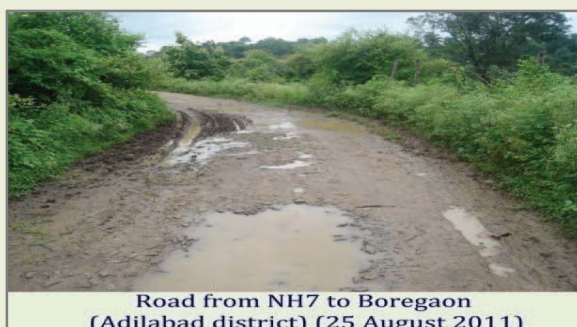


Road from Mallampeta to Nakkapally  
(Adilabad district) (24 August 2011)

The Engineer-in-Chief (ENC) contended (June 2011) that the incomplete roads were being used by the tribal people.

The contention of ENC is not acceptable, as (i) the roads were not laid to the specifications originally contemplated and (ii) the roads laid up to WBM stage cannot be treated as traffic worthy in all weather conditions. Moreover, the reply of ENC contradicts his own proposals submitted to Government for sanction of BT (all weather) roads in tribal areas.

Further, as per the administrative sanction for the works accorded by Government, the Commissioner, TW and Project Officers, Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs) were responsible for overall monitoring of the progress of works. It was observed that effective monitoring had not been done over these works.



Road from NH7 to Boregaon  
(Adilabad district) (25 August 2011)

***Thus, commencement of road works by EEs, TW engineering divisions, without obtaining mandatory forest and other requisite clearances led to closure of the works midway and the works remained incomplete even after the lapse of over four years. This resulted in denial***

***of the intended benefit of all weather road connectivity in the tribal areas. Further, the Government had to forego funding from NABARD due to delay in completion of these works.***

Government stated (August 2011) that action was being taken to restart the works by calling for fresh tenders and the balance works would be completed by March 2012. It is not clear as to how these works can be restarted without complying with the provisions of Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and obtaining the requisite clearances from forest and other departments.