FIRST CONSTRUCTION COUNCIL
FOUNDATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH STUDIES TRAINING

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InfraCon Weekly Review

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POLICY & REGULATORY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MNRE Extends Limited Exemption from ALMM List-II for Net-Metering and Open Access RE Projects till end-Dec 2026

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has decided that while there will be no change in the policy of Government of India in respect of implementation of Approved List of Models & Manufacturers (ALMM) List-II for solar PV cells, and no blanket extension in applicability of ALMM List-II for solar power projects will be provided, however, a limited window is being provided for Net-metering projects and Open Access RE power projects, whereby such projects can now commission with exemption of ALMM List-II (for solar PV cells), till 31st December 2026. Earlier this dispensation for the limited segment of Net-metering projects and Open Access renewable power projects, was available till 31st May 2026.

This step will also help the standalone solar PV module manufacturers by providing them protection of investments already made, in the form of inventories, through additional demand creation. This will also provide them sufficient time before they could effectively increase their sourcing of solar cells from ALMM List-II enlisted solar cell manufacturers, as the solar cell capacity in ALMM List-II continues to rise steadily.

The decision is a result of detailed deliberations with various stakeholders of the solar industry, to ensure a smooth transition to ALMM List-II (for solar PV cells), for the Net-metering projects and Open Access renewable power projects.

Solar PV manufacturing remains a significant focus of the Government's efforts. The Government is committed to making India self-reliant (Atmanirbhar) in solar PV manufacturing and establishing India as a major player in the global value chain.

NHAI Strengthens Framework for Engaging Professionals in National Highway Consultancy Contracts

With the objective of strengthening technical supervision of National Highway projects, NHAI has made amendments to the Standard Request for Proposal (RFP) documents for deployment of Authority Engineer (AE) and Independent Engineer (IE) consultancy services, mandating minimum remuneration to be paid by the Consultancy Firms to Key Professional, Sub-Professional (Civil Engineer) and Young Professional (Civil Engineer) in future contracts.

Minimum monthly remuneration of Rs. 5.00 Lakhs has been fixed for Team Leader and Bridge/Structural Engineer, Rs. 2.50 Lakhs for Road Safety Expert and Rs. 3.50 Lakhs for Resident cum Highway Engineer, Program Schedule Reviewer, Senior Quality cum Material Expert and Senior Pavement Specialist. In addition to this, minimum monthly remuneration of Rs. 1.50 Lakhs for Sub-Professional (Civil Engineer) and Rs. 1.00 Lakhs for Young Professional (Civil Engineer) has been fixed. Payment of minimum mandated remuneration to the consultancy staff will be ensured through escrow arrangement.

Further to create structured career progression opportunities for experienced Site Engineers, NHAI has revised the policy governing engagement of Site Engineers, which limited their tenure to a maximum of five years. To ensure that these trained professionals continue to contribute to the development of the National Highway network, NHAI has incorporated specific provisions in the General Conditions of Contract (GCC) of the AE/IE consultancy RFPs.

Under the revised framework, a minimum of 20 per cent of the Sub-Professional Engineering Staff deployed by Authority Engineer and Independent Engineer consultancy firms shall comprise previously engaged Site Engineers or Young Professionals from NHAI, MoRTH or NHIDCL. The framework seeks to leverage the experience gained by these professionals in National Highway planning, construction supervision and project management, while simultaneously providing them with meaningful employment opportunities within the Highway infrastructure sector.

To further promote fair and competitive compensation, NHAI has also prescribed that professionals such as Site Engineers and Young Professionals with five years or more of relevant experience shall receive a minimum monthly remuneration of Rs. 1.50 lakhs.

To ensure the deployment of technically qualified, experienced and competent Key Professionals, NHAI has also introduced mandatory empanelment and interview requirements through the NHAI Skill Bridge portal. These provisions have been incorporated into the Consultancy Contract Agreements to strengthen the selection process and enhance the quality of professional engagement in National Highway consultancy assignments.

Maha Metro unveils draft mobility plan for Nashik city

A 58-km Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) network with the potential to be developed as a Light Metro system, 131 km of pedestrian infrastructure, 88 km of dedicated cycle tracks, multimodal transport hubs and a comprehensive strategy for managing Simhastha Kumbh Mela traffic are among the key proposals included in the draft Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP) for Nashik city prepared by Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (Maha-Metro).

A key component of the draft plan is the proposed MRTS network spanning around 58 km across three high-demand corridors. These include the 21.5-km Gangapur-Nashik Road railway station corridor, the 13.58-km Gangapur-Mumbai Naka-Pathardi Phata corridor and the 23-km Ozar Airport Road–Mumbai Naka/Pathardi Phata-Ambad corridor. The routes have been identified based on projected passenger demand, land-use patterns and emerging growth centres.

Centre Proposes Mandatory Star Ratings for Large Buildings to Promote Energy-Efficient Construction

The government has reportedly proposed mandatory energy ratings for all new commercial and residential buildings with a built-up area of 20,000 square metres or more. The Ministry of Power released a draft notification proposing mandatory energy ratings for large commercial, office, and residential buildings across India, aiming to improve energy efficiency, encourage sustainable construction, and create a uniform national framework for evaluating the performance of buildings.

The proposed rules have been issued under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, following amendments made to the Act in 2022, and replace the existing Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) with the Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code (ECSBC). Every eligible building will have to achieve at least a three-star BEE Rating or the equivalent minimum rating under other approved certification systems. Existing rating agencies such as GRIHA, IGBC, LEED, and GEM will be recognised after registration with BEE.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES/PROGRAMMES

NHAI to Share NH Data with Government Research Institutions for Research and Innovation

NHAI has introduced a comprehensive framework to facilitate seamless sharing of National Highway infrastructure and operations data with premier Government research institutions. The framework will enhance procedural efficiency by reducing time required for initiating collaborative academic research, while promoting innovation for the development of safer, more durable and cost-efficient National Highway infrastructure.

Data will be shared with leading government institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and CSIR–Central Road Research Institute (CRRI). The initiative is aimed at supporting development of scientifically validated Pavement Deterioration Models (PDMs) and advanced traffic flow analytics tailored to local conditions, traffic loading and operational conditions.

The initiative marks a major shift from the earlier process of executing separate Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for each research proposal, which involved extensive legal vetting and multi-agency consultations. Under the revised framework, eligible requests from recognised Government research institutions will be received and evaluated through a dedicated centralized mechanism within NHAI, enabling faster approvals and timely commencement of research activities.

The Data sharing framework outlines a structured approach for collaborative research. Approved research projects will initially be provided with a standard sample data block covering up to 2,000 km of National Highways. The sample data will enable institutions to execute pilot projects, validate methodologies and demonstrate the applicability of research outcomes.

In addition, the framework incorporates robust safeguards to ensure data security and confidentiality. Participating institutions will be required to execute a standard Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), enabling institutions to use the results for their own research & academic purposes as well as prohibiting commercialization or disclosure of data to any third party. The confidentiality obligations will remain in force throughout the project duration and for three years thereafter. All researchers, students and external academic collaborators associated with the project will also be required to adhere to strict confidentiality commitments.

Further, any Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), patents or copyrights arising from the research will be jointly owned by NHAI and the respective research institution. Institutions will be encouraged to publish research findings in reputed academic journals after obtaining the concurrence of NHAI, thereby promoting knowledge creation while ensuring appropriate stewardship of strategic infrastructure data.

Following successful completion of pilot projects, validated Pavement Deterioration Models (PDM) and other research outputs demonstrating practical utility for National Highway planning, design and maintenance will be evaluated using full-scale datasets. Proven solutions with significant operational value will be considered for wider implementation across the National Highway network through structured long-term collaborations under formal MoUs.

NEW PROJECTS

MoPSW gives In-principle Approval for Two Projects under Shipbuilding Development Scheme in Gujarat

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) has accorded in-principle approval to two strategic maritime infrastructure projects, a Greenfield shipbuilding cluster in Porbandar district of Gujarat and a state-of-the-art ship repair facility at Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch, under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS), marking a significant step in India's ambition to emerge as a global shipbuilding hub.

The two projects have been granted in-principle approval under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS), a key component of the Government of India's strategy to strengthen indigenous shipbuilding and ship repair capabilities under the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.

The approvals cover the establishment of Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster on the western coast and financial assistance for the development of one of the country's largest ship repair facilities. The Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster will be developed through the National Shipbuilding and Heavy Industries Park–Gujarat (NSHIP-Gujarat), a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) jointly promoted by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) and the Gujarat Maritime Board.

Spread across nearly 2,000 acres at Kuchhadi in Gujarat's Porbandar district, the integrated maritime manufacturing cluster will comprise modern shipyards, ancillary manufacturing units, common infrastructure and capability development centres. The project is designed to build large commercial vessels with an annual production capacity of 1.2 to 1.5 million gross tonnage (GT), significantly expanding India's domestic shipbuilding capacity while positioning Gujarat as a major hub for heavy-tonnage vessel construction.

The second project approved under the scheme is a ₹1,570-crore ship repair facility at Vadinar, to be jointly developed by Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL) and Deendayal Port Authority (DPA). The project had earlier received approval from the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on May 5, 2026, and has now secured in-principle approval under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme for 25% financial assistance on eligible capital infrastructure. The brownfield expansion will include a 650-metre jetty, two large floating dry docks, workshops and supporting marine infrastructure.

Indian Railways Approves Third Line Project between Nimpura West Outer Cabin and Midnapur of SER

Indian Railways has approved the construction of a 14.52 km third line between Nimpura West Outer Cabin and Midnapur in South Eastern Railway at a cost of ₹440 crore. The project forms part of Indian Railways' continued efforts to augment network capacity on high-density routes to facilitate faster movement of passenger and freight trains while supporting the growing transportation needs of industries and essential commodities.

The sanctioned project involves construction of a 14.52 km third line between Nimpura West Outer Cabin and Midnapur on South Eastern Railway. The section forms part of the High Utilisation Network (HUN-2) route, where the Nimpura West Outer Cabin-Gokulpur section is presently a single line, while doubling works are already in progress. The additional third line will substantially augment line capacity and improve operational flexibility on this strategically important corridor.

CONTRACT AWARDS

Suzlon Energy to power Waaree Group's maiden 201.6 MW wind project

Suzlon Energy is powering Waaree Group's maiden wind project in Andhra Pradesh through a 201.6 MW order from Waaree Forever Energies (WFEPL), the group independent power producer (IPP) arm.

Under the project, Suzlon will install 64 nos. of its flagship S144 wind turbine generators (WTG) with rated capacity of 3.15 MW each in Andhra Pradesh. Suzlon will deliver its comprehensive EPC offering, covering land acquisition, turbine supply, balance of plant, commissioning and life time operations and maintenance.

FUNDING

Odisha signs IFC agreement to build ₹20,000 crore PPP project pipeline

Odisha is set to develop a pipeline of 20 infrastructure projects with a cumulative investment potential of around $2 billion (around Rs 20,000 crore) under a strategic collaboration with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private-sector arm of the World Bank Group. A Transaction Advisory Services Agreement (TASA) was signed between the Odisha government and IFC on Friday to mobilise private capital for large infrastructure projects and significantly strengthen the state's public-private partnership (PPP) ecosystem.

The agreement is expected to pave the way for identifying, structuring and developing a pipeline of bankable and commercially viable PPP projects across key sectors of the state economy. Odisha is the first state to sign a TASA with IFC, while the corporation is also in discussions with other states for similar collaborations. The Odisha engagement is expected to serve as a model for leveraging international expertise and private capital to develop large-scale infrastructure projects through the PPP route.

Under the agreement, IFC will work with the Odisha government over one year to identify and develop around 20 projects across priority sectors, with the combined project pipeline expected to have a potential investment value of nearly Rs 20,000 crore. The projects will be structured with a focus on attracting private participation and ensuring their suitability for implementation through the PPP model.

The proposed pipeline will cover a wide range of infrastructure sectors, including renewable energy, power transmission, logistics and transport, urban infrastructure, and electric mobility. The focus on these sectors is expected to support Odisha's transition towards cleaner energy, strengthen its industrial and logistics infrastructure, improve urban services, and accelerate the adoption of sustainable transport solutions.

COMPANY/PROJECT UPDATES

Prime Minister Dedicates to the Nation 75 Amrit Bharat Stations Across India

As part of the mega infrastructure package, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated 75 Redeveloped Railway Stations to the nation under the flagship Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Nationwide, the newly inaugurated 75 stations across 20 States are redeveloped at a combined cost of approximately Rs. 1,570 crore. This is the second major nationwide dedication of redeveloped stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme by the Prime Minister.

Earlier, on 22 May 2025, the Prime Minister dedicated 103 redeveloped Amrit Bharat Stations across 18 States and Union Territories to the nation. The redeveloped stations have been transformed into modern, passenger-centric transit hubs with enhanced amenities, improved accessibility, and architecture reflecting local and regional heritage, while incorporating future-ready infrastructure.

Adani Power eyes Madhya Pradesh for its first nuclear project

Adani Power is evaluating the possibility of developing its first nuclear power project at Bina in Madhya Pradesh while also assessing whether to use land at Bina and Nigrie for thermal or nuclear expansion, as the company prepares for private participation in India's nuclear power sector.

The sites are part of Jaiprakash Power Ventures Ltd (JPVL), in which Adani Power recently acquired a 24% stake. JPVL owns and operates the 500 MW Jaypee Bina Thermal Power Plant and the 1,320 MW Jaypee Nigrie Super Thermal Power Plant in Madhya Pradesh. According to Khyalia, both locations have sizeable land banks that could support future capacity additions.

The company has already incorporated a wholly owned subsidiary, Adani Atomic Energy Ltd, to pursue opportunities in the sector and has identified sites to develop 10 GW of nuclear generation capacity by 2035. The group's plans follow the passage of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025, which opens the sector to private participation and small modular reactors (SMRs), with the government targeting 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047.

T2 at Thiruvananthapuram Airport Set for Massive Expansion with 165,000 sqm Upgrade by 2030

Thiruvananthapuram International Airport has taken a major step towards its next phase of expansion after Thiruvananthapuram International Airport Ltd (TIAL) invited bids for a comprehensive Rs 2,700 crore infrastructure programme centred on a new integrated Terminal 2 (T2). The expansion, which forms part of the airport's wider modernisation strategy under Adani Airport Holdings, will include the construction of a state-of-the-art passenger terminal alongside new aircraft aprons, taxiways, utility buildings, cargo facilities and upgraded landside infrastructure.

According to the tender schedule, work is expected to begin in November 2027 and conclude by July 2030. The project has been planned to ensure that airport operations continue with minimal disruption throughout the construction period.

Currently spanning 45,000 square metres, Terminal 2 will expand to 165,000 square metres, featuring a multi-level curb-integrated terminal, an airport plaza, a hotel, commercial and administrative spaces, and expanded car parking facilities. Given that the works will be carried out inside an operational airport, the contractor will be required to adopt stringent safety measures, including dedicated work zones, foreign object debris (FOD) management, phased execution and coordinated daily handovers to airport authorities.

AAI floats new tender for infra development at Birpur Airport

The development of Birpur Airport in Kosi region has received a significant boost with the Airports Authority of India (AAI) issuing a tender worth Rs 28.42 crore for the construction of key airside infrastructure. The project is being undertaken under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN to improve air connectivity in the region.

According to the officials, the tender covers the development of the runway, taxiway, apron and other essential airside facilities required to make Birpur Airport suitable for Code-2B category aircraft operations. The infrastructure upgrade is expected to enable the airport to handle larger aircraft under the prescribed operational standards. In addition to the airside works, another major component of the airport project has already progressed.

West Bengal Government Appoints RITES for Feasibility Study of Asansol-Durgapur Aerial Metro

The West Bengal state government has appointed RITES (Rail India Technical and Economic Service) to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study for a proposed Aerial Metro connecting Asansol and Durgapur. The initiative is being led by Urban Development & Municipal Affairs Minister Agnimitra Paul in collaboration with the Asansol Durgapur Development Authority (ADDA). The decision was officially announced after an administrative review meeting held on July 18, 2026.

RITES will carry out detailed technical, spatial, traffic, and demographic studies to finalize the elevated metro alignment. Actual construction work will begin only after the state government reviews and approves the final feasibility report.

The proposed Asansol-Durgapur Aerial metro is a major 40 to 45 km elevated transit system designed to completely transform travel across West Bengal’s industrial heartland. Metro will run along the region’s main commercial belt, linking crucial hubs like Asansol, Raniganj, Durgapur, and the Kazi Nazrul Islam Airport in Andal. Its main goal is to give commuters a fast, smooth alternative to the heavily crowded National Highway 19 (NH 19), effectively cutting down massive traffic jams, clearing up highway bottlenecks, and providing seamless last-mile connectivity for everyday travelers.

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