VII CHAPTER

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
Road laying and construction were always emphasised in India. With the advent of the British, it was increasingly felt about the significance of roads for the prosperity of the nation. The Jayakar Committee appointed in 1928, to examine the extent of road development recommended for periodical block grants from the centre to finance the road construction activity. It was also of the opinion that road construction cannot be limited to the efforts of the local bodies alone. In pursuance of the recommendations of the committee, the Central Road Fund was instituted in 1929.

Of the different roads in India, unsurfaced road length accounts for more than half of the total length. There is not even of one kilometre of cement concrete road for every 100 kilometres of road. India's road length is not internationally respectable. The neighbouring Sri Lanka is in a better position than India. New Zealand has the longest road kilometrage per lakh of population. Judged from both per lakh of population and per 100 Sq. Kilometres of area, India has
The Nagapur Plan (1943-53) was an important milestone in the development of the roads in the country. The plan laid major emphasis on the construction of rural roads. The plan also felt that no village in a well developed agricultural area should be at a distance of more than 5 miles from the main road. Another milestone in the road development in India was a Long Term Plan (1961-1971). The main objective of the plan was to build a network of the roads, so that no village would be farther from a metalled or unmetalled roads beyond a specified distance. Analysing the programmes and performance during Plan periods, we get a feeling that the planners have recognised the need for a well laid out network of roads in rural areas. Progressively increasing efforts are being made to provide rural roads to as many villages as possible. However, such a proposition is easier said than done. In some of the initial Five Year Plans, the programme of rural roads was given a distinct status and was considered an integral part of the Community Development Programme and National Extension Services. In the recent Five Year Plans,
the programme of rural road laying is included under the Minimum Needs Programme. This is mainly done in recognition of its employment and income generating potential. Investment in road building has a larger employment generating potential. It is believed that a unit of investment in road building would generate 100 units of employment. Obviously, rural road laying is labour absorbing and capital saving. In the programme of road laying greater attention was paid to laying of unsurfaced roads, rather than surfacing of existing roads. The hard reality that should be recognised is that the diseconomies of unsurfaced roads will be far reaching. Hence an imperative need for a proper balance between surfacing the existing roads and unsurfaced road laying and construction.

The importance of roads in the economy of Andhra Pradesh is not debatable. The growth in National Highways during the period from 1956 to 1992 is insignificant. State Highways, however, increased four fold. There is no significant increase in minor district roads. However, Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samithi rural roads have registered a significant increase.
Though the growth rate of Andhra Pradesh in road laying is marginally better than Karnataka, it is substantially below all India and Southern States rates. In tune with the national plans, the planners in Andhra Pradesh also have recognised the need to extend transport network to rural areas. A reference is also made to a 'Village Plan' in the Second Five Year Plan of Andhra Pradesh. However such a reference is ambiguous. In the Third Five Year Plan of Andhra Pradesh apart from emphasising road laying, attention is also paid to construct the bridges and culverts. The Fourth Five Year Plan restricted its role to the completion of already planned programmes which were not fulfilled. The Fifth Five Year Plan of Andhra Pradesh emphasised Minimum Needs Programme. Under this programme all villages having a population of 1,500 and above were proposed to be connected. The Fifth Five Year Plan also made a special provision for backward and tribal areas. Apart from fixing targets to be reached in certain categories of rural roads, the Sixth Five Year Plan of Andhra Pradesh pinpointed, its concern for the fishermen's villages road laying.
The total expenditure in Andhra Pradesh steadily increased up to Third Five Year Plan. But in the years following the Third Five Year Plan and Fourth Five Year Plan, there was a perceptible decline in the allocations for this purpose. However, the Fifth Five Year Plan is characterised by a big jump in total expenditure. The same is not noticed in the Sixth Plan. The two road building authorities in Andhra Pradesh are the Chief Engineer of Panchayat Raj and the Chief Engineer of Roads and Buildings. The regionwise expenditures by the Panchayatraj Chief Engineer are revealing. The regionwise allocations are guided more by rules of thumb rather than relative exigencies. Again there is no definite pattern in the yearly allocations. The physical magnitudes are more in the form of estimates rather than firm figures. The focus also frequently gets shifted on regional pulls and pressures. The physical counterpart efforts are not commensurate with financial expenditure under Minimum Needs Programme and other programmes like the crash programme; DPAP and DRDA. The tendency for financial expenditure to disregard physical counterparts will be aided by other economic variables like, price rise.
short fall in supply etc. Under these circumstances, the refining of data may make it infirm and soft rather than reliable and dependable.

Cuddapah district is located in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. Rayalaseema region is drought prone and is known as stocking ground of famine. The drought prone area of Cuddapah region is suggestive. A good net work of transport facilities is necessary to reach drought prone people in the district. Further agricultural and allied activities can be effectively promoted only in the presence of adequate rural roads. Finally meaningful rural industrialisation can not be made possible in the absence of adequate rural road transport facility. The intensity of roads in Cuddapah district is not discouraging when compared to the intensities of roads in India and Andhra Pradesh. The population intensity is almost equal to all India average and is substantially higher than the state of Andhra Pradesh. The intensity relating to geographical size is above All India and Andhra Pradesh levels. All the roads under Panchayat Samithi are categorised under village roads. Further 50 percent of the Zilla Parishad
roads belong to the category of rural roads in Cuddapah district. All the Panchayat Samithis except Cuddapah Samithi have no major district road. Muddanur is a class by itself, for it has only village roads. Lakkireddipalli, Kodur, Porumamilla and Sidhout do not have village roads under the Zilla Parishads. The distribution of village roads among different Samithis is uneven. Sidhout samithi has lowest length of roads as against Porumamilla which has the highest kilometrage roads.

Most of the Panchayat Samithi roads are unmetalled. Water bound macadam roads are found in all Panchayat Samithis. Apart from four percent of total road under Zilla Parishad which are block topped the rest of the roads are divided between water bound macadam and unmetalled. Water bound macadam accounts for nearly $3/4$ of the total road length. Unmetalled roads account for 25 percent of the total road length. The highest road length samithis are Lakkireddipalli, Sidhout and Kodur followed by Pulivendula and Muddanur. The inter samithi disparities continue if we take road length per 1000 of population. The samithis of Sidhout, Lakkireddipalli and Rayachoti are abnormal judged by this yardstick.
In case of Rajampet and Proddatur samithis road length per 1000 of population is far too low. An analysis of expenditure of Panchayatraj rural roads in the year 1983-84 with reference to three divisions namely Cuddapah, Rajampet and Jammalamadugu is revealing. The incurred expenditure in Rajampet and Jammalamadugu divisions is almost the same. On the other hand in the Cuddapah division, the expenditure incurred is marginally higher. However, when analysed in terms of per kilometre expenditure, it gives a different picture. Though total expenditure is the highest in Cuddapah division per kilometre expenditure is only Rs. 1221-30. Compared to this, in Rajampet and Jammalamadugu divisions per kilometre expenditure is five times higher.

A more relevant point is the extent of road facility enjoyed by the villages in Cuddapah district. One fourth of the total villages are on the main roads. They get mechanised transport. Another 25 percent of the villages are connected to the main roads through a pucca road. The remaining villages are connected by kutchcha or cart track roads. In these villages extension of mechanised road transport is difficult and expensive.
Further nearly 28 percent of the villages in the population size 2000 and more depend on kutcha or cart track road. As the population size decreases the number of villages connected by kutcha and cart track road increases. Among these villages, mechanised road transport is difficult and costly.

In pursuance of the Government of India’s 20 point programme, the village Link Transport Services Scheme was taken up in Andhra Pradesh in March, 1973. The scheme was to connect all the villages in the state by mechanised road transport. It is a bold measure to win the appreciation and catch the imagination of the public. The village Link Transport Services Scheme was proposed to be implemented under the management of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation. It has 25 schemes originating from five depots covering 33 routes and connecting 204 villages in Cuddapah district. The 25 schemes covering 33 routes revealed certain pattern of trips. A good number of these trips were double trips, though treble trips were not ruled out. Most of the routes were urban to rural rather than within the rural areas themselves. Almost all the schemes are in actual operation in five depots, namely, Cuddapah, Jammalamadugu,
Proddatur, Allagadda and Rajampet. One scheme in each depot of Cuddapah and Allagadda could not be put into operation. The distribution of routes and their lengths, in Cuddapah district is more unevenly pronounced. The official records of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation claim to encompass all the villages that had no transport facility at the commencement of village Link Transport Services scheme. In an attempt to establish the basis of village Link Transport Services scheme a hypothesis is formulated. The hypothesis is that there is no different in the mean distance of the villages included under village Link Transport Services scheme and all the villages comprising the district. The applied tests confirm the absence of difference.

The Village Link Transport Services Scheme is not economically viable. Its revenues are discouraging in the face of mounting costs. The Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation can ill afford to sustain the consequent losses. It does not show the same enthusiasm as it revealed at the time of introduction. Moreover, there occurred fluctuations in the rates of
operation. These fluctuations point to the complexity of the problem and the operational difficulties encountered in the village Link Transport Services Scheme. Obviously adequate preplanning was not done before the commencement of the scheme. The scheme was put into operation even before the completion of the necessary infrastructure. The reasons which range from absence of motorable roads, to bad roads, to poor traffic, expose the village Link Transport Services Scheme and its feasibility in Cuddapah district. The reasons listed out point to the main obstacles. The obstacles lie in the nature of roads and their maintenance. It is very necessary to secure this infrastructure in the form of adequate roads before the village Link Transport Services Scheme can be meaningfully implemented.

An attempt is made to study the operational efficiency under Proddatur, Jammalamadugu, Cuddapah depots. Under Proddatur depot, Adavicherlopalli route accounts for maximum operational efficiency. While Eturu route reported maximum cancellation. Under Jammalamadugu depot, Gandikota route reported highest kilometres operated and Dasaripalli route reported highest cancellation.
Similarly under Cuddapah depot, Gadikota reported highest operational efficiency. Ambavaram route is the one with maximum cancellation. Among the three depots cancellation is the highest in Jammalamadugu depot, the lowest cancellation is reported from Cuddapah depot. Cancellation is attributed to lack of all weather proof roads. The roads become non-motorable during rainy season. It is equally true that non-availability of buses accounts for cancelled kilometres, in certain routes. All weather proof roads are the need of the hour. The village Link Transport Services Scheme can not be meaningfully implemented in the absence of adequate infrastructural facilities. They may be created on a priority basis.

The main problem is how to make village Link Transport Services Scheme feasible and viable. The scheme has been incurring losses. This does not mean the village Link Transport Services Scheme should be wound up. If profit making is the only criterion for the continuation of a scheme or a project, most of the public sector project should have been given a clean go by long ago. The public sector continues in the public interest, regardless of profit or loss. Moreover loss incurring is not an exclusive phenomenon of a
Village Link Transport Services Scheme. To contain losses, earnings per kilometre should be stepped up. Similarly, every effort should be made to lower the cost per kilometre. The divergence between earnings and costs needs to be reversed, if not arrested into an equality. The higher cost per kilometre in the Village Link Transport Services scheme is largely due to poor surface of the road, improper maintenance and other physical barriers, impairing smooth and speedy movement. Road surfaces need to be improved. Human factor can also be effectively geared up. By applying skills and talents, vehicle drivers can certainly reduced the cost on the vehicle and fuel. Other things being equal, low earnings are attributed to undependability of the transport system. Unplanned frequencies, inflexible timings, disregard to the norms of punctuality are responsible for the low earnings. Planned frequencies, flexible timings and adherence to the punctuality are necessary. Winning customers, retaining them after having won and providing satisfaction to riders are important for a transport system. Adequate attention should be made to all these aspects, to make the village Link Transport Services Scheme attractive.
The reputation of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation has been anything but good. Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation has near monopoly over all routes. It faces no healthy competition, from other modes of transport. The bureaucratic functioning of the system too contributed in a measure to the poor and unattractive image of the organisation. The militant trade union activity of the employees also is responsible for making the organisation unimpressive and unattractive. The problem of pilferage has its adverse effects on the Village Link Transport Services Scheme. Loop-holes regarding pilferage need to be plugged. If pilferage is allowed to continue, earnings cannot be increased. Such low level of earnings may be used both to discredit the Village Link Transport Services Scheme and to strengthen the practice of leakage of earnings. If additional costs are to be incurred to overcome these losses, costs would mount up. This would make the Village Link Transport Services Scheme appear financially not feasible and viable. A new organisational framework and a new set of management values are called for.
Village Link Transport Services Scheme may be brought under tax concession before it could be made remunerative. Model vehicles may also be designed for rural transport to facilitate economy. The Regional Transport Authorities may encourage fresh licence seekers to rural services under the Village Link Transport Services scheme. Institutional credit should be advanced to operators willing to extend their services to villages. In the evaluation of Village Link Transport Services Scheme social cost benefit analysis are more pertinent than physical financial parameters. The provision of committed personnel to man the rural services will help the scheme look more attractive. Hence no efforts should be spared to motivate its personnel with all the resources at its command.