

NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026

[^ TOP](#)

CFI is now on social media! We'd love your support in increasing our visibility. Please take a moment to like and share our posts. Your engagement will certainly help us reach more people! Check us out here: [CFI LinkedIn](#).

Thank you for your support!

- ✚ [PMO Orders Third-Party Audits For Highway And Rail Projects, Seeks Faster Speeds On Key Transport Corridors: Report](#)
- ✚ [Centre Extends Deadline For PMGSY Road Projects In Dodra Kwar Till 2027 To Strengthen Rural Connectivity](#)
- ✚ [Centre Exploring PPP Model For Rs 16 Trillion High-Speed Rail Network Across Seven Proposed Bullet Train Corridors: Report](#)
- ✚ [East Coast Road \(ECR\): How Chennai's coastal stretch is turning into a growth hub](#)
- ✚ [Integrated Transport Push In Visakhapatnam: 76.7 km Metro Network Planned With 12 NH-16 Flyovers](#)
- ✚ [NRSC-NHAI Collaboration Produces India's First Comprehensive Satellite-Based Green Cover Assessment For National Highways](#)

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

[Rs 542 Crore Underground Tunnel To Link Bihar Museum And Patna Museum, Work Begins In Patna](#)

PMO Orders Third-Party Audits For Highway And Rail Projects, Seeks Faster Speeds On Key Transport Corridors: Report
Business Standard,
March 10, 2026



PM Narendra Modi at the new PMO building 'Seva Teerth'

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has directed the ministries of road transport and railways to introduce independent third-party quality audits for infrastructure projects, according to a Times of India report.

The report said the directive is aimed at ensuring higher construction standards and greater accountability at a time when large investments are being made to expand the country's transport network. Ministries have also been asked to address delays that often slow project execution.

As part of the review, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked the road transport ministry to revisit construction and monitoring practices used during the Golden Quadrilateral highway programme, India's first major national highway development initiative.

Officials have been asked to examine why the project witnessed very few complaints related to construction quality during its implementation.

The PMO has also suggested that authorities study global models that strengthen infrastructure oversight.

One such example is Indonesia's system of institutionalised third-party audits, which is designed to improve quality control and transparency in large public infrastructure works.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

Malaysia introduced a similar system last year through "external audits" to monitor project quality.

Beyond construction standards, the ministries have been asked to focus on improving operational efficiency on transport corridors once projects become operational.

The road transport ministry has been tasked with identifying bottlenecks that restrict freight movement on high-capacity highways. At present, the average speed of freight trucks is about 50 kmph, significantly below the desired 70 kmph on these corridors.

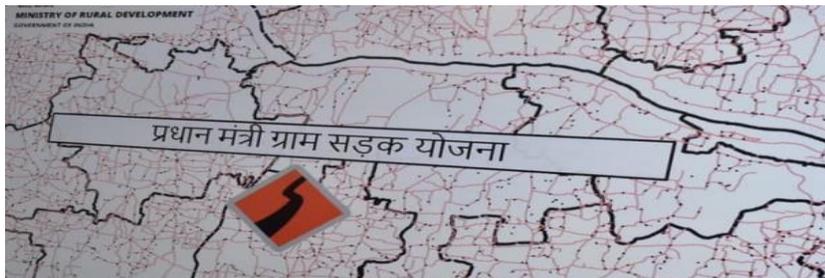
Indian Railways has been directed to adopt a phased strategy to increase train speeds on key routes. Current targets include raising speeds from 110 kmph to 130 kmph, eventually moving to 160 kmph and beyond 200 kmph on select corridors.

[^ TOP](#)

Centre Extends Deadline For PMGSY Road Projects In Dodra Kwar Till 2027 To Strengthen Rural Connectivity

PTI,

March 10, 2026



PMGSY

The Union Ministry of Finance has approved an extension for completing pending rural road works under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-I) in the remote Dodra Kwar region of Shimla district, allowing the projects to be finished by 31 March 2027.

The development was announced by Vikramaditya Singh, Public Works and Urban Development Minister of Himachal Pradesh, who said the extension followed a recent meeting in New Delhi with Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the Union Minister for Rural Development.

The discussion focused on improving rural road infrastructure across the hill state, particularly in geographically challenging regions.

Several road projects under PMGSY-I in Dodra Kwar, one of the most remote high-altitude areas in the district, had been delayed due to extremely difficult terrain, severe weather conditions and a short annual construction window.

Snowfall and steep mountain slopes significantly limit the duration during which heavy construction work can be carried out.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

Authorities believe the completed road network will be crucial for improving access to essential services in the border region.

According to Singh, reliable road connectivity will strengthen disaster response capabilities and ensure smoother movement of essential supplies, healthcare services and emergency assistance for residents of the area.

He also expressed appreciation to the Union government for responding positively to the state's request and facilitating progress on the project.

The minister reiterated that the state government remains committed to expanding all-weather road connectivity to remote and far-flung villages across Himachal Pradesh.

Singh further noted that the state has already secured approval for nearly 1,500 km of rural roads under PMGSY-IV, with an estimated investment of around Rs 2,300 crore.

The minister also urged local representatives, Panchayati Raj institutions, and landowners to cooperate in facilitating land availability and approvals so that sanctioned projects can be completed within the stipulated timeframe.

[^ TOP](#)

Centre Exploring PPP Model For Rs 16 Trillion High-Speed Rail Network Across Seven Proposed Bullet Train Corridors: Report

The Hindu Business Line,
March 10, 2026

The union government is examining the possibility of introducing a public-private partnership (PPP) framework to develop India's next generation of high-speed rail (HSR) corridors, as it seeks to mobilise private investment and reduce the financial burden on the exchequer, The Business Standard has reported.

Seven new bullet train routes, announced in the Union Budget in February by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, are estimated to require an investment of roughly Rs 16 trillion.

The proposed corridors, spanning about 4,000 km, include Mumbai-Pune, Pune-Hyderabad, Hyderabad-Bengaluru, Hyderabad-Chennai, Chennai-Bengaluru, Delhi-Varanasi and Varanasi-Siliguri.

Officials familiar with internal discussions said the idea of exploring a PPP structure was first raised at a high-level government meeting in December, ahead of the Budget announcement.

The aim is to identify a viable model that can attract private participation in constructing and operating high-speed rail systems.

"Yes, we are looking at that option actively. It is a challenge, as there are very few global precedents of successful projects in HSR. But it is a need and it is important that we keep exploring ways in which this can be done," a top Ministry of Railways official was quoted as saying by Business Standard.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

One approach being considered involves the government providing land for the projects, while private developers would be responsible for construction, operations and maintenance.

Officials believe this could help reduce some of the risks that have historically discouraged private investment in large rail infrastructure projects, particularly those related to land acquisition.

Experts caution, however, that financial viability remains a key challenge. India currently has no operational bullet train corridor, and the flagship Mumbai–Ahmedabad high-speed rail project has faced delays, largely due to land acquisition issues.

The government now aims to open a 100 km section between Surat and Vapi by 2027, while overall project costs have risen to nearly Rs 2 trillion.

Authorities have recently begun reviewing the financial viability and detailed project reports for the newly proposed corridors as part of the next phase of India's high-speed rail expansion.

[^ TOP](#)

East Coast Road (ECR): How Chennai's coastal stretch is turning into a growth hub

The Economic Times,
March 10, 2026

Synopsis

Chennai's East Coast Road (ECR) is transforming from a scenic route to a prime residential hub. Enhanced connectivity, new infrastructure like the Kalaignar Convention Centre, and improved social amenities are attracting long-term residents. Developers are responding to this demand with quality housing projects, positioning ECR as a key player in Chennai's premium housing market.

Over the last several years, East Coast Road (ECR) has evolved from being a mere picturesque coastal route to emerging as a prominent residential destination in Chennai. Once known mainly for holiday homes and weekend escapes, the stretch is increasingly being shaped by expanding infrastructure, rising demand for premium housing, and growing long-term investor interest. Accessibility continues to play a central role in the evolution of the ECR corridor. The stretch is interlinked with key parts of Chennai, including the residential neighbourhoods around Thiruvanmiyur and the major employment hubs along OMR. Infrastructure upgrades are expected to further strengthen this connectivity, particularly the planned elevated corridor between Thiruvanmiyur and Uthandi.

Parallel infrastructure developments are adding institutional depth to the stretch. The upcoming Kalaignar Convention Centre along ECR is poised to enhance the corridor's profile as a destination for large-scale cultural, corporate, and public events. Such civic investments signal long-term governmental focus on the region, elevating its stature beyond purely residential appeal.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

Social infrastructure across ECR has also strengthened considerably. Premium educational institutions, multi-speciality healthcare facilities, hospitality destinations, and organised retail developments have contributed to the corridor's emergence as a self-sustaining residential ecosystem. Its relatively low-density character, coastal ventilation, and open surroundings continue to differentiate it from more congested urban zones.

Micro-markets such as Kanathur, Uthandi, and Injambakkam have gained traction among end-users seeking structured community living rather than speculative land investments. The shift in buyer profile, from weekend investors to full-time residents, reflects ECR's maturity as a dependable housing destination.

Developments along the corridor further underline this transition. Projects such as Oceanique, developed by Altis Properties, have emerged as among the most sought-after apartment communities on ECR, reflecting sustained end-user demand for quality residential formats. Building on this momentum, the developer has introduced its latest residential project in Kanathur, aligning with the corridor's next phase of growth.

According to the brand, with large-scale infrastructure initiatives underway and sustained civic investments supporting the corridor's long-term potential, ECR is increasingly being viewed as more than just a coastal stretch. The brand believes the area is evolving into a structured residential corridor that could play a defining role in Chennai's premium housing landscape in the coming years.

[^ TOP](#)

Integrated Transport Push In Visakhapatnam: 76.7 km Metro Network Planned With 12 NH-16 Flyovers

Swarajya,
March 10, 2026

Plans for the Visakhapatnam Metro Rail project are moving forward with an integrated transport approach that combines metro corridors with new highway flyovers to reduce congestion and improve mobility across the port city.

According to N Ramakrishna Reddy, Managing Director of Andhra Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation Limited, the metro project will include four corridors covering about 76.70 km, designed to meet the long-term public transport needs of Visakhapatnam.

Speaking at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Vijayawada annual meeting, he said the proposed Metro-cum-four-lane road flyover project along National Highway-16 is expected to significantly improve traffic flow by integrating urban rail and road infrastructure.

The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has proposed to construct 12 flyovers at various junctions along the NH-16 passing through Visakhapatnam, the Metro Rail Corporation MD said.

Reddy also highlighted progress on the Vijayawada Metro Rail project, which is planned with three corridors extending over 66.20 km. Much of the proposed metro infrastructure there will run along highway flyovers to optimise land use and improve urban connectivity.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

Transport planners emphasised that strengthening infrastructure across rail, road and port networks will be crucial for supporting Andhra Pradesh's economic growth.

Meanwhile, Vijayawada Divisional Railway Manager Mohit Sonakiya highlighted ongoing railway upgrades in the region, including improvements to Machilipatnam railway station and strengthening of key bridges in the division.

Industry representatives at the meeting noted that better integration between railways, ports and industrial zones could significantly boost exports from Andhra Pradesh, which already benefits from major ports such as Visakhapatnam, Krishnapatnam, Gangavaram and Kakinada.

[^ TOP](#)

NRSC-NHAI Collaboration Produces India's First Comprehensive Satellite-Based Green Cover Assessment For National Highways

Swarajya,
March 10, 2026

India has quietly crossed a meaningful milestone in how it thinks about its highways. What was once monitored by boots on the ground — surveyors driving stretches of tarmac to check whether saplings had survived — is now being done from space.

The National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), under ISRO, has released its annual report for 2025-26 on the National Highways Green Cover Index (NH-GCI) project, a joint initiative with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

The system uses 5-metre-resolution imagery from India's own Resourcesat-2 and Resourcesat-2A satellites to estimate green cover at every single km of highway, on both the left and right sides, and along medians wherever they exist.

Under the Green Highways Policy of 2015, contractors are not merely expected to plant trees along highway corridors; they are responsible for their survival too.

Verifying that survival across tens of thousands of km was always a logistical headache. The partnership between NRSC and NHAI, formalised through an MoU signed in January 2024 in the presence of then Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, was designed to solve exactly that.

Pilot studies in Rajasthan and Punjab, covering 100 km stretches each, established proof of concept. Ground truth validation found the Rajasthan results "matching ground reality," though Punjab initially threw up geometric inaccuracies that required methodological refinement.

A Telangana phase followed, covering 17 project units spanning over 1,120 km, before the project scaled up to its current scope.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

The resulting Green Cover Index, expressed as a percentage of land under canopy within each km, is then published to NHAI officials through a dedicated web-GIS portal on ISRO's Bhuvan platform.

What makes the system operationally credible is its validation record. A manual field-photo survey found roughly 90 per cent agreement between satellite-derived GCI values and on-ground vegetation, a correlation robust enough for policy use.

Two illustrative segments from Punjab demonstrated GCI values of approximately 71 per cent versus 35 per cent, accurately reflecting the difference between dense plantation and sparse cover.

Currently, about 30,000 km of highways across 24 states are being monitored on a biannual basis.

Future plans include machine learning tools to automate vegetation classification, change-detection alerts for plantation loss between monitoring cycles, and, perhaps most consequentially, integration with carbon and biomass estimation models.

That last piece would allow NHAI to quantify the sequestration contribution of its green corridors, lending the programme a climate dimension that goes well beyond aesthetics or compliance.

[^ TOP](#)

Rs 542 Crore Underground Tunnel To Link Bihar Museum And Patna Museum, Work Begins In Patna

Swarajya,
March 10, 2026

Construction has begun on a Rs 542 crore underground tunnel in Patna that will directly connect the Bihar Museum with the historic Patna Museum.

The initiative was formally launched by Nitish Kumar, the Chief Minister of Bihar, during a site visit on Sunday (8 March). Officials said the chief minister initiated tunnelling operations by activating the tunnel boring machine that will excavate the passage beneath a key stretch of the city.

The underground passage is planned near Hartali Mor along Nehru Path in Patna. Once completed, the subway will allow visitors to move seamlessly between the two major museums without crossing busy traffic corridors.

Authorities expect the project to significantly enhance the visitor experience while also boosting tourist numbers at both institutions, which together showcase Bihar's rich archaeological, artistic and historical heritage.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office, senior officials briefed Kumar on the technical aspects of the construction and the proposed timeline for completion.

"Joining the Hands that Believe in Building Sustainably # Platform for Sustainable Infra"

The chief minister also directed officials to plan for expanded parking facilities and improved visitor amenities to handle the anticipated rise in tourist footfall once the tunnel becomes operational.

During the visit, Kumar toured the Bihar Museum complex, where Director General Anjani Kumar Singh presented updates on newly installed exhibits, visitor statistics and infrastructure arrangements including parking facilities.

The chief minister also reviewed progress on the redevelopment of a residential and officers' hostel complex, which will include 60 housing units and a landscaped park being developed in front of the museum along Nehru Path.

He instructed officials to accelerate construction so that the upgraded facility can provide improved accommodation and public spaces in the area.

Senior officials including Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha, Chief Secretary Pratyaya Amrit, and Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Deepak Kumar were present during the inspection.

[^ TOP](#)