

The Hindu 03.08.2009

Land acquisition, high tender rates delaying JNNURM projects

Staff Reporter

Projects that do not need land acquisition progressing

Contractors quote high rates for drinking water supply project of the Mission

A senior civil servant likely to be posted as coordinator of Kochi projects

KOCHI: The delay in obtaining land for projects and the 'exorbitant' rate quoted by contractors are reportedly delaying the implementation of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) projects in Kochi.

At least three road projects proposed for the city have been caught in the deadlock. The projects that have started include Sahodaran Ayyappan and Edapally-High Court roads, as land acquisition was not required. The civic body will have to find funds for meeting the land acquisition projects, as the Mission does not provide funds for acquiring land.

It is also the case with Rail Overbridge at Pachalam. The Roads and Bridges Corporation may soon begin the construction of the overbridges at Atlantis and Ponnurunni as they don't require additional land, officials said.

The issues faced by the civic authorities in implementing the projects will come up for discussion at the review meeting of the projects to be held on August 4.

The first meeting will be chaired by the Local Administration Minister Paloli Mohammed Kutty and the second one by Sharmila Mary John, the newly-appointed Project Director of the Kerala Sustainable Development Project (KSUDP). The KSUDP is the nodal agency for the implementation of the Mission projects for Kerala.

According to civic officials, there were no takers for the proposed drinking water supply project of the Mission for Kochi.

The contractors were reportedly reluctant to take up the projects. Those who turned up quoted high rates for the work, which was unacceptable to the authorities. If the high rates quoted by the contractors are accepted, it will become a precedent for other projects. This would upset the financial projections of the projects, said officials.

Meanwhile, it is understood that the government may appoint a senior civil servant, who is heading a public sector unit in Kochi, as the coordinator of the Kochi projects. The demand for a dedicated team of senior officials for implementing the projects is also likely to be raised at the review meetings, officials said.