

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is a scheme for rural India for better connectivity and transportation. Government schemes in the news are an important topic for the [UPSC exam](#). Aspirants will also find this topic useful for other government exams as well.

For a [list of important government schemes for the IAS exam](#), click on the given link.

What is the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana?

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was launched in December 2000 with the objective of providing unrestricted all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages of India.

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme and is part of the poverty reduction strategies of the government.
- Eligibility for the Scheme: Rural areas with a population of 500 and above in plain areas; and hill states including NE, desert states, tribal areas and other backward areas with a population of 250 and above.
- Apart from building new roads, the scheme also has provisions for the upgrade of existing roads in these areas, although the primary focus is to provide connectivity to unconnected habitations.
- All-weather roads imply roads that can be used throughout the year in all seasons. To provide all-weather roads, the scheme envisages providing for the draining of roads by adequate cross-drainage structures such as culverts, minor bridges and causeways.
- The scheme does not cover repairs to black-topped or cement roads, even if the surface condition is bad.
- The share of the central government's funding is 60% of the cost with the share increasing to 90% for northeastern and hill states.
- Currently, the scheme is in its third phase - **PMGSY - III**.
- The roads developed under this scheme are maintained by the Panchayati Raj institutions.
- The nodal ministry for the scheme is the Ministry of Rural Development.
- In 2012, an agreement was signed between the National Rural Roads Development Agency (NRRDA), the Ministry of Rural Development, and the [ILO](#) to enable the international organisation to help with the implementation of the project.

PMGSY III Objectives

The objective of the third phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is to consolidate the existing rural road network by the up-gradation of the existing 'Through Routes and Major Rural Links' that connect habitations to:

1. Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs)
2. Higher Secondary Schools
3. Hospitals

PMGSY Significance

PMGSY is an important scheme for the development of rural India. Its benefits and significance are discussed in the following points.

- Rural road connectivity is very important for two main reasons. One, it is a key component of rural development by enhancing access to social and economic services thereby increasing farm incomes and employment opportunities to people. Secondly, it is a key ingredient in poverty alleviation.
- The development of roads, apart from national highways, is the responsibility of the state governments. Because of inadequate funds and diverted focus of planners, rural roads hardly received any attention. This scheme seeks to fill this gap and take the fruits of development to remote corners of the country.
- Increased connectivity will help the rural population avail opportunities of employment, health, education and various other social welfare schemes provided by the government. Good, dependable roads translate to easier and faster connectivity from farm to market, timely movement of perishable products from village to market centres, and provide an incentive to industry to move to the hinterland among many other such benefits.
- Connectivity also encourages government functionaries such as health workers, teachers, and agriculture extension workers to willingly move to the villages to offer their services. This ultimately contributes to prosperity, and allows economies of scale and sustainable employment.

Challenges of PMGSY

Some of the challenges facing the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana are discussed below.

- **Paucity of funds:** The maintenance of the roads built will need spending of ₹75,000-80,000 crore over a five-year period starting 2020-21 according to the Ministry of Rural Development. States will need to spend ₹11,500 crore in the current fiscal year and the required amount would rise to over ₹19,000 crore by 2024-25. Given that the Central Government's revenues are under stress, it is difficult to predict whether a good enough grant of funds would be transferred to the states.
- According to the report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (Chair: Dr. P Venugopal) that submitted its report on 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana' in March 2017, frequent transfers of trained and experienced staff in State Rural Roads Development Agencies hampers the effectiveness of monitoring the scheme. The report also noted that many projects under the scheme were lagging behind due to-
 - inadequate execution and contracting capacity, and
 - unavailability of land and forest clearances.

Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Area (RCPLWEA)

This was a special vertical under the PMGSY launched in 2016 with a view to providing all-weather road connectivity to hitherto unconnected rural areas that were critical from a security and communications point of view. More than 5000 km long roads have been sanctioned under this scheme for 44 districts. Out of these, 35 are districts that have been severely affected by [left-wing extremist \(LWE\)](#) terror.

UPSC Questions related to Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

What is the importance of Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana?

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products from village to market centres, and provide an incentive to industry to move to the hinterland among many other such benefits.

When was Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana started?

The scheme was launched in 2000.

