

Ganga expressway in UP likely to open for the public before schedule

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The Uttar Pradesh government has asked developers of Meerut-Prayagraj Ganga Expressway to wrap up the work on the 595-km project by December 2024 so that it can be opened for the public before the 2025 Prayagraj MahaKumbh Mela. The flagship project, which is estimated to cost over Rs 36,000 crore to the exchequer, was expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

To expedite the project, the state has allowed for the usage of fly ash to overcome the shortage of soil in the construction. This will not only cut carbon footprint but also provide an environmentally amenable disposal.

The greenfield expressway is expected to offer speedier passenger and cargo movements, bolster industrial corridors, agricultural marketing value chains, and tourism circuits along its route. UP Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi has asked the officials to ramp up equipment and manpower.

"The expressway is a dream project of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and no slackness would be tolerated in its construction," he said during a meeting to review its progress.

The minister said the expressway would facilitate easy travel during the Mahakumbh Mela, which is expected to host nearly 400 million tourists. The state has estimated a budget of Rs

6,800 crore for the Mela.

The public private partnership (PPP) project will run through 12 districts — Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahar, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Raebareli, Pratapgarh, and Prayagraj. The access-controlled six-lane (expandable to eight lanes) Ganga Expressway has been divided into four groups with three packages each, totaling 12 packages.