

Nitin Gadkari says, 'India's highway infrastructure will match US by 2024': Report



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Nitin Gadkari says, 'India's highway infrastructure will match US by 2024': Report | File

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari while speaking to PTI said, India's highways infrastructure will match that of the US by 2024 for which work in time bound 'mission mode' is on including construction of green expressways and rail over bridges.

Gadkari in the interview said the allotment for construction of railway over bridges will be increased to Rs 50,000 crore in five years in comparison to Rs 16,000 crore that is allocated this year.

Kailash Mansarovar Highway Project

Talking about the Kailash Mansarovar highway project via Pithoragarh, the Road Transport and Highways Minister said that ninety three per cent work on the project

has been completed. He also added that once the project is completed, the arduous trek through treacherous high-altitude terrain can be avoided by pilgrims of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra and the period of journey will be reduced by many days.

Currently, travel to Kailash Mansarovar takes around two to three weeks through Sikkim or Nepal routes.

Bharatmala Phase 2

The minister expects the cabinet to soon give an approval for the Bharatmala Phase 2 and this will further accelerate the making of highways. Under this phase 2 close to 5,000 km of highway network is envisaged.

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This is expected to be the country's largest infrastructure program to develop about 35,000 km of National Highway corridors, connecting over 580 districts in the nation. The program signaled a paradigm shift to corridor approach of infrastructure development.

The overall network of the nation was reimagined through scientific studies including, Origin - Destination study of freight movement across 600 districts and crow-flight alignment for optimised routes to reduce transit time.

Greenfield expressway

Gadkari speaking about green field expressways told PTI, "In Jharkhand, work of seven greenfield expressways, economic corridor and inter corridor is being done at a cost of Rs 70,000 crore."

Inter corridor work

He also said that work worth Rs 50,000 crore is being done for better connectivity with states like Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The 4-lane inter corridor work is being done at a cost of Rs 6,200 crore for Ranchi-Varanasi Inter Corridor which will reduce the travel time significantly between Ranchi and Varanasi.

The 635 km Raipur-Dhanbad economic corridor is being constructed at a cost of Rs 15,000 crore and would ensure faster movement of coal, steel, cement and minerals, he said.

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The other projects included Rs 6,300 crore Ranchi-Sambalpur greenfield economic corridor for 230 km and Rs 22,000 crore Varanasi-Ranchi-Howrah 620 km access-controlled green expressway.

The minister also feels that the 6-lane 262 km economic corridor on completion will provide excellent hassle free connectivity to Kolkata, Assam, Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh from Jharkhand, he added.

The Rs 5,000 crore Ranchi Ring Road and the detailed project report for this 194 km highway will be completed in May 2023 he added mentioning the other projects. This ring road will pass through Hazaribag, Latehar, Lohardaga, Gumla, Khunti, Jamshedpur and Hazaribag.

With inputs from PTI

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