

# NEWSLETTER

## CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

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## Infrastructure development crucial for Viksit Bharat vision, says Nitin Gadkari'

FE Online,  
January 16, 2025

Gadkari underlined the government's decision to transform Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) through infrastructure projects that will enhance tourism, eradicate poverty and generate jobs.

On the inauguration of the Sonamarg tunnel formerly known as the Z-Morh tunnel, Gadkari called it a historic achievement.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari highlighted the critical role of infrastructure in achieving "Viksit Bharat", asserting that economic growth depends on robust transport and communication systems. Addressing a rally after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sonamarg tunnel, Gadkari stated, "The Prime Minister has given us a goal to make India developed and prosperous. To achieve this vision, improving infrastructure is essential. It cannot flourish without advancements in transport, communication, power, water, industries, and tourism."

Gadkari underlined the government's decision to transform Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) through infrastructure projects that will enhance tourism, eradicate poverty and generate jobs. On the inauguration of the Sonamarg tunnel formerly known as the Z-Morh tunnel, Gadkari called it a historic achievement. He stated that the tunnel will ensure year-round connectivity to the tourist hub.

J-K's infra boom! PM Modi 'eagerly awaiting' Z-Morh Tunnel inauguration on Monday – A game-changer for year-round Kashmir-Ladakh connectivity?  
Zojila Tunnel Project

The Union Minister shared details on the Zojila tunnel project, which will be Asia's highest tunnel. Once the project is completed, the travel time will be reduced between Srinagar and Leh by 3.5 hours and will provide all-season connectivity. The Rs 6,800 crore project will be completed within budget and will save Rs 5,000 crore.

Gadkari also revealed the plans for four major road corridors in J&K worth Rs 50,000 crore. These corridors are- Surankote-Shopian-Baramulla-Uri, Jammu-Chenani-Anantnag, Jammu-Akhnoor-Surankote-Poonch and Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar. These projects once completed are anticipated to shorten travel times, boost connectivity, and uplift the economy.

### Project details of the four corridors

**Jammu-Akhnoor-Surankote-Poonch Corridor (203 km):** This project will be constructed with a budget of Rs 5,000 crore. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) is under process.

**Jammu-Chennai-Anantnag Corridor (202 km):** The project has been allocated Rs 5,000 crore and its Detailed Project report (DPR) is underway.

**Surankote-Shopian-Baramulla-Uri Corridor (303 km):** This project has been granted a budget of Rs 10,000 crore and is expected to be completed by 2027.

**Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar Corridor (250 km):** This project will comprise 33 tunnels, out of which 15 are completed and nine more are anticipated to get over by December 2025.

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Moreover, the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra expressway is expected to cut down travel time to Delhi-Srinagar to 8-8.5 hours. Ropeway projects in Sonamarg and Shankaracharya are under pipeline.

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EV ecosystem potential declines, yet India to see 5x growth in green funding by 2030:

Crisil

Reuters,

January 16, 2025

While solar and wind power projects have access to adequate debt financing, newer technologies such as green hydrogen and carbon capture need new funding initiatives, including sops from the government.

*The government estimates 47 GW of battery energy storage systems by 2032.*

India is likely to see a surge in green investments in infrastructure over the next five years, with an estimated Rs 31 lakh crore expected to come into the sector by 2030, according to a report by Crisil Intelligence released at its infrastructure summit in the capital. Crisil says this investment push aligns with India's ambitious net-zero goals and the increasing importance of sustainable practices across industries from mobility to energy. However, some sectors like the EV ecosystem need a push – as there has been a decline in investment potential year on year.

Key sectors that will attract this green investment include renewable energy and storage, which will likely get about Rs 19 lakh crore. The transport and automotive sectors are expected to receive Rs 4.1 lakh crore, while the oil and gas sector is poised to attract Rs 3.3 lakh crore – with a push towards green hydrogen and smarter refining.

Crisil, however, sees a challenge in financing this green transition. While solar and wind power projects have access to adequate debt financing, newer technologies such as green hydrogen and carbon capture need new funding initiatives, including sops from the government.

“There needs to be a strong focus on energy efficiency with sector-specific roadmaps for industries, buildings and transportation. To mobilise funding for this green transition, there is a need to accelerate green bonds, green revolving funds and green credit schemes, and provide support for emerging technologies,” says Rahul Prithiani, senior director and global head, of energy and sustainability, Crisil Intelligence.

The report points out the need for collaboration between the private sector, government and international funds. Besides the capital markets, developing green bond markets, and leveraging innovative financing structures like blended finance are crucial to address the funding gap and steer India's net-zero journey.

Pointing out the growth in investments in different sectors through its “Infrastructure Investibility Index”, which highlights investment potential in different sectors, Crisil says investment in the electric vehicle (EV) ecosystem declined in the past year by about 4% while mining also saw a 6.2% decline. Investment potential in power transmission and renewable energy is up about 2.6% and 2.7% respectively.

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Hemal N Thakar, senior practice leader and director, Crisil says “The slowdown in the EV ecosystem is because of the lack of a long-term initiative. The FAME III scheme and PM-EDRIVE schemes are short-term incentives and the sector needs a better push. That said segments like two-wheelers and three-wheelers will see growth in EV adoption much faster.”

He points out the need for consistent policies and private-sector participation to achieve this goal.

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**Katra-Reasi Section Gets Railway Safety Approval For 85 Kmph Speed, Jammu-Kashmir Vande Bharat Train To Operate Soon**  
Swarajya,  
January 15, 2025



*The Reasi Railway Bridge is a crucial link between Banihal and Katra. It is one of the world’s highest bridges railway, much higher than the Eiffel Tower Photograph: Asrar Sultanpuri*

The newly-built 17-km Katra-Reasi section of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail (USBRL) project in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has received approval from the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) for train operations.

According to officials quoted by Indian Express, the CRS has authorised the movement of trains between Shri Vaishno Devi Dham Katra and Reasi at a speed of 85 kilometres per hour (kmph).

“Apart from this, we have received fitness approval at a speed of 15 kilometers per hour on the loop line of the station. The final CRS report has cleared the way to run a train between Jammu and Srinagar soon. Preparation to run Vande Bharat and DEMU and MEMU trains from Jammu to Srinagar is ongoing,” a Railway Ministry official said.

The USBRL project, also known as the Kashmir line, received approval in the 1994-95 period. The first three phases of the project were successfully completed by 2014, enabling train services between Baramulla and Banihal in the Kashmir valley.

Train services were also operational between Jammu, Udhampur, and Katra in the Jammu region. However, the Banihal-Katra Section, spanning 111 kilometers, presented the greatest challenge due to geological factors.

In February 2024, a 48-kilometer stretch from Banihal to Sangaldan was inaugurated, followed by the 46-kilometer Sangaldan-Reasi section, which was authorised by CRS on 1 July 2024. The final segment, from Katra to Reasi, has recently received CRS approval.

The Banihal-Katra section has tunnel sections over a length of 97 km, while 7 km is covered by four main bridges. It also features the World's highest arch bridge (i.e 359 m) on the Chenab River, which the Railways called "the toughest challenge," especially constructing foundation support of the bridge.

"It was achieved by a rock bolting method using 30,000 tonnes of steel. The other main challenge was to build India's first cable-stayed bridge on the Anji River. The two other bridges on the section are Reasi Bridge and Bakkal Bridges," the Railway Ministry said in a statement.

The T50, the lengthiest tunnel in the USBRL project, extends for 12.77 km. According to officials, cameras are strategically installed every 50m within the tunnels to monitor operational safety. Additionally, the railways have constructed 215 km of roads in the area to facilitate access to the project sites.

The CRS has given the green light for an eight-coach Jammu-Kashmir Vande Bharat train to operate on the route. This train is unique from other Vande Bharat trains in its ability to function in extremely cold temperatures, going as low as -20°C.

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## Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project Achieves Another Milestone With Completion Of 210 Metre Long Bridge Crossing NH-48 In Gujarat

Swarajya,  
January 15, 2025

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project has achieved a milestone with the completion of a 210-meter-long pre-stressed concrete (PSC) bridge spanning National Highway-48 in Gujarat.

The National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), which is the implementing agency for the bullet train project, stated that the 210-meter-long PSC bridge, located at Dabhan village in Gujarat, consists of 72 precast segments and features four spans configured as 40m + 65m + 65m + 40m.

The bridge was constructed using the Balanced Cantilever Method, a technique well-suited for larger spans.

The bridge is located between the Anand and Ahmedabad Bullet Train stations.

NHSRCL said that the bullet train project has seen significant progress, with approximately 253 km of the viaduct completed, 290 km of girders cast, and 358 km of pier work finished.

Bridges on 13 rivers and five steel bridges have been completed and noise barriers have been installed over a stretch of approximately 112 km.

Additionally, track construction work has commenced at multiple locations in Gujarat.

"The work on a 21 km tunnel in Maharashtra is under construction and seven mountain tunnels are under construction in Palghar district, Maharashtra through NATM. One mountain tunnel in Valsad district, Gujarat is already completed," NHRCL said.

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail corridor is India's first bullet train project, stretching 508 km to provide rapid connectivity between Maharashtra and Gujarat.

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## Khurda-Balangir Rail Project Hits Milestone With 2.6-Km Tunnel Breakthrough In Odisha

Swarajya,

January 16, 2025

The Khurda Road-Balangir New Rail Line project reached a significant milestone with the successful breakthrough of the 2.6-km-long tunnel (T-3) between Buguda and Banigochha in Odisha's Nayagarh district, according to the East Coast Railway.

This tunnel, featuring a 2-degree curve, was excavated using the New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM) and represents a critical achievement in the project.

The breakthrough, referred to as "daylighting," was completed on 13 January.

T-3 is the longest tunnel in Nayagarh district and the second longest in the entire project, the East Coast Railway stated.

The excavation process utilised advanced technologies and equipment to navigate the challenging terrain of the Eastern Ghats.

The Railway Ministry highlighted the importance of this achievement in enhancing connectivity across Odisha.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, "A milestone showcasing engineering excellence in challenging terrains: A breakthrough has been achieved in the 2.6 km-long Tunnel T3 (with a 2-degree curve) between Buguda and Baniguchha stations on the Khurda-Bolangir section in Odisha."

The 301-km Khurda Road-Balangir rail project includes seven tunnels within a 75-km stretch between Daspalla and Purunakatak, with the longest tunnel (T-7) spanning 4.85 km already completed.

Tunnelling through the rugged Eastern Ghats has been one of the most complex aspects of the project.

To date, 215 km of the rail line has been completed—105.8 km between Khurda Road and Daspalla, and 109 km between Balangir and Purunakatak.

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The remaining sections, including the stretch from Purunakatak to Adhenigarh, are under construction and expected to be finished in the coming months, an official confirmed.

Once fully operational, the rail line will significantly reduce travel time between Bhubaneswar and Balangir, boosting connectivity and economic growth in the region.

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## Adani Group Firm Tops Bids For Managing 124-Km National Highway Stretch In Tamil Nadu Under TOT Model With Rs 1,692 Crore Offer

PTI,

January 16, 2025

Adani Road Transport has emerged as the top bidder to manage a 124-km national highway stretch in Tamil Nadu under the toll-operate-transfer (TOT) model, with a Rs 1,692 crore offer.

Adani Group's bid was followed by IRB Infrastructure Developers with Rs 1,485 crore, Epic Concessions at Rs 1,152 crore, and Prakash Asphaltings & Toll Highways with Rs 876 crore, all competing for the four-lane Trichy-Thuvarankurichi-Madurai section on NH-38.

Financial bids were opened by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Tuesday (14 January).

The contract is likely to be awarded to the highest bidder following board approval, according to a senior government official cited by Economic Times.

NHAI, which operates under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, conducted the auction for TOT Bundle 15 in mid-2024.

The TOT model involves leasing highway assets to private firms, granting them rights to operate, maintain, and collect tolls over 15-30 years in exchange for a one-time upfront concession fee paid to the government.

NHAI has identified 86 national highway stretches with an aggregate length of about 4,912 km for monetisation.

Before Bundle 15, five stretches—11, 12, 13, 14, and 16—had been monetised, and three additional awards are expected before the fiscal year's conclusion.

NHAI aims to generate Rs 54,000 crore in fiscal year 2025 through road asset monetisation to fund new projects and reduce debt.

As of December 2024, the authority's total debt stood at around Rs 2.76 lakh crore.

The contract for TOT Bundle 16 was secured by Highways Infrastructure Trust in September 2024.

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## India's metro network grows, becomes world's third-largest with 1,000 km expansion

FE Online,  
January 14, 2025



*Over the past decade, the metro network has expanded threefold, adding 1,000 kilometers.*

The number of states with metro services has increased from five to eleven, while the number of cities benefiting from metro connectivity has risen from five to 23.

India has achieved a significant milestone by expanding its metro network to become the third-largest in the world, with a total length of 1,000 kilometers. This accomplishment highlights the government's ongoing efforts to improve urban mobility and connectivity. The achievement follows the announcement of several new metro projects and the Namo Bharat initiative for Delhi under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The journey of India's metro network, which began in 2002 with the launch of the modern metro by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Delhi, has now reached this nationwide achievement, with unprecedented growth under PM Modi's leadership, particularly since 2014.

### **Metro network expands 3 fold in past 10 years**

Over the past decade, the metro network has expanded threefold, adding 1,000 kilometers. The number of states with metro services has increased from five to eleven, while the number of cities benefiting from metro connectivity has risen from five to 23.

Meerut Metro trial runs begin! NCRTC testing trains at varying speeds from Meerut South to Central Station – Check routes, stations and more

PM Modi's vision for urban transport focuses on providing seamless, affordable, and modern connectivity to improve the ease of travel and the quality of life for millions of citizens.

### **RRTS redefining inter-state commute**

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Last week, PM Modi inaugurated the 13-kilometer stretch of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Namo Bharat Corridor, built at a cost of Rs 4,600 crore. This Namo Bharat section spans from Sahibabad RRTS Station to New Ashok Nagar RRTS Station. This corridor will significantly improve regional connectivity between Delhi and Meerut, offering high-speed and comfortable travel options for millions of people.

In addition to the Namo Bharat corridor, PM Modi inaugurated a 2.8-kilometer stretch of Delhi Metro Phase-IV between Janakpuri and Krishna Park. With an investment of Rs 1,200 crore, this is the first operational segment of Delhi Metro Phase-IV. Residents of West Delhi, including areas like Krishna Park, Vikaspuri, and Janakpuri, will benefit greatly from this development.

PM Modi also laid the foundation stone for the 26.5-kilometer Rithala-Kundli section of Delhi Metro Phase-IV, with an estimated cost of Rs 6,230 crore. This new corridor will connect Rithala in Delhi to Nathupur (Kundli) in Haryana, enhancing connectivity across North-West Delhi and Haryana, and benefiting key areas such as Rohini, Bawana, Narela, and Kundli.

As India's urban infrastructure continues to evolve, the metro network's expansion is expected to improve the daily lives of millions of citizens. With a strong focus on creating world-class transport systems, the future of urban mobility in India looks increasingly promising.

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