

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI LALCHAND KATARIA): (a) The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India has not conducted any study for the use of Natural Rubber Modified Bitumen (NRMB) in construction of rural roads under PMGSY. However, Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) has tested the technology for use of modified bitumen including natural rubber modified bitumen in construction and maintenance of rural roads.

(b) Government of Kerala has reported that it is using Natural Rubber Modified Bitumen (NRMB) for construction of road works under PMGSY. According to the findings of the study conducted by CRRI, Natural Rubber Modified Bitumen improves the durability of roads by reducing susceptibility towards temperature variations and improving the desirable properties of bitumen thereby giving overall better performance. The benefits of the use of rubber-modified bitumen in road construction as reported by the Rubber Board, Government of India include:

- i. Increase in service life.
- ii. Improved resistance to cracking at low temperature.
- iii. Better resistance to fatting up or bleeding of bitumen under hot condition.
- iv. Increased fuel economy.
- v. Better grip and cornering.
- vi. Low maintenance.
- vii. Enhances tire rolling.
- viii. Reduces traffic noise pollution.

The cost difference between NRMB and normal bitumen as reported by the State Government of Kerala is as under:

NRMB	Rs. 46,486 / Tonne
Normal Bitumen (80/ 100 grade)	Rs. 44,088 / Tonne

Old age and widow pension

1362. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons getting old age and widow pension in the country, and the amount thereof, State-wise; and

(b) whether Government would consider to enhance their pension to Rs. 1000/- and pay them directly by the cash transfer scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI LALCHAND KATARIA): (a) As reported by the States/Union Territories, 2,22,86,829 beneficiaries have been covered under the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) and 48,80,272 beneficiaries have been covered under the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), components of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP). The total expenditure incurred during 2012-13 is Rs. 531633.57 lakh under IGNOAPS and Rs.83624.79 lakh under IGNWPS.

(b) A Task Force was constituted by this Ministry under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mihir Shah, Member, Planning Commission to prepare a proposal for a Comprehensive National Social Assistance Programme. The Task Force considered various issues, demands and suggestions relating to pension schemes under NSAP, received from various quarters including those on quantum of assistance. The Task Force has submitted its report to this Ministry. With effect from 1st July, 2013, the Old Age, Widow and Disability pensions schemes of the NSAP, has been brought under the ambit of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) initially in the selected 121 Districts of 26 States/Union Territories.

Construction of roads under PMGSY

1363. SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of roads sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) during the last three years across the country including Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the details of roads constructed under PMGSY during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether there has been an inordinate delay in constructing the roads under PMGSY;