



TALK TO EXPERTS -16

Author

Next in rank comes in Design changes as the cause for the highway projects languishing causing loss of money and of the attendant benefits to all the stakeholders.

A project takes its origin in the felt need for it by the authorities, a genuine need that will profusely fulfill the demand bringing in its wake a plethora of benefits. What was felt in abstraction is framed into a concept and to do that, a proper and effective communication of the nature and structure of the need to a relevant technical expert or to a team of experts must happen. Once the technical experts understand the entire picture of the need, they proceed to draw and build the design necessary for the need to be implemented.

All along, beginning from the conception of the need till its completion through a project, the details required must be factual and exact so that both the time and the money required for the project are not wasted out. Of course, to arrive at the cost of the project and the timeframe,

the design of the project, be it a two-way lane or an elevated corridor passing through a thickly populated region, must be free from errors. An error-free design guarantees minimal cost overrun and excess time.

If an imperfect technical input marks the design, then, a series of faults in sequence damage the project. Based on the faulty technical input, a wrong estimate is arrived at leading to grave miscalculations in budget, in acquisition of the materials and hiring of labour. In short, a bad beginning invites a bad end only. Therefore, maximum care must be given to all aspects of the project. Inaccuracy in any form at any level of the project will necessarily lead to design changes. And design change implies extra of everything like time and money.

Investigation of the site must precede all attempts at the project. An accurate, exact investigation of the site must be carried out through proven agencies. A hasty or inefficient investigation of the site will force restructuring the project, costing precious resources like money, men and materials. In-built defects in the project start popping up during the implementation of the project compelling corrections. Every correction, every modification involves additional finance and workforce.

Like design change, there is a possibility of scope change. Scope covers all the deliverables of the project such as quality, schedule, estimate etc. Change in scope generally is the result of inaccurate design and planning. Sometimes, it becomes engaged in litigation which means halting the implementation of the project with no certainty of resumption of the work as scope inevitably covers the interests of the contractors.

It is clear from the points discussed above, the design change does cause delay in the implementation of the project. Imperfect planning, inefficient technical in-put, improper estimate, inaccurate investigation of the site—all these lead to design change costing very valuable resources.