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## Puttaparti town hit by poor civic amenities

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DC Correspondent

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Anantapur, Nov. 15: For all the tall claims by ministers and officials to provide basic amenities in the world famous spiritual centre of Puttaparti, roads and the drainage system in the town have been in bad shape for many years, besides rampant encroachments posing a problem to dwellers and devotees.

Thousands of devotees throng this small pilgrim town for Satya Sai Baba's darshan every day. The authorities have been taking steps to beautify the town in the wake of Sai Baba's 85th birthday to be celebrated on November 23.

President Ms Pratiba Patil will visit the town on November 19 and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will participate in Satya Sai University's convocation ceremony on November 22. Chief ministers from seven states and six governors will visit the town.

While the authorities are making temporary arrangements for the visit of notable persons from 150 nations, problems of long-pending basic amenities haunt the dwellers. Almost all internal roads are ruined and drains are waterlogged across the town.

Though the government announced that Rs 53 crore would be utilised for roads and drainage restoration works, nothing substantial has been done so far. Rainwater often enters shops and residences due to the poor drainage system.

According to sources, the officials failed to utilise Rs 53 crore for basic amenities except for Rs 2 crore works so far.

The government promised to construct a bypass road for easy accessibility to the town and a four-lane road from Enumulapalli to Puttaparti. But the promises have remained confined to foundation stones.

Sewage treatment is in shambles though civic authorities renovated it with Rs 1 crore last year. Residents are concerned as unhygienic conditions prevail at the municipal compost yard.

The government assured that it would provide boating facilities for devotees in Enumulapalli tank, but this has not materialised yet.

Dwellers urge the government to take up roads and drainage system restoration works before Baba's birthday, else it would give a bad impression to the visiting dignitaries.

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