

Finance issues to not hamper Bharatmala project: Official

• OUR BUREAU

New Delhi

Conceding that government is facing bottlenecks like dearth of working capital availability for its ambitious Bharatmala scheme, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is working on a system to ensure that project execution is not hampered, a top official said at an ASSOCHAM event held in New Delhi.

"We are working on how to implement the project in a fast manner; we have to find ways and means to shrink the time it takes to execute a project, one of the bottlenecks we are facing is working capital availability," said Rohit Kumar Singh, member-finance, NHAI while addressing an ASSOCHAM national conference, 'Sureties and guarantees: A global way to manage working capital.'

"There is an element of mobilisation advance which is 10 per cent of the project cost that is given but beyond that during the construction project implementers are facing problems of working capital," he said.

Singh added, "We are working on a system as to how to facilitate a contractor with adequate checks and balances so that during the life cycle of the project he does not unduly suffer from lack of working capital and it does not hamper the execution of the project." He also informed that there are more than 65 projects that have been bid out under the public-private partnership (PPP) mode and that are ready to be rolled out and some work has already started on certain road projects.

The NHAI official further informed that bids are due from international bidders on January 7 for a set of highways

which are complete and running with six in the eastern part and 4 in the western part being clubbed as a bundle which has been bid out to international investors.

"We hope that these nine highways with 10 toll plazas are going to fetch us more than USD 1 billion in the order of Rs 6,700 crore as a money which will come to us in March if the bids are successful which we will further infuse in our highways which are non-viable for PPP kind of investment, this is also called internationally a way to recycle assets," said Singh. He also credited the current government for focusing on resolving over 100 stuck projects. "I am very glad to inform that out of 103 projects that were stuck, there are only 3-4 projects that are facing problems and mostly because of judicial interventions."

India is home to 50% of world's undernourished children: report

New Delhi: India is home to the largest number of malnourished children in the world, a report said on Wednesday, advocating that the country needs to frame policies with a focus on reducing health and social inequities. "Over the decade (2005-15), there has been an overall reduction in the infant mortality rate and under-five mortality rate in India, yet the country is housing about 50% of undernourished children of the world," said the joint study by Assocham and EY. The report found that towards the end of 2015, 40% of the Indian children were undernourished.

PTI

दुनिया के आधे कुपोषित बच्चे भारत में उद्योग संगठन 'एसोचैम' के एक सर्वे में हुआ खुलासा

■ प्रस, नई दिल्ली : दुनिया के करीब आधे कुपोषित बच्चे भारत में बसते हैं। कुपोषण के शिकार बच्चों की संख्या देश के ग्रामीण इलाकों में ज्यादा है, जबकि शहरी इलाकों के बहुत से बच्चे अतिपोषण से दो-चार हो रहे हैं। उद्योग संगठन 'एसोचैम' का एक सर्वे बयान करता है कि देश में हाल के वर्षों में जहां शिशु मृत्यु दर और 5 साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों की मृत के मामलों में कमी आई है, वहीं कुपोषण भारतीय बच्चों के लिए अब भी एक बड़ी समस्या है। सर्वे के मुताबिक, भारत के पांच साल से कम के करीब 37 फीसदी कुपोषित बच्चों का वजन कम है। 39 फीसदी

कद में छोटे हैं, 21 फीसदी शारीरिक रूप से कमजोर हैं और 8 फीसदी गंभीर कुपोषण के शिकार हैं। सर्वे में कहा गया है कि देश के ग्रामीण इलाकों में कम वजन के बच्चों का प्रतिशत 38 है, वहीं शहरी इलाकों में यह 29 है। एक से पांच साल के ऐसे बच्चे झारखंड में सबसे ज्यादा (42 फीसदी) हैं। इसके बाद बिहार में कम वजन के बच्चों का प्रतिशत 42, यूपी में 36 और मध्य प्रदेश में 34.1 है। रिविक्वम में यह सबसे कम 5 फीसदी है। सर्वे कहता है कि भारत में असंतुलित और गैर पोषक डाइट लेना बच्चों में कुपोषण का एक बड़ा कारण है।