



NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11-13, 2026

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NITI calls for two-year construction ban as West Asia crisis drains economy
Tribune News Service,
May 13, 2026

Reconstruction of Nirman Bhavan, Udyog Bhavan and Shastri Bhavan ministerial complexes 'deferred'

Faced with spiralling construction costs and rising imports due to the ongoing West Asia crisis, government think tank NITI Aayog is learnt to have advised the Centre to halt all major construction works across India for two years, including the demolition and reconstruction of the Nirman Bhavan, Udyog Bhavan and Shastri Bhavan ministerial complexes.

The recommendation, according to highly placed sources, was made by NITI Aayog to the Union ministries concerned, pointing out that owing to cost escalation, rising imports and supply chain disruptions affecting the availability of raw material, all large-scale construction activity should be paused for two years.

The suggested duration for suspension of construction and demolition work indicates the gravity of the situation arising from the Iran war.

Incidentally, the recommendation was made prior to the appointment of NITI Aayog's new Vice-Chairman Ashok Lahiri and an entirely new team of full-time members.

The think tank's recommendation came just days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on May 10, appealed to citizens to curb fuel consumption, revive work-from-home practices,

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pause gold purchases and reduce overseas travel in view of surging global energy prices amid the continuing crisis in West Asia.

Meanwhile, sources said the demolition work at the Nirman Bhavan complex, which houses the Union Urban Affairs and Health Ministries, had been halted.

Apart from this, initial preparations for demolition of the neighbouring Udyog Bhavan, which houses the MSME, Steel and Commerce Ministries, that had begun last month after the entire compound was barricaded, may now also be halted following NITI Aayog's recommendation.

Following these developments, the proposed demolition of Shastri Bhavan, which houses the largest number of Union ministries, including the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, and the adjoining Krishi Bhavan complex, home to the Agriculture, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Food Ministries, has also been put on hold, the sources told The Tribune.

They said heavy-duty construction and demolition projects of this scale required high-end machinery, gas cutters, crushers, cranes, large quantities of building material and, most importantly, high fuel consumption.

Considering that energy supplies have been impacted due to restricted movement of shipments through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, suspension of such heavy-duty construction and demolition activity is learnt to have been suggested as part of austerity measures.

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World Bank And Asian Development Bank Review Amaravati Infrastructure Push, Assess Smart City And Phase-2 Funding Plans

PTI,

May 12, 2026

Senior representatives from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Monday carried out an extensive review of infrastructure and urban development works underway in Andhra Pradesh's planned capital city of Amaravati.

The visiting teams held discussions with officials of the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) and assessed progress across key construction and urban planning initiatives being implemented in the capital region.

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According to an official release, the review covered multiple aspects of Amaravati's ongoing development, including large-scale infrastructure execution, environmental safeguards, labour welfare arrangements and smart city systems designed for the upcoming administrative hub.

"World Bank and Asian Development Bank delegations reviewed the ongoing infrastructure and development works being executed by the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) in the greenfield capital city of Amaravati," the statement said.

Officials said the delegation also examined sustainable urban development measures being integrated into the project as Amaravati continues to position itself as a technology-driven and environmentally conscious capital city.

"The teams reviewed various ongoing infrastructure and sustainable urban development initiatives being implemented in Amaravati Capital City," said APCRDA Commissioner Vijay Rama Raju in the press release.

The delegation included senior World Bank executives, among them Vice President and Chief Risk Officer Dennis McLaughlin, along with representatives from the ADB and other financial institutions involved in infrastructure financing discussions.

During the field inspection, the teams visited several critical project locations, including the Gravity Canal site near the N16 Junction at Dondapadu, labour accommodation facilities and other active construction zones.

The delegation also toured the APCRDA Command and Control Centre, where officials showcased integrated monitoring systems, smart governance platforms and emerging technology initiatives linked to quantum computing applications within the capital region's administrative framework.

Further meetings between government officials and financial institutions are expected to continue, with discussions likely to focus on Phase-2 funding requirements and future infrastructure financing plans for Amaravati's expansion.

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Uday Kotak To India: More Brahma And Mahesh, Less Vishnu — That's The Path To Economic Power
NDTV,

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May 12, 2026

Kotak says India must chart a clear-eyed, strategic course rather than swinging between unwarranted optimism and needless gloom.

Veteran banker Uday Kotak on Tuesday made a case for India to lean harder into creation and disruption — the domains of "Brahma and Mahesh" — and step back from an over-reliance on preservation, or excessive "Vishnu energy", if the country is serious about becoming an economic powerhouse in a fractured and increasingly transactional world order.

Addressing the CII Annual Business Summit 2026, Kotak observed that most people still hold out hope the world will snap back to how it was, despite the turmoil playing out across geopolitical and economic fronts. "Every time there is a crisis, our mind says things will get back to normal. That's our basic mindset," he said, adding that foundational shifts across large parts of the world were already well under way.

In Kotak's reading, the global order is reverting to something resembling the pre-1945 era — a "tribal" dynamic driven by territorial ambition, asset ownership and the concentration of economic power. "We are seeing raw power becoming the rule of life and that is back to tribalism," he said.

He flagged the growing concentration of both tangible and intangible assets in a handful of global players, and pointed to geopolitical fault lines — including the disruption of shipping lanes around the Strait of Hormuz — as a reminder of just how exposed supply chains and energy security remain.

Kotak's prescription for India was unambiguous: neither panic nor complacency, but clear-eyed strategy. "We need to be real, we need to be strategic and we need to be smart," he said.

Kotak Sounds The Alarm On US-Iran Fallout

Kotak also backed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent remarks on austerity and moderated consumption, saying India must steel itself for a prolonged period of global uncertainty and guard against "living beyond its means".

Referring to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, Kotak described it as "a much more bigger, much more complex problem than it sounds," underlining the need for India to brace for external shocks. He said the Prime Minister's call to rein in unnecessary consumption should be read as part of a broader effort to strengthen India's economic balance sheet.

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Kotak also urged Indian businesses not to look solely to the government for answers, but to reflect on their own contribution to nation-building. "Let's not depend on what the country can do for us. What can we do for the country?" he asked, calling on industry leaders to become "tougher within ourselves".

The remarks came against the backdrop of significant stress on India's energy imports. Shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has been largely blocked since late February 2026, when the United States and Israel launched joint air strikes against Iran. The strait normally handles around a fifth of the world's seaborne oil trade and a similar share of global liquefied natural gas.

Analysts at Kotak Securities have cautioned that with no immediate resolution to the West Asia stalemate in sight, the outlook remains guarded, and that India's best course for now is to "hunker down" and wait for, what they describe as, an artificial supply disruption to pass.

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India clears path for big funds to bid directly for road projects

The Economic Times,
May 11, 2026

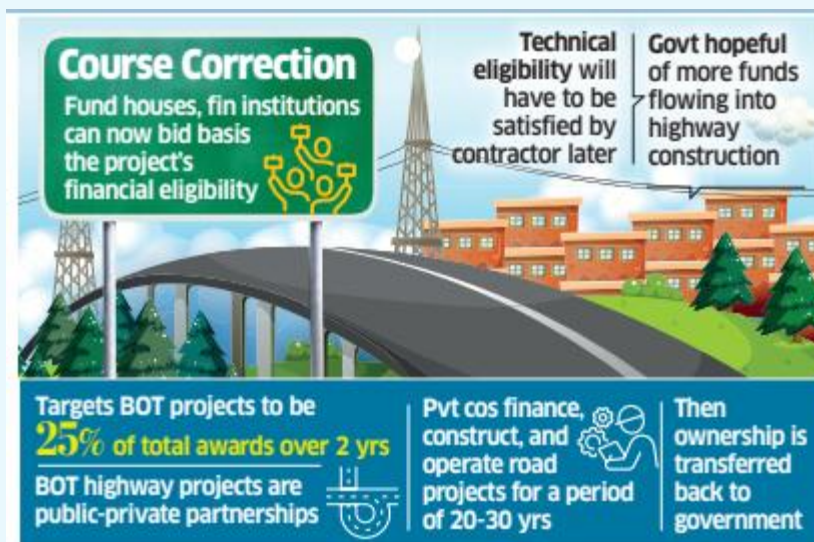
Synopsis

India has opened the door for pension and sovereign wealth funds to directly bid on greenfield toll-road projects, aiming to boost private investment in infrastructure. This move relaxes eligibility norms for build-operate-transfer projects, allowing institutional investors to leverage their financial strength while partnering for construction expertise. The government seeks to significantly increase the share of BOT projects in highway awards.

India has allowed pension and sovereign wealth funds to directly bid for greenfield toll-road projects as the government strives to channelise private investment in infrastructure and ease pressure on public finances.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has relaxed eligibility norms for build-operate-transfer, or BOT, projects to attract large global and domestic funds with long-term capital, said a government official familiar with the matter.

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These changes have been introduced under the request for proposal (RFP) document issued recently for single-stage bidding for BOT projects, the official said.

The move is part of the government's push to raise the share of BOT projects in total highway awards to 25% over the next two years from less than 5% currently. BOT highway projects are public-private partnerships.

Under BOT model, private entities finance, construct, and operate road projects for a set period of 20-30 years before transferring ownership back to the government.

The latest policy marks a shift in India's infrastructure financing model, which has relied heavily on government spending after private developers retreated from BOT projects in the past decade amid debt stress and weak traffic projections. The Centre has spent more than Rs 10 lakh crore annually on infrastructure in recent years to sustain economic growth and logistics expansion.

The road ministry has retained its targets for awarding and constructing 10,000 kilometres of national highways in 2026-27, despite falling short of its goals last fiscal year. Highway construction reached about 9,400 kms in FY26 against a target of 10,000 kms, while awards totalled about 7,000 kms. The ministry has also set an asset monetisation target of Rs 30,000-35,000 crore for this fiscal, after achieving about Rs 29,000 crore in the previous fiscal.

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Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project Awards Rs 1,513-Crore Coach Contract To ICF For Metro-Style AC Trains

Swarajya,
May 12, 2026

Bengaluru's Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Ltd has awarded a Rs 1,513.75 crore contract to Chennai-based Integral Coach Factory (ICF) for the supply of 153 air-conditioned coaches designed on metro-style lines.

The order covers 51 three-coach trainsets that will operate on Corridors 2 and 4 of the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project.

The contract includes the design, manufacturing, testing, integration and commissioning of the broad-gauge coaches.

The agreement was finalised on 6 May 2026 after procedural clearances linked to direct procurement norms under Karnataka's public procurement regulations. The first train deliveries are expected within 18 months.

The timeline is intended to align with the planned commissioning of the Chikkabanavara–Yeshwantpur section under Corridor 2, which was reviewed under the Prime Minister's PRAGATI infrastructure monitoring mechanism last year.

According to news report, the coaches will feature stainless steel construction and are being designed for a safe operating speed of 95 kmph, with regular commercial operations expected at 85 kmph.

Passenger-focused amenities such as modern seating layouts, ventilation systems, digital passenger information displays, and accessibility features will also be incorporated.

Each six-coach rake is expected to accommodate around 1,052 passengers through a combination of seating and standing space, reflecting the growing commuter demand across Bengaluru's expanding suburbs.

Rolling stock procurement is being synchronised with track and signalling work to avoid delays once infrastructure is ready.

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East Coast Railway Accelerates 600 Km Track Fencing Project To Prevent Trespassing, Cattle Runovers And Support Faster Train Operations

Business Standard,
May 12, 2026

The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has intensified efforts to strengthen rail safety infrastructure by fencing vulnerable sections of tracks across its network to reduce trespassing incidents, cattle runovers and operational disruptions.

According to a Times of India report, nearly 600 km of fencing has already been completed across the zone's 3,092 km rail network, with additional stretches being covered in phases.

Authorities stated that the project is primarily focused on accident-prone corridors passing through densely populated settlements and regions where cattle movement near tracks remains frequent.

Around 300 km of fencing has been specifically designed to prevent cattle from entering railway lines, a persistent challenge affecting train movement and passenger safety.

“Track intrusion is one of the major causes of accidents and disruptions in rail operations. By putting up fencing, we aim to significantly reduce such incidents while ensuring smoother train movement,” a senior railway official was quoted as saying by TOI.

Railway authorities noted that unauthorised crossings and stray animals often force trains to brake suddenly, resulting in delays, operational inefficiencies and, in severe cases, derailments or fatalities.

Officials believe the fencing initiative will substantially lower these risks while improving punctuality across key rail corridors.

The project involves installing durable protective barriers on both sides of railway tracks using materials suited to varying terrain and weather conditions across the region.

Alongside physical infrastructure upgrades, railway teams are also conducting awareness campaigns in nearby villages and urban pockets to discourage trespassing and unsafe crossings.

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Coordination with local administrations is also underway to address practical concerns such as designated crossing points for residents and cattle movement.

Railway officials added that increasing sections of the ECoR network are now capable of supporting train speeds of up to 130 kmph.

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Government Explores JNPA IPO As India's Largest Container Port Prepares For Public Listing Under Monetisation Drive: Report

Swarajya,
May 11, 2026

India's biggest container port may soon head to the stock market, with the Centre beginning preliminary work towards a potential initial public offering (IPO) of the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) as part of its wider infrastructure monetisation strategy.

According to a report by Mint, the government has initiated early-stage discussions and engaged state-backed investment banks to help prepare the port authority for the regulatory and compliance requirements associated with a public listing.

The process is currently at a nascent stage, with approvals from multiple departments still pending and no valuation or timeline finalised.

"The process is in the preliminary stages and involves multiple layers of departmental approvals," a source involved in the discussions was quoted as saying in the report.

"Government mandates of this nature follow a specific trajectory that requires consistent oversight to move from the initial engagement to a formal filing."

Located near Mumbai on the Arabian Sea coast, JNPA handles nearly 54 per cent of India's container traffic across major ports.

The port reported a sharp rise in profitability during FY25, with net profit climbing 52 per cent to Rs 2,053 crore on revenue of Rs 3,262 crore.

"No discussions on valuations have occurred at this stage," another source was quoted as saying by Mint. "The current phase involves hand-holding the authority through the compliance and reporting standards required for a public listing."

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The proposed IPO forms part of the National Monetisation Pipeline, under which the government aims to unlock value from established public infrastructure assets to fund future development projects.

JNPA was converted from a trust into an authority under the Major Port Authorities Act in 2021, a move that paved the way for potential equity participation.

The port currently operates multiple container and liquid cargo terminals through partnerships with major global logistics operators, while continuing to expand capacity under India's long-term maritime growth plans.

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