

₹121-Crore Road Project Turns into Two-Year Nightmare for Commuters



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What was promised as a major infrastructure upgrade under the Assam Mala Scheme has instead become a symbol of official apathy, contractor failure, and endless public suffering. Nearly two years after work began on the crucial Sivasagar-Sonari Road, commuters continue to battle dust, mud, potholes, and unfinished construction, with no end in sight.

The 18.416-kilometre road stretch from Sivasagar town to Suomoni near Garmur in Charaideo district, sanctioned at a cost of around ₹121 crore, remains incomplete despite repeated assurances from authorities. Daily commuters—including office employees, students, patients, and business owners—have been forced to endure hazardous travel conditions as construction drags on at a snail's pace.

During dry weather, thick clouds of dust engulf the road, creating serious health hazards and reducing visibility. With the onset of rain, the same road transforms into a muddy obstacle course riddled with waterlogged craters and dangerous stretches, exposing what locals describe as the complete failure of project execution.

The project was initially awarded to controversial contractor Shiv Harlalka. However, according to local sources, less than ten percent of the work was completed before the contractor abandoned the project. The responsibility was later divided among multiple contractors, but progress remained painfully slow. Contractors have reportedly blamed delays in government payments, while residents argue that bureaucratic excuses have come at the cost of public safety and convenience.

In many locations, excavation work has been left incomplete for months. Sections of the road remain partially carpeted, while poorly maintained WBM surfaces have deteriorated into massive potholes. Open drains and unfinished road shoulders have further increased the risk of accidents, particularly during the monsoon season.

One of the most glaring examples of neglect is the incomplete culvert at Manipuri Gaon near Singhadwar in Hahchara. Despite nearly two years having passed since construction began, the culvert remains unfinished. Local residents say the half-completed structure has become a symbol of contractor negligence and administrative indifference.

Last year, blockage at the culvert prevented water from draining out of nearby agricultural fields, causing significant distress to farmers. Villagers were compelled to approach the District Commissioner seeking intervention, but even after repeated appeals, the problem remains unresolved.

Public anger has also been directed at local MLA Akhil Gogoi. Residents recall that the MLA had reportedly assured them that the road project would be completed by March this year. However, with little visible progress on the ground, many are now questioning why stronger action has not been taken against the contractors and officials responsible for the delay.

For thousands of commuters who rely on the Sivasagar–Sonari Road every day, the ₹121-crore project has become a textbook example of how public infrastructure projects can descend into chaos when accountability is absent. As contractors continue to miss deadlines and authorities remain silent, residents fear they may be condemned to suffer through yet another monsoon on a road that seems perpetually under construction.

The lingering question remains: who will be held accountable for a project that has consumed crores of public money while delivering little more than dust, mud, and broken promises?

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