

A STUDY ON THE STATE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM IN KERALA

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Abstract

Transport plays a significant role in the economic development of any region. As road transport provides door-to-door connection and flexible movement of goods and passengers, its patronage by people is on the rise day by day. The quality of life now greatly depends on the quality of roads. India has an extensive road network, which provides mobility to millions of people every day. Thus road transport is one of the important growth engines for social and economic development of the country.

I. INTRODUCTION

India has the third largest road network in the world stretching 4.48 million km in length. According to World Bank, National Highways in India account for 76,818 km, which constitute mere 2 per cent of the total road network, but carry about 40 per cent of the total road traffic in India. Only 24 per cent of the total national highways network has four - lane carriage way and the rest are from single - lane to two - lane standards. Transport plays a significant role in the economic development of any region. As road transport provides door-to-door connection and flexible movement of goods and passengers, its patronage by people is on the rise day by day. The quality of life now greatly depends on the quality of roads.

Significance of the Study

Presence of quality infrastructure is vital for social, economic and industrial development of the country. The transport infrastructure in Kerala largely consists of roads, railways, airports and inland water transport system. Roads play a prominent role in Public Transportation over other modes of transportation owing to the geographic peculiarities of Kerala, widely scattered habitation with lesser rural urban divide and limited geographical area of 38,863 Sq.Km.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The most important challenge in the road sector involves building all weather roads connecting each and every village. Even though Kerala is comparatively better placed than most other States as regards road length, the condition of many of these roads is very poor. Therefore, the main emphasis under road development in Kerala has been on improvement and up gradation of existing roads rather than construction of new roads.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To identify the outlay and expenditure of transport sector under different five year Plan.
- 2) To understand the agency wise distribution of State roads in kerala.
- 3) To assess the district wise and category wise length of roads maintained by PWD .

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Only secondary data are used for the study. They are collected from the publication of government and other agencies, annual reports, and other published reports like State Planning Board, IKM etc

V. TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Most of the roads in the State do not have adequate width so as to cater to the existing level of traffic and only one fourth of the roads have either two lanes or four lane capacity while most of the roads have single lane or intermediate lane capacity.

In the case of National Highways, only about 12 per cent of the roads have four lane capacities while the remaining roads have only two lane or intermediate lane capacity. Bulk of the inter city and interstate traffic are carried out by the National Highways and State Highways which are only eight per cent of the total network. Considering the demand supply gap, there is a huge need for up gradation of existing road network.

Outlay and expenditure of Transport Sector under different Five Year Plans, in lakh..

Five Year Plan	Budgeted Outlay	Expenditure	Percentage of Expenditure
Tenth Plan(2002-07)	247771.00	237819	96
Eleventh Plan(2007-12)	445881.00	658046	148
Twelfth Plan (2012-17)	638585.00	960728	210

*Expenditure of the first four years of plan

Source: Budget, State Planning Board.

District wise and category wise length of roads Maintained by PWD as on 31.3.2016

Sl.. No	Name of district	State Highways	Major district Roads
1	Thiruvananthapuram	180.36	2377.37
2	Kollam	123.79	2079.07
3	Alapuzha	170.84	1301.49
4	Pathanamthitta	249.19	1782.17
5	Kottayam	406.53	3049.68
6	Idukki	998.37	1868.99
7	Ernakulam	325.20	2760.07
8	Thrissur	374.03	1690.18
9	Palakkad	245.98	1938.70
10	Malappuram	374.76	2305.38
11	Kozhikode	377.17	2077.47
12	Kannur	128.95	900.35
13	Wayanad	244.66	2020.57
14	kasaragode	141.78	1318.88

Source: PWD (RandB)

State roads

An efficient road infrastructure is an essential requirement for sustained growth of the economy and to ensure cost effective movement of people and goods. The major road network of Kerala, though well connected, faces severe constraints due to the urban sprawl and the haphazard ribbon development all along the routes. The existing traffic levels at most stretches are excessive and beyond the road capacity. The traffic on roads is steadily increasing at a rate of 10 to 11 per cent a year.

Agency-wise distribution of State roads in Kerala during 2015-16

Sl.No	Name of the department	Length(KM)	Percentage
1	Panchayats-LSGD	139380.410	67.81
2	PWD(R&B)	31812.096	15.48
3	Municipalities	18411.870	8.96
4	Corporations	6644	3.23
5	Forest	4575.770	2.23
6	Irrigations	2611.900	1.27
7	PWD (NH)	1781.570	0.87
8	Others (railways, KSEB)	328	0.16
	Total	205545.616	100

Sources: Various Departments

Findings

- A comparative analysis of sector wise outlay and expenditure during the tenth and Eleventh Five Year Plans reveals that the Transport Sector has utilized 12 per cent of the share of total expenditure of the State against 10 per cent of the share of outlay during the Tenth Plan.

- This trend continued during the Eleventh Five Year Plan also where the share of total expenditure was 15 per cent against the share of outlay of 10 per cent.

- Most of the roads are constructed and maintained by LSGD during the year 2015-16 .

- Out of the total roads of 31812.096 km maintained by PWD, Kottayam District has the major share with a length of 3456.214 km (10.86 per cent).

- Wayanad District has the lowest share with 1029.314 km (3.24 per cent).

Conclusion

The most important challenge in the road sector involves building all weather roads connecting each and every village. Even though Kerala is comparatively better placed than most other States as regards road length, the condition of many of these roads is very poor. Therefore, the main emphasis under road development in Kerala has been on

improvement and up gradation of existing roads rather than construction of new roads. This requires institutional strengthening, adoption of standards applicable to the Indian Road Congress (IRC)/Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) specifications, strict quality control and adoption of self-financing revenue models suited to the State. The investment need in the road sector is of high magnitudes that are beyond the resources available with the Government. Therefore, there is an imperative need to motivate private and other non-governmental agencies/corporate sectors to participate in road construction and up gradation of selected highways.

VI. REFERENCE

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