

Project ^{Management}

implementation

The reiteration by the government to implement development projects more effectively and to improve the quality of fund utilisation is encouraging as well as reassuring. It had been long acknowledged that timely completion of development schemes should also be fully ensured without which the goals of poverty reduction, employment generation and improvement of human development indicators could remain quiet distant. Addressing the launch of the first Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report prepared jointly by the Planning Commission, the Centre for Research on Poverty and Income Distribution and the UN team, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said that public-private partnership would be strengthened to speedily move towards the stated objectives. The achievement of development goals would also be ensured at the grass roots level.

The domestic development effort, which is to be integrated with the MDGs, is basically focused on removing hunger and poverty, achievement of universal primary education, control diseases and improvement of healthcare, provision of safe drinking water, improvement in the quality of life of the underprivileged, develop a non-discriminatory trading system, promotion of good governance, debt relief for highly indebted countries and more generous official assistance. In essence, these goals primarily relate to the overall national development of a country and overall improvement in the quality of its people in the changed liberal, transparent and technology-oriented global environment. As such they would require a more determined effort to maintain the completion schedule so that there is no room for cost escalation and their bene-

room for cost escalation and their benefits are fully reflected in the lives of the people, especially the poor.

Pakistan has also been trying to redouble its efforts to attain these goals through increasing development allocations especially for infrastructure and social sectors, attracting investment and promoting economic growth. Over the last two years, the government has substantially increased its own development outlay which is fixed at Rs 202 billion for the current financial year. It is expected to be further enhanced as more fiscal space is created. The Economic Committee of the National Economic Council approves development projects worth billions of rupees and larger allocations are being made for the under-developed areas. Greater emphasis being laid on infrastructure development would facilitate the private sector in taking their investment initiatives. Though allocations for social sector development have also been increased, much more still needs to be done to improve human development indicators. By ensuring timely implementation of development projects and by improving the quality of fund utilisation, the country's resources can be much more productively and gainfully used.