

Jhangir Chowk-Rambagh flyover-ERA shows way

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Srinagar, Jan 27 : Notwithstanding the complete lack of transparency and accountability in governance and lack of will to work, a handful of engineers involved in construction of Jhangir Chowk-Rambagh flyover in Srinagar have upheld the maxim 'where there is a will, there is a way.' It is for the first time in the history of Kashmir that even the heaviest snowfall and freezing temperatures could not stop the work on the flyover being constructed from Jahangir Chowk to Rambagh in Srinagar. The executing agency- Economic Reconstruction Agency- is working overnight to complete the construction of the much talked about flyover in the stipulated time period. This refers to the on-going work on the construction of the flyover from Jahangir Chowk to Rambagh. "It is really impressive to see the workers working round the clock. Whenever I pass through the road be it morning, afternoon or evening I see them continuously working. I see it as my moral responsibility to appreciate them and congratulate them. It is heartening to see work culture is slowly developing in Kashmir and there is a hope for better and prosperous Kashmir," says Mudasir Drabu. Come November the administrative apparatus gets paralyzed in Kashmir and suspend all developmental works on the pretext of chilling winters. And even common people tend to believe that no developmental activity could continue beyond November. Most of the projects are put in abeyance and it is only after March that the work is restarted. However, the fact remains that it is the escapist approach of the bureaucracy that hinders the process of development. But there are still some people with rock solid integrity and the ongoing work on Jahangir Chowk-Rambagh flyover substantiates this view-point. No denying the corruption is destroying hopes of a better future in Kashmir, a few engineers of the Economic Reconstruction Agency (ERA) have generated some hope that if there is will to perform even heaviest snow fall and freezing temperatures could not deter you. The 2.4 kilometers long project of the estimated cost of Rs. 350 crore will certainly is the traffic in Srinagar city besides will add to its beauty. "The contract for construction of the Flyover has been awarded to Simplex Infra Ltd, for an amount of Rs.200 cr whereas Rs.150 cr has been earmarked for the land acquisition and rehabilitation part of the project. The expected time for completion of the Flyover Project has been the targeted about 3 years" Executive Engineer ERA, Basharat Malik told Early Times. "Presently work on the casting of piles is underway from sericulture crossing towards - Solina section of the project, besides confirmatory bore soil test at each pier. So far work on 66 piles each having dimensions of 1.2 meter dia and depth of 20 -23 meters has been completed. Work is going on in double shift with , work starting daily early morning and continuing till late night hours , to ensure that all the components of each pile which include making the bore, fabricating of steel cage and laying of Concrete is completed in one go. Normally 245- 250 bags of cement are consumed on an average for each pile.. The process involves the use of very machinery like heavy duty hydraulic Rigs , Heavy cranes etc " Basharat said. He said despite limited working corridor all efforts are being made to ensure that work on the project is undertaken with minimum inconvenience to public. The travel time from Jahangir chowk- Rambagh crossing to the Metrological department gate (Barzulla Bridge) would be reduced to 3-4 minutes from the current time of 25 -30 minutes (At peak hours) . The completion of Express way is going to save lot of time besides will result in fuel saving of Rs 20.0 to 25 Crores per year . The pollution levels are going to get reduced with the reduction in the idling / travel time of the vehicles from present time of 25 -30 (at peak hours) minutes to 3- 4minutes. He said the Chief Executive Officer, Sheikh Tehseen Mustafa has been personally monitoring the pace of work on the project on hourly basis. When contacted Tehseen Mustafa said, " The 2.4 km Flyover will reduce the journey time from Jahangir Chowk to Rambagh from 28 minutes to just, 2 ½ minutes and will go a long way in reducing the traffic congestion on this busy part of the Lal Chowk to International Airport, Humhama". On rehabilitation of the displaced shopkeepers, Tehseen said the government has already taken-up construction of two mega shopping complexes at Rambagh for rehabilitation of the effected Shopkeepers under the Fly over project. Tehseen said today the work on Rs 350 crore Jahangir Chowk-Rambagh flyover was started on June 13 and will be completed ahead of the scheduled time. He said the Asian Development Bank has set a tight deadline for completion of the project and ERA has resolved to complete the project well ahead of the deadline. A local resident of Solina told Early Times that it was for the first time in the history of Kashmir that work is going on any project in sub-zero temperatures and that too round the clock.