CONSTRUCTION FEDERATION OF INDIA

NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

MONDAY, JANUARY 14 - 19, 2026

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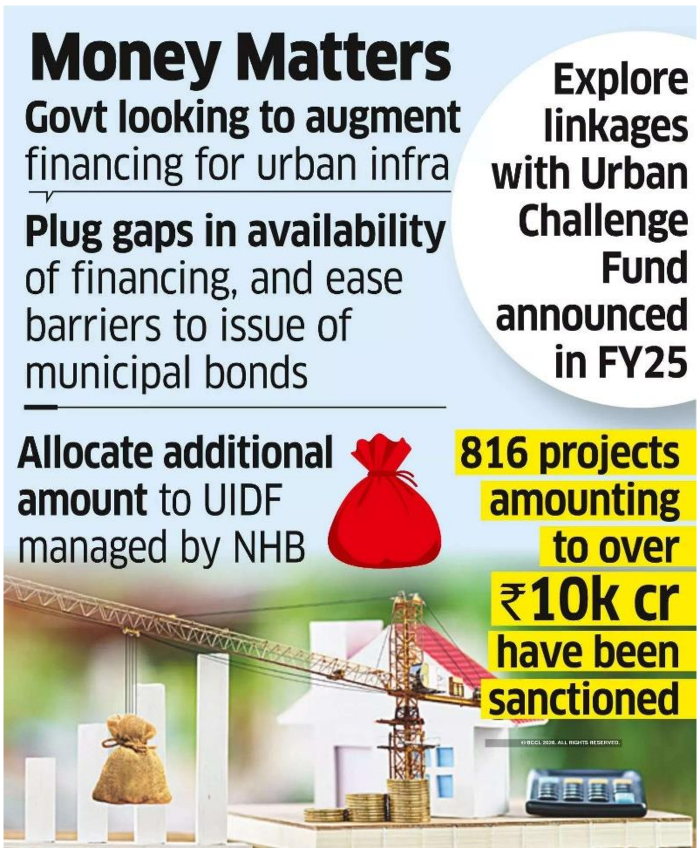
Budget 2026: Urban infra fund may get additional ₹10,000 cr injection
The Economic Times,
January 19, 2026

Synopsis
The government plans to enhance urban infrastructure in the upcoming budget. An additional ₹10,000 crore may be allocated to the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund. This initiative aims to improve urban living quality and address financing gaps. The fund supports various urban development projects, particularly in midsize cities.

The government may announce several measures to boost urban infrastructure in the upcoming budget and is likely to augment the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) with an additional allocation of up to ₹10,000 crore.

The proposal is in line with the government's emphasis on urban infrastructure development and improving quality of urban living, said people familiar with the developments. It estimates India's urban infrastructure sector to attract around ₹10 lakh crore of investment till fiscal 2029.

"Some of these suggestions also aim to address a gap in the availability of financing and barriers to the issue of municipal bonds, and look at further capacity building," said an official, requesting anonymity.



UIDF was set up in fiscal 2024 with an initial corpus of ₹10,000 crore. The government has broadened the scope of the fund to cover all urban infrastructure activities except housing, power, telecom and urban transport.

"There are also plans for further linkages with existing schemes such as the Urban Challenge Fund, which was announced in the last budget," said another official, adding these suggestions may find mention in the budget speech.

Established through priority sector lending shortfall and managed by the National Housing Bank (NHB), the fund focuses on midsize cities that have potential to develop into regional economic hubs. Public agencies can utilise the fund to create urban infrastructure.

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In FY25, the government allocated an additional ₹10,000 crore to UIDF. However, in order to augment the availability of funds for rural credit, ₹7,000 crore from this was reallocated to the Short-term Co-operative Rural Credit Refinance Fund.

In August, the government informed the Lok Sabha that the reallocated amount would be replenished to UIDF through a new allocation in FY26.

As per latest available data, the central government had received proposals worth ₹13,138.17 crore from states and union territories for funding under UIDF till July 2025, and sanctioned ₹10,746.60 crore.

MoS for finance Pankaj Chaudhary, citing NHB, informed Lok Sabha last August that 816 projects had been sanctioned under UIDF, including nine where the work had been completed.

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L&T, RVNL, KEC International: What construction and infra players expect from Budget 2026 and what the outlook is

PTI,
January 14, 2026

Budget 2026: Suprio Banerjee, Vice President & Co-Group Head at ICRA Ltd, expects 8-10% revenue growth for the construction sector in FY2027, which is slightly better than the 6-8% revenue growth expectations in FY2026.

Budget 2026: Shares of infrastructure and construction companies such as Larsen & Toubro (L&T), Ircon International, Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), KEC International, and NBCC, among others, are expected to remain in focus in the coming trading sessions as the Union Budget 2026 (FY27) draws closer.

Market participants, as well as industry bodies and experts, are sharing their projections on the capital allocations and expectations for key sectors such as construction and infrastructure, hotels, agriculture, the steel sector, railways, real estate, and defence, among others.

With regard to construction space, L&T's Chief Financial Officer (CFO), R. Shankar Raman, recently said that they were anticipating a 10% increase in capital expenditure (capex) outgo in the upcoming budget for FY27.

Amid concerns about sagging private capital expenditure growth, Raman said that he does not fear a "crowding out" of resources because of the high spending by the state. The ample liquidity in the system will support such investments.

Crowding-out effect

The crowding-out effect suggests that higher government spending can reduce private sector investment. This usually happens because increased government borrowing or higher taxes can push up interest rates, making loans more expensive for businesses and individuals. As a result, disposable income falls and private investment may slow, raising concerns about the overall impact of government involvement in the economy.

"If India is to become a developed economy by 2047, infrastructure has a big role to play, and I think the government is seized of this. I am hopeful that they will allocate adequate resources in the budget to be able to do that," Raman told PTI recently.

Pointing to the over ₹11 lakh crore commitment for capital expenditure in the FY26 budget, Raman said the new document to be presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in a few weeks will continue on the same lines.

"They will possibly go for a 10% increase...that is what I am anticipating, but that's at a personal level," Raman said.

There is already a jump in the way large infrastructure projects are getting conceived, Raman said, underlining that "infrastructure has miles to go".

Raman, however, rued that sometimes, projects are handed over to the lowest bidder, who may not be the best equipped technically, and this leads to execution delays.

Raman said the government has recommended all departments adopt a "qualitative-based pricing mechanism" under which weightage is also given to the timely completion of a project and other aspects.

As long as the "balance" between the price of a bid and other aspects like an entity's ability for timely completion is followed, good companies will bag contracts, the CFO added.

Manpower shortages

When asked about the manpower shortages, which the country's largest engineering, procurement and construction company has been flagging for some time now, Raman said the challenges continue.

Availability of alternatives makes construction a less favoured occupation, and moreover, with the government promising employment for up to 125 days, people think twice before uprooting themselves from their native place, Raman added.

COVID-19 pandemic changed mindset

Raman said the pandemic changed people's mindset, as they found it difficult to reach homes in times of crisis after the lockdowns, which has also caused some shift in thinking.

"The best antidote to that would be to take projects closer to their places of residency, which means you will have to go deeper into the country, which is what I think the government is doing, which is what all of us are also trying to do," the CFO said.

On the private capital expenditure front, he said companies across sectors like automobile, construction equipment, steel, minerals and metals, semiconductors and electronics are investing at present.

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The CFO welcomed the government's openness to discuss suggestions from the industry and all important stakeholders in the budget-making process and called it a sign of a mature system of governance.

Revenue growth expectations in FY27

Suprio Banerjee, Vice President & Co-Group Head at ICRA Ltd, expects 8-10% revenue growth for the construction sector in FY2027, which is slightly better than the 6-8% revenue growth expectations in FY2026.

Road-focused construction entities will continue to witness muted performance; however, construction entities focused on urban infrastructure, irrigation and the energy segment should register healthy growth.

While the competitive intensity in the construction sector continues to remain high, the operating margins, supported by operating leverage benefits and stable commodity prices, are likely to keep the margins at stable levels at around 10.3-10.8% in FY2026e and in FY2027p.

ICRA expects the cash conversion cycle to remain at similar levels in FY2025 as in FY2026e, which is expected to keep the borrowings range bound and keep the coverage indicators at adequate levels. The outlook on the sector continues to be 'stable', driven by expectations of steady growth in operating income, moderate leverage and comfortable coverage metrics, Banerjee added.

How infra stocks have fared

Shares of L&T have gained nearly 16% (as of Wednesday, January 7, closing level) over the past 12 months, while NBCC (India) has rallied over 29%. Rail Vikas Nigam has slipped over 14% in the past year, and Ircon International has fallen 14%.

KEC International shares have declined by over 31% during the period.

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Beyond L&T: 3 Construction stocks to play the 'make in India' equipment boom

The Financial Express,
January 14, 2026

A potential ₹16,000 crore Budget 2026 incentive push could transform the domestic capital equipment industry. These three manufacturers, with leading market share and scalable operation, are best positioned to benefit.

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Heavy construction equipment and automobile manufacturing plants highlight India's push to boost domestic capital goods production under the Make in India initiative.

The Indian government is reportedly considering an incentive package of up to ₹23,000 crore in the upcoming Budget 2026. The goal is to accelerate domestic manufacturing of capital goods and promote Make in India products, reducing dependence on imports. (Note: Financial Express could not independently verify these reports.)

The construction equipment sector could receive incentives worth approximately ₹16,000 crore, while the automobile sector is targeted for ₹7,000 crore to build global value chains. Support for construction equipment followed China's restrictions on tunnel boring machine exports, which disrupted infrastructure projects in India previously. However, they were lifted last year.

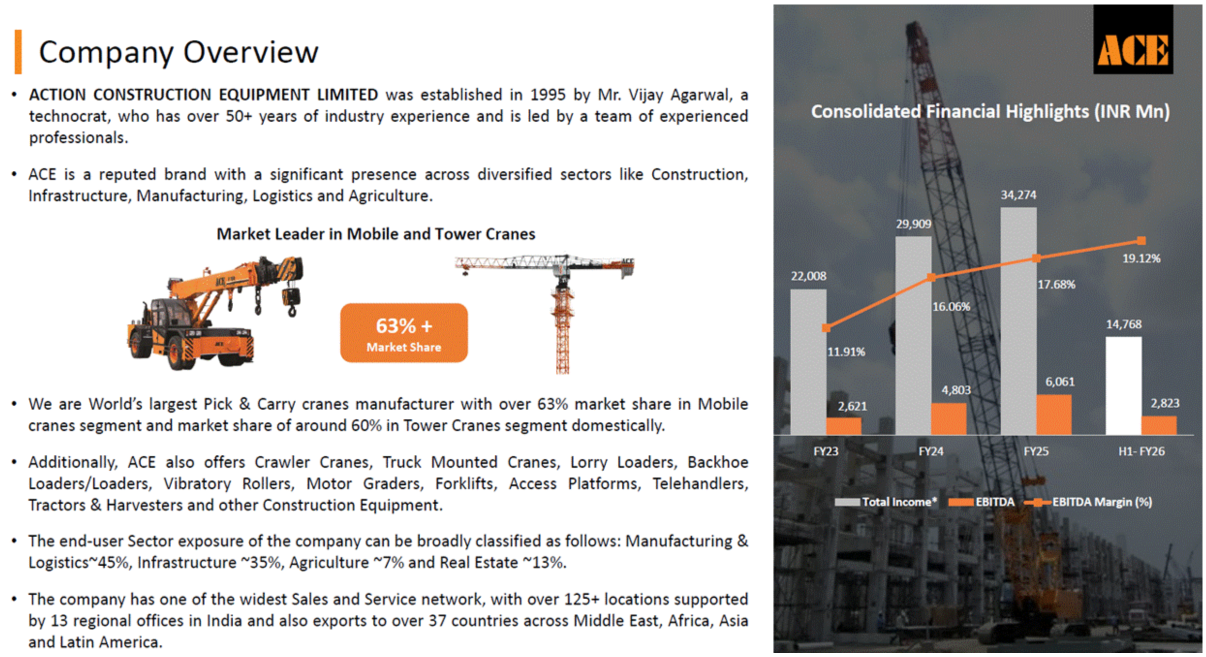
Support for the auto sector will target advanced automotive components such as Advanced Driver Assistance Systems, 360-degree cameras, sensors, and other high-technology parts, with a provision to promote at least 50% domestic value addition. In this article, we have highlighted three stocks that could benefit from the construction sector incentive…

#1 ACE: Dominating the crane market with a strategic defence pivot
Action Construction Equipment (ACE) is a diversified construction Equipment Manufacturer. It manufactures construction equipment, including cranes and material handling equipment. ACE serves sectors including infrastructure, Manufacturing, Logistics, and the agri-sector. It has a presence in both domestic and global markets, exporting to over 37 countries.

The 63% crane dominance
In fact, ACE is the world's largest pick & carry Crane manufacturer and holds over 63% market share in Mobile and tower cranes. In the backhoe loader segment, a significant focus

area, ACE aims to increase its market share from roughly 2.5% to double digits. In the heavy crane segment, ACE aims to achieve 50% market share within the next 3–4 years.

ACE Financial Performance



Source: ACE Investor Presentation

Among end-user sectors, manufacturing and logistics (45%), infrastructure (35%), real estate (13%), and agriculture (7%) contributed the most. With such diverse exposure, ACE could be a major beneficiary. A notable strategic development for ACE is its expanding presence in the Defence sector.

The ₹420 crore defence breakthrough

ACE received its first-ever order (₹420 crore) from the Ministry of Defence for 1,121 rough-terrain forklifts. It is awaiting a No Objection Certificate to begin executing the order book. It expects execution to begin in Q4 and continue into FY27. ACE aims to increase export revenue share to 8-10% and defence share to 5-8% in the medium to long term.

ACE's roadmap to a ₹6,000 crore revenue target

The company targets revenue of ₹4,000 crore (lower end) by the end of FY27 and ₹6,000 crore by FY29-30, from ₹3,327 crore in FY25. Growth will be supported by the transition to BS-V emission norms, which has led to a 15-20% increase in realizations. On a blended basis, the company expects an 8-9% price increase due to technology upgrades.

Countering the China factor

The government's recommendation to impose anti-dumping duties on Chinese crawler and truck cranes (ranging from 26% to 52%) could be a major tailwind. This is expected to curb aggressive pricing by Chinese players and enable ACE to compete more effectively in the heavy crane market. With these duties, ACE estimates an incremental revenue of ₹500-1,000 crore over the next 3-5 years.

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To support its growth targets, ACE is undergoing expansion, including the acquisition of 86 acres of land. Its current production capacity can support revenues of over ₹5,000 crore. Additionally, ACE is focusing on premiumization. It is also finalizing a joint venture with Kato Works, a five-decade-old Japanese company.

The Kato works alliance
This partnership will provide access to advanced Japanese technology. The company hopes to sell at a premium and use the proceeds to establish leadership in the heavy-lifting segment. ACE states that continued government capex on logistics modernisation, infrastructure provides a positive multi-year demand outlook.

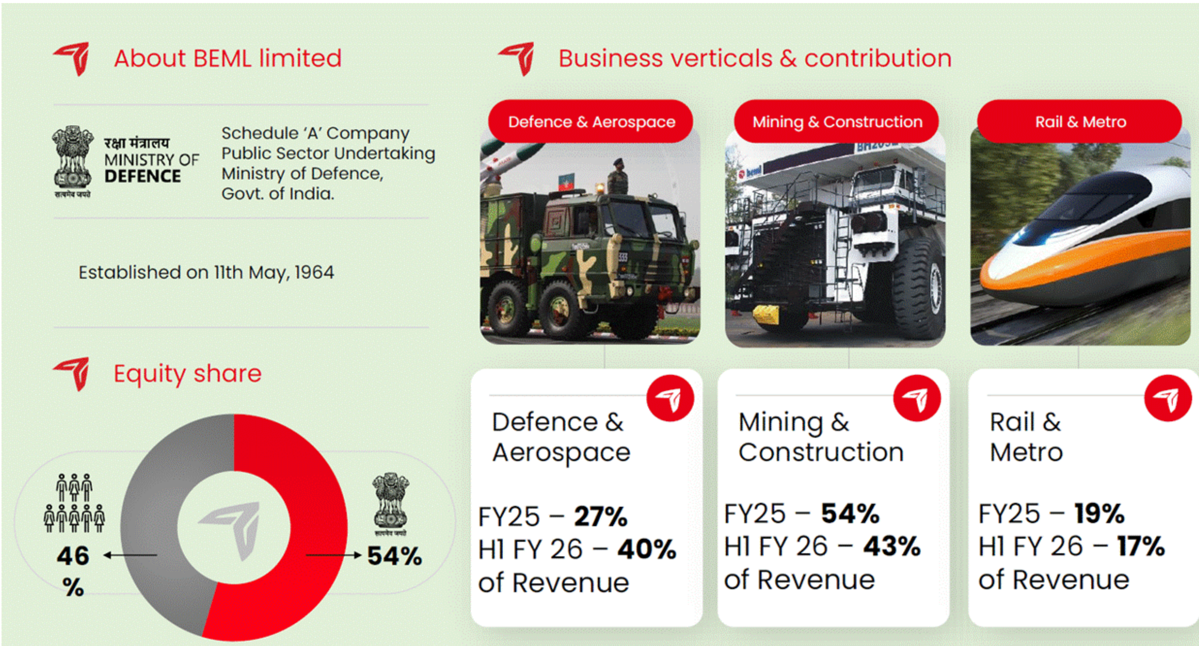
ACE's total income declined 4.9% year over year to ₹1,477 crore in H1FY26, due to a high base from last year, driven by strong pre-buying ahead of the emission norm shift. The cranes, material handling, and construction equipment segment continued to dominate, contributing 94% of total revenue.

However, despite the revenue dip, the company's profitability improved. EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation) increased 5% to ₹282 crore, while margins expanded by 180 basis points (bps) to 19.12%. Margins expanded by favourable product mix, operating leverage, and cost efficiencies. As a result, PAT increased by 4.9% to ₹187.8 crore.

#2 BEML: Transitioning from mining to high-margin rail & metro
BEML is a Public Sector Undertaking operating under the Ministry of Defence. It manufactures heavy earthmoving equipment for the mining and construction industries, defence vehicles, and coaches for the metro and Indian Railways.

Mining and Construction accounts for the highest (43% of sales), followed by defence and aerospace (40%) and rail and metro (17%). The Mining and Construction vertical specialises in manufacturing heavy-duty earth-moving equipment for surface and underground mining. Key products include Dump Trucks, Dozers, Rope Shovels, and Motor Graders.

BEML Revenue-Mix



Source: BEML Investor Presentation

BEML's shift toward 60% revenue share from defence and rail

The Mining and Construction sector contribution is expected to fall to about 40% in FY26. At the same time, the Defence, Rail, and Metro sectors are projected to rise to 60%. It's because the Defence, Rail, and Metro sectors are poised for expansion due to the Government of India's strong emphasis on reducing import dependency.

BEML is actively diversifying its portfolio to reduce its over-dependence on traditional sectors such as the coal industry. A new Strategic Business Unit has been created to focus on complex defence systems rather than just vehicle platforms. This includes Mechanical Minefield Marking Equipment and Self-Propelled Mine Barriers.

In defence, BEML has partnered with Bharat Forge and Data Patterns in a consortium for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft program, focusing on its core strength in aerostructures. BEML expects defence revenue to grow by 70% to 80% in the near term.

The diversification into the ₹4,000 crore port market

The company is entering the maritime market, targeting Goliath cranes for shipbuilding and ship-to-shore cranes for port operations. Management believes this line will generate revenues of over ₹4,000 crore in the next four to five years.

The metro upside

In the rail and metro sector, the company expects to manufacture 53 trains for the Bangalore Metro. Revenue from 63 trains for Mumbai Metro is expected to begin in FY27, and prototype rollouts for Chennai Metro are scheduled for FY27.

The ₹16,342 crore order book

From a financial perspective, the company's revenue remained flat in H1 FY26 at ₹1,473 crore, compared with ₹ 1,494 crore last quarter. It reduced its losses to ₹16 crore from ₹ 19 crore in the same period last year. BEML has set an aspirational growth target of at least

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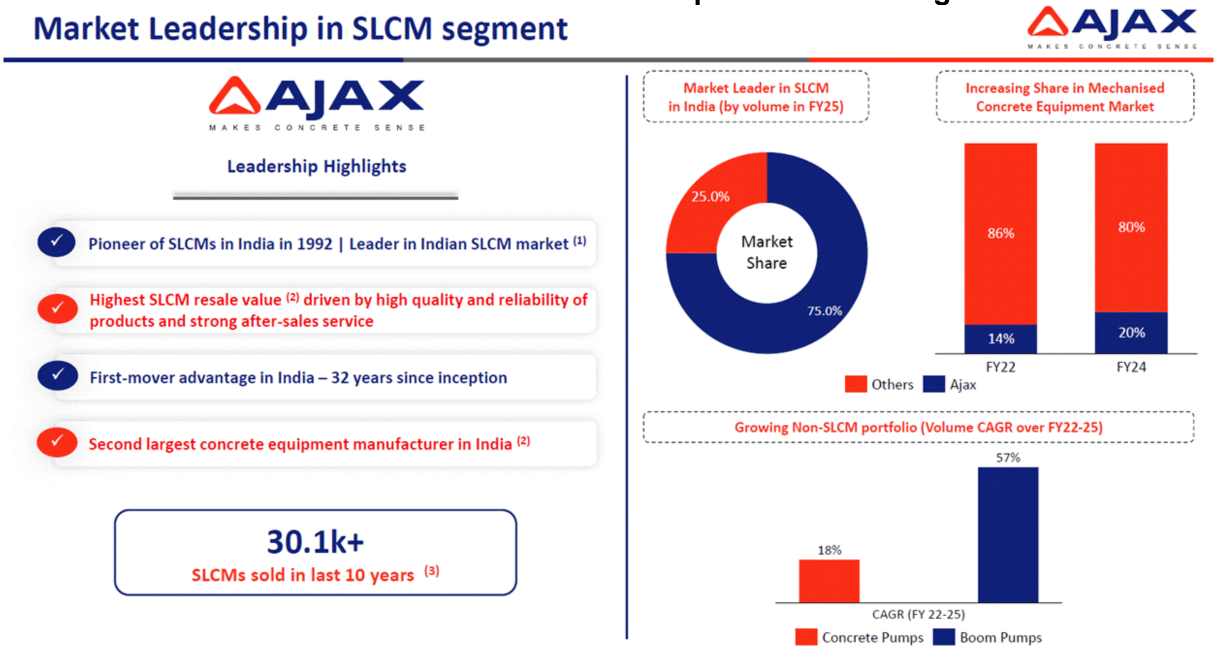
20% in FY26. The order book stood at ₹16,342 crore, providing revenue visibility of about 4 years.

#3 Ajax Engineering: Market leader in self-loading concrete mixers

Ajax Engineering manufactures concrete equipment for the entire concrete application value chain, including engineering, production, transportation, placement, paving, and printing. It is the leader in self-loading concrete mixers (SLCM) in India, with a 75% market share by volume. It is also India's second-largest manufacturer of concrete equipment.

Market Leadership in the SLCM Segment



Source: Ajax Investor Presentation

The non-SLCM pivot

AJAX intends to maintain its dominant position in the Self-Loading Concrete Mixer (SLCM) segment. A major strategic goal is building strong capabilities in the non-SLCM space, including concrete pumps, batching plants, and transit mixers. The company is pursuing several strategic growth drivers.

The company's fourth manufacturing facility is expected to become operational in H2FY26, providing fungible capabilities to assemble various concrete equipment. Ajax is also expanding its pan-India dealer network with a new B2B channel focused on the top eight metro cities to target larger buyers directly.

Soft H1 performance as sector activity slows

Ajax faced headwinds in H1FY26 due to changes in emission norms and a slower pace of project execution. Revenue increased by 18.4% year-on-year to ₹912 crore in H1 FY26. However, EBITDA declined 10.6% to ₹106.6 crore, while margin fell 380 bps to 11.7%. As a result, PAT declined by 9% to ₹91.9 crore.

The industry typically sees a 40-60% split between H1 and H2 of the year. Therefore, volume growth is expected to accelerate in H2 FY26. With performance improvement, the company expects operating leverage and continued cost optimization to support its margin profile.

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The valuation gap: Are these stocks overpriced?
ACE and Ajax have the industry-leading return ratios: Return on Capital Employed (RoCE) and Return on Equity (RoE). However, BEML lags behind with below-average metrics and a relatively higher valuation multiple compared to the industry. ACE and Ajax are both trading at below the industry valuation.

Peer Comparison (X)				
Company	**P/E**	**5Y Median P/E**	**RoCE (%)**	**RoE (%)**
BEML	50.0	50.2	15.6	10.5
ACE	25.4	32.2	40.1	28.7
Ajax	27.2	NA	33.6	25.1
Industry Median	33.9		25.4	23.4

Source: Screener.in

If the proposed ₹23,000 crore incentive framework materialises, it strengthens the investment case for construction equipment manufacturers aligned with localisation.

ACE and Ajax stand out for strong market positions, high return ratios, and favourable valuation, offering a cleaner risk–reward profile. BEML while strategically placed across defence, rail, and mining. Ultimately, incentive clarity and timely implementation will decide earnings translation.

Disclaimer
Note: Throughout this article, we have relied on data from http://www.Screener.in and the company's investor presentation. Only in cases where the data were unavailable have we used an alternate, widely accepted, and widely used source of information.

The purpose of this article is only to share interesting charts, data points, and thought-provoking opinions. It is NOT a recommendation. If you wish to consider an investment, you are strongly advised to consult your advisor. This article is strictly for educational purposes only.

About the Author: *Madhvendra has been deeply immersed in the equity markets for over seven years, combining his passion for investing with his expertise in financial writing. With a knack for simplifying complex concepts, he enjoys sharing his honest perspectives on startups, listed Indian companies, and macroeconomic trends.*

A dedicated reader and storyteller, Madhvendra thrives on uncovering insights that inspire his audience to deepen their understanding of the financial world.

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India Completes Over 200 Km Of Tunnels, With 40+ Km More In Pipeline Across Strategic Road And Rail Projects

Swarajya,
January 14, 2026

India has constructed or is executing around 240 km of tunnel infrastructure across some of the country's most challenging terrain, as road, rail and urban tunnelling projects expand rapidly to improve all-weather connectivity, strategic mobility and freight movement, the government said in a release on Wednesday (14 January).

According to government release, tunnelling has emerged as one of the fastest-growing infrastructure segments, driven by border road development, railway expansion, metro networks and high-speed rail corridors.

Projects span elevations from 1,200 metres to over 13,000 feet, using advanced construction techniques to cut through fragile Himalayan geology.

Among the most significant projects is the 9.02-km Atal Tunnel, the world's longest highway tunnel above 10,000 feet, which has reduced the Manali–Sarchu distance by 46 km and cut travel time by four to five hours.

Built in temperatures ranging from minus 25 degrees Celsius to 45 degrees Celsius, the tunnel enables year-round civilian and defence movement through the Pir Panjal range.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the 12-km Sonamarg Tunnel, built at a cost of Rs 2,700 crore, is designed to handle 1,000 vehicles per hour and eliminate winter closures caused by avalanches and heavy snowfall.

Once integrated with the upcoming Zojila Tunnel, average travel speeds on the Srinagar–Ladakh axis are expected to rise from 30 km per hour to 70 km per hour, significantly strengthening defence logistics and regional supply chains.

Railway tunnelling has also reached record scales.

The 12.77-km Tunnel T50 under the Udhampur–Srinagar–Baramulla Rail Link is among India's longest transportation tunnels and forms a critical rail corridor linking the Kashmir Valley with the national network.

The tunnel includes a parallel escape passage connected every 375 metres, with CCTV coverage at 50-metre intervals for continuous monitoring.

Urban and high-speed rail projects are adding another dimension.

In 2024, India commissioned its first underwater metro tunnel beneath the Hooghly River in Kolkata, while the Mumbai–Ahmedabad bullet train project achieved a breakthrough on its 4.8-km undersea tunnel, a first for Indian rail engineering.

Looking ahead, the Zojila Tunnel, spanning over 30 km and targeted for completion by 2028, is expected to become India's longest road tunnel and Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel.

The project has already resulted in cost savings of over Rs 5,000 crore through the adoption of modern construction technologies, the government said.

The scale of India's tunnelling push is best illustrated by the Rishikesh–Karnaprayag rail project alone, where nearly 200 km of tunnels have already been completed against a total scope of 213 km, making it one of the most tunnel-intensive railway projects ever undertaken in the Himalayas.

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Centre Plans Tougher Eligibility Rules After Contractors Repeatedly Dodge Blacklisting

PTI,
January 14, 2026

Under the new framework, any contractor found responsible for a "major or catastrophic failure" in an ongoing project would be barred from bidding for NH works for two years.

The Union government is moving to tighten oversight in the national highways sector after repeated instances of contractors and consultants securing swift court stays against debarment and blacklisting orders.

Officials said a two-pronged approach is being worked out: analysing how such legal relief is routinely obtained and restructuring contract rules to sharply reduce the scope for judicial challenges.

According to a Times of India report, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is proposing key changes to eligibility conditions for national highway (NH) projects.

Under the new framework, any contractor found responsible for a "major or catastrophic failure" in an ongoing project would be barred from bidding for NH works for two years.

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The move is aimed at shifting from punitive blacklisting to contract-based disqualification, which is seen as legally more robust.

The issue came up during a recent high-level review of the highway sector, where officials flagged concerns over how quickly debarred firms were managing to obtain court relief.

Over the past two years, highway authorities have suspended or debarred more than 60 contractors and consultancy firms and imposed penalties exceeding Rs 307 crore.

"It was felt that a detailed assessment should be carried out to detect if there is any pattern behind contractors and consultants getting immediate relief," an official was quoted as saying in the report.

Explaining the proposed contract changes, another official was cited as saying that the definition of "major or catastrophic incident" would include events such as the collapse of bridges, viaducts, elevated road sections or reinforced walls, as well as instances of severe road damage.

Linking eligibility directly to such failures, rather than issuing blacklisting orders, is expected to leave little room for legal intervention.

"Once you ban a contractor or consultant, they can approach a court for relief. It also impacts their business as they don't get any work across departments and states. So, our eligibility condition linked to major incidents will impact contractors in getting NH projects and such players will have hardly any scope to challenge it," the official said.

He added that because debarment can severely disrupt business operations, firms often pursue legal remedies aggressively.

By embedding restrictions within contractual eligibility itself, the government believes it can ensure accountability while minimising prolonged legal battles.

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West Delhi Set For Major Road And Drainage Upgrade As Rs 64 Crore Project Launched On Nangloi–Najafgarh Corridor

Swarajya,
January 14, 2026

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was accompanied by Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena and PWD Minister Parvesh Verma during the foundation-laying event.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena on Tuesday (13 January) laid the foundation stone for a Rs 64.04 Crore drainage improvement project planned along the heavily congested Nangloi–Najafgarh road, which includes the construction of new stormwater drains and the upgradation of existing drainage systems along the busy stretch.

The works are designed to address chronic waterlogging, deteriorating road conditions and traffic congestion, particularly during the monsoon season.

Recalling a visit to several parts of West Delhi in September 2024, including Mundka, Nangloi, Kanjhawala, Phirni Road and Rohtak Road, the Lieutenant Governor described the situation as grim.

"Sewage water was flowing on the roads, the roads were badly damaged and conditions were miserable due to potholes and filth. I had then directed the government to take immediate corrective action," Saxena said, adding that progress was delayed due to neglect by the previous administration.

The Chief Minister said the project is part of a broader effort to modernise Delhi's drainage and stormwater management framework.

"The Delhi government is working on improving the city's entire drainage and stormwater management system using new and modern approaches. Once the project is completed, drainage across the entire corridor will improve, roads will be upgraded and commuters will get significant relief from traffic bottlenecks," Gupta said.

She added that the road will be reconstructed and strengthened, with crash barriers installed along the central verge to ensure safety and effective water flow.

"Regular cleaning of drains, construction of new trunk drains and implementation of sewage treatment plants projects were being carried out simultaneously, so that only treated water flows into the Yamuna in the future and the capital is permanently freed from the problem of waterlogging," Gupta said.

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Uttar Pradesh Steps Up Infrastructure Push With 128 Projects Worth Rs 2.37 Lakh Crore Completed And 202 On Schedule

Swarajya,
January 14, 2026

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday (13 January) said that 39 per cent of government projects in the state have been completed, underlining the role of the "Pragati" monitoring model in accelerating development work.

Addressing a review of the Pragati (Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation) platform, the UP Chief Minister stated that projects worth Rs 10.48 lakh crore are currently under implementation across Uttar Pradesh.

Of this, projects worth Rs 2.37 lakh crore, covering 128 schemes, have already been completed.

The remaining 202 projects, representing 61 per cent, are currently under implementation. These ongoing projects involve an estimated investment of Rs 8.11 lakh crore and are progressing within approved timelines.

CM Yogi said the Pragati model, originally introduced at the national level under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been effectively adapted by Uttar Pradesh to ensure time-bound execution of large infrastructure and development projects.

He noted that the system helps identify bottlenecks early and ensures accountability at every stage.

The projects under implementation include major investments in transport, energy, urban development, housing and industrial infrastructure.

The Chief Minister said the state government has ensured that each project is approved with a fixed timeline, and completion deadlines are reviewed regularly.

Highlighting governance outcomes, Yogi Adityanath said that out of 515 public grievances reviewed at the state level, 494 have been resolved, reflecting a resolution rate of around 96 per cent.

At the national level, issues related to Uttar Pradesh raised through Pragati have also seen high resolution rates with 278 out of 287 issues resolved.

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Bihar Cabinet Clears Mega Urban Revamp For Patna, Approves Power Cabling, Ring Road Land And New Master Plan

Business Standard,
January 14, 2026

The Bihar cabinet has given the green signal to a series of high-value urban and infrastructure initiatives aimed at reshaping key parts of Patna, including Rajbanshi Nagar, Shastri Nagar and the city's power and road networks.

At its meeting on Tuesday (13 January), the cabinet approved the appointment of a consultancy firm to prepare a comprehensive mega development plan for Rajbanshi Nagar and Shastri Nagar.

An amount of Rs 1.59 crore, inclusive of GST, has been sanctioned for the exercise.

According to cabinet secretariat department Additional Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar Chaudhary, the proposed plan will cover both residential and non-residential zones in the two localities, laying the groundwork for planned growth and improved urban amenities.

In a parallel move to modernise infrastructure, the cabinet cleared significant funding for underground electricity cabling across Patna.

A sum of Rs 576 crore has been approved for works in nine of the 13 divisions under the Patna Electric Supply Undertaking (PESU). This includes Rs 346 crore as central assistance under a national scheme and a state contribution of Rs 230 crore.

An additional Rs 76 crore from the state plan fund has been sanctioned to extend underground cabling to the remaining four PESU divisions—Danapur, Khagaul, Guljarbagh and Kankarbag-2.

The cabinet also approved Rs 284 crore for the acquisition of 185 acres of private land across 11 revenue villages for a key stretch of the Patna Ring Road project.

The land will be used to build a six-lane road over an 8.48 km section between Kanhauli and Sherpur, along with a junction connecting the Bihta–Danapur elevated road.

The project, being implemented under the Centre's Bharatmala programme, is expected to divert heavy vehicle traffic away from the city while spurring development along the corridor.

In another decision, seven sand ghats along the Ganga in Patna district and two in Vaishali district were transferred from the mines and geology department to the Bihar State Road Development Corporation.

Officials said the move would streamline the supply of construction material and improve coordination for large infrastructure projects.

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India's 110 Kmph+ Capable Tracks Now Cover 80 Per Cent Of Rail Network After Major Renewal Push

Swarajya,
January 19, 2026

Indian Railways has recorded significant progress in track modernisation and safety enhancement, with sustained investment over the past eleven years translating into a sharp expansion of track sections capable of supporting 110 kmph+ operations across the national rail network.

According to the Ministry of Railways, the length of tracks permitting speeds of 110 kmph and above has increased from 31,445 km in 2014, which accounted for about 40 per cent of the network at the time, to 84,244 km at present, covering about 80 per cent of the national rail network.

The expansion has enabled faster and more reliable train operations across large parts of the country.

Track renewal has remained a central pillar of this modernisation drive.

During the financial year 2024–25, Indian Railways completed renewal works over 6,851 track km.

In the current financial year 2025–26, more than 7,500 track km of renewal work is underway.

Further, track renewal covering 7,900 track km has been planned for 2026–27, indicating a continued acceleration of renewal activity over the next two years .

Progress has also been reported in turnout renewal, which plays a critical role in ensuring smooth and safe train movement.

In 2024–25, Indian Railways provided 7,161 Thick Web Switches and 1,704 Weldable CMS Crossings.

The scale of deployment has increased in 2025–26, with over 8,000 Thick Web Switches and more than 3,000 Weldable CMS Crossings being provided across the network .

Mechanised deep screening of ballast, essential for maintaining track stability and improving ride quality, has been carried out consistently.

During 2024–25, deep screening was completed over 7,442 track kilometres, while more than 7,500 track kilometres of deep screening work is currently underway in 2025–26 .

To support mechanised maintenance and improve productivity, Indian Railways has significantly expanded its track machine fleet.

Since 2014, more than 1,100 track machines have been procured, enabling faster and more efficient maintenance of track assets across the rail network .

Safety measures have also been strengthened through the installation of fencing along railway tracks to minimise cattle run-over incidents and unauthorised trespassing.

About 15,000 km of fencing have been provided so far, improving safety on sections where trains operate at speeds exceeding 110 kmph .

The Ministry of Railways said these sustained efforts reflect a long-term focus on asset reliability, safety and operational efficiency, forming the backbone of Indian Railways' broader modernisation programme aimed at supporting higher speeds and heavier traffic volumes on the existing network.

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Kerala Industries Minister Confirms Tender Process For Delayed Seaport–Airport Road Section; Construction To Begin Soon

PTI,
January 18, 2026

After more than two decades of uncertainty, construction work on a crucial stretch of Kochi's Seaport–Airport Road is finally poised to resume.

The Kerala government has granted technical sanction for Phase II of the project, clearing the way for work on the 2.7 km segment between HMT Junction in Kalamassery and the Naval Armament Depot (NAD) located between South Kalamassery and Aluva.

Industries Minister P Rajeev confirmed on Saturday (17 January) that the government had acquired about 500 metres of land from HMT, while additional land required for the remaining stretch has been purchased from the Naval Armament Depot and handed over to the Roads and Bridges Development Corporation of Kerala Ltd.

He added that a technical sanction to initiate the tender process was received on Saturday.

He added that the tender notice for the HMT–NAD stretch would be issued on 20 January.

The broader Seaport–Airport Road project, spanning 25.7 km from Irumpanam to Nedumbassery, has long been viewed as a vital transport corridor for Kochi.

However, progress was repeatedly stalled due to prolonged land acquisition disputes, particularly involving HMT land in Kalamassery, which became the main bottleneck for the project.

While a 2 km portion of the road between HMT and NAD was completed in 2022, construction could not be fully wrapped up as sections belonging to HMT and the defence establishment remained unavailable.

To resolve this, the state government sanctioned Rs 37.50 crore to acquire land from HMT. In addition, 2.4967 hectares of land belonging to the Naval Armament Depot were acquired at a cost of Rs 32.26 crore and subsequently handed over to RBDCK.

Once completed, the Seaport–Airport Road is expected to significantly ease traffic congestion within Kochi and offer a faster, more reliable connection between the city, the port area and Kochi International Airport.

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Rs 6,927 Crore Barabanki–Bahraich Highway Upgrade Advances, Construction Likely After Mid-2026 Clearance: Report

Business Standard,
January 17, 2026

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has stepped up efforts to develop a four-lane National Highway 927 linking Barabanki and Bahraich, a project estimated to cost Rs 6,927 crore and expected to play a key role in strengthening road connectivity between India and Nepal.

According to a TOI report, the proposal has been submitted to the central government, with officials indicating that financial clearance is likely by mid-2026. Once approved, the project will move swiftly into the tendering and construction stages.

Spanning approximately 101 km, the upgraded highway is expected to dramatically cut travel time between Barabanki and Bahraich, a journey that currently takes several hours, to around one hour.

The corridor is designed to handle up to 38,000 light and heavy vehicles daily for decades, easing congestion and supporting long-term growth.

The project is expected to bring major benefits to residents, traders and transporters across Barabanki, Bahraich, Gonda, Balrampur, Shravasti, as well as neighbouring regions of Nepal, by improving access to markets, healthcare and economic centres.

Around 325 hectares of land, comprising both government and private holdings, have already been identified for the project. In addition to the main carriageway, the land will be used to develop service roads, improving local connectivity and road safety.

According to NHAI, the project will be implemented in two phases, with the initial phase covering the Barabanki–Jarwal and Jarwal–Bahraich stretches.

Following approval from the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee, the proposal was forwarded to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in November last year for final clearance.

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High Court backs NHAI's move to terminate Pune co's Delhi-Mumbai expressway contract over project delay

The Economic Times,
January 19, 2026

Synopsis
The Delhi High Court's order showed a growing judicial emphasis on timely delivery, especially for large national projects. By placing the interests of commuters and the wider economy above contractual disputes, the ruling seeks to send a clear signal that prolonged delays on critical public works will face little tolerance.

The Delhi High Court has cleared the way for the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to terminate a key construction contract on the Delhi–Mumbai Expressway, ruling that public interest must take precedence over a contractor's claims, The Times of India reported on January 16. The court said citizens cannot be denied access to a properly built highway because of prolonged delays, and allowed NHAI to bring in another agency to complete a stalled 35-kilometre stretch, ToI's report (by Dipak K Dash & Abhinav Garg) said.

In a strong endorsement of the authority's position, a bench of Justices Dinesh Mehta and Vinod Kumar held that the "balance of convenience" lies squarely with the nation and road users. The judges said smooth and free movement of vehicles is a basic public requirement, and cannot be compromised due to slow execution by a private contractor.

The ruling relates to a 35-km section of the Delhi–Mumbai Expressway awarded to Pune-based Roadways Solutions India Infra Ltd (RSIIL). NHAI had issued a notice of intent to terminate the contract on December 23 after recording significant delays in construction. RSIIL challenged the notice before a single-judge bench, which stayed the termination, prompting NHAI to move the High Court in appeal.

Allowing NHAI's appeal, the division bench rejected the contractor's argument that issuing a fresh tender would take at least three months and that it could still demonstrate adequate progress. The court said NHAI was free to act in the public interest and ensure timely completion of the project.

At the same time, the court offered limited interim protection to the contractor. It restrained NHAI from encashing insurance surety bonds and bank guarantees furnished by RSIIL until the contractor's application is finally decided by the single-judge bench. This safeguard, however, does not prevent NHAI from moving ahead with administrative steps to replace the contractor.

In its order, the High Court made it clear that NHAI may pass appropriate orders pursuant to its December 23 notice and, if considered necessary, issue a fresh notice inviting tender for Package VIII of the expressway. The authority has also been permitted to engage another agency or entity to complete the remaining work on the affected stretch.

The case has drawn attention to wider concerns about delays on parts of the ambitious Delhi–Mumbai Expressway, a project estimated to cost around ?1 lakh crore. RSIIL has been awarded three contracts covering a total of 87 kilometres in the Gujarat portion of the expressway. According to NHAI, progress on these stretches has been slow.

Appearing for NHAI, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the court that the contractor's failure to complete work has had a direct impact on motorists. Because of unfinished sections, vehicles travelling on the newly constructed expressway are being forced to take detours, undermining the purpose of the high-speed corridor.

Officials familiar with the matter say NHAI is likely to issue cure period notices for the two other stretches being built by RSIIL where progress has lagged. A cure period notice gives a contractor 60 days to rectify breaches or delays before the authority initiates formal termination proceedings.

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