

With 13 ministers, Tamil Nadu tops with central projects

With 13 ministers in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's government, Tamil Nadu has been allocated 62 major central projects valued at almost Rs.409 billion (Rs.40,900 crore) in the past four and a half years.

It tops all states in investments allocated.

The next in line is Maharashtra with 76 major central projects, an estimated investment of Rs.289.59 billion.

Bihar, home state of Railway Minister Lalu Prasad, comes third with 51 projects valued at over Rs.289.23 billion, while 79 major projects with an estimated cost of over Rs.201.35 billion are being implemented in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state.

Andhra Pradesh has got 69 major projects with an estimated investment of over Rs.286.91 billion, Madhya Pradesh 41 projects at Rs.112.13 billion and Rajasthan has 33 major projects worth Rs.131.86 billion.

'As of April 1, 2008, Tamil Nadu tops the list with 62 central sector projects with an estimated cost of over Rs.40,895.46 crore,' said a senior official in the ministry of statistics and programme implementation.

'The total number of central sector projects stand at 868 with an estimated cost of Rs.403,755.85 crore (over Rs.4 trillion),' the official told IANS.

The central projects are mainly related to capacity building in areas like atomic energy, civil aviation, power, railways, road transport, shipping, ports and telecommunications.

Out of a total 62 central projects under implementation in Tamil Nadu, 33 are related to road, shipping and highway.

Of these, 30 projects with an estimated value of Rs.108.6 billion are for building or improving roads, while three, valued at over Rs.25.62 billion, are in shipping and ports sectors.

Shipping, Road Transport and Highways Minister T.R. Baalu is from the DMK, an important ally of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government.

Other prominent members of the Manmohan Singh government from Tamil Nadu are Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, Statistics and Programme Implementation Minister G.K. Vasan, both from the Congress, Communications and Information Technology Minister A. Raja (DMK), and Health and Family Welfare Minister Anbumani Ramadoss of the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK).

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