

EXTRACTS FROM SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE AT ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATION TO MARK 160 YEARS OF THE CENTRAL PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (CPWD)

Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi: 12-07-2014

1. I am happy to join you on this annual day celebration to mark one hundred sixty years of the Central Public Works Department (CPWD). I compliment the entire CPWD fraternity of engineers, architects, technical and non-technical staff, and workmen on this joyous occasion.
2. The sphere of activity of CPWD is centred not only on big urban areas but also remote places. I am told that CPWD has executed works at the Rann of Kutch, Thar Desert, in high altitude areas of the Himalayas, North Eastern Region and also in Afghanistan. The projects implemented by it which include green building, city infrastructure, sport facility, educational institution, and residential and office complex are commendable.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

3. The construction sector is marked by dynamism in terms of concepts, techniques and efficiency parameters. Any modern organization operating in this evolving field can ill-afford to ignore the latest developments taking place. It is incumbent on organizations like CPWD to possess sound technical pre-requisite to launch initiatives in various infrastructure domains. It is for CPWD to adopt state-of-the-art procedures for maintenance of assets. It is understandable that old organizations are often burdened with out-dated practices. The challenge is therefore to become vibrant and enterprising, and respond quickly to the changing external environment. I expect no less from a department of CPWD's calibre and capability.
4. CPWD should evolve into a smarter, more dynamic and highly professional organization. It should benchmark itself with the best in

the world. It should adopt global best practices to be able to orient itself towards efficiency, cost and quality consciousness and on-time performances. It should adopt latest management techniques to bring in greater efficiency throughout the system. It should go for information technology (IT) solutions to attain greater transparency and speed in decision-making. With India's high level of competence in the IT sector, it should not be difficult to achieve synergy between IT initiatives and organizational goals of CPWD. In this context, I applaud the organization for having e-governance as the theme for this year's annual day celebrations.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

5. CPWD, as a technical department, should focus on areas where innovation and modernization in the infrastructure sector can lead to accelerated economic development. Last mile connectivity of rural roads, health and educational infrastructure, water supply and sanitation are some areas that immediately come to my mind. I am sure that the Ministry of Urban Development will provide guidance in this direction.
6. CPWD should constantly make efforts at adopting innovative designs and practices for construction. In today's perspective, sustainable habitat is the need of the hour. Energy-efficient building is 'the' important strategy for sustainable urban development. CPWD should build enough capacity within the organization to use latest technology in implementing green building projects. At the same time, it should also pay heed to the aesthetics of these new buildings.
7. I am confident that CPWD will help improve infrastructure across the country in an efficient and transparent manner and contribute towards sustainable development. I expect CPWD to continue serving the country with renewed dedication and commitment in the years to come. Remember the words of Mahatma Gandhi who had said and I quote: *"Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or another. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service*

deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger, and it will make not only for our own happiness, but that of the world at large" (unquote). I once again wish the CPWD family the very best for the future.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.
