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INDUSTRY UPDATES

India steel sector set for growth amid strong balance sheets

India's steel sector is poised for growth, supported by strong earnings and trade protections, which will maintain stable debt and credit metrics during capacity expansions, as outlined in the report "India Steel Brief: Strong Balance Sheets Will Support Growth Aspirations."

India's major steel producers announced a 40 per cent increase in capital expenditure (capex) for fiscal 2027, amounting to Rs 700 billion (US\$7.5 billion), which is significant given that these producers account for half of the nation's steel output. This surge in investment aligns with anticipated growth in domestic steel demand, expected to rise by over 50 million tonnes in the next five years.

The capacity expansion occurs amid limited competition from overseas steel due to safeguard duties on imports, implemented in April 2025 and extended through April 2028. With plans to increase total steel capacity from 220 million tonnes to 300 million tonnes by 2030, India forecasts annual capital investments of approximately US\$15 billion over the next five years. However, there are risks associated with potential prolonged domestic demand weaknesses, which could lead to overcapacity, impacting steel prices and earnings. A 20 per cent drop in EBITDA per tonne could elevate the debt-to-EBITDA ratio to a concerning level, potentially hindering further capital expansion efforts.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES/PROGRAMMES

NHAI Rolls Out Technology-Driven Highway Maintenance Framework With Automated Repair And Cleaning Systems

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has rolled out a series of technology-driven initiatives aimed at modernising maintenance practices across National Highways and Expressways. The authority issued comprehensive guidelines mandating mechanised maintenance of drainage systems in urban and built-up areas, along with deployment of advanced equipment including automatic pothole filling, compacting and patching machines, and mechanised road sweeping machines.

Ahead of the monsoon season, NHAI has made mechanised cleaning of lined drains mandatory for urban stretches of National Highways and Expressways. The framework involves integrated use of advanced equipment, including high-flow suction and jetting units, hydraulic grab machines and dewatering pump sets. The initiative aims to improve stormwater management and reduce waterlogging risks during heavy rainfall.

In another major step, NHAI has incorporated automatic pothole filling, compacting and patching machines, as well as mechanised road sweeping machines, into the list of equipment to be deployed under Performance-Based Maintenance Contracts.

India's Floating Solar Potential Assessed At 102 GWp, Estimates NISE Report; MNRE Plans Dedicated Support Scheme

India's floating solar photovoltaic potential has been assessed at 102.18 GWp, taking the country's total assessed solar potential to 3,445 GWp, according to a report released by Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday (10 June). The report, prepared by the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, combines the floating estimate with the ground-mounted potential assessed last year.

The ministry is working on a dedicated scheme to promote floating solar deployment across the country. MNRE Secretary Santosh Kumar Sarangi confirmed the ministry is preparing support schemes for floating solar and agri-photovoltaics, and is in discussions with the Finance Ministry on them.

Reservoirs and other water bodies are emerging as important assets for clean energy generation through floating solar projects. The assessment used geospatial mapping and scientific analysis to identify suitable locations, with water bodies considered viable only if they met several conditions, including adequate solar radiation, year-round water availability, appropriate depth, and proximity to roads and power transmission infrastructure.

NEW PROJECTS

Indian Railways Sanctions Upgradation of Electric Traction System on Mahbubnagar-Secunderabad-Medchal Section

Indian Railways has sanctioned a significant project to enhance rail operations on the Mahbubnagar-Secunderabad-Medchal section of South Central Railway. Under the project, the existing 1x25 kV electric traction system will be upgraded to a modern 2x25 kV electric traction system. The work will be undertaken over this approximately 141 route kilometre rail section at a cost of ₹285.01 crore.

The project is part of Indian Railways' ongoing efforts to enhance capacity on busy rail corridors across the country. The introduction of the 2x25 kV system will provide a more stable and efficient power supply for train operations, making rail services smoother, safer and more reliable.

The Mahbubnagar-Secunderabad-Medchal section is part of one of the country's important High-Density Network (HDN) routes. It falls on the Dharmavaram-Dhone-Mahbubnagar-Secunderabad-Medchal-Mudkhed-Indore-Ajmer rail corridor, which carries substantial passenger and freight traffic. Upon completion, the project will further improve train operations on the route. Freight movement will become more efficient, enhancing both the speed and capacity of goods transportation. The project is also expected to support trade, industry and economic activity across the region.

Indian Railways Sanctions Upgradation of Electric Traction System on Bengaluru-Tumkur Section

In a significant step towards enhancing rail capacity and operational efficiency on one of Karnataka's busiest railway corridors, Indian Railways has sanctioned the upgradation of the electric traction system on the

Bengaluru-Tumkur section of South Western Railway. The project involves the conversion of the existing 1x25 kV electric traction system to a 2x25 kV electric traction system over a stretch of 120 Track Kilometres (TKM). The sanctioned cost of the project is ₹162.57 crore.

The Bengaluru-Tumakuru section forms part of the strategically important Highly Utilized Network (HUN) Route-10, which connects major economic and industrial centres along the Pune-Hubballi-Chikjajur-Birur-Tumkur-Bengaluru-Salem-Kanniyakumari corridor.

The adoption of the 2x25 kV traction system will strengthen power supply arrangements for train operations, enabling the section to handle higher traffic volumes more efficiently. The upgraded system is expected to support the operation of heavier freight trains and longer passenger services while improving overall reliability of electric traction infrastructure. The project will contribute to decongesting a key rail route serving the Bengaluru metropolitan region and adjoining districts, while also supporting smoother movement of passenger and freight traffic across Karnataka and southern India.

Indian Railways Approves Mararikulam-Alappuzha Doubling Project at a Cost of ₹220 Crore

In a significant step towards strengthening rail infrastructure and enhancing capacity on the Southern Railway network, Indian Railways has approved the doubling of the 10.65 km Mararikulam - Alappuzha section of Southern Railway at a sanctioned cost of ₹220.51 crore.

The project has been approved under the umbrella work for doubling, tripling, quadrupling, flyover and bypass works aimed at augmenting the capacity of the railway network. The Mararikulam - Alappuzha section is presently the only remaining single-line stretch on the Ernakulam - Turavur - Alappuzha - Ambalapuzha - Kayankulam corridor, where other doubling works have already been commissioned or are under implementation.

Upon completion, the project is expected to facilitate the operation of 9 additional passenger trains in each direction per day and support freight traffic of 2.88 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). The doubling work is also projected to generate additional net earnings of approximately ₹3.08 crore annually through enhanced passenger and freight movement.

Cabinet approves Ahmedabad Metro Rail project Phase 2A (Koteshwar Road to Airport corridor)

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved Phase 2(A) of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project with corridor for a length of 6.032 Km with 05 stations (04 Elevated and 01 underground). On operationalisation of Phase 2(A), Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar will have 77.63 Km of active Metro Rail Network. The names of stations in the Phase 2(A) Corridor are- Ashram Road, Koteshwar Prachin Mandir, Sabarmati River, Sardar Nagar and Airport.

The total completion cost including IDC (Interest during Construction) for the project will be Rs.2,169.04 crore. Phase 2(A) of the Ahmedabad Metro Project envisages the development of approximately 6.032 km of new metro corridor, aimed at substantially enhancing public transportation by providing seamless connectivity to the airport and linking key residential and commercial areas that presently lack efficient transit access. This phase aims to seamlessly integrate key zones, including residential & Commercial hubs with existing Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar corridor.

Union Government approves Rs 13,000-crore Great Nicobar airport

The Union government has approved the construction of a ₹13,000-crore greenfield dual-use airport at Great Nicobar, under the operational control of the Indian Navy. The facility will serve both civilian and military needs and will be jointly funded by the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Civil Aviation. It replaces earlier plans to extend the INS Baaz runway, which were dropped due to terrain constraints, navigational safety issues, and higher projected environmental impact.

The airport is planned as a greenfield international airport at Campbell Bay. It is designed for 4,000 peak hour passengers and an initial capacity of 1.35 million passengers per annum by 2040. The project is expected to be completed within five years. The project is linked to India's maritime position in the Indian Ocean, the Andaman Sea, and the sea routes near the Malacca Strait.

The project involves diversion of about 130.75 sq. km. of forest land and an estimated 964,000 trees. More than half of the area is planned to remain as green cover, and no displacement is proposed for the Shompen and Nicobarese communities.

Maharashtra Approves Rs 22,611 Crore Projects across MMR

The Maharashtra government has cleared infrastructure projects worth Rs 22,611 crore across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). The approvals were granted by the Cabinet Infrastructure Committee during a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at Mantralaya.

The package includes a major road connectivity project valued at Rs 17,036 crore and a Rs 5,575 crore expansion of the Navi Mumbai Metro network. A key component of the road project is the construction of a six-lane underground tunnel stretching 5.86 km between Gaimukh and Fountain Hotel on the heavily congested Ghodbunder Road corridor. The project also includes a 9.58 km six-lane elevated road linking Fountain Hotel and Bhayandar. The tunnel will be built using advanced Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) technology and is expected to be completed within five years.

Transport planners believe the new corridor will significantly improve travel between western Mumbai, Thane, Kalyan-Dombivli, Panvel, Nashik and National Highway-48.

Defence Ministry Approves 250 MW Solar Power And Battery Storage Project On 850 Acres Of Defence Land In Uttar Pradesh

The Ministry of Defence has approved a 250 MW solar power project with an integrated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) on 850 acres of defence land in Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh, marking the first large-scale renewable energy project to be developed on defence-owned land in India. The facility will be developed on nearly 850 acres of vacant defence land and marks the first large-scale renewable energy project of its kind to be established on defence-owned property.

The project has received approval from Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and is expected to play a key role in reducing dependence on conventional electricity sources while enhancing long-term energy security for defence establishments across the country. Designed as a solar-plus-storage facility, the project will combine renewable energy generation with battery-backed storage capacity, ensuring a more reliable and stable power supply.

The initiative is also expected to significantly lower the expenditure incurred on procuring grid power for military installations, generating substantial savings over its operational lifespan. State-run power major NTPC Limited has been tasked with implementing the project through a competitive bidding framework aimed at securing the most cost-effective energy solutions.

Delhi Government Approves Rs 138 Crore Sewer Network Upgrade for Karawal Nagar

The Delhi government has announced a major sewer infrastructure project worth Rs 138 crore for the Karawal Nagar Assembly constituency. The announcement was made by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta during a public event organised as part of the BJP's Sewa Pakhwara programme commemorating 12 years of the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre.

The new project is expected to accelerate the development of underground sewer networks across several densely populated localities, including Sonia Vihar, Milan Garden, Chauhan Patti and Sabhapur Extension, areas that have long faced challenges linked to sanitation and drainage infrastructure.

Highlighting the broader development agenda for the constituency, Gupta said projects worth more than Rs 300 crore had received approval over the past year through various funding channels, including the Chief Minister's Development Fund, MLA allocations and the Yamuna Paar Development Board.

Centre approves Rs 1,359 crore four-lane Nagaur-Bikaner highway project in Rajasthan

The Centre has approved a Rs 1,359 crore project for four-laning of the Nagaur-Bikaner stretch of the National Highway-62 in Rajasthan. The project, to be developed under the Build-Operate-Transfer model, is expected to significantly improve connectivity in western Rajasthan and boost economic activity in the region.

The four-lane highway will enhance connectivity between Nagaur and Bikaner and is likely to create new opportunities for investment and employment. The project is also expected to accelerate industrial and tourism activities in the region by providing smoother and safer transportation.

Centre grants administrative, technical approval for Rs 1,663 crore NH-183 development project in Kerala

The Centre has granted administrative and technical approval worth Rs 1,663.15 crore for the first phase of the Kollam-Theni National Highway (NH-183) development project, clearing the way for the upgrade of a key highway corridor linking Kollam and Chengannur in southern side of Kerala. The approval covers a 54.37-km stretch from Kadavoor Bypass Junction in Kollam to Anjilimoodu near Chengannur.

According to reports, the project will be implemented under the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model and is scheduled for completion within 24 months. The approved stretch will be developed as a four-lane national highway with a width of 20 metres. Of the total sanctioned cost, Rs 689.20 crore has been earmarked for civil works. Another Rs 331.64 crore will be spent on land acquisition and related procedures, while Rs 394.19 crore has been allocated for building demolition and compensation.

The project blueprint includes three major bridges, six minor bridges, 103 culverts, one railway overbridge and two vehicle underpasses. It also provides for 48 bus bays and a modern drainage network covering 88.81 km. Safety infrastructure planned along the corridor includes crash barriers, modern signboards, solar LED blinkers, median mast lights and high-mast lighting systems.

The project also includes the modernisation of 16 major junctions across the route. These include Kollam Bypass, Mukkada, Perayam, Kundara-Chittumala, Bharanikkavu, Chakkuvalli, Charummoodu, Kottamukku, Nalamukku, Mankamkuzhi, Kollakadavu, Pennukkara and Anjilimoodu. In addition, 18 smaller junctions will be upgraded as part of the highway expansion programme.

CONTRACT AWARDS

GHV (India) Wins Rs 127 Crore Depot Contract for Lucknow Metro East-West Corridor

Construction of the Vasant Kunj depot for Lucknow Metro's East-West Corridor is set to begin after UPMRC awarded a Rs 127 crore contract to GHV (India) Private Limited. The Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation (UPMRC) has selected GHV (India) Private Limited to execute the project, which carries an estimated cost of around Rs 127 crore. The facility will serve as the primary operations and maintenance hub for trains running on the new metro corridor.

According to UPMRC, five companies participated in the competitive bidding process. Following detailed technical and financial evaluations, GHV (India) emerged as the successful bidder. The original project estimate was approximately Rs 150 crore. The depot will be developed along the lines of Lucknow Metro's existing Transport Nagar facility and will house infrastructure for train stabling, inspections, repairs and routine maintenance. It is being designed as a technologically advanced centre capable of supporting modern metro operations.

RVNL bags ₹221-cr contract from South East Central Railway in Chhattisgarh

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) it has received a letter of acceptance (LoA) from South East Central Railway for an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract valued at ₹221.33 crore in Chhattisgarh.

The project involves replacement of panel interlocking with electronic interlocking, installation of indoor and outdoor signalling equipment, OFC huts, construction and electrification of signalling and telecommunication (S&T) service buildings, and cabling works in adjoining block sections of stations under the Bilaspur division of South East Central Railway.

HCC bags ₹127 crore Bhutan Hydropower contract

Hindustan Construction Company (HCC) has secured a ₹127 crore contract from Wangchhu Hydroelectric Power Limited (WHPL) in Bhutan for construction works on the Wangchhu Hydroelectric Project. The contract is to be completed within nine months.

The scope of work covers construction of diversion tunnels, hydromechanical gates, and cofferdams — structures critical for enabling early commencement of the project's primary civil works. The award followed WHPL's technical and financial evaluation process. The contract adds to HCC's longstanding footprint in Bhutan, spanning over three decades, through projects including Tala (1,020 MW), Punatsangchhu-I (1,200 MW), and Nikachhu (118 MW). The company has built 26 per cent of India's installed hydropower capacity.

Bhutan is targeting 6,000 MW of installed hydropower capacity under its 13th Five-Year Plan (2024–29), positioning the country as a significant market for infrastructure contractors with hydropower expertise. HCC currently carries a market capitalisation of approximately ₹6,331 crore.

COMPANY/PROJECT UPDATES

Bids invited for General Consultancy work for Lucknow Metro Phase 1B

The Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation has floated the tender for General Consultancy services for Lucknow metro rail project – Phase 1B. The last date for bid submission is 9 July 2026. UPMRC will evaluate bids using a Quality cum Cost Based Selection (QCBS) methodology, which weighs both technical competence and financial proposals in determining the winning consultant.

Kerala Government Approves Rs 3,200 Crore For Thiruvananthapuram Outer Ring Road's Long-Delayed Land Acquisition

The Kerala government has approved Rs 3,200 crore for the long-delayed land acquisition of the proposed Thiruvananthapuram Outer Ring Road (ORR) project which expected to improve connectivity between Vizhinjam International Seaport and the northern parts of the capital region. The funding approval is expected to unlock compensation payments for thousands of landowners whose properties fall within the alignment of the 62.7 km corridor.

The compensation disbursement anticipated to begin within the next two months. Landowners' Action Council also welcomed the approval, describing it as a long-overdue breakthrough for thousands of families who have been awaiting compensation for years. The project affects 6,563 landowners across the proposed NH-866 alignment.

Reliance and Meta Partner to Build 168 MW AI-Enabled Data Centre in India

Reliance Industries and Meta Platforms announced a strategic partnership to develop a 168-megawatt AI-enabled data centre in Jamnagar, Gujarat. The facility, planned for delivery within two years, represents

Meta's first built-to-suit data centre capacity in India and marks a significant milestone in the country's emergence as a global hub for AI infrastructure.

Under the agreement, Reliance Industries will deliver comprehensive end-to-end services covering the entire lifecycle of the data centre, from design and construction to the management of utilities, renewable power supply, network connectivity, and fully managed operations.

Meta will lease the capacity with options to scale in future, while covering the full cost of electricity and water for the facility. The data centre will support Meta's global infrastructure needs, including computing power for Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and AI services.

IIT Roorkee, AM/NS India sign pact to advance steel sector research

ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India has signed an initial pact with Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee to boost education, research and innovation in manufacturing and steel technologies. Under the memorandum of understanding (MoU), the partners will explore opportunities in the joint development and delivery of academic programmes, executive education and professional development courses, workforce transformation initiatives and collaborative research.

The partnership will also focus on innovation, technology development, publications, intellectual property creation, and technology transfer initiatives. The partnership combines ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel (AM/NS) India's industrial know-how and global manufacturing reach with Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee's (IIT Roorkee) academic and research strengths to create a platform for talent development, applied research, technology innovation and enhanced industrial competitiveness.

Sagar Cements commissions additional capacity plant in Madhya Pradesh

Hyderabad-based Sagar Cements (M) Pvt Ltd (SCMPL), an arm of Sagar Cements, has successfully commissioned and commenced its commercial operations of additional installed capacity of 0.5 million tonnes per annum at its cement manufacturing plant at Jeerabad, Tehsil Gandhwani, Dhar District, Madhya Pradesh.

With the commissioning of the aforesaid unit, SCMPL total cement grinding capacity has increased from 1.0 MPTA to 1.5 MPTA and group cement capacity of the company stands at 11.00 MPTA.

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InfraCon Weekly Review is an industry newsletter by FIRST Construction Council, delivering curated insights on India's infrastructure and construction sector—covering policy developments, project updates, investments, company updates, and industry perspectives.

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