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## News

### India Fast-Tracks 208 Mega Projects Worth 15 Lakh Crores Under PM GatiShakti Across Road, Railway And Energy Sectors

Swarajya,  
October 14, 2024

India is making significant strides in boosting its infrastructure capabilities with the recommendation of 208 large-scale infrastructure projects valued at Rs 15.39 lakh crore under the ambitious PM GatiShakti initiative.

These projects are recommended by the Network Planning Group (NPG) which was constituted under the PM GatiShakti initiative.

Launched in October 2021, this initiative is designed to enhance multi-modal connectivity across the country, with a focus on integrated infrastructure development to cut logistics costs and streamline investments across multiple sectors.

According to Amardeep Singh Bhatia, Secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the projects include investments from a variety of ministries, including roads, railways, urban development, and oil and gas.

Of the total projects, 101 focus on road development, 73 on railway infrastructure, 12 on urban development, and four in the oil and gas sector, according to Business Standard report. Each sector plays a critical role in ensuring India's connectivity, energy security, and urban transformation.

#### **PM GatiShakti's Broader Vision**

The PM GatiShakti initiative, with its National Master Plan (NMP), integrates over 1,600 layers of geospatial data, making it easier for planners to create efficient, data-driven designs. This includes data on land records and both physical and social infrastructure.

One of the core goals is to accelerate project planning and execution by removing bottlenecks in the logistics chain. This holistic approach ensures that infrastructure investments are aligned, reducing redundancies and encouraging inter-ministerial cooperation.

The initiative has already identified 156 critical infrastructure gaps, particularly in areas related to ports and the movement of essential bulk commodities like coal, cement, and food grains. Addressing these gaps is seen as essential to improving the efficiency of the supply chain, which remains a significant factor in India's goal to become a \$5 trillion economy.

The projects are being evaluated by the Network Planning Group (NPG), an inter-ministerial body that meets every two weeks to assess proposals. Projects that exceed Rs 500 crore are reviewed by the NPG before being sent to the Public Investment Board (PIB) or the Department of Expenditure for final approval.

This process ensures that major investments are subjected to rigorous scrutiny, enhancing transparency and accountability in public spending.

#### **International Interest and Future Expansion**



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In a promising development, the success of the GatiShakti initiative has garnered international attention, with Nepal and Sri Lanka expressing interest in adopting the model. Discussions with Sri Lanka are reportedly underway, and this signals the potential for India's infrastructural planning expertise to have a broader regional impact.

Bhatia also revealed plans for the initiative to expand to the district level within the next two months, a move that will ensure that the benefits of integrated infrastructure development trickle down to local economies, providing a more inclusive growth model.

### Key Challenges Ahead

Despite the promising outlook, there are significant challenges that need to be addressed.

The integration of land record data, for instance, remains a complex task, particularly given India's vast and varied geography. The collaboration between central and state governments is crucial, but differing priorities and bureaucratic hurdles at the state level can slow down implementation.

Moreover, while the initiative is focused on multi-modal connectivity, aligning the pace of development across different sectors—such as roads, railways, and urban infrastructure—requires meticulous planning and coordination.

Ensuring that all stakeholders, including private investors, remain aligned with the broader national goals will also be critical for the long-term success of the initiative.

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## Union Cabinet Greenlights 2,280 Km Road Project In Border Areas, Approves Funding For National Maritime Heritage Complex

Swarajya,  
October 14, 2024

The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the construction of 2,280 kilometers of roads in the border regions of Punjab and Rajasthan.

This significant infrastructure initiative, backed by an investment of Rs 4,406 crore, is aimed at improving rural livelihoods and enhancing connectivity with the national road network. The decision underscores the government's commitment to developing strategic infrastructure in India's border areas.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw emphasised that Prime Minister Modi has consistently prioritised the development of border regions. "These areas were once referred to as the last villages, but under PM Modi's leadership, they are now considered the first villages," Vaishnaw said.

He also highlighted the government's recent launch of the 'Vibrant Village Program,' which focuses on improving road and connectivity in border areas. The Cabinet's approval of this road project aligns with the government's vision of transforming these regions into hubs of world-class infrastructure.

### Impact Beyond Road Construction



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According to Economic Times report, this project's scope goes beyond the construction of roads. The initiative aims to improve telecom connectivity, healthcare facilities, water supply, and education in the border areas.

By enhancing these essential services, the development will ensure a seamless travel experience, uplift rural livelihoods, and integrate these regions more effectively with the rest of the country. The government plans to provide border villages with the same facilities as central areas, fostering equal development across regions.

In a parallel development, the Union Cabinet has also sanctioned the construction of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) in Lothal, Gujarat. The NMHC is set to become the world's largest maritime heritage complex, showcasing India's rich maritime history.

The project will be developed in two phases, with the Cabinet approving funds for Phases 1B and 2. Construction funds will be generated voluntarily, marking a significant step towards preserving India's maritime legacy.

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### PM GatiShakti: 208 major infra projects worth over Rs 15 lakh crore recommended for approval

Reuters,

October 14, 2024

The inter-ministerial NPG, which meets every two weeks, evaluates projects to promote multi-modal connectivity and ensure comprehensive development.

A total of 208 large-scale infrastructure projects from various ministries, including roads and railways, valued at Rs 15.39 lakh crore, have been recommended for approval under the PM GatiShakti initiative, a top government official said on Saturday.

The Network Planning Group (NPG), established under the initiative launched in October 2021, has assessed these projects to accelerate the development of integrated infrastructure across India, according to Amardeep Singh Bhatia, Secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

“So far, 208 projects have been assessed under the initiative worth Rs 15.39 lakh crore,” Bhatia told reporters. Of the recommended projects, 101 are focused on road development, 73 on railways, 12 on urban development, and four from the oil and gas sector.

The inter-ministerial NPG, which meets every two weeks, evaluates projects to promote multi-modal connectivity and ensure comprehensive development. The initiative aims to cut logistics costs and streamline infrastructure investments. Projects with investments exceeding Rs 500 crore are first reviewed by the NPG before being sent to the Public Investment Board (PIB) or the Department of Expenditure under the finance ministry for final approval.

The National Master Plan (NMP), a key component of the GatiShakti initiative, features over 1,600 layers of geospatial data, including land records, physical, and social infrastructure, designed to speed up planning and improve the design process. Additionally, 156 critical infrastructure gaps—related to



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ports and the movement of bulk commodities such as coal, cement, and foodgrains—have been identified for intervention under the initiative.

The DPIIT is collaborating with states to integrate updated land record data into the system. Bhatia added that Nepal and Sri Lanka have expressed interest in adopting the GatiShakti initiative, with discussions already underway with Sri Lanka. The initiative is expected to expand to the district level within the next two months, according to Bhatia.

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### From connectivity to social welfare, PM Modi puts spotlight on GatiShakti's role in developing country's infrastructure landscape

FE Online

October 14, 2024

The GatiShakti initiative focuses on enhancing multimodal connectivity, which is essential for driving efficient development across various sectors. It has successfully identified and addressed 156 critical infrastructure gaps related to first and last-mile connectivity in key sectors such as coal, steel, and public distribution.

From connectivity to social welfare, PM Modi puts spotlight on GatiShakti's role in developing country's infrastructure landscape

Launched on October 13, 2021, the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP) has emerged as a game-changing initiative aimed at revolutionising India's infrastructure landscape. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the programme's significant impact during a surprise visit to the PM GatiShakti Anubhuti Kendra at Bharat Mandapam, marking its third anniversary.

The GatiShakti initiative focuses on enhancing multimodal connectivity, which is essential for driving efficient development across various sectors. It has successfully identified and addressed 156 critical infrastructure gaps related to first and last-mile connectivity in key sectors such as coal, steel, and public distribution. This identification process relies on advanced digital surveys and project planning tools, which improve the speed and accuracy of project execution.

During his visit, Modi praised the seamless integration of various stakeholders within the framework, which has boosted logistics, minimised delays, and fostered new opportunities for citizens. The programme adopts a "whole-of-government" approach, utilising 1,529 data layers from 44 ministries and 36 states and union territories, ensuring cohesive development.

*"PM #GatiShakti has played a critical role in adding momentum to India's infrastructure development journey. It is using technology wonderfully to ensure projects are completed on time and any potential challenge is mitigated," wrote PM Modi on X.*

A critical component of GatiShakti is the Network Planning Group (NPG), which has facilitated 81 meetings, evaluating 213 projects worth Rs 15.48 lakh crore. The NPG synchronises efforts across ministries, breaking down silos and fostering collaboration to address infrastructure challenges effectively.

One of the standout achievements of GatiShakti is its focus on the social sector, particularly the mapping of 45 lakh Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) across 29,000 habitations. By



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linking this data with 1,500 GIS layers, the program has improved the planning of Anganwadi centres, addressing nutritional needs, and ensuring targeted interventions. More than 10 lakh centres have been incorporated into the National Master Plan, demonstrating the initiative's commitment to social welfare alongside infrastructure development.

Moreover, GatiShakti aims to support skill development by mapping prominent industries in various districts. This mapping enables the design of district-specific skill courses in schools, fostering local employment opportunities.

Internationally, the GatiShakti framework has garnered attention, with initiatives for knowledge sharing and collaborations underway with countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. This outreach emphasises India's commitment to promoting global best practices in infrastructure development.

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### Maharashtra Clears Rs 24,702 Cr Expressway

CW Team,

October 14, 2024

The Maharashtra cabinet has approved the construction of the Jalna-Nanded expressway, a massive infrastructure project worth Rs 24,702 crore, despite the state grappling with a rising fiscal deficit. This expressway, part of the larger Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) initiative, is expected to boost regional connectivity and stimulate economic development across the state, particularly in the Marathwada region. By linking Jalna and Nanded, the expressway will provide a critical transportation corridor, reducing travel time, improving the flow of goods, and enhancing access to key markets.

This 179 km-long expressway will significantly ease traffic congestion, promote faster transportation, and support local industries by improving the movement of raw materials and finished goods. The expressway is also expected to spur the growth of ancillary industries, boost real estate, and attract investments into the underdeveloped regions it passes through. The project forms part of the Maharashtra government's larger push towards upgrading its infrastructure to match the growing demands of its economy.

However, the approval of this project comes at a time when the state's fiscal deficit is mounting, prompting concerns about the financial sustainability of such large-scale infrastructure initiatives. While the project's long-term benefits for the state's economy are acknowledged, managing fiscal resources will be critical to ensure that it does not overburden the state's finances.

The expressway is a crucial part of Maharashtra's efforts to build a comprehensive, modern road network, enhancing both regional and national connectivity. With the project receiving cabinet approval, construction is expected to begin soon, providing a much-needed infrastructural boost to Maharashtra's rural and urban areas. The state government hopes the expressway will pave the way for future growth, despite the immediate challenges posed by financial constraints...

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### Pune Ring Road Project Boosts Connectivity



CW Team,  
October 14, 2024

The ambitious 172 km Pune Ring Road project is poised to significantly improve connectivity while easing traffic congestion in and around the city. The project, which aims to link key highways such as those leading to Satara, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, and Nashik, will save considerable travel time for commuters by diverting heavy vehicles away from Pune's congested urban areas. This major infrastructure initiative is expected to become a vital arterial road, allowing smoother transit for long-distance and regional travel.

The ring road project, spearheaded by the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC), is designed to alleviate the burden on Pune's roads by providing an alternative route for commercial vehicles, which currently pass through the city and contribute to traffic snarls. By redirecting heavy traffic away from central Pune, the project is anticipated to reduce pollution levels and improve the quality of life for residents, while also ensuring faster movement of goods and services across the region.

The ring road's strategic positioning will enhance access to industrial hubs and promote economic growth in the surrounding districts. It also holds the potential to spur real estate development and attract investments in the areas it connects. Construction work is scheduled in phases, with the authorities prioritizing sections that will have the most immediate impact on traffic decongestion.

Once completed, the Pune Ring Road will not only enhance travel efficiency but also strengthen the region's infrastructure, contributing to Maharashtra's overall development. The project's benefits extend beyond reducing traffic jams, as it promises to reshape the transportation landscape, making Pune a more accessible and livable city for its residents and neighboring regions.

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## Subway Work Starts on Chennai-Bengaluru Highway

CW Team,  
October 14, 2024

Construction has commenced on a vehicular subway along the Chennai-Bengaluru highway in Ranipet, a move expected to ease traffic congestion and improve safety for commuters. The subway is being built as part of the National Highways Authority of India's (NHAI) larger initiative to enhance infrastructure along one of the busiest national highways in Tamil Nadu. The project aims to provide a smoother, more efficient route for vehicles, particularly in areas where traffic bottlenecks and pedestrian movement often lead to delays and safety concerns.

The subway will allow uninterrupted vehicular movement, improving the overall flow of traffic on the Chennai-Bengaluru highway, which serves as a critical corridor for both commercial and passenger traffic between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. This development is expected to alleviate long-standing traffic jams in the Ranipet region, providing significant relief to commuters and reducing the risk of accidents at key intersections.

Once completed, the subway will not only enhance travel convenience but also contribute to the long-term improvement of the highway's infrastructure. In addition to easing congestion, the project will provide a safer route for local traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists by separating different traffic streams.





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The NHAI is working closely with local authorities to ensure timely completion of the project, with efforts focused on minimizing disruption to existing traffic flow during the construction phase.

This infrastructure upgrade is part of broader efforts to modernize highways across Tamil Nadu, ensuring that key routes like the Chennai-Bengaluru highway are equipped to handle increasing traffic volumes. It will play a vital role in supporting regional economic activity by improving the efficiency of transportation and reducing travel time between two major cities.

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### Hyderabad: Rs 17,212 Crore Sewer Network In Pipeline To Cover 7,034 km Under New Master Plan

Swarajya,  
October 14, 2024

In a bid to address Hyderabad's growing sanitation needs, the state government has launched an ambitious project to overhaul the city's struggling sewerage system. The plan aims not only to renovate the aging infrastructure but also to extend the sewer network to the Outer Ring Road (ORR), ensuring comprehensive coverage as the city expands.

Under the government's Comprehensive Sewerage Master Plan (CSMP), the project will see the construction of a 4,378-kilometer sewer network. This initiative, with a budget of Rs 17,212 crore, will serve both the peripheral circles and portions of the core city zones up to the ORR.

The peripheral areas covered under the plan include Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) circles such as Uppal, Kapra, Malkajgiri, Alwal, Serilingampally, Rajendranagar, LB Nagar, Kukatpally, and Quthbullapur. These regions have been divided into three packages, totaling 2,231 kilometers of new sewerage lines.

Within the core area, the network will span 424 kilometers, while the remaining coverage will be distributed across urban local bodies (ULBs) within the ORR boundary.

City officials highlighted that Hyderabad's current sewage collection system is inadequate, as the existing lateral sewers were installed by smaller municipalities years ago. To prevent sewage from flowing through nalas, the entire system will be refurbished, with new lateral sewers, branch sewers, and trunk mains reports The New Indian Express.

The sewerage project has a dedicated budget of Rs 12,848 crore for constructing a new sewage collection system in areas lacking proper infrastructure. In addition, the existing network will undergo repairs and upgrades, including replacing pipes and modernising pumping stations, which accounts for nearly 75 per cent of the project's total cost.

The master plan has been prepared by Mumbai-based Shah Technical Consultants, a firm specializing in infrastructure, water, and wastewater management. The firm has previously developed similar plans for water supply and sewerage systems in Chennai and 104 towns within the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

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