

NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

MONDAY, JANUARY 05, 2026

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PRAGATI progress report: 3,300 delayed projects worth Rs 85 lakh crore fast-tracked

The Economic Times,
January 05, 2026

Synopsis

PRAGATI has fast-tracked over 3,300 delayed projects worth Rs 85 lakh crore, resolving land, forest and clearance hurdles, and accelerating mega infrastructure works like the Kashmir rail link and Navi Mumbai airport.



It took over 20 years to build 40% of the Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link, while the remaining 60% was completed in under 11 years. The Rs 42,760 crore track cutting through the Himalayas with 38 tunnels and 943 bridges would have been completed only by 2038 if the earlier pace had been maintained.

Similarly, the recently opened Navi Mumbai airport would have become operational only by 2049 if it hadn't been for PRAGATI, a review mechanism to expedite projects delayed for various reasons.

The railway line and the airport are among the more than 3,300 projects worth Rs 85 lakh crore that were fast-tracked after coming under the PRAGATI umbrella. "Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation or PRAGATI took up 3,300 projects... 7,735 issues were raised and 7,156 of them were resolved," cabinet secretary TV Somanathan said at a press conference on the outcome of 50 meetings.

Of the 7,156 matters resolved through PRAGATI, 35% pertained to land acquisition, 20% to forest, wildlife and environment issues, 18% to right of use or right of way, while the others were delays due to law and order, construction, power utility approvals and financial issues, Somanathan said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself reviewed as many as 382 projects and of the 3,187 issues raised in these projects, 2,958 had been resolved. The platform also reviewed 61 flagship government schemes—including One Nation—One Ration Card, PM Jan Aarogya Yojana, PM Awas Yojana, PM SVANidhi and Swachh Bharat Mission.



Somanathan Speak

LAND ACQUISITION

There is no plan to change the land acquisition policy

TV Somanathan
Cabinet Secretary

EXECUTION

India is a democracy where there are interests of completing projects and there are interests of people whose land is affected... We want consent and public involvement

REGULATORY REFORMS

We really need to embark on regulatory reforms on these fundamental issues of public consultation... procedural improvements can be done from time to time



Coordination Gaps

It addressed citizen grievances in 36 sectors, including Covid-19, RERA, banking, insurance, Jan Dhan and Matru Vandana. Prime Minister Modi conceptualised PRAGATI in 2015 to tackle time and cost overruns that have been a chronic drag on India's public projects, the cabinet secretary said. He said PRAGATI addresses three coordination gaps--between central ministries, between the Centre and states, and within state governments. On average, one issue was resolved every working day after review under PRAGATI, the cabinet secretary said.

Asked if the government has plans to review its policy on land acquisition, which has emerged as the biggest impediment in the timely execution of projects, the cabinet secretary said, "There is no plan to change the land acquisition policy." He said states are keen to resolve their issues through such a mechanism and some are already replicating it. "All states, irrespective of their political dispensations, want to complete their projects and all chief secretaries have been very responsive in resolving issues," he said. Asked about the most vexed project that the PRAGATI mechanism faced, Somanathan cited the Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project, which was approved in March 1994 and was commissioned on June 6, 2025.

Process

Somanathan said PRAGATI has a multilayer follow-up mechanism that ensures the timely implementation of decisions. Projects are tracked and monitored by the cabinet secretariat, while schemes and grievances are reviewed at the ministry level, with continuous oversight by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and finally at the level of the Prime Minister, he said. The escalation framework ensures coordinated inter-ministerial action, timely decision-making, and focused resolution of implementation bottlenecks in projects of national importance, Somanathan said. He cited a study by Oxford University's Said Business School that said the PRAGATI platform offered a compelling case study on how digital governance can drive progress. The study is called: From Gridlock to Growth--How Leadership Enables India's PRAGATI Ecosystem to Power Progress.

Learnings

PRAGATI has led to an improvement in the quality of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), greater use of the PM Gati Shakti portal, the creation of land banks for compensatory afforestation, and clear escalation thresholds for projects above Rs 500 crore. The National

Academy of Administration is preparing training modules for young officers based on lessons from PRAGATI, Somanathan said.

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Ambala–Shamli Expressway On Fast Track, Set For Completion By December 2026

Swarajya,
January 05, 2026



Expressway (Representative Image)

Haryana Cabinet Minister Anil Vij has said that work on the 121 km Ambala–Shamli Expressway is moving at a brisk pace and is expected to be completed by December 2026, as reported by The Tribune.

The expressway will run from Ambala to Shamli and extend further towards Delhi, where it will connect with the Dehradun–Delhi Expressway.

He also reviewed the progress of the Ambala–Mohali Expressway, noting that construction is advancing swiftly and is likely to be completed soon, offering smoother access to Chandigarh, Mohali and nearby urban centres.

During a review meeting with NHAI Ambala Project Director PK Sinha and other officials, Vij directed that the Ambala Ring Road be completed at the earliest.

He pointed out that the ring road would allow vehicles from other states to bypass the city entirely, easing congestion within Ambala and reducing traffic pressure on busy urban stretches.

The minister also addressed local infrastructure concerns linked to the ring road, including water drainage issues at Shahpur and Bara villages, and the need to provide proper access routes for residents of Sapera village.

In addition, he discussed plans to connect Ambala Cantonment with the Panchkula–Saharanpur Highway and instructed officials to prepare a detailed proposal.

Other projects reviewed included the installation of decorative lighting along GT Road from Ambala Cantonment Railway Station to Mohra village, and improved access to the Shaheed Smarak being developed on the national highway.

Vij stressed the importance of planning escalators, an overbridge or a subway, keeping in mind the expected daily footfall once the memorial and adjoining science centre become operational.

He also examined the proposal for a flyover at Machhonda village, directing departments to carry out a joint site inspection so construction could begin without delay.

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1,200 MW Kalai-II Hydropower Project In Arunachal Pradesh Gets Central Environment Panel's Nod: Report

Swarajya,
January 05, 2026



Bichom Dam of Kameng hydropower station in Arunachal Pradesh (Representative Image)

The 1,200 MW Kalai-II hydroelectric project on the Lohit River in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh has received the environmental clearance from a Union Environment Ministry expert panel, Indian Express reported.

Citing official minutes of the meeting, the report stated that the Centre's Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) on river valley and hydroelectric projects cleared the Kalai-II hydel proposal during its meeting held on 19 December.

The Environmental Impact Assessment report for the project was reportedly prepared by WAPCOS Ltd, a government-owned enterprise and an accredited EIA consultant.

The project will be developed by THDC India Ltd at an estimated cost of Rs 14,176.26 crore and is planned on the Lohit River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, near Hawai village in Anjaw district.

The pondage-based project involves the construction of a 128.5-metre concrete gravity dam along with an underground powerhouse.

Located in the Lohit river basin of Anjaw district, the project comprises six units of 190 MW and one unit of 60 MW.

The hydropower plant is projected to generate around 4.85 terawatt-hours of electricity annually.

Kalai-II is among 13 stalled hydropower projects revived in 2024 through memoranda of agreement with four central public sector undertakings and is expected to create about 1,700 direct jobs, along with supporting infrastructure development.

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Yogi Government Sets February 2026 Deadline For Ganga Expressway Completion

The Hindu Business Line,
January 05, 2026.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary SP Goyal has asked officials to adhere strictly to the 15 February, 2026 deadline for completing the Ganga Expressway.

The directive was issued during a high-level review meeting held on Thursday, where Goyal also called for speeding up land acquisition linked to the UP Defence Industrial Corridor and projects under the Bundelkhand Industrial Development Authority (BUDA).

During the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) meeting, the Chief Secretary assessed the status of several flagship initiatives, including the Ganga Expressway, the Defence Industrial Corridor, BUDA, the Medical Device Park in Gautam Buddha Nagar and the Pharma Park in Lalitpur.

He stressed that timely execution of these projects is critical for attracting investment, boosting industrial growth and creating employment across the state.

Special emphasis was placed on planning milestones for BUDA. Goyal directed officials to complete zonal and sector-level planning for BUDA's Master Plan-2045 by 31 March, 2026.

He also instructed that work orders for water and power supply infrastructure in BUDA's activation area should be issued within the current month, and that construction of a 60-metre-wide arterial road should begin without delay.

Reviewing progress at the Pharma Park in Lalitpur, the Chief Secretary highlighted the need to maintain construction quality while ensuring that timelines are met.

He also called for regular engagement with investors who have already been allotted land under various state schemes.

Officials were asked to hold meetings with these investors to understand their construction schedules and likely dates of becoming operational, so that projects can be closely monitored and brought into production at the earliest.

Goyal further cautioned departments to allocate land to investors only where availability is confirmed, to prevent future disputes or delays.

He reiterated that careful planning, coordination and continuous monitoring are essential to ensure that these large-scale projects deliver tangible economic benefits for the region.

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Andhra Pradesh Clears Greenfield Port And Mega Shipbuilding Hub At Dugarajapatnam

The Indian Express,
January 05, 2026



Ports on the Andhra Pradesh coast.

The Andhra Pradesh government has granted formal approval for initiating the establishment of a Greenfield Port along with a National Mega Shipbuilding Cluster at Dugarajapatnam in Tirupati district.

The project will be developed under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS) of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW).

Under the approval, the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board (APMB) has been authorised to take forward the development of both the port and an anchor shipyard with an annual capacity of 0.5 million gross tonnes.

The shipbuilding cluster is planned to be realised within a maximum timeframe of 10 years from the commissioning of the shipyard at Dugarajapatnam.

The decision is based on the findings of a Techno-Economic Feasibility Report (TEFR) prepared by RITES, with coordination support from APMB and Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT).

As per the scheme guidelines, APMB has received permission to form a special purpose vehicle (SPV) in an equal 50:50 partnership with VPT.

The SPV's board will comprise an equal number of directors nominated by the State government and VPT, ensuring balanced representation in line with the national framework for the project.

The government has also cleared the acquisition of around 2,000 acres of land for setting up the National Mega Shipbuilding Cluster.

APMB has been authorised to mobilise the required resources to complete the land acquisition process and transfer the land to the SPV as the State's equity contribution.

In addition, APMB has been empowered to take all necessary steps through the SPV to secure statutory approvals for both the Greenfield Port and the shipbuilding cluster.

This includes selecting an appropriate development partner for the shipyard, strictly in accordance with the guidelines prescribed under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme.

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Gujarat Invites Urban Planners To Prepare Master Plans For Five Satellite Towns Aimed At Reducing Pressure On Major Cities

Swarajya,
January 05, 2026

The Gujarat government had announced in October 2025 that five towns in the state would be developed as Satellite Towns.

The state government has now invited urban planners to submit proposals for preparing master plans and has started the tender process for appointing planners, Desh Gujarat reported.

By 2030, the state government aims to provide metro-like facilities in these towns and enhance their economic strength to ease the burden on major cities.

According to an official statement, the decision aligns with the Urban Development Year 2025 vision of "Earning Well–Living Well," under which Sanand (near Ahmedabad), Savli (near Vadodara), Kalol (near Gandhinagar), Bardoli (near Surat), and Hirasar (near Rajkot) will be developed as Satellite Towns.

Urban planners with both national and international expertise have been invited to submit proposals for preparing the master plans.

A consultant is expected to be appointed within two months, with the master plans for these towns to be developed and finalised within one year.

A Satellite Town refers to an urban centre located close to a major city and accessible within about one hour.

The objective is to turn these towns into strong economic hubs that reduce congestion in large cities while generating local employment.

They will feature world-class infrastructure along with facilities designed around citizen needs.

In the first phase, the state will focus on developing these five identified towns as Satellite Towns.

Each town will be planned with modern transport, industrial, tourism, education, and healthcare facilities along with holistic master town planning.

Proposed infrastructure includes well-organised public transport with electric buses, modern water and waste systems, ring roads, urban forest parks, lakes, model fire stations, and mixed-use zones combining offices, housing, and commercial spaces.

An approval and monitoring committee will supervise execution to ensure timely implementation of all planned facilities.

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