CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
Road laying and Road construction were always emphasised in India. Indian historical evidence testifies this. Kautilya, the famous Indian economist made a mention of the specific dimensions of different roads, that existed in India. According to him, the city roads were only 24 ft wide. However, the roads leading to the villages and battle fields were double the size of city roads. The vision of the planners of those roads was sophisticated. The modern rural development planner, may very well envy the sophistication.

The coming of the British to India is the starting point of a new phase in Indian history. Lord William Bentinck made the earliest efforts in the road construction. Dalhousie made a pioneering attempt in organising the central public works department in 1865. It was recognised that the significance of roads was important for the prosperity of the nation, in the transportation of raw materials and finished products. Hence the Government of India laid utmost emphasis for a variety of reasons on rail transport.
However, road construction and management was left to the Provincial Government. In a landmass India, the favourable effects of a well laid out net work of roads need no special mention. None-the-less, The Royal Commission on Agriculture did emphasise the benefits of an adequate road net work. The first Motor vehicle was on the Indian roads in 1898.

REPORT OF THE JAYAKAR COMMITTEE

An attempt to examine the extent of road development in India was made in 1927. A committee was set up under the label of the Indian road development committee. This was done in pursuance of the resolution of the Indian legislature. M.R. Jayakar was the Chairman of the committee. It was expected of the committee to suggest ways and means for planned road development in India. The report was published in 1928. Any study on road development in India does make atleast a passing reference to this Jayakar Committee Report.
The road mileage in India was as low as 1.69 lakhs by the end of 1913. Not the whole of it was surfaced. The surfaced part was only one third of the total mileage. The inadequate attention paid to the development of road transport was fully exposed during the First World War operations. The movement of troops became difficult in the absence of adequate development of roads.

Jayakar Committee Report is an important document in the sense it laid down the method of financing road construction activity. The committee was of the opinion that road construction cannot be limited to the efforts of the local bodies alone. Hence, it advocated in favour of national financing and recommended for periodical Block grants from the centre to finance the road construction activity. The committee also recommended the collection of a motor vehicles transport tax in the form of vehicle taxation, licence fees for vehicles plying and a duty on motor spirit.
INSTITUTION OF CENTRAL ROAD FUND

Jayakar Committee was also categorical in certain respects. It made a special recommendation to the effect that the duty on Motor spirit be raised to six annas\(^*\) per gallon from four annas. Further the committee recommended that the additional levy so imposed be exclusively devoted to road development.

To give a concrete shape to the recommendations of the committee, the Central Road Fund was instituted in 1929. The depression that followed, however, rendered the operation of the Central Road Fund ineffective.

In the subsequent years, though the revenue from Motor vehicles taxation increased, the expenditure did not register any increase. This is mainly because of the question of federal and provincial realms of operation.

AFTERMATH OF II WORLD WAR

The II World War fully brought to light the dangers of exclusive reliance on railway transport system.

\(^*\) Equivalent to 25 paise and 36 paise respectively
In the light of shocking experience a meeting of Provincial Chief Engineers was convened by the Government of India to explore the possibilities of road development. This conference embarked upon a 20 year road development plan. This was known as the Nagpur Plan.

It cannot be gainsaid that none can match Sir Dennis Robertson in emphasising the basic and primary importance of road construction in the context of the Indian economy. In 1934, he said "If I were given a Crore of Rupees and allowed to spend on anything, I would spend it on roads. I consider it to be of the greatest benefit to the economy".

The next chapter examines how far Indian Planners have paid heed to the sentiments of Sir Dennis Robertson and adhered to his top priority. The third chapter deals with Road Development Planning in Andhra Pradesh. The fourth chapter talks about Road Development in Cuddapah District. The fifth chapter evaluates The Village Link Transport Services Scheme adopted by Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation. The penultimate
chapter studies the feasibility of Village Link Transport Service Scheme. The Summary and Conclusion as emerged from the study is presented in the last chapter.