Roads linking cities & towns to expressways to be widened

Times News Network

Lucknow: Roads linking towns and cities to state expressways are going to be widened through the State Road Fund (SRF) during the current fiscal year. A day after the SRF management committee, overseeing the corpus amounting to Rs 5,500 crore, held its meeting, the Public Works Department (PWD) decided its priority areas.

While Rs 3,000 crore out of the sanctioned corpus is going to be utilised on maintenance of the existing road network and pre-sanctioned road projects, the remaining Rs 2,500 crore will be used for widening and strengthening of the existing road network.

PWD minister **Jitin Prasada** has instructed officials to see if the road works within the key cities and urban centres of the state could be executed as per guidelines stipulated by smart city mission for building smart roads. "We will earmark space for underground ducts and utilities while planning new roads," said engineer-in-chief and head of the department, AK Jain.

The department is also going to direct engineers deputed in the field to revisit the entry and exit points of the expressways and check the width of connecting roads that lead to the city, town and villages. The scope of the repair work for such road stretches will be revised accordingly and a budget will be provided to widen the connecting roads as per the traffic volume. During high-level meetings, Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority has pointed out the low ridership issues it has been facing due to poor feeder routes from the high-speed corridors which are deterring vehicle owners from taking the expressways in some locations.

"For instance the Talgram exit on the Lucknow-Agra expressway is not that wide at present. It goes on to connect Grand Trunk road at some distance," said a senior officer. Emphasis is on augmenting the infrastructure around expressways as in the years to come the state expects increased industrial and logistics and warehousing activity in such locations.