

J&K Gets 1-Year Extension In Rs 1500 Crore WB Project

Agencies

Srinagar: Noting the remarkable progress made over the last 2.5 years, the World Bank has extended the deadline for completion of its Rs 1500 crore project in Jammu & Kashmir by one more year, but made it clear to the Central Government and J&K authorities that any works not completed by December 31, 2023 would need to be completed with the government's own resources.

In a letter to the Union Finance Ministry and J&K administration, the World Bank has accepted the Union Finance Ministry's request to extend the deadline of the project to December 31, 2023.

"We also refer to the letter from the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance F.No. 05/06/2014-FB. VIII/V dated December 19, 2022,



requesting the Association to extend the Closing Date of the Credit by 12 months. We are pleased to inform you that the Association concurs with the request and has established December 31, 2023, as the later date for purposes of Section IV.B.2 of Schedule 2 to the Financing Agreement," reads the letter written by WB's Hideki Mori, Acting Country Director, India to Rajat Kumar Mishra, **More on P6**

J&K Gets 1-Year

Additional Secretary (MBC), Department of Economic Affairs Ministry of Finance and Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K.

But the WB has made it clear to them that any works of the project not completed by the closing date of December 31, 2023, including for L.D. Hospital, Srinagar, would need to be completed with the government's own resources.

After the 2014 floods, the Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) was approved by the World Bank in June 2015 for reconstruction of the damaged public sector infrastructure and strengthening J&K's disaster management mechanism.

The closing date of the Rs 1500 crore project was June 30, 2020, which has been extended to December 31, 2023. The project has faced multiple challenges, including COVID-19, which led to substantial implementation delays.

According to the World Bank, the project has shown remarkable progress over the last 2.5 years in improving the pace of public infrastructure construction, completing livelihood support activities, implementing CERC component activities to boost healthcare services for COVID response, and augmenting disaster preparedness capabilities. One of the notable contributions of the project has been the installation and commissioning of 30 oxygen generation plants in rural areas of J&K which include areas like Gurez, Tangdar and Bani basoli. The project has committed 100% of the credit with signed contracts including the cost variations and funds earmarked for implementation support.

Out of 213 contract packages under the project, 159 (74 percent) have been completed till December 15, 2022. These includes completion of: 41 schools and higher education buildings, 10 road packages, one bridge, silk and wool factories and showroom with new machineries; procurement and deployment of: mobile pumps, search and rescue equipment; and

trainings and technical support to handloom and handicrafts sector and artisans; and several technical studies and assessments—(KNO)