

NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025

[^ TOP](#)

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- [ET WLF 2025: World-class infra key to \\$5 trillion goal, says Nitin Gadkari](#)
- [Nitin Gadkari Lays Foundation Stone For Three National Highway Projects In Madhya Pradesh To Boost Road Safety, Connectivity](#)
- [Despite 180 Kmph Speed Potential, Vande Bharat Trains Run At 130 Kmph Consistently Only On Five Routes](#)
- [Rs 6,000 Crore Elevated Corridor On Pune–Bengaluru Highway To Be Fast-Trackd: Report](#)
- [Odisha Sets Ambitious Five-Year Target Of 30,000 Km Rural Roads And 500 Bridges](#)

ET WLF 2025: World-class infra key to \$5 trillion goal, says Nitin Gadkari

The Economic Times,
August 25, 2025

Synopsis

Nitin Gadkari emphasizes infrastructure upgrades for India's economic goals. The focus is on green highways and improved connectivity. Logistics costs are decreasing. Public transport will be pollution-free and cost-effective. India aims to become an energy exporter. The automobile industry is set to become world number one. Efforts are on for road safety and eco-friendly construction.

Road transport minister Nitin Gadkari said India must develop world-class infrastructure to achieve its target of becoming a \$5 trillion economy and the third largest in the world, as the prime minister envisions.

To meet this goal, priority is being given to four key sectors including water, power, transport and communication, Gadkari said in his keynote address at the ET's World Leaders Forum on Friday.

As the transport minister, Gadkari said he is laying emphasis on upgrading infrastructure to global standards in an environment-friendly and cost-effective way.

"The strategy, going forward, is to develop multiple access-controlled green highways, ropeways and tunnels across the length and breadth of the country for better and faster connectivity between cities," Gadkari said, adding that this in turn will reduce the logistics cost, making Indian products more competitive.

Citing a recent study by IIM Bangalore, IIT Madras and IIT Kanpur, Gadkari said India's logistics cost has come down to 10% from 16%, compared with 8% in China and 12% in the US and European nations, due to construction of good-quality roads.

"While there is already a 6% reduction in logistics cost, I am confident that before the end of December this year, our logistics cost will come down to single digit or 9% and will benefit the nation in a big way," he said.

Gadkari said his ministry's priority is to build a pollution-free and cost-effective public transport network in the country.

"First tender for flash charging buses has been given to Tata Motors and the pilot run will be done in Nagpur," he said, adding that the cost of travel will be 30% less compared with diesel, while services will be comparable to facilities in an airplane.

"Besides, we are also working on a mass rapid transport system from Dhaula Kuan in Delhi to Gurgaon to decongest that stretch and have received six proposals, including hyperloop, which are under consideration," he said.

Expressing concern over India's fossil fuel import worth ₹22 lakh crore, Gadkari said the government is working on hydrogen as a fuel, different kinds of biofuels, as well as alternative fuels and flex engines.

"With hydrogen and other biofuels, we aim to become an energy exporting nation instead of an energy importing country now," he said, adding that work is on to address the twin challenges of development of hydrogen filling stations and transport of the fuel.

On the automobile industry, Gadkari said the sector is poised to become No. 1 in the world over the next five years from being the third biggest now - industry size is pegged at ₹22 lakh crore - behind the US (₹78 lakh crore) and China (₹49 lakh crore).

"Our automobile industry is doing great. From electric engines to the development of flex engines, research is being done on all new engine types and green fuel options, as we aim to make India's automobile industry the number one in the world in five years," he said.

The minister said that "growth of the automobile sector will boost the overall economic growth of the country as the sector is the highest employment generator, is a top revenue generator for the government, and has a high stake in exports".

According to Gadkari, India's agriculture is fast diversifying to the energy and power sector, a transition that will help the country become self-reliant, reduce pollution and add to the income of farmers.

"The transport sector accounts for 40% of pollution. So, efforts are on to come up with electric buses, flex engine vehicles, vehicles running on biofuels like ethanol and methanol and other alternate fuels to cut down on emissions," he said.

Gadkari said that while development is the top priority, the government is focusing on three pillars - ethics, economy, ecology and environment.

"To protect the ecology and environment, the road ministry is working towards development of bamboo crash barriers, has used over 80 lakh tonnes of municipal waste to construct roads and has made pre-case technology mandatory as we focus on eco-friendly technology for road construction," he said.

On the increase in road accidents and casualties, he said that despite initiatives to improve road engineering and automobile engineering, his ministry has failed to reduce the number of road accidents in the country.

"There are five lakh accidents in our country and about 1,80,000 deaths, out of which 66% deaths are in the 18-34 age bracket," he said, adding that the road ministry is working on rectifying 40,000 black spots, besides making use of airbags and helmets mandatory.

[^ TOP](#)

Nitin Gadkari Lays Foundation Stone For Three National Highway Projects In Madhya Pradesh To Boost Road Safety, Connectivity

Swarajya,
August 25, 2025

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for three major National Highway (NH) projects in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday (24 August).

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The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) said the projects aim to reduce travel time, ease congestion, improve road safety, and enhance regional connectivity, in a post on X.

The first project involves the four-laning of the 17.87 km Amazhar–Barela Road (Jabalpur Ring Road). According to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the project completes the final stretch of the Jabalpur Ring Road, reduces the entry of heavy vehicles into the city, lowers accident risks, and provides better connectivity for vehicles from Amarkantak to other NHs.

The second project focuses on the construction of seven underpasses along the Rewa–Maihar–Katni section of NH-30. These underpasses, to be built at key locations including Amarpatan–Satna Link Road, Maihar City Entry, and Sleemnabad Junction, will improve safety on the existing four-lane stretch and introduce long-term safety features such as service roads and median barriers.

The third project covers the construction of six flyovers and underpasses on the Katni–Jabalpur–Lakhnadon section of NH-30/34. NHAI stated that the project will enhance safety by adding underpasses, service roads, and realignments. Major works include interventions at Barna Tiraha, Sihora Bypass Junction, Panagar Bypass, and realignment of the Ramanupr Valley to reduce accident-prone stretches.

The Ministry said these projects, under the 'Pragati Ka Highway' initiative, are expected to provide safer, faster, and smoother travel for commuters and commercial traffic in Madhya Pradesh.

[^ TOP](#)

Despite 180 Kmph Speed Potential, Vande Bharat Trains Run At 130 Kmph Consistently Only On Five Routes

Swarajya,
August 25, 2025

Indian Railways has transformed intercity travel with the Vande Bharat Express trains, introduced in 2019.

Designed by Chennai-based Integral Coach Factory (ICF), these semi-high-speed trains reduce travel time and operate with high passenger demand. Currently, 150 services (75 UP and 75 Down) run nationwide, reported The Indian Express.

The trains can achieve a top speed of 180 kmph, though their maximum operating limit is 160 kmph. In practice, track geometry, stoppages, and maintenance often restrict their speed. Despite these challenges, five Vande Bharat trains consistently run at 130 kmph across their full routes. These include:

- Train no. 20825/20826 Bilaspur–Nagpur–Bilaspur Vande Bharat Express
- Train no. 22347/22348 Howrah–Patna–Howrah Vande Bharat Express
- Train no. 22962/22961 Ahmedabad–Mumbai Central–Ahmedabad Vande Bharat Express
- Train no. 22303/22304 Howrah–Gaya–Howrah Vande Bharat Express

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- Train no. 20101/20102 Nagpur–Secunderabad–Nagpur Vande Bharat Express

Other services also hit 130 kmph but only on certain stretches. For example, the Varanasi–New Delhi Vande Bharat maintains 130 kmph between New Delhi and Prayagraj, but slows to 110 kmph till Varanasi. Similarly, the New Delhi–Katra train runs at 130 kmph up to Ludhiana but drops to 110 kmph beyond.

In Parliament, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw highlighted continuing renovations to railway tracks on Indian Railways to increase speed potential, which had been carried out in a large way during the last 10 years.

These advancements mark a significant step toward faster, more efficient rail connectivity across India.

[^ TOP](#)

Rs 6,000 Crore Elevated Corridor On Pune–Bengaluru Highway To Be Fast-Tracked: Report

PTI,

August 25, 2025

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has instructed officials to expedite the long-pending elevated corridor along the Pune–Bengaluru Highway (NH-48), covering the busy stretches within Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, Pune Pulse reported.

According to senior National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) officials cited in the report, the directive was issued during a review meeting on 7 August.

“The proposal will soon be placed before the Union Cabinet. The minister has also asked us to simultaneously begin tendering so that the project can move forward immediately after cabinet approval,” one official was quoted as saying by Pune Pulse.

The project, which has been in pipeline for nearly four years, involves constructing a 32 km elevated corridor at an estimated cost of Rs 5,500–Rs 6,000 crore.

The detailed project report has already been completed, with the alignment split into two phases: Dehu Road–Pashan-Sus and Pashan-Sus–Narhe.

Initially designed to end at Balewadi Stadium, the first phase was later extended to Pashan-Sus following requests from IT professionals in Hinjewadi and local residents.

Delays in execution were earlier attributed to arbitration disputes with the existing concessionaire, which currently manages the 140 km Dehu Road–Shendre section and collects tolls.

In August 2024, Maval MP Shrirang Barne flagged the issue in Parliament, prompting Gadkari to clarify that arbitration disputes had stalled the progress.

Officials now say the disputes are nearing resolution, paving the way for construction.

Once built, the corridor is expected to ease chronic congestion on NH-48, particularly during peak hours, and support the fast-expanding residential and commercial zones along the highway.

Meanwhile, NHAI has also begun preparations to widen service roads within Pimpri-Chinchwad from 12 to 24 metres.

Civic authorities recently cleared 110 structures to make space for the expansion, which will begin after the monsoon.

[^ TOP](#)

Odisha Sets Ambitious Five-Year Target Of 30,000 Km Rural Roads And 500 Bridges

PTI,

August 25, 2025

The Odisha government has unveiled an ambitious plan to construct 30,000 km of rural roads and 500 bridges over the next five years.

At a review meeting of the Rural Development department held at Lok Seva Bhawan on Friday (22 August), Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi instructed officials to ensure construction of top quality infrastructure by utilising 100 per cent of the funds received under various schemes and budget provisions, The New Indian Express reported.

“Strict action will be taken against contractors, agencies and officials found responsible for any sub-standard work,” he warned, stressing the need for durable infrastructure and proper upkeep.

The Chief Minister called for skill enhancement programmes for contractors and urged officials to prioritise road links to hilly and inaccessible villages, particularly those inhabited by tribal communities.

He underlined that such connectivity would significantly improve livelihoods and access to services in marginalised areas.

Odisha has already recorded major progress under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). Out of 73,984.88 km of sanctioned roads, the state has built 70,711.24 km, ranking fourth nationally.

The ongoing PMGSY Phase IV aims to add 942 roads and eight bridges, linking more than 1,000 unconnected habitations in tribal and Naxalite-affected districts.

Parallel efforts under the PM Janman Yojana include 66 roads and four bridges to benefit habitations of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

Under the Mukhyamantri Sadak Yojana (MSY), 4,500 km of roads were completed in 2024–25, while 5,000 km are underway in 2025–26 at a cost of Rs 3,469.94 crore.

The MSY also envisages construction of 186 bridges in 2024-25 and 300 more in 2025-26.

Beyond road infrastructure, the rural development department is also executing public works including hostels, government buildings, and disaster shelters. In 2024–25, 451 buildings were completed, with 1,229 projects lined up for 2025–26.

[^ TOP](#)