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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 05, 2024

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From Roads To Tunnels: Jammu And Kashmir's Development Drive To Bolster Socio-Economic Growth

Swarajya,
November 05, 2024



Enhanced road infra is expected to stimulate economic activity by improving trade, tourism, and access to healthcare and education.

Jammu and Kashmir is set to undergo significant transformation as development and infrastructure projects take centre stage, addressing the region's longstanding socio-economic challenges.

Key projects currently underway in Jammu and Kashmir hold significant strategic value. Among them are the Zojila and Z-Morh tunnels, which will enhance connectivity between Kashmir and the rest of India.

These tunnels provide essential year-round access, especially important during harsh winter months that can isolate areas like Ladakh. The Zojila tunnel will link Sonamarg in Kashmir to Drass in Kargil, drastically reducing travel time from several hours to just 15 minutes, thereby improving logistics and security.

The Z-Morh tunnel, designed to bypass the avalanche-prone Gagangir area, connects Kangan town to Sonamarg, ensuring reliable access to Ladakh throughout the year.

Together, these projects will facilitate movement for both civilians and security personnel, strengthening the region's defense capabilities, particularly near the Line of Control (LoC). They serve



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a dual purpose: ensuring territorial integration and supporting national security by making remote areas more accessible.

In addition to these tunnels, the four-laning of the Jammu-Srinagar highway is set to create all-weather routes, significantly reducing travel time between the two regions.

This Rs 16,000-crore project traverses the mountainous terrain of Ramban and Banihal, incorporating 10 tunnels spanning 21.5 kilometers, as well as viaducts and bridges to maintain uninterrupted access, as per Financial Express report.

Enhanced road infrastructure is expected to stimulate economic activity by improving trade, tourism, and access to healthcare and education.

Another major initiative, the Srinagar Semi Ring Road, approved in 2021, aims to alleviate traffic congestion across five districts in the Kashmir Valley: Pulwama, Srinagar, Budgam, Baramulla, and Ganderbal.

With a budget of Rs 2,919 crore, this project includes a 60-kilometer road stretch, featuring around 300 culverts to manage water flow and minimize flood risks, alongside two flyovers and over-road bridges to streamline traffic.

Initially set for completion in February 2024, the project has faced delays and now targets June 2025 for completion. Once operational, it is expected to enhance mobility and connectivity for thousands of residents.

Additionally, the ongoing four-laning of the Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri highway, approved in 2022, is addressing critical traffic flow and safety issues.

This project covers two main phases, including the Narbal-Baramulla and Baramulla-Uri stretches, with planned bypass roads and flyovers to ease congestion in densely populated areas.

Budgeted at Rs 823.45 crore, this initiative aims to improve transport efficiency and boost local economic activity by facilitating smoother travel between key destinations.

As these infrastructure projects progress, they promise to reshape the socio-economic landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, fostering connectivity, enhancing security, and ultimately improving the quality of life for its residents.

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Asia's longest flyover in Nagpur unveiled by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari

CW Team,

November 05, 2024

In a ground-breaking moment for infrastructure, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated Asia's longest double-decker flyover, which also features the continent's first four-tier structure.

The engineering marvel near Gaddigodam Gurudwara on National Highway, integrates four different levels of transit, with a Metro line at the top, followed by a flyover, a railway track beneath it, and finally, a road at the base at a single location.



The 5.6 km double-decker Kamptee Road flyover from LIC Square to Automotive Square, constructed by Maha Metro and National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) at a cost of Rs.5.73 billion now surpasses the earlier record held by Nagpur's 3.14 km Wardha Road flyover.

Gadkari highlighted the potential of adopting ultra-reinforced concrete technology, which is widely used in Singapore and Malaysia, for upcoming infrastructure projects. He emphasised that NHAI has invested between Rs13 billion and Rs14 billion in Nagpur's three major flyovers – Kamptee Road, Wardha Road and Pardi.

The minister also lauded Nagpur Metro for setting a new benchmark in Metro construction, achieving costs of Rs.3.5 billion per km, which is significantly lower than those in other Indian cities. This flyover stands as a testament to modern engineering, blending innovation and functionality to address the growing needs of urban transit.

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Govt plans to incentivise planned urbanisation of peri-urban areas

The Economic Times,
November 05, 2024

Synopsis

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs aims to promote planned development of peri-urban areas by incentivising states and addressing political, administrative, and financial reforms. This aligns with the upcoming recommendations from the Sixteenth Finance Commission, chaired by Arvind Panagariya, to augment urban local body revenues from 2026-27 to 2031-32.

Encouraging planned development of peri-urban areas while discouraging haphazard growth and illegal constructions is likely to be the focus area to tap into Sixteenth Finance Commission grants.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is finalising its recommendation to the commission to incentivise planned urbanisation of peri-urban areas, people aware of the matter said.

The five-member Sixteenth Finance Commission, chaired by former Niti Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya, was constituted on December 31, 2023, and is expected to finalise its recommendations by October 2025. Its recommendations will be valid for five years from 2026-27 to 2031-32.

The commission is expected to recommend ways to augment the revenues of urban local bodies.

While the Fifteenth Finance Commission incentivised urban reforms with a sharp focus on rapid urbanisation, the ministry now wants to incentivise planned development of peri-urban areas, people cited above said.

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