



NEWSLETTER

CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026

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UN Cuts India’s 2026 Growth Forecast To 6.4 Per Cent As West Asia Crisis Raises Inflation And Energy Cost Concerns

PTI,

May 21, 2026

The United Nations has lowered India’s economic growth projection for 2026, warning that continued geopolitical tensions in West Asia and rising energy costs could weigh on the country’s economic momentum despite its strong domestic fundamentals.

In its latest global economic outlook released on 19 May, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) revised India’s 2026 growth estimate to 6.4 per cent, down from the earlier forecast of 6.6 per cent.

Even with the downgrade, India is expected to remain among the world’s fastest-growing major economies.

The report highlighted that the ongoing crisis in West Asia has triggered fresh uncertainty across global markets, increasing inflationary pressures and weakening growth prospects for energy-importing nations.

India, which relies heavily on imported crude oil, is seen as particularly vulnerable to sustained increases in fuel prices and tightening global financial conditions.

Ingo Pitterle, Senior Economist and Officer-in-charge of the Global Economic Monitoring Branch at UN DESA, said India remains exposed to several external risks despite its resilience.

"It is a large energy importer and it is also exposed to other channels, for example, remittances, add to some vulnerability. Also, a global financial tightening will make monetary policy more complicated," he was quoted as saying in a PTI report.

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The report noted that India's economic expansion is expected to moderate from the estimated 7.5 per cent growth recorded in 2025.

Higher import bills, elevated freight and logistics costs, and tighter financial conditions are expected to place pressure on both inflation and policymaking.

At the same time, UN economists maintained that India's long-term growth drivers continue to remain strong.

Public infrastructure spending, domestic consumption and robust services exports are expected to support overall economic activity over the coming years.

The UN currently projects India's economy to expand by 6.6 per cent again in 2027.

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Ashwini Vaishnaw Says India's Upcoming Indigenous Bullet Train Programme Will Target Speeds Of 350 Kmph

Swarajya,
May 21, 2026

India is preparing to take its high-speed rail ambitions further, with Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announcing plans for the country's next indigenous bullet train capable of operating at 350 kmph.

The minister in an interview with the Economic Times said that work on the design phase of the upgraded trainset is expected to begin within the next six months.

The announcement comes even as Indian Railways continues development of the B28 high-speed train currently being built jointly by BEML and the Integral Coach Factory (ICF).

The upcoming train is designed for speeds of up to 280 kmph and is expected to have its prototype ready early next year. It is slated to operate on sections of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor from August 2027.

Speaking about the future programme, Vaishnaw said, "Our next indigenous high-speed train will run at 350 kmph," while adding that the new-generation trains are being engineered to withstand India's varied climatic and operating conditions.

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Alongside passenger rail modernisation, Indian Railways is also preparing a broader logistics push aimed at increasing domestic freight movement through rail-based containerisation.

The move follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on reducing fuel consumption linked to road transport amid rising global crude oil prices triggered by tensions in West Asia.

"We will simplify norms for boosting domestic container movement by rail," the minister was quoted saying by ET, noting that discussions are underway with industry stakeholders to streamline cargo operations and improve efficiency.

Vaishnav also highlighted the scale of railway infrastructure expansion over the past decade, stating that nearly 70,000 km of railway tracks have been laid and more than 80 per cent of the network is now capable of supporting train speeds of up to 110 kmph.

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Indian Railways Approves Rs 2,193 Crore Works Across Jammu-Katra, Kiul-Jhajha And Arakkonam-Chengalpattu Routes

Swarajya,
May 21, 2026

Indian Railways has cleared three major infrastructure projects worth Rs 2,193 crore to strengthen safety on the Jammu-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra route, expand capacity on the high-density Howrah-Delhi corridor and decongest the Chennai suburban network.

The Ministry of Railways announced the approvals yesterday (19 May), with the projects spanning critical routes across Northern, Eastern and Southern India.

The approvals include Rs 238 crore for slope stabilisation and tunnel rehabilitation works on the Katra section, Rs 962 crore for the 54-kilometre Kiul-Jhajha third line project, and Rs 993 crore for doubling the 68-kilometre Arakkonam-Chengalpattu line.

The safety package for the Jammu-Katra section covers critical slope stabilisation, rehabilitation measures, treatment of tunnel seepage issues and bridge protection works at vulnerable locations in challenging terrain.

In Eastern India, the Kiul-Jhajha third line project will add a 54-kilometre third line on the saturated Howrah-Delhi corridor, which currently operates beyond optimal capacity.

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The section forms part of Indian Railways' High Traffic Density Network and provides critical connectivity between Kolkata and Haldia ports and Raxaul near the Nepal border, while handling substantial freight from major industrial establishments.

The Arakkonam-Chengalpattu doubling project in Tamil Nadu will strengthen the Chennai suburban rail network, forming part of the circular route connecting Chennai Beach, Tambaram, Chengalpattu and Arakkonam.

Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated the projects reflect the government's commitment towards ensuring safe and reliable connectivity whilst improving punctuality and operational flexibility for both passenger and freight services.

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Bihar Plans 125 Km Vishwamitra Path Along Ganga With New Sone Bridge, PPP Corridors And Direct Patna–Buxar Connectivity Boost

Business Standard,
May 21, 2026

The Bihar government is preparing an extensive infrastructure push along the Ganga river corridor, with plans to construct a new four-lane highway named Vishwamitra Path to improve connectivity between Patna and western Bihar.

According to a TOI report, the proposed corridor will run largely along the embankments of the Ganga between Maner and Buxar, forming a major alternative road link between Patna and Buxar.

The total length of the Vishwamitra Path project will be approximately 125 km, including a nearly 90 km stretch along the river embankment.

A new bridge across the Sone-river is also planned as part of the broader connectivity upgrade.

Authorities clarified that the highway will be developed as a fully at-grade corridor rather than an elevated road.

Existing embankments will be utilised wherever possible, while missing sections will be newly constructed to complete the alignment.

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The Bihar State Road Development Corporation Ltd (BSRDCL) has initiated the process of appointing a survey consultant for the project.

A pre-bid meeting is scheduled for 27 May, while the final selection is expected on 10 June. The chosen agency will prepare the Detailed Project Report within six months.

A BSRDCL official was quoted as saying: “The path will be connected to the Marine Drive being developed on Patna’s Ganga bank, creating direct connectivity from the capital to west Bihar. The project is expected to boost economic activity in key markets like Koelwar, Barhara, Ara Sadar, Bihiya and Shahpur. Tourism will also benefit. Historic Shivpur Ghat in Bhojpur district will be developed as a major tourist spot.”

The state government is simultaneously planning three additional Ganga corridor road projects under the Public-Private Partnership model, including the Bidupur–Dighwara Ganga Path and the Narayani Path in Gopalganj district.

Meanwhile, work is advancing on Phase II of the JP Ganga Path project between Digha and Koilwar, a Rs 5,500 crore corridor combining elevated and embankment-based road infrastructure expected to be completed within four years.

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DND–Faridabad–Sohna Highway And Jewar Airport Link Corridor Nears Completion, Set To Transform Delhi-NCR Regional Mobility

Swarajya,
May 21, 2026

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari reviewed the progress of the DND–Faridabad–Sohna Access-Controlled Highway project alongside Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and senior Union ministers and officials on Tuesday (19 May)

The 59 km long DND-Faridabad-Sohna Access Controlled Highway, being developed under the Bharatmala programme at an estimated cost of nearly Rs 4,463 crore, will create a high-speed six-lane link connecting Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurugram and Sohna with the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

Officials said the corridor is expected to significantly reduce traffic pressure on key stretches such as NH-44, Ashram, Badarpur and Dhaula Kuan.

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The highway includes several advanced engineering features, including a 140-metre-long Network Arch Bridge over the Agra Canal, described as one of the country's most sophisticated steel bridge structures.

Built using modern “Tied-Arch” technology and a “Crossed Hanger” arrangement, the bridge has been designed to offer improved structural stability and higher resistance during seismic activity.

The project also incorporates precast segmental construction methods, launching girders, high-strength E450 steel, Grade 10.9 bolts, high-damping rubber bearings and swivel expansion joints.

Environmental sustainability has also been integrated into the construction process.

Nearly two lakh metric tonnes of inert material generated from bio-mining operations at the Okhla and Ghazipur landfill sites have been utilised in road construction, reducing dependence on natural soil extraction. Landscaping, plantation drives and noise barriers are also part of the project.

In parallel, the government is developing a dedicated 31.4-km connectivity corridor linking the DND-Faridabad bypass directly with Noida International Airport in Jewar at a cost of around Rs 2,360 crore.

The fully access-controlled expressway will include six-lane and eight-lane sections and provide seamless links to the Yamuna Expressway, Eastern Peripheral Expressway and the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

Officials said the project is expected to divert a substantial volume of airport-bound traffic away from central Delhi once Jewar Airport becomes operational. Travellers from South Delhi, Faridabad and Gurugram will be able to access the airport directly without entering Noida city traffic.

The corridor will also feature four major interchanges and an elevated section crossing the Dedicated Freight Corridor, strengthening logistics connectivity and supporting future urban growth planned under the Faridabad Master Plan 2031.

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