

# NEWSLETTER

## CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24 & 25, 2026

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India Can Mobilise Rs 8 Lakh Crore Annually For Highway Projects, Says Nitin Gadkari; Flags Slow Spending Pace

The Economic Times,  
March 24, 2026

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday (24 March) said India has the capacity to mobilise up to Rs 8 lakh crore every year for highway development but expressed concern that the sector's spending pace remains slower than required, news agency PTI reported.

Speaking at the listing ceremony of the NHAI-sponsored Raajmarg Infrastructure Investment Trust on the Bombay Stock Exchange, the minister stressed that stronger investment in roads can significantly boost economic growth.

"Our problem is we are unable to spend. Our speed of spending is too low," Gadkari said, highlighting the need to accelerate project execution across the highways network.

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According to the minister, the government can potentially raise around Rs 5 lakh crore annually from the market, supported by the strong asset base in the highways sector. This can be supplemented with the existing budgetary allocation of around Rs 3.2 lakh crore for road infrastructure.

Gadkari underlined the wider economic impact of infrastructure investment, noting that each rupee spent on the sector can generate multiple benefits.

He pointed to the Dwarka Expressway near Delhi as an example of how road projects can drive economic activity and attract investment. The area surrounding the expressway, once largely forest land, has since witnessed real estate investments worth more than Rs 8 lakh crore.

The minister also announced that several new projects worth nearly Rs 40,000 crore in and around Pune are expected to see ground-breaking ceremonies in the coming weeks. These include the proposed Pune–Aurangabad Expressway along with four additional highway projects.

Gadkari further revealed that plans are underway for a new Mumbai–Bengaluru expressway, which is expected to reduce travel time between the two major cities to about five hours.

On the Mumbai–Goa National Highway, the minister acknowledged that land acquisition challenges had delayed the project, which began in 2010.

However, he said that 93 per cent of the construction work has now been completed and the remaining work is likely to finish within the next two months.

Gadkari also noted that the pace of highway construction has slowed to around 32–34 km per day from the earlier level of about 40 km, even as the government continues to work towards increasing the rate to 60 km per day.

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**India Says No Further Financial Commitment To Chabahar As US Extends Sanctions Waiver Until April 2026**

Swarajya,  
March 25, 2026



*Chabahar Port in Iran.*

India is in discussions with relevant stakeholders following the United States' decision to grant a conditional sanctions waiver for activities linked to Iran's Chabahar Port until 26 April, 2026, the government informed Parliament on Tuesday (24 March).

Responding to a query in the Rajya Sabha by John Brittas of the CPI(M), Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said India had already fulfilled its financial commitment related to the project and currently has no further funding obligations.

Singh explained that India's involvement in the project centres on the development and operation of the Shahid Beheshti Terminal at Chabahar Port in Iran. The facility is operated by India Ports Global Limited under a long-term agreement with Iran's Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran.

"On 13 May 2024, India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) signed a ten-year contract with the Ports and Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran for equipping and operating the Shahid Beheshti Terminal at Chabahar Port. Under the provisions of the contract, India has fulfilled its commitment of contributing USD 120 million for the procurement of port equipment. Therefore, there is no further financial commitment from the Government of India towards the port."

The minister also outlined developments related to US sanctions. "On 16 September 2025, the US State Department revoked the sanctions exception issued in 2018 under the Iran Freedom and Counter Proliferation Act of 2012 for Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic development, effective 29 September 2025. Pursuant to discussions with the US side, the latter issued guidance extending the conditional sanctions waiver until 26 April 2026. The Government of India remains engaged with all concerned in order to address the implications of these developments."

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The Chabahar Port project has long been viewed as a strategic initiative aimed at strengthening India's connectivity with Afghanistan and Central Asia, while providing an alternative trade route that bypasses Pakistan.

Earlier this year, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal also confirmed that India remains in dialogue with Washington regarding the waiver framework governing the project.

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## Haryana Clears Rs 33,000 Crore Delhi–Panipat–Karnal RRTS Corridor And Kundli Metro Extension

Swarajya,  
March 25, 2026

The Haryana government on Tuesday (24 March) approved two major urban transport projects aimed at expanding public transport infrastructure across the National Capital Region (NCR).

Among the key approvals was the proposed Delhi–Panipat–Karnal Namo Bharat corridor, part of the National Capital Region Transport Corporation's Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).

The high-speed corridor will extend approximately 136.30 km from Delhi to Karnal via Panipat.

According to officials, the project will cost around Rs 33,051 crore, with the Haryana government expected to contribute roughly Rs 7,472 crore. The state's share will be released in phases during the implementation period.

The corridor will include 11 stations within Haryana, providing faster and more reliable connectivity between major towns and urban centres in the state and the national capital.

Authorities believe the project will help reduce road congestion, shorten travel times and support efforts to control pollution across the region.

The cabinet also approved the development of depot infrastructure for the corridor, which will be jointly planned by the transport corporation and the relevant land-owning agencies.

The depot will be built at ground level, with commercial development permitted above it to generate additional revenue.

To strengthen the project's financial viability, the state will also promote higher development density around RRTS stations under the Transit Oriented Development policy by allowing an increased Floor Area Ratio in surrounding areas.

In addition to the RRTS corridor, the cabinet cleared the revised detailed project report for the extension of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Phase-IV metro corridor from Narela to Kundli.

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The Haryana segment of the extension will cover 2.726 km and include two elevated stations at Kundli and Nathupur.

The cost of the Haryana portion has been approved at Rs 545.77 crore, of which the central government will contribute Rs 97.30 crore while the state government will bear the remaining Rs 448.48 crore, including land acquisition expenses.

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