



NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

TUESDAY, MAY 18 - 19, 2026

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India Plans To Monetise 28 National Highway Corridors Across 1,800 Km To Raise Rs 35,000 Crore In FY27: Report
 Business Standard,
 May 19, 2026

India is preparing to monetise 28 operational national highway stretches covering more than 1,800 km during the 2026-27 financial year as part of its broader strategy to unlock infrastructure value and generate fresh capital for new road projects, according to a report by The Economic Times.

The monetisation exercise, led by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), is expected to mobilise nearly Rs 35,000 crore through a mix of infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) and toll-operate-transfer (TOT) models.

As per the report, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh account for the highest number of identified highway assets in the current pipeline.

The initiative forms part of the government's larger asset recycling strategy aimed at funding future infrastructure expansion without placing excessive pressure on public finances.

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"This year's monetisation will have two built-operate-transfer (BOT) projects, and seven engineering procurement and construction (EPC) projects," a government official was quoted as saying by ET.

Authorities indicated that hybrid annuity model projects are likely to remain the preferred assets for monetisation because they involve comparatively lower capital expenditure risk than other highway development formats.

The latest push follows recent policy changes allowing sovereign wealth funds and pension funds to directly invest in greenfield toll road projects, a move expected to widen long-term investor participation in India's transport infrastructure sector.

According to official estimates, the road transport ministry generated nearly Rs 29,000 crore through monetisation activities during FY26.

Earlier this year, NHAI's first public InvIT successfully raised over Rs 9,000 crore by monetising five highway stretches spread across four states.

Officials also revealed that nearly 1,500 km of completed and revenue-generating national highways may be added to future public InvIT platforms over the next three to five years.

Under the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) 2.0 framework unveiled earlier this year, the highway sector alone is expected to contribute around Rs 4.42 lakh crore in monetisation value between FY26 and FY30. Of this, nearly Rs 68,770 crore is projected to come during FY27.

The revised monetisation framework will also include certain build-operate-transfer projects awarded during the current financial year.

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Indian Railways Approves Rs 1,955 Crore Rail Expansion Push Across Tamil Nadu And Bihar To Decongest Chennai Suburban Network And Howrah-Delhi Corridor

Swarajya,
May 18, 2026

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Indian Railways has approved two major infrastructure projects worth nearly Rs 1,955 crore aimed at strengthening suburban, passenger and freight rail operations across Tamil Nadu and Bihar.

The newly sanctioned projects include the 68 km Arakkonam–Chengalpattu doubling project under Southern Railway and the 54 km Kiul–Jhajha third line project on the high-density Howrah–Delhi corridor.

The approvals form part of Indian Railways' broader strategy to modernise heavily utilised rail corridors, reduce congestion and improve operational efficiency across key economic routes.

The Arakkonam–Chengalpattu doubling project, cleared at a cost of Rs 993 crore, is expected to significantly improve the Chennai suburban rail network.

The corridor forms part of the circular suburban route connecting Chennai Beach, Tambaram, Chengalpattu and Arakkonam, where the existing single-line section is currently operating under heavy traffic pressure.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the project would ease congestion, improve punctuality and strengthen transportation of industrial cargo, including cement, automobiles, iron and steel, and food grains.

The route serves major industrial hubs such as Sriperumbudur, Oragadam, Irungattukottai and Mahindra World City, while the upcoming Parandur airport near Kancheepuram is expected to further increase the corridor's strategic importance.

Officials said the doubling work would help reduce train detention time, improve suburban train frequency and enhance freight movement across southern Tamil Nadu's industrial belt.

Meanwhile, Indian Railways has also sanctioned the Rs 962 crore Kiul–Jhajha third line project in Bihar to improve capacity on the crucial Howrah–Delhi route, one of the busiest rail corridors in the country.

The project falls under the High Traffic Density Network and is aimed at addressing severe congestion on the existing double-line section, which is currently operating beyond optimal utilisation levels.

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According to railway officials, the additional third line will improve operational flexibility, enhance punctuality and support smoother movement of both passenger and freight trains between Eastern and Northern India.

The corridor also plays a vital role in freight movement linked to Kolkata and Haldia ports, Raxaul and Nepal, besides serving major industrial establishments, including Barh STPP, Jawahar STPP and Birganj ICD.

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Indian Railways Sanctions Rs 238 Crore Safety Upgrade For Jammu–Katra Rail Route To Strengthen Tunnels, Bridges And Mountain Slopes
Swarajya,
May 18, 2026



Pic Via X

Indian Railways has cleared a major infrastructure safety package worth Rs 238 crore for the Jammu–Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra railway section.

The approved works will focus on slope stabilisation, tunnel rehabilitation, bridge protection and other preventive engineering measures across vulnerable stretches of the route.

The Jammu–Katra section, which serves millions of pilgrims travelling to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi shrine every year, passes through difficult Himalayan terrain that is frequently affected by unstable slopes, water seepage and extreme weather conditions.

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Railway officials said the newly sanctioned works are intended to improve the long-term resilience and operational reliability of the corridor.

The protection plan includes treatment of tunnel seepage issues, strengthening of cuttings and embankments, rehabilitation of ageing structures and installation of additional safety systems at critical locations identified during technical assessments.

Authorities believe the project will significantly reduce risks linked to landslides, soil erosion and geological instability along the route.

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the latest approval reflects the government's continued focus on improving rail safety in challenging mountain regions.

“Following a detailed assessment of cuttings, bridges and tunnels, protection and rehabilitation works have been sanctioned,” he said. “These works will strengthen the long-term safety and reliability of this strategically important section.”

The route has historically posed engineering and operational challenges because of adverse terrain and changing weather patterns.

Despite these difficulties, Indian Railways has maintained uninterrupted connectivity through continuous infrastructure monitoring and timely interventions.

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Ashwini Vaishnaw Gives Major Update On Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project, Says Work Progressing Across All Four Corridors

PTI,

May 18, 2026

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Sunday (17 May) said construction activity under the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project was progressing steadily across all four planned corridors, with multiple phases moving into execution and survey stages.

Addressing an event virtually during the flagging off of an express train at Sir MV Terminal in Bengaluru, the minister said land acquisition had already been completed for the Baiyappanahalli–Chikkabanavara and Heelalige–Rajanukunte corridors.

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Station development works along these routes are currently underway as authorities accelerate the city's long-awaited suburban rail network.

Vaishnaw also confirmed that the alignment for the KSR Bengaluru–Devanahalli corridor had received joint approval from both the Karnataka government and the Railways.

Geotechnical surveys for the stretch have already been completed, clearing the way for further project activity.

Meanwhile, the recently approved Kengeri–Whitefield corridor is expected to enter the survey stage shortly.

Once operational, the suburban rail system is expected to significantly improve urban mobility by connecting major employment and transport hubs including Kempegowda International Airport, Electronic City, Hebbal and Marathahalli.

The Railway Minister said enhanced central funding over recent years had helped speed up railway infrastructure development across Karnataka.

Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 61 railway stations in the state are being redeveloped at a combined cost of Rs 2,160 crore, with nine stations already completed.

Among the major ongoing upgrades, Bengaluru Cantonment station is being modernised at a cost of Rs 485 crore, while redevelopment work at Yeshwantpur railway station is being carried out with an investment of Rs 367 crore.

Vaishnaw further stated that Karnataka currently operates 12 pairs of Vande Bharat trains. Trial runs on the Bengaluru–Mangaluru route are also underway and are expected to strengthen rail connectivity towards the coastal belt up to Madgaon.

The minister additionally confirmed that high-speed rail corridors linking Bengaluru with Hyderabad and Chennai have received approval as part of a broader national plan to expand India's future bullet train network.

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Lucknow-Kanpur Expressway Set For Launch On 24 May, Travel Time To Drop To Just 30 Minutes
The Hindu Business Line,

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May 19, 2026

Uttar Pradesh is set to receive another major road infrastructure upgrade with the upcoming inauguration of the Lucknow-Kanpur Expressway.

The six-lane access-controlled expressway, stretching nearly 63 km, is likely to be inaugurated on 24 May.

Officials said the project was initially expected to open earlier this year, but the launch timeline was later revised.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to inaugurate the expressway before it is opened for public use following final approvals.

The new corridor is being viewed as a major relief for commuters who regularly face heavy congestion on National Highway-27, the existing route connecting Lucknow and Kanpur.

Traffic bottlenecks, long delays, and overcrowding on the 94 km highway have remained a persistent challenge for years, especially during peak travel hours.

Currently, the journey takes around two-and-a-half to three hours under congested conditions to travel between the two cities, which could be completed in nearly 30 to 45 minutes through the new route.

The expressway has been designed to directly connect key entry and exit points of both cities while also linking with the existing Kanpur-Lucknow highway and the Unnao-Lalganj route.

Officials believe the project will improve regional mobility, reduce fuel consumption and support industrial and commercial movement across central Uttar Pradesh.

The National Highways Authority of India is also expected to introduce revised toll charges for the new corridor.

While the present toll on NH-27 for cars is around Rs 95 for a one-way journey, proposed toll rates for the expressway are likely to be higher due to its upgraded infrastructure and high-speed design.

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India's top copper producers like Adani, Vedanta and Hindalco oppose inclusion of scrap-based rods in standards

The Economic Times,
May 19, 2026

Synopsis

In a major dispute, leading copper producers like Adani and Vedanta are opposing the inclusion of copper wire from secondary refiners in government quality standards, based on the argument that products made from scrap pose safety risks due to inconsistent purity. This standoff impacts a significant portion of copper wire production and trade in India.

India's top copper producers, including Adani, Vedanta and Hindalco, are opposing plans to make copper wire made by secondary refiners acceptable under government quality standards, saying products made from scrap pose safety risks.

The dispute has triggered a months-long standoff between large primary producers and smaller refiners over fire-refined high conductivity (FRHC) copper rods, which are mainly used in electrical applications such as transformers, power cables and wires.

Large producers argue that copper rods from smaller refiners, which mostly use scrap as raw material, should not be under the same standards because the products may not consistently meet the purity levels required for electrical applications. "Indian fire (secondary) refiners may not have the requisite technology and hence are incapable of manufacturing the FRHC grade consistently," the large producers said, according to the minutes of a March 23 meeting of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) that was reviewed by Reuters.

The state-run BIS oversees product quality standards in India.

"Many of the manufacturers are not refining and just re-melting scrap to make substandard product," the minutes said of the views expressed by the Indian Primary Copper Association (IPCPA).

The IPCPA's partners include Adani, Vedanta, Hindalco and Hindustan Copper. In the minutes, secondary producers defended their production method, saying fire refining is used to control the chemical composition of copper and meets conductivity requirements used internationally for cable manufacturing.

The BIS did not respond to requests from Reuters for comment.

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IPCPA President Rohit Pathak said the industry body was seeking separate standards for FRHC copper because "fire refining which uses copper scrap as the primary input, cannot remove impurities to achieve 99.99% purity required for electrical applications."

"Lower purity will increase overheating and fire risks. A separate standard will help ensure safe usage," Pathak, who is also CEO of Hindalco's copper business, told Reuters in a statement.

India's total demand for copper rods in the fiscal year to end-March 2025 was estimated at 1.2 million metric tons, of which imports accounted for 0.1 million tons, while FRHC copper rod production stood at 0.4 million tons, according to industry estimates.

Imports are mainly sourced from the United Arab Emirates, although supplies have been disrupted this year by the Middle East conflict.

As a result of the dispute, about 400,000 tons of copper wire rod is currently being traded outside the quality control regime, an industry source said.

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