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## Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Union Minister of Rural Development** provided information on implementation of the **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)**, in Rajya Sabha.

### Key Points

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- **Launched on:** 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2000.
- **Objective:** To provide connectivity, by way of an all-weather road to unconnected habitations.
- **Eligibility:** Unconnected habitations of designated population size (500+ in plain areas and 250+ in North-Eastern States, Himalayan States, Deserts and Tribal Areas as per 2001 census) in the core network for uplifting the socio-economic condition of the rural population.
  - An **Unconnected Habitation** is one with a population of designated size located at a distance of at least 500 metres or more (1.5 km of path distance in case of Hills) from an All-weather road or a connected Habitation.
  - **Core Network:** It is that minimal Network of roads (routes) that is essential to provide Basic access to essential social and economic services to all eligible habitations in the selected areas through at least single all-weather road connectivity.
- **Latest Funding Pattern:** The fund allocation to states has been made in subsequent years commensurate with the value of projects sanctioned to states. The **Union Government bears 90% of the project cost** in respect of projects sanctioned under the scheme in **North-Eastern and Himalayan States**, whereas **for other states** the Union Government bears **60% of the cost**.

- **Construction of Rural Roads:** The Rural Roads constructed under the PMGSY will be in accordance with the provision of the **Indian Roads Congress (IRC)**.
  - IRC is the **Apex Body of Highway Engineers** in the country.
  - The IRC was set up in **1934**.
- **PMGSY - Phase I**
  - PMGSY - Phase I was launched in December, 2000 as a 100 % **centrally sponsored scheme**.
  - Under the scheme, 1,35,436 habitations were targeted for providing road connectivity and 3.68 lakh km. for upgradation of existing rural roads in order to ensure full farm to market connectivity.
- **PMGSY - Phase II**
  - The Government of India subsequently launched **PMGSY-II in 2013** for **upgradation of 50,000 Kms of existing rural road network** to improve its overall efficiency.
  - While the ongoing PMGSY - I continued, under PMGSY phase II, the **roads already built for village connectivity was to be upgraded** to enhance rural infrastructure.
  - The cost was **shared between the centre and the states/UTs**.
- **PMGSY - Phase III**
  - Phase III was approved by the Cabinet during July **2019**.
  - It gives priorities to facilities like:
    - **Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs)**  
GrAMs are retail agricultural markets in close proximity to the farm gate, that promote and service a more efficient transaction of the farmers' produce.
    - **Higher Secondary Schools and**
    - **Hospitals.**
  - Under the PMGSY-III Scheme, it is proposed to consolidate **1,25,000 Km** road length in the States. The duration of the scheme is **2019-20 to 2024-25**.
- **Challenges:**
  - Lack of dedicated **funds**.
  - Limited involvement of the **Panchayati Raj Institutions**.
  - **Inadequate execution** and contracting capacity.
  - Less working season and **difficult terrain** particularly in Hill States.
  - **Scarcity of the construction materials**.
  - **Security concerns** particularly in **Left Wing Extremism (LWE)** areas.

## Way Forward

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- Rural Road Connectivity is a key component of Rural Development as it promotes access to economic and social services.

- Further, it helps in generating increased agricultural incomes and productive employment opportunities in India.
- In this regard, the government can consider engagement with international financial institutions to construct basic rural infrastructure.

**Source PIB**