

when nine of these schemes came to be known as 'flagship' schemes. They covered important areas like school education, mid-day meals, rural health, sanitation and drinking water, polio immunization, employment guarantee and care of pre-school children.

These, along with the mega Bharat Nirman pro-

gram, were the main campaign planks of the UPA in the recent elections. Triumphant Congress MPs are claiming that it is the success of these flagship schemes that led to their victory. Here is a snap review of the flagship schemes. Judge for yourself whether the hype about their success is justified.



## National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)

Ministry of Rural Development

Rs 44,480 cr (2006-09)

The most publicized of the flagship schemes, it was launched in 2006 and rolled out over the country in phases. It is supposed to provide 100 days of work at minimum wages to all registered applicants in rural areas. NREGS has so far generated over 391 crore persondays of employment (a personday is one person working for one day). Over Rs 44,480 crore have been spent. Implementation has been highly uneven across states. The share of registered households given work varies from as high as 73% in Rajasthan, 68% in Chhattisgarh and 63% in Assam to a dismal 13% in Maharashtra, 30% in Gujarat and 31% in Orissa. Similarly, the average number of days of work given also varies from 79 in Rajasthan and 63 in MP, to 22 in Bengal, 28 in Bihar and 33 in Gujarat. On average, NREGS has given 48 days of work to about 50% of the 100 million registered jobcard holders.



## Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Ministry of Women & Child Development

Rs 32,000 cr (2001-08)

This mammoth scheme provides nutritional supplements, health check-ups and immunization coverage to children up to the age of 6 years to reduce mortality and disease. It also provides nutritional supplements to pregnant and lactating mothers. These services are delivered through a vast network of 12.43 lakh anganwadi centers. Of the estimated 20 crore children in the 0-6 years age group, over 7 crore (35%) are officially benefiting from ICDS. Running since 1975, ICDS has been restructured in recent years with NGOs being given an increasing share of work. Over Rs 32,000 crore have been spent on the scheme since 2001, mainly on food. Day to day running has suffered due to irregular and insufficient funding. Food quality has deteriorated greatly in many centres. The government needs to infuse more funds, compensate the workers better, improve service quality.



## Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)

Ministry of Urban Development

Rs 7,428 cr (2005-09)

Nearly one-third of India now lives in urban areas. Cities and towns are in dire need of expansion of basic services like roads, sewerage, electricity, housing etc. JNNURM was launched in 2005 to build basic infrastructure, improve governance and provide basic facilities to the urban poor in 63 cities over seven years. Funds were to come from Center, state and the local bodies. JNNURM has suffered severe delays mainly because of states hesitating to change local laws fearing political backlash. Although it was supposed to provide Rs 31,500 crores for projects submitted by 65 cities, the Centre has released only about one-fourth of it. There are gaps in state and local body fund availability too. The other component of JNNURM, related to providing basic services to urban poor, has also suffered a worse fate.



## Polio Eradication

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Rs 9,000 cr (2005-09)

Launched in 1994, Pulse Polio drastically reduced polio cases by 2000, and India was on the verge of becoming polio-free. But a few pockets are now showing resistance to immunization. There are fears that, if not controlled, polio may again become rampant. Although nearly Rs 9,000 crore has been spent on polio immunization in the past 5 years, confirmed cases jumped to 559 in 2008. Now, the government is thinking of going in for the injectible vaccine, used in the West. This will mean huge cost escalation, as it costs 20 times more than the oral version. While the government bumbles its way through this, there has been a neglect of the routine immunization programme, which protects against many other deadly diseases. In the same period, routine immunization has got just Rs 5,000 crores, covering just 44% of children.

The ninth flagship scheme, pertaining to drinking water, is under Bharat Nirman

# आग से बचाव के साथ गांववालों को मिलेगा रोजगार भी

## उत्तराखंड के जंगलों को आग से बचाने की योजना

पूनम पाण्डे || नई दिल्ली

जंगलों में लगने वाली आग से हर साल भारी नुकसान झेल रहे उत्तराखंड को आखिरकार इस समस्या से निपटने का रास्ता सूझ गया है। राज्य के वन विभाग ने ऐसी योजना बनाई है, जिससे एक ओर जंगलों को आग से बचाया जा सकेगा, वहीं लोगों को रोजगार भी मिलेगा। जंगल में आग की बड़ी वजह माने जाने वाले पिरूल (चीड़ के पत्ते) को रोजगार से जोड़ने की ये कोशिश अगले साल अमलीजामा पहन लेगी। यह पहल देशभर में जंगलों को आग से बचाने की कोशिशों को एक दिशा दे सकती है। फॉरेस्ट सर्वे ऑफ इंडिया (एफएसआई) के अनुमान के मुताबिक, 63 मिलियन हेक्टेयर में फैले भारत के जंगलों में आग से हर रोज करीब 35 करोड़ रुपये कीमत की लकड़ी जलकर खाक हो जाती है और बायो-डायवर्सिटी (जैव विविधता) को भारी नुकसान होता है। एफएसआई के आंकड़े बताते हैं कि देश के कुल वन क्षेत्र का करीब आधा फीसदी हिस्सा जल्दी आग पकड़ने वाला है। उत्तराखंड, हिमाचल प्रदेश सहित हिमालयी क्षेत्र के जंगलों में आग की बड़ी वजह पिरूल है। हिमाचल वन विभाग के अनुसार, राज्य में 23 फीसदी जंगल क्षेत्र फायर प्रोन हैं। ज्यादातर आग की घटनाएं चीड़ के जंगलों में होती हैं, जो कि बेहद ज्वलनशील हैं।

राज्य में अब तक 7,900 हेक्टेयर



फॉरेस्ट लैंड आग की भेंट चढ़ चुकी है। अगर उत्तराखंड वन विभाग की योजना सफल होती है तो हिमालयी क्षेत्र में जंगलों को आग से बचाने में यह अहम कदम साबित होगा। इससे न सिर्फ करोड़ों का नुकसान रुकेगा और जंगली जानवरों की रक्षा होगी, बल्कि भीषण आग से लगातार बढ़ रहे तापमान पर नियंत्रण लगेगा। उत्तराखंड के मुख्य वन संरक्षक बी. आर. एस रावत ने बताया कि हमने जिस योजना का प्रस्ताव तैयार किया है, उसका मुख्य मकसद जंगलों को आग से बचाना तो है ही ग्रामीणों को रोजगार मुहैया कराना भी है। यह अमल में आता है तो अनूठा होगा क्योंकि भारत में इस तरीके की कोई योजना अभी तक नहीं आई है। उत्तराखंड वन महकमे ने सूबे के 11 जिलों में ऐसी औद्योगिक इकाइयां बनाने की योजना बनाई है, जो पिरूल

से कोयला, रसोई गैस और केमिकल्स बनाएंगी। यह रसोई गैस एलपीजी से बेहद सस्ती पड़ेगी। इसके लिए विभाग ग्राम और वन पंचायतों की मदद लेगा और उनसे एक रुपये प्रति किलो की दर से पिरूल खरीदेगा, जिसे विभाग औद्योगिक इकाइयों को बेचेगा।

इस योजना के लिए फिलहाल विभाग ने राजस्थान और गुजरात के कुछ उद्योगपतियों से बातचीत की है, जो सूबे में अपनी इकाइयां लगाने की हामी भर चुके हैं। विभाग को उम्मीद है कि इससे हर साल ग्रामीणों को 8 से 10 करोड़ रुपये मिल सकेंगे। सरकारी आंकड़ों के मुताबिक राज्य के जंगलों में हर साल 8 लाख मीट्रिक टन पिरूल गिरता है। फिलहाल वन विभाग इस योजना को अंतिम रूप देने में जुटा है जिसे सरकार की मंजूरी के लिए भेजा जाएगा।

▶ चीड़ के पेड़ों से झड़े पत्ते ही हैं

▶ इन पत्तों को एक रुपये प्रति किलो

▶ इनसे बनेगा कोयला, रसोई गैस

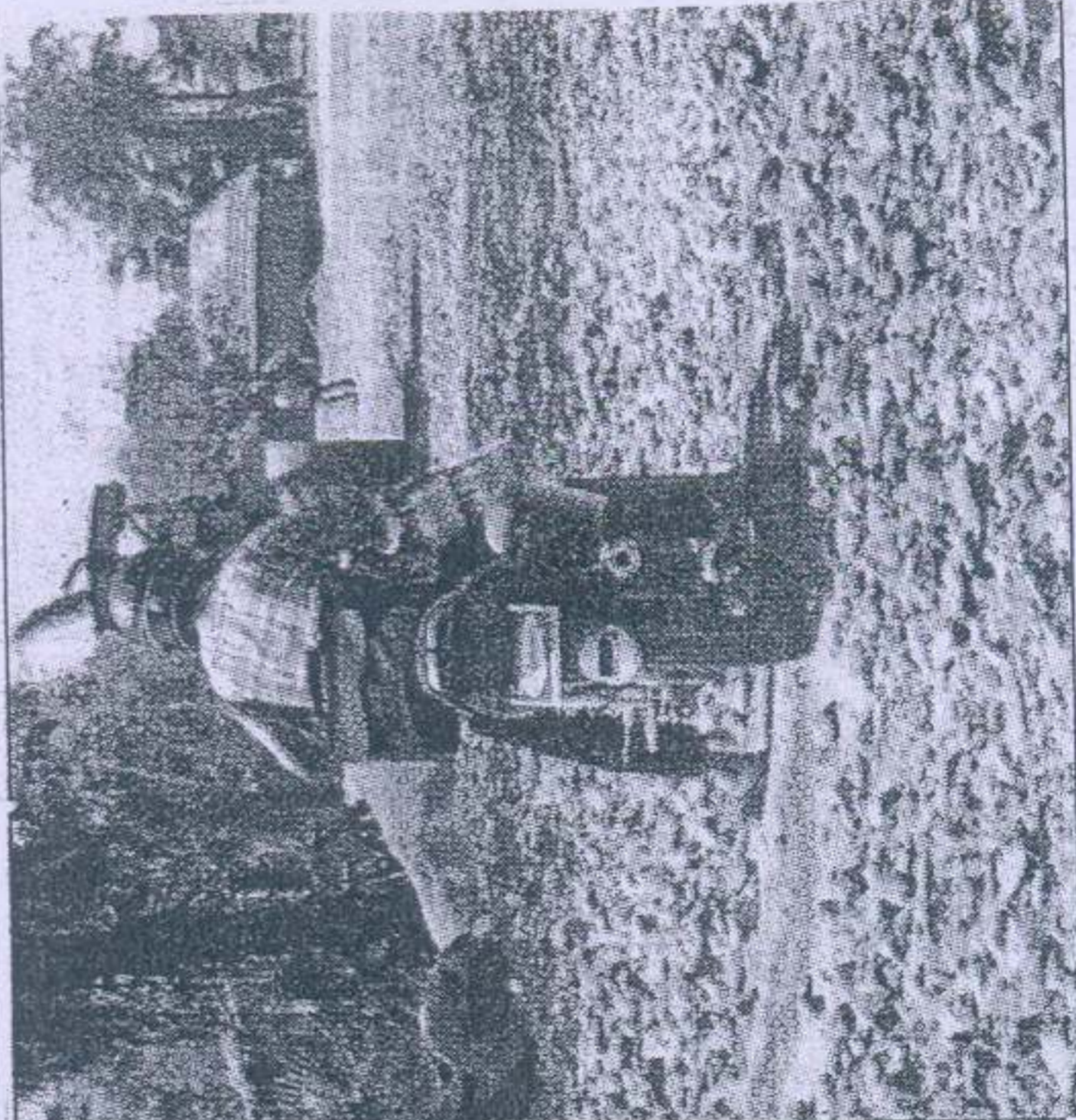
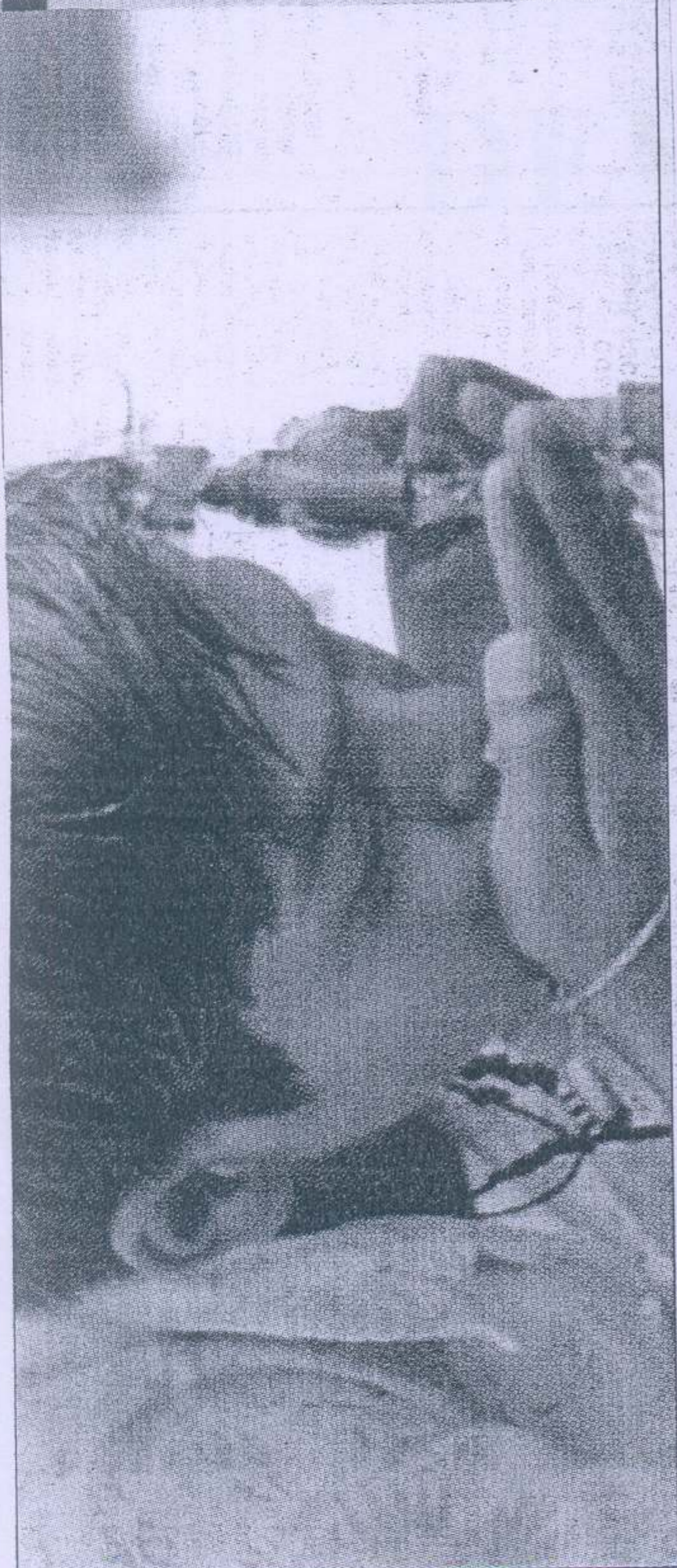
▶ उत्तराखंड वन विभाग अगले साल

# BHARAT NIRMAN STATUS SUMMARY

Component	Financial status Expenditure (Rs crore)	PHYSICAL STATUS		
		Target	Achieved	% Achieved
Rural Roads	30,737	New road length (km) 146,185 Upgraded Road Length (km) 194,132	72,185 106,284	49 55
Electrification	11,275	Habitations (no.) Villages (no.)	25,068 128,072	49 27
Telephones	137	Villages (no.)	56,030	84
Irrigation	29,349	Area ('000 hectares)	5,583	56
Drinking Water	20,588	Villages (no.)	479,898	80
Rural Housing	22,172	Houses (lakh)	61	102
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,14,257</b>			

Source: Various nodal ministries

Hopefully the political leadership, whether at the state or central level, will recognize that investment in these essentials is good policy as well as good economics. Irrigation will pump up food production. Safe drinking water will cut medical care costs. Roads will boost trade. The people understand this — it is the leaders who are merely using developmental schemes as instruments of patronage and political brinkmanship. Meanwhile most of 'bharat' still awaits 'nirman'.



There are several important lessons here for the incoming government. Fund availability was not a constraint to meeting the targets. The real roadblocks included problems with private contractors, litigation on land, cost escalation and corruption. Political interest also appears to be a factor; as state governments have to carry out the actual work, and if enthusiastic can sort out all the roadblocks.

Rural housing for 'below poverty line (BPL)' families is the only area where targets have been met, with over 61 lakh dwelling units getting built. This was done under the ongoing Indira Awas Yojana, which is routed through the panchayats. Selected families are given Rs 27,500 for building a small pucca house. In most cases this is not sufficient, but anything is better than living in mud-thatch huts.



# BHARAT WAITS FOR REAR NIRMAN

*On the eve of President Pratibha Patil spelling out the priorities of the new UPA government, TOI examines how key government initiatives and programmes — Bharat Nirman and nine flagship schemes — have done so far. These have been credited with helping the Congress win. But, they are at best an unfinished agenda, finds Subodh Varma*

Every village in India with over a 1,000 population will have an all-weather road, every habitation would have water supply, every village would have a telephone and every village would be, in fact, electrified? If that sounds like a promise India's leaders might have made at the dawn of Independence, think again. It's actually Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2005, at the gala launch of one of the biggest infrastructure development programmes in India's history — Bharat Nirman.

Implicit in the statement was an admission that millions still drank water from stagnant ponds, lit their huts with kerosene lamps and depended on the monsoon for their livelihood.

The ambitious Bharat Nirman programme proposed to invest about Rs 1.74 lakh crore over the next four years on six sectors in rural areas: roads, drinking water, irrigation, houses, telephones and electricity. But what's new about any of this? Bharat Nirman, it was promised, would not be plagued by the time and cost overruns typical of other government programmes. Funds would be spent on schedule, with regular monitoring of physical targets and transparency all round.

With the UPA riding back to power in the recent elections, and promising to carry on the good work, it is time to look at how this mega program fared and what remains to be done. How much of the

The real roadblocks included problems with private contractors, litigation on land, cost escalation and corruption. Political interest also appears to be a factor as state governments have to carry out the actual work and if enthusiastic can sort out all the road blocks

promised targets have been achieved will largely determine the further course.

Till March 2009, about Rs 1.14 lakh crore have been spent under Bharat Nirman, that is, about two-thirds of the target. So much for high focus and fast tracking. But even so pumping in such huge amounts into the otherwise neglected hinterland would have surely had some effect. To see just how much, let's look at the physical achievements.

One of the more celebrated components of Bharat Nirman was the scheme for building all-weather roads for unconnected habitations. Launched during the NDA rule, the Pradhan Mantri Grameen Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was made part of the fast track Bharat Nirman process. In 2005, there were over 50,000 habitations with no road connections. Four years later, less than half of these have got the promised road. Also included under Bharat Nirman was upgradation and renewal of 3.4 lakh kilometers of existing roads (read mud tracks). Less than 1.8 lakh km have actually been improved. On the ground that means the more vulnerable sections, like dalits living in smaller habitations and

tribals living in forests, would have largely been ignored.

Less hyped but perhaps the most crucial component of Bharat Nirman was irrigation. About 60% of India's cultivated land is dependent on rain and it is estimated that crop yields will double if water is assured through surface irrigation. Bharat Nirman was to bring 10 million hectares under some form of surface irrigation. But, only about 5.6 million hectares could be covered.

This is in line with the gross neglect of farmers that successive governments have practiced. Irrigation projects are languishing — some for three decades — across the country, while desperate farmers buy water from private pump owners. Absence of surface irrigation is also causing an irreversible loss of precious groundwater reserves in many districts. This is arguably the costliest omission under Bharat Nirman and the new government needs to make amends.

# Govt looks to club rural schemes to create jobs

Mahendra Kumar Singh | TNN

**New Delhi:** Realising the vote-garnering potential of social sector schemes which ensured UPA's victory, the government is set to re-draw the contours of its flagship NREGS by converging the entire gamut of "similar" rural development programmes to generate more employment avenues.

Sources said the government was working on a proposal to bring out Convergibility Guidelines to strengthen the flagship scheme to ensure livelihood opportunities to rural masses.

Planning Commission, which is working with rural development ministry to finalise the guidelines, argues that the proposal will help the government meet the demand for hike in wages and increase in employment days assured to each household under NREGS. The proposal of converging NREGS with other schemes will allow the government to increase wages and raise the number of days of employment to households, plan panel member Mihir Shah said.

According to sources, the guidelines would allow funding a component of one flagship scheme from another like for building a house under Indira Awas Yojana, the labour component can be provided through

NREGS which will facilitate generation of more employment avenues without much additional burden on the government exchequer.

Plan panel is also keen to implement the flagship programme more vigorously in states like Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan where job demand is high. "We

should be looking more at implementing NREGS in those states where the demand for it is more, especially in the central Indian states," Shah said.

In its second innings, UPA wants to improve the implementing mechanism by pushing aggressive reforms in governance to ensure that benefits of the scheme reach the rural masses.

"We should embark on aggressive reforms in governance in the 200 most backward districts or even better in 1,000 most backward blocks," Shah said.

The plan panel is of the view that merely pumping money through direct cash transfers is not enough. Shah, assigned to look after rural development in the commission, said it was crucial to ensure that funds were translated into concrete results by putting appropriate mechanisms in place. "The need is to deploy high quality manpower and transparent accountability system that will ensure accountability and stakeholder participation," Shah said.



**FOR CONCRETE RESULTS**