

Audit observes poor workmanship in farm road GSB projects

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In its latest report, the Royal Audit Authority revealed several audit issues concerning the laying of Granular Sub-Base (GSB) on farm roads. These include the rapid appearance of potholes, erosion, and GSB washouts shortly after project completion. The report also highlighted the use of improperly graded GSB materials and inadequate compaction. The authority stated that such practices compromise road durability and result in significant maintenance costs.

A GSB is a uniform mixture of granular material that is laid on a prepared foundation of road, then moistened, shaped, and compacted.

It acts as a drainage layer to avoid excessive wetting and weakening of the foundation.

The audit authority observed that non-compliance with the Specification for Buildings and Roads 2020, has been a key factor in substandard work, undermining the value of public investment.

The Specification for Buildings and Roads 2020, outlines clear standards for laying GSB. It details the scope, grading, material composition, physical requirements, and construction processes needed to ensure quality.

The authority recommends the government to ensure strict monitoring and supervision of GSB works by implementing agencies, with firm action against non-compliance.

The authority suggests focusing on building fewer, high-quality roads in phases to ensure year-round usability instead of prioritising quantity.

Evaluating the cost-effectiveness of using a complete base course is also one of the recommendations.

During the 12th Five-Year Plan, the government spent over Nu 5.5bn on GSB laying projects. Similar investment is expected to continue in the 13th Five-Year Plan to enhance farm roads.

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