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Infra boost: Record capital expenditure marks India's road to a \$30 trillion economy by 2047

FE Online,
December 17, 2024

The government's capital expenditure has seen a steady and dramatic rise. From Rs 5 lakh crore in 2021-22, it surged to Rs 11.11 lakh crore in 2024-25, marking a clear focus on strengthening India's infrastructure framework. This allocation includes substantial investments in roads, railways, and air connectivity, sectors that have witnessed notable progress over the past decade.

In recent years, the Indian government has intensified its efforts to bolster infrastructure development, a cornerstone of its economic growth strategy. Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary recently highlighted the PM Modi administration's significant increase in capital expenditure, underscoring its commitment to transforming India into a developed nation by 2047.

Record-Breaking Capital Expenditure

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"The focus of the Modi Government is on building infrastructure... India's road, air, and rail connectivity has improved considerably over the last 10 years," Chaudhary stated. Such advancements are vital for fostering economic growth, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life for millions of citizens.

Vision 2047

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) by 2047 aligns with the country's centenary of independence. According to NITI Aayog's "Vision for Viksit Bharat @ 2047" document, the roadmap is ambitious yet achievable. The plan sets India on a trajectory to become a USD 30 trillion economy with a per capita income of USD 18,000 per annum.

Currently, India's GDP stands at USD 3.36 trillion, with a per capita income of USD 2,392 per annum. To meet these targets, the economy must expand ninefold, necessitating sustained, high-quality growth over the next two decades.

Key Initiatives Driving Growth

1. **Connectivity Projects:** Massive investments in highways, railways, and airports are transforming India's transport ecosystem, reducing travel time, and improving logistics efficiency.
2. **Industrial Corridors:** Developing dedicated freight corridors and special economic zones (SEZs) to attract investment and boost manufacturing.
3. **Digital Infrastructure:** Expanding internet penetration and deploying 5G technology to empower businesses and bridge the urban-rural divide.

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4. **Renewable Energy:** Increasing focus on solar, wind, and hydropower to meet growing energy demands sustainably.

Budgetary Commitments

Chaudhary emphasised that budgetary allocations for infrastructure will continue to be a priority in the upcoming Budget for 2025-26. This commitment is expected to fuel both public and private sector investments, creating a multiplier effect on the economy.

Challenges Ahead

While the roadmap is promising, achieving these goals requires overcoming significant challenges, including:

- Ensuring efficient project execution to avoid delays and cost overruns.
- Mobilising private sector investments alongside public spending.
- Addressing socio-economic disparities to ensure inclusive growth.

The Modi government's robust capital expenditure and strategic planning underscore its commitment to infrastructure-led growth. As India aims to join the ranks of high-income nations, achieving a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047 will demand unwavering focus, innovation, and collaboration. With the right policies and execution, the vision of "Viksit Bharat" can become a reality, heralding an era of unprecedented prosperity for the nation.

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PM Modi Inaugurates Key Development Projects Worth Rs 5,500 Crore In Prayagraj Ahead Of Mahakumbh 2025

Hindustan Times,
December 17, 2024

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated multiple development projects worth Rs 5,500 crore in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, on Friday (13 December) ahead of the Mahakumbh 2025.

These initiatives are designed to enhance infrastructure, connectivity, and public amenities in the region, catering to the large influx of devotees expected during the event.

The inaugurated projects include several rail and road developments, such as 10 new Road Over Bridges (ROBs), flyovers, permanent ghats, and riverfront roads.

These upgrades are aimed at providing seamless connectivity for the millions of pilgrims who will attend the Mahakumbh, ensuring smooth travel to and from the religious site.

In line with the vision for a "Swachh and Nirmal Ganga," the Prime Minister also launched initiatives focused on intercepting, diverting, and treating drains that currently lead untreated water into the Ganga, thereby ensuring zero untreated discharge into the sacred river.

As part of the temple corridor projects, PM Modi unveiled the Bharadwaj Ashram Corridor, Shringverpur Dham Corridor, Akshayvat Corridor, and Hanuman Mandir Corridor.

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These corridors are designed to improve accessibility for devotees and boost spiritual tourism in the area, offering a more enriching experience for those attending the Mahakumbh.

Additionally, PM Modi introduced the "Kumbh Sah'AI'yak" chatbot, a tool designed to offer real-time updates and assistance to pilgrims during the Mahakumbh in 2025.

The event, which takes place every 12 years, is expected to draw millions of devotees, with key bathing days, such as "Shahi Snan" on 14 January 2025, and others on 29 January and 3 February 2025, projected to see large crowds.

To bolster security for this massive event, Uttar Pradesh Police will employ Artificial Intelligence and advanced CCTV systems, according to the Director General of Police Prashant Kumar.

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Gold Line Metro 8: Fadnavis Government Set To Expedite Rs 15,000 Crore Project To Enhance Connectivity Between Mumbai-Navi Mumbai Airports

Navi Mumbai Metro line (Maha Metro)

December 17, 2024

The Gold Line, also known as Metro 8, connecting Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) to the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport, is back in focus as the new government plans to decide on the executing agency for this crucial infrastructure project.

Currently, no mass rapid transport system (MRTS) links the two airports, and the Metro 8 corridor, envisioned as part of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) Metro Master Plan, is intended to bridge this gap.

The project has been a subject of deliberations ahead of the assembly elections to determine which agency would handle its execution, as the route spans both Mumbai and Navi Mumbai.

While the MMRDA and the state government have supported the execution of the project by the City and Industrial Development Corporation (Cidco) through the Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation (Maha Metro), the then Chief Minister Eknath Shinde preferred that the MMRDA take charge of the 35-kilometer corridor.

"The then chief secretary and MMRDA were inclined towards Cidco executing the project through Maha Metro, as the majority of the route falls within Navi Mumbai," a state government official stated.

However, Shinde was unable to finalise the decision during his tenure.

With the Navi Mumbai International Airport set to open next year, the newly-formed government under Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis is now expected to expedite the Metro 8 project.

The metro line, estimated at Rs 15,000 crore, is designed to accommodate a daily ridership of nine lakh passengers, which underscores its importance for both Mumbai and Navi Mumbai's infrastructure.

The final decision on the executing agency is crucial to ensure timely completion of the project, especially with the Navi Mumbai airport's impending inauguration.

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Rajasthan infra boost: PM Modi to lay foundation for 24 projects worth Rs 46,300 crore- Know all details here

FE Online

December 16, 2024

PM Modi will inaugurate nine critical projects worth more than Rs 11,000 crore. These include both central and state government initiatives aimed at improving the state's infrastructure and ensuring better services for its people.

Rajasthan infra boost: PM Modi to lay foundation for 24 projects worth Rs 46,300 crore

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit Jaipur on Tuesday to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for 24 key projects across various sectors, with an estimated cost of more than Rs 46,300 crore. The event marks a significant moment for the Bhajanlal Sharma-led BJP government in Rajasthan as they celebrate the completion of one year in power.

The 'Ek Varsh – Parinam Utkarsh' program will be held at Dadiya, near Sanganer, to commemorate the achievements of the state government in the past year. During the event, the Prime Minister will unveil a series of initiatives that will shape the future infrastructure and development of Rajasthan, including projects focused on energy, transportation, and water supply.

Key Projects to be Inaugurated by PM Modi

PM Modi will inaugurate nine critical projects worth more than Rs 11,000 crore. These include both central and state government initiatives aimed at improving the state's infrastructure and ensuring better services for its people. Notable projects include:

- Navnera Barrage: This vital water project aims to enhance the state's water management system.
- Smart Electricity Transmission Network: A move towards modernizing the energy infrastructure of Rajasthan.
- Railway Electrification Projects: Including the electrification of the Bhildi-Samdari-Luni-Jodhpur-Merta Road-Degana-Ratangarh section, aimed at improving connectivity and reducing energy costs.
- Delhi-Vadodara Greenfield Alignment (NH-148N): This highway project is set to ease traffic congestion and enhance connectivity in the region.
- These projects are expected to bolster the state's infrastructure, improve energy accessibility, and provide smoother transportation networks for residents and businesses alike.

Foundation Stone for Major Water and Solar Power Projects

In addition to the inaugurations, PM Modi will also lay the foundation for 15 more projects worth over Rs 35,300 crore. Among these are several water and solar power initiatives that will help address Rajasthan's pressing needs:

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- **Ramgarh and Mahalpur Barrages:** Two major water infrastructure projects estimated to cost more than Rs 9,400 crore. These will help manage the state's water resources more effectively, particularly in the arid regions.
- **Water Transfer Systems:** The project to transfer water from Navnera Barrage to Bisalpur Dam and Isarda Dam via canals on the Chambal River is part of the government's long-term strategy to ensure a steady water supply.
- **Solar Power Initiatives:** PM Modi will lay the foundation for rooftop solar power plants on government office buildings and the development of large-scale solar parks in Pugal (Bikaner) and other areas. These projects will contribute significantly to the state's renewable energy capacity.

Enhancing Railway Infrastructure

The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation for several railway projects designed to enhance connectivity across Rajasthan. These include:

- Luni-Samdari-Bhildi Double Line
- Ajmer-Chandaria Double Line
- Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur Double Line

These projects are part of the ongoing efforts to modernise India's railways and improve transport efficiency within Rajasthan.

Strengthening Rajasthan's Power Infrastructure

Additional projects related to power transmission and energy efficiency will also be launched. These initiatives are intended to strengthen the state's energy grid and improve the quality of power distribution, ensuring that the growing population and industries have reliable access to electricity.

Ahead of the Prime Minister's visit, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma took stock of the preparations for the event. He held meetings with officials and gave clear instructions to ensure the smooth execution of the programme in Dadiya, reinforcing the government's commitment to bringing developmental projects to the people.

The initiatives being launched and inaugurated by PM Modi are set to play a pivotal role in transforming Rajasthan's infrastructure landscape. With a focus on water, energy, and transportation, these projects will not only boost economic growth but also improve the quality of life for the state's residents.

As the BJP government celebrates one year in power, these landmark projects demonstrate the state's dedication to creating a robust, sustainable future for Rajasthan.

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Andhra Pradesh Approves Rs 24,276 Crore For Amaravati Capital Infrastructure: Iconic Buildings, Roads, And More

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Swarajya,
December 17, 2024

Amaravati capital city is envisioned to be the people centric pioneer smart city of India built around sustainability and liveability principles.

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA), chaired by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, has approved infrastructure projects worth Rs 24,276 crore for the greenfield capital city of Amaravati.

The approval was granted during the 43rd APCRDA meeting, focusing on the development of trunk roads, layouts, and iconic buildings, Municipal Minister P Narayana announced at a press conference on Monday.

"The 43rd CRDA meeting approved Rs 24,276 crore funds for the construction of trunk roads, layouts, and iconic bhavans (buildings) in Amaravati capital," said Narayana. He also highlighted that Rs 45,249 crore had been approved in total across the past four CRDA meetings.

The minister provided details about key projects, including the upcoming Assembly building, which will span 103 acres, covering 11.2 lakh sq ft with a height of 250 metres. "When the Assembly is not in session, people can visit the top of the building to enjoy a bird's eye view of the capital," he said.

The High Court building will occupy 42 acres, with a total area of 20.32 lakh sq ft. It will rise to a height of 55 metres across eight storeys and will be constructed at a cost of Rs 1,048 crore. Additionally, the General Administration Department (GAD) building will feature 47 floors and cover 17 lakh sq ft.

Narayana further announced the construction of five additional towers, with a total area of 69 lakh sq ft, at a cost of Rs 4,688 crore.

Out of the approved funds, Rs 9,699 crore has been allocated for four main roads spanning 580 km and other facilities, while Rs 7,794 crore has been earmarked for trunk roads and related infrastructure.

The tendering process for these projects is set to begin on December 23, with the aim of completing most tenders by the end of the month and the remainder by January.

"At any cost, we will complete Amaravati capital construction in the next three years to make it one of the best five cities in the world," Narayana stated.

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Mumbai Coastal Road: Second Arm Of Bow-String Bridge To Open By 26 January, Connecting Nariman Point To Bandra-Worli Sea Link

PTI,
December 16, 2024

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is set to open the second arm of the bow-string bridge under the Mumbai Coastal Road Project (MCRP) by 26 January. This new section will connect the coastal road directly to the Bandra-Worli Sea Link (BWSL) and facilitate southbound traffic.

The bow-string arch bridge, the longest of its kind in India to span across an open sea, was partially opened in September for northbound traffic. This section allows vehicles from Nariman Point in South Mumbai to directly access the Bandra-Worli Sea Link without exiting the coastal road.

“With the launch of the girders already complete, we are undertaking the final works such as water-proofing, asphaltting, installation of electric poles, etc. We are set to open the bridge for southbound traffic from January 26,” a senior BMC official told The Indian Express. The completion of the second arm will make the entire structure fully operational.

The opening of the bridge marks a significant milestone in the first phase of the MCRP, which was inaugurated in stages earlier this year. The southern arm from Worli to Marine Drive became operational on 11 March, followed by the northern section linking Marine Drive and Haji Ali on 11 June, and the final 3.5 km stretch between Haji Ali and Worli on 11 July.

Additionally, the BMC opened the sixth arm of the coastal road’s Haji Ali interchange towards Worli earlier this week. Officials have confirmed that two more interchanges, connecting Haji Ali to Marine Drive and Worli to Lotus Jetty Junction, are expected to be operational by May 2025.

As reported by The Indian Express, the second phase of the MCRP, which will extend the coastal road from Versova to Dahisar, has received approval from the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC). Estimated to cost Rs 16,621 crore, this 22.93 km stretch will include multiple bridges, flyovers, and underground tunnels, further enhancing Mumbai’s connectivity.

The completion of the second arm of the bow-string bridge is a critical step in the first phase of the Mumbai Coastal Road Project, which includes eight interchanges and is expected to significantly ease travel and reduce congestion in the city.

Mumbai’s Coastal Road Project is constructed in two phases. Phase 1 of the project is a 10.58-kilometre stretch from Marine Drive to Worli. The second phase involves connecting the Bandra Sea Link to Kandivali Junction.

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Rs 13,000 Crore Delhi-Dehradun Expressway Work Nears Completion, Set To Be Inaugurated By PM Modi Soon

Swarajya,
December 17, 2024

The Delhi-Dehradun expressway, which is set to cut the travel time between the two cities to nearly 2 hours from around 6 hours at present, will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced on Friday (13 December).

The expressway will also decrease travel time between Delhi and Haridwar from 5 hours to 2 hours.

Once completed, the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway would be instrumental in decongesting the national capital. It would also reduce the load on the Delhi Meerut Expressway.

As of now, two packages of the expressway, which has been divided into four packages, have been completed and efforts are underway to complete the pending works by the end of the financial year.

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Speaking at the tenth edition of Times Network 's India Economic Conclave (IEC), Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said, "Two packages of Delhi Dehradun Expressway have been completed. There is a completely elevated road from Akshardham and its inauguration will be done by PM Modi in the next 15-20 days. There is an effort to complete the pending works in the next 2-3 months. Once completed, the travel time will reduce to 2 hours from Delhi to Dehradun."

This infrastructure project, costing Rs 13,000 crore, aims to transform connectivity while prioritising safety and environmental conservation.

The expressway incorporates cutting-edge design features, including a 12-km elevated wildlife corridor, six animal underpasses, and two elephant underpasses, ensuring safe passage for animals along the route from Ganeshpur to Dehradun.

Additional provisions include a 340-meter-long, three-lane tunnel at Datkali in Dehradun, constructed at a cost of Rs 1,995 crore.

Key infrastructure along the expressway includes:

- 16 entry and exit points
- 113 underpasses for vehicular and light traffic
- 76 km of service roads
- 29 km of elevated roads
- 62 bus shelters

The 212-km six-lane Greenfield Access-Controlled Expressway starts at the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway near Akshardham and passes through Shastri Park, Khajuri Khas, Mandola EPE Interchange, Baghpat, Shamli, and Saharanpur, before reaching Dehradun.

Its strategic route is expected to benefit commuters, tourists, and freight operators alike.

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Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project: Track Construction Work Progressing Swiftly In Gujarat

Swarajya,
December 15, 2024

The Gujarat section of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project has reached a significant milestone with the commencement of rail welding on the viaduct.

The track construction is progressing swiftly, with advanced flash butt welding (FBW) technology employed to assemble 25-meter rails procured from Japan.

The process involves preparing and aligning 25-metre-long rails to be joined into 200-metre-long panels using cutting-edge welding machines.

So far, 298 such panels, covering around 60 km, have been successfully welded.

According to the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), which is the executing agency for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project, rail welding is a critical step in ensuring passenger comfort, track durability, and safety during high speed travel.

Key steps in bullet train rail welding process:

- Before rail welding, the rail ends are grinded and surface preparation which ensures a pristine surface for the crucial joining of rails.
- Each rail is checked to meet the dimensional requirements for welding
- Once the rails are perfectly aligned, they are joined together using flash butt welding technology.
- Weld is inspected by using magnetic particle and ultrasonic testing for detection of flaw and if any flaw is detected in the weld the same is replaced by new weld.
- Alignment is checked by special rail tread measuring equipment (procured from Japan).
- After going through the rigorous procedure, the 200 m long rail panels are spread by a special rail feeder car to lay, temporary track, at Standard Gauge, to facilitate movement of sophisticated high end machineries like slab laying car, CAM injection cars etc.
- Later on these rails are fixed on the track slab through rail fasteners, for final track.

The NHSRCL said that Dedicated Track Construction Bases (TCBs) are being planned and constructed to facilitate track construction including handling of rails, track slabs, machineries and equipment on ground and at the viaduct

The DTCBs also serve as a base for engineers and other man-power working for track construction.

Four track construction bases, two in between Surat and Bilimora and two in between Vadodara and Anand in Gujarat have been made operational, at present, according to NHSRCL.

The entire process of track installation is mechanised with cutting edge machinery especially designed and manufactured, as per Japanese specifications, in India or directly purchased from Japan.

Four sets of track construction machineries have been arranged, so far, for the project.

The fleet of machines include rail feeder car, track slab laying car, related wagons and motor cars, CAM laying car and flash butt welding machines.

Further, RC Track Bed construction has commenced over multiple locations in Anand, Vadodara, Surat and Navsari district in Gujarat.

And, nearly 64 track km of RC track bed construction has been completed.

Track slabs are being separately casted in dedicated track slab manufacturing facilities set up in Kim (near Surat) and in Anand.

These factories are equipped with state-of-the-art technologies and infrastructure to produce precise slabs for track construction.

More than 23,000 slabs have been cast which are equivalent to 118 track km, the NHRCL said.

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