

# New roads will halve the cost of logistics: Gadkari

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There's no dearth of funds for infrastructure development in India, and the government's target is to increase the length of national highways (NHs) to 2 lakh km by 2025, Union road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari said at the ET Global Business Summit on Saturday.

"Projects in India have economic viability. For the success of any project, we need proven technology, economic viability, availability of raw materials and marketability. All these are available in India," Gadkari said.

"I can even take up projects with investment up to Rs 8 lakh crore-10 lakh crore, and to raise funds I can go to the capital market. People are waiting to invest in our projects as these are viable," he added.

He pointed out that high-quality infrastructure is key to attracting investment and pushing industrial growth to eradicate poverty.

Gadkari said the government's focus is on greenfield expressways and highways to slash the cost of logistics from 18% of GDP at present to 9%, to make Indian products globally competitive. He said the government has taken up construction of



## FULL SPEED AHEAD

10,000km of greenfield expressways and economic corridors with an investment of Rs 7 lakh crore.

He also spoke about the ropeway projects his ministry has taken up and added that some of these can be solutions for highly congested stretches in urban areas. A proposal for ropeway connectivity between Dhaula Kuan in Delhi and Manesar in Haryana is also under consideration, he revealed.

On the highway development programme, Gadkari said the first phase of Bharatmala with a revised estimate of Rs 11 lakh crore is progressing well and the proposal for its second phase has been sent to the Cabinet for approval. He said his ministry is open to new road-making technologies to lower the cost of construction without compromising on quality.