

## Rajasthan MPs show the way in local area development

Rajasthan has topped the major states in implementing the Members of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme by not only completing the projects under the scheme in 2006-7, but by overshooting the target 10 percent, says a government report.

Rajasthan completed 5,554 projects during the period against a target of 5,037.

West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh MPs also overshot their targets. West Bengal completed 3,623 projects compared to a target of 3,435. Uttar Pradesh completed 6,965 projects against a target of 6,830.

Bihar completed 4,188 projects against a target of 4,373. Gujarat completed 5,384 projects against 5,800 sanctioned.

According to the report prepared by the statistics and programme implementation ministry, the overall implementation rate of MPLAD projects was 105.45 percent during the period, with the smaller states and union territories registering a high success rate.

As many as 424 projects were completed in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, though only 54 were sanctioned.

'Against the target of completing 77,618 works under the scheme, 81,851 works were completed during 2006-07 as March 31, 2007 in all 36 states and union territories,' says the report.

The prominent performers include Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee who got 30 projects completed in his constituency in West Bengal, while Leader of Opposition and senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader L.K. Advani got all 82 projects completed in his constituency, Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

As many as 63 projects were completed in Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, the constituency of Congress president and United Progressive Alliance (UPA) chairperson Sonia Gandhi, while her son and Congress general secretary Rahul Gandhi got 25 projects completed against the 30 sanctioned.

The MPLAD scheme was launched in 1993-94 to provide a mechanism for parliamentarians to recommend development projects to create durable community assets and basic amenities including community infrastructure based on locally felt needs.

'Under the scheme, every MP gets Rs.20 million a year to carry out such works in his constituency. In 2006-07, the government released Rs.14.51 billion to MPs. The cumulative funds released so far stands at Rs.163.75 billion,' said a ministry official dealing with the scheme.

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