

**AIIB decides to invest \$140M to improve Rural Connectivity in India;**

Ministry of Finance

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### **Project to benefit about 1.5 Million Rural residents of 5,640 Villages in Madhya Pradesh.**

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Approximately 1.5 Million rural residents in State of Madhya Pradesh are going to directly benefit from improved livelihoods, education and mobility with the USD \$ 140-Million loan approved by the Board of Directors of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in a Meeting held recently in Beijing. The Project, co-financed with the World Bank, aims to improve the rural road connectivity and management for residents of about 5,640 villages who use the rural roads for daily activities.

Livelihoods of the rural population will be improved by expanding income earning opportunities through better farm-to-market road connections. Moreover, more children are expected to enroll in higher education programs and school attendance is expected to further improve. The road maintenance pilot under the Project will employ more women, contributing to gender equality and income generation.

“Promoting sustainable growth in India through investment in rural infrastructure will require substantial financing,” said AIIB Vice President and Chief Investment Officer D.J. Pandian. “I am glad that AIIB’s participation in this project will contribute to reducing this financing gap and enhance overall development in the region.”

In addition to the above, the Project also aims to improve durability and accessibility, and enhance resilience to climate change of the gravel surfaced rural road in State of Madhya Pradesh while building the capacity of the State to manage its rural road network and road safety.

The planned activities under the Project are:

- Upgrading the gravel surfaced roads to a sealed surface standard.
- Providing additional linkages to villages with potential for high growth.
- Enhancing institutional capacity through implementing/upgrading a rural road asset management system and strengthening design and research and quality assurance capacity of the implementation agency.
- Developing road safety management capacity with road accident data management system and piloting a comprehensive road safety program.

- Supporting design, implementation and management.

AIIB Director General of Investment Operations SupeeTeravaninthorn said that this Project will provide sustainable and safe last-mile connectivity to small villages and improve mobility of the rural population of Madhya Pradesh. He said that the Project will stimulate economic development in the entire State of Madhya Pradesh and improve the livelihoods of the rural population, especially rural women and girls. It is a typical reflection of our priorities of enhancing economic growth and sustainability through infrastructure investment.

More details and information and the Project's Environmental and Social Management Plan

are available at <https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/approved/index.html>

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