YEIDA unveils ₹14,000-cr metro line linking IGIA & Jewar Airports

Yeoumu Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) has planned to directly connect India Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) with Jewar Airport in Gautam Buddha Nagar of UP at an investment of ₹14,000 crore. Once the Jewar airport is ready, it will have a direct link to the Delhi airport via Metro and the passengers will be able to travel from one airport to the other in two-and-a-half hours whereas those travelling from South Delhi to Jewar will cover the distance in one-and-a-half hours. RITES Limited submitted three different proposals to link Jewar Airport with the IGIA last year. The plan selected by YEIDA involves three stages including the construction of a 20-km line between Aerocity and Tughlakabad, which is being undertaken by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC); a 15-km proposed extension from Tughlakabad to Noida Sector 142 on the Aqua line; and finally, a 35.6-km line between Knowledge Park and Jewar Airport. Passengers will have to change twice on this 82-km journey, at Noida Sector 142 and Knowledge Park II. The line from Aerocity to Tughlakabad is a part of DMRC’s Phase IV while construction of the other two corridors, currently handled by YEIDA, is estimated at ₹8,248 crore. The last and longest leg that starts at Knowledge Park II and ends at Jewar Airport is estimated to cost ₹5,708 crore and will have 25 stops.

Arunvir Singh, CEO of YEIDA, informed that the upcoming Metro line will run from Aerocity, pass Tughlakabad, Noida and Greater Noida, and then head to Jewar. The airport and the Metro links are expected to be ready by 2024.

Govt plans parallel rail line beneath Zojila Pass in J&K

The Union government is contemplating to build a parallel rail line along the all-weather tunnel beneath the Zojila pass in J&K. National Highway and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) has already presented the proposal of a parallel tunnel to the road transport and highways ministry and the PMO has directed the agency to look into the option of integrating road and rail networks on this stretch. The NHIDCL has awarded the work of a 14.1 km tunnel to a Hyderabad-based infrastructure major, Mega Engineering. The transport ministry had restructured the earlier project, which brought down the cost of the tunnel by nearly ₹3,500 crore. Zojila tunnel will ensure round-the-year connectivity from Srinagar to Ladakh. While the original plan was to build an escape tunnel along the main tunnel, the idea was done away with when the plan was tweaked. Even if train operations are planned on this stretch, very few trains may actually run and a railway line can be laid in the main tunnel which will be constructed. The vehicular traffic can be blocked for half an hour when the train passes through the tunnel. A parallel tunnel can be built after the first one as agencies will have a better assessment of the geological condition and the cost estimate would be more realistic.

L&T emerges as lowest bidder for 237-km high-speed rail corridor

The scope of work in the project involves the design and construction of 237 km length of the viaduct for 508-km Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail corridor. It is the first high-speed train project of India, which is being built with the financial help of Japan. The tender covers about 47% of total alignment of 508 km, between Vapi and Vadodara in Gujarat. This includes four railway stations including Vapi, Billimora, Surat and Bharuch and Surat Depot, bridges on 24 rivers and 30 road crossings.

ABD inks ₹177-mn highway building loan pact

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Central government has signed a ₹177 million loan to upgrade 450 km state highways and major district roads in Maharashtra. The signatories to the Maharashtra State Road Improvement Project included Sameer Kumar Khare, Additional Secretary (Fund Bank and ADB), Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance signed for the Government of India, and Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of ADB’s India Resident Mission signed for ADB. Khare informed that the project will improve connectivity between rural areas and urban centres in the state enabling rural communities to better access markets, employment opportunities and services. Improved mobility will expand development and livelihood opportunities outside of the state’s major urban centres to tier 2 cities and towns thus reducing income disparities. Yokoyama of ADB said that the project will strengthen road safety measures by developing a road safety audit framework that will protect vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women and children. Following the international best practice. Another feature of the project is to update the road maintenance system by encouraging 5-year performance-based maintenance obligations to contractors to sustain asset quality and service levels.

Cabinet approves Kolkata East-West Metro corridor’s revised cost

The Union Cabinet has approved the revised cost estimates for construction of the Kolkata East-West Corridor project as per the realigned route and it will be implemented by the Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation. The estimated completion cost of the project is ₹9,575 crore, with the Ministry of Railway’s share as ₹3,268.27 crore, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs’ share as ₹1,14,58.31 crore and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) loan of ₹4,158.40 crore. The completion date of the entire project is December 2021. The project aims to create efficient transit connectivity between the business district of Kolkata with the industrial city of Howrah in the west and Salt Lake City in the east through a safe, accessible and comfortable mode of public transport and will integrate multiple modes of transport like Metro, suburban railways, ferry and bus transport by constructing interchange hubs. The project envisages construction of 16.6 km long Metro Rail Corridor including a tunnel below the river Hooghly which is the first transportation tunnel in India under any major river as well as Howrah station which is one of the deepest Metro stations in India.

INdian Infrastructure & Tenders Week
Govt announces 6 tunnels in eastern Ladakh in J&K

To shore up road infrastructure along the border with China, the Union transport minister has announced the construction of half a dozen new tunnels in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh that would help in ensuring the quicker movement of troops and machines including reinforcements to the area in hours of any border crisis. Gadkari informed that the detailed project reports (DPRs) of 10.2 km Singgora-Valkio tunnel on Kishalwar-Anantnag road, two tunnels of 8 km each on Sudmahadev-Gohar-Khelani stretch and a 2.4 km tunnel at Khelani bypass in J&K have been prepared. Four major tunnels with a combined length of nearly 45 km on Manali-Leh have been planned. These include a 12.7 km tunnel at Shinkun La and three more at Lachung La (12 km), Taglang La (10 km) and Baralacha-La (10 km). The construction work on these tunnels will make the connectivity between Manali and Leh seamless round the year. NHIDCL sources informed that under the direction of road transport and highways ministry, the agency is currently conducting an airborne electromagnetic survey using specialized helicopters through these tough terrains.

MMRDA unveils 500-cr metro lines’ upgrades

In view of the state government’s decision to shift the Metro-3 car shed to Kanjurmarg from Aarey Colony in Mumbai, the underground line (Colaba-Bandra-Seepz) and Metro-6 (Swami Samarth Nagar-Vikhroli) line will be integrated before the proposed elevated Saki Vihar station of line 6. Metropolitan Commissioner MMRDA, RA Rajeev, informed that it will be a common elevated line with six stations up to the newly proposed Kanjurmarg depot site. The modification necessitated by the decision to scrap a car shed at Aarey is estimated to cost over 500 cr. The state CM announced that the car shed for Metro-3 will not be constructed in Aarey, but at Kanjurmarg, along with the Metro-6 depot for which the state has allocated the 45-hectare land to MMRDA. There will be no changes in the Metro-6 alignment apart from the platform size to accommodate the line-3’s eight-coach trains as the platforms for Metro-6 are designed for six coaches. However, the depots at the Kanjurmarg site will be different for both the lines and some of the amenities will be common but depots will be different. As the line gets integrated post the Saki Vihar station, the headway between two trains will also be more as Metro-3 was planned as a 33.5 km underground corridor from Colaba-Seepz while Metro-6 is a 14-km elevated corridor from Lokhandewala to Vikhroli on the eastern express highway. The projects, which have been bagged by Megha Engineering, will drastically reduce the distance between Hyderabad – Kokata - Chennai. Before this, vehicles from Hyderabad and Kokata travelling to Chennai had to go via Vijayawada town but after the completion of this bypass road, vehicles from Hyderabad and Kokata can go directly to Chennai. Another road project includes NH-71 between Nayandupeta and Renigunta route, a single lane road facing frequent traffic jams. MEIL is constructing a 57-km long 6-lane road which will make travelling to holy place Tirumala more convenient and also travelling towards Chennai, Bangalore, Renigunta Airport and Tirukkala has temple will be easier. As part of the NH project, MEIL is also constructing a bypass on Nayandupeta, Renigunta, Tirukkala has town and Varpelur route.

Indian Railway approves JSPL’s high-speed rails

JSPL, the Indian steel and power company which had earlier declared its plans to manufacture 60E1 1175 Heat Treated rails suitable for high-speed and high axle load applications primarily used by the Metro Rails, High-Speed Corridors and Bullet Trains, has received approval from the Union Transport Ministry for the production of 1.8 Lac MT per annum of this high-grade 60E1 1175 Heat Treated (HT) Rails. It has embarked upon upgrading the Indian railway track system to carry 250M axle load and up to 200 km/hour speed. V R Sharma, MD of Jindal Steel, informed that prior to this, all specialty rails were imported in the country. JSPL is committed for manufacturing of specialty rails to fulfill requirements of Indian Railways and metro rail corporations hence making India Atmanirbhar in procuring rails locally for different applications. These rails will be used in the dedicated freight corridors and high axle load application including bullet trains. The Research Design and Standards Organization (RDSO) has approved the newly developed 60E1 1175 Heat Treated (HT) Rails of Jindal Steel and Power Limited and is a superior grade to 1080 HH.

MorRT launches two road projects in AP

Union Transport Minister has laid the foundation stones for two road construction projects as a part of NH-16, a 30-km long 6-lane bypass road, from Chinna Avalapalli to Gollapudi. The projects, which have been bagged by Mega Engineering, will drastically reduce the distance between Hyderabad – Kokata - Chennai. Before this, vehicles from Hyderabad and Kokata travelling to Chennai had to go via Vijayawada town but after the completion of this bypass road, vehicles from Hyderabad and Kokata can go directly to Chennai. Another road project includes NH-71 between Nayandupeta and Renigunta route, a single lane road facing frequent traffic jams. MEIL is constructing a 57-km long 6-lane road which will make travelling to holy place Tirumala more convenient and also travelling towards Chennai, Bangalore, Renigunta Airport and Tirukkala has temple will be easier. As part of the NH project, MEIL is also constructing a bypass on Nayandupeta, Renigunta, Tirukkala has town and Varpelur route.

Lodha Group announces luxury housing scheme in Thane

Lodha Group has announced a new category of property, a luxury gated community of villas on the outskirts of Mumbai in Thane. The project is located just 15 minutes away from Viviana Mall on the Mumbai-Nashik highway and is a first-of-its-kind in Mumbai, offering home seekers the discretion to own a large independent home on their own land. Designed by Hafeez Contractor, the gated estate comprising villa plots aptly makes the dream home of the consumer, a reality. Shalabh Dharai, Business CEO, Township and Annuity Assets, informed that along with 5-tier security, management services and amenities, the estate includes a serene lake, grand clubhouse, temple, large open lawns and play areas. Being a consumer-centric brand, Lodha has always aimed at providing the desired and finest lifestyle to its customers.
Trichy semi-ring road project gains pace in TN

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has initiated groundwork for the construction of a part of the Trichy semi-ring road project in Tamil Nadu. The 43-km long project has been sectioned into two stages - stage-1 covers Jeeyapuram to Panchapur and stage-2 between Panchapur and Thuvakudi. The project aims at reducing the travel time and also to decongest the city's roads. To start with the Karur project implementation unit (PIU) of NHAI has issued a 3D notification to acquire land to construct a portion of the project linking Trichy-Karur and Trichy-Madurai national highways. In April 2018, NHAI conducted a public hearing to acquire 46 hectares of land situated between Panchapur (Trichy-Madurai) and Jeeyapuram (Trichy-Karur) via Thayanur on the Trichy-Dindigul national highway. In September 2019, NHAI submitted a notification (power to acquire land) to the ministry of road transport and highways (MoRTH) and since then the project is on hold. The newest notification aims at acquiring land in Panchapur, Prattbury, Thayyanur and Kalluki villages, for which the revenue department will initiate compensation to the landowners. After the land acquisition process is complete, NHAI will prepare the project cost estimate to float a tender to select the contractor to initiate civil work.

Maharashtra clears ₹333-cr Broad Gauge Metro Project in Nagpur

The Maharashtra cabinet has cleared the Broad Gauge (BG) metro project involving an investment of ₹333.60 crore. The project, which was proposed by Maha Metro, aims at providing high-speed connectivity to satellite towns like Naktikhat, Wardha, Bhadrachal and Ramtek. With the cabinet clearing the proposal, it is now being sent to the Central Government for its approval. Once implemented, metro coaches would run on the Indian railway track. It would change the transportation pattern in Nagpur and its surrounding areas as it is aimed at utilizing the existing infrastructure of the Indian Railways for providing air-conditioned, faster, reliable and comfortable services between Nagpur and satellite towns. It is the first of its kind service being introduced in the country. It would also act as feeder service to Nagpur Metro, thereby reducing dependency on private vehicles and transportation services, besides reducing pollution and congestion on the roads.

L&T secures multiple contracts across business segments

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has secured multiple orders of around ₹5,000 crore across various business segments. The construction arm of L&T has won contracts from a reputed developer to construct a high-rise residential project and an office space in Mumbai. Its factories segment has received an order from a leading global shipping and logistics company for the designing and construction of warehousing logistics park in Mumbai and also secured an order for construction of 4,000 TPD (tons per day) capacity clinker plant in Odisha. It has also received add-on orders for ongoing projects in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. L&T's water and effluent treatment business has bagged an order from Punjab Water Supply and Sewerage Board for providing 24x7 surface-based water supply to Patiala town and the same segment has also received orders from Gujarat Water Infrastructure Ltd for design, construction, and operation of a 20,000-CUFT/Day multimedia bulk water transmission pipeline project in Gujarat. An order from Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board for the construction of ground-level reservoirs with associated mechanical, electrical and instrumentation works, along the western route of Bengaluru, has also been secured. This project is being funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and is a part of phase 3 of Bengaluru water supply and sewerage project.

Tata Housing offers fixed interest rate for a year

Tata Housing Development Company (THDC) has announced a new scheme titled ‘Wow is Now’ for homebuyers under which its customers will have to pay only 3.99 per cent flat interest rate for one year and the rest would be borne by the company. The scheme, which is applicable to 10 projects until November 20, has been considered taking a 7 per cent rate of interest per annum from the bank as the maximum limit for the offer. Under the scheme, the customer will receive a gift voucher ranging from ₹25,000 to ₹5 lakh depending on the property, post the booking. The voucher would be issued after the payment of 10 per cent and the registration of property. The campaign is extended across 10 Tata Housing projects with ready-to-move-in (RTMI) and under-construction properties across Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kochi, Delhi-NCR, and Kasiwala in HP. Sanjay Dutt, MD & CEO of Tata Realty & Infrastructure, informed that the government and RBI have demonstrated agility by announcing a slew of measures to uplift the real estate sector, like maintaining accommodating stance on repo rate, treatment of COVID-19 period as an event of force majeure and on-tap targeted long-term repo operations (TLTRO) of up to ₹1,00,000 crore.

Govt offers relaxed norms for construction companies

The Union government has offered relaxed norms for construction companies engaged in the construction of road infrastructure, real estate, stadium, warehousing, oil & gas exploration and hospitality sectors. It aims to increase the number of eligible contractors considering that the government wants to bid out more road projects to improve infrastructure and boost economic activities. In the past few years, the highway ministry has strategised to bid out small stretches to make small contractors eligible for such projects and also to uplift economic activities. This modification and a host of new amendments in the bidding norms are aimed at promoting domestic players under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Players who have worked in these expanded sectors will get more scope to be qualified and in bagging projects. The relaxations have also been offered for the bidding of tunnel construction projects. According to changes in the bid parameters, no prior experience is required by contractors for tunnel measuring up to 200 metres. Similarly, in the case of bridges, no prior experience is required for such structures of up to 60 metres. These changes aim at promoting local players and will also infuse more equity in the sectors.

Sunteck Realty sharpens 50-acre realty plan in Mumbai

Sunteck Realty has planned to acquire a 50-acre land parcel in Vasind, Mumbai to develop a residential project. The project will have a revenue potential of ₹1,250 crore. Kamal Khetan, Chairman and MD of Sunteck Realty, informed that the second strategic acquisition amidst the pandemic complements the strategy to strengthen the brand presence. The new project will be residential, catering to the affordable segment of the housing sector. The Mumbai-based Sunteck Realty player is a luxury real estate building major with a portfolio of about 31 million square feet spread across 26 projects and the newest acquisition reflects its differentiated development philosophy of focusing on strategic locations.

NHAI to construct 3-grade separators along NH-44 Bypass in J&K

The central government has approved ₹757.16 crore annual plan 2020-21 for national highways works in J&K. After which, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) took over the construction of three-grade separators along the bypass on NH-44. The major works of the project include the construction of 3.23 km of three flyovers in Srinagar on NH-44 (Jammu-Srinagar) highway at Bemina, Sanat Nagar and Nowgam at ₹135 crore. Executive Engineer, NHAI, Javid Ahmad informed that they have finalized the DPR and submitted it to MoRTH, and are hopeful that the construction work will start soon. The construction is expected to remove traffic congestion along the highway and also decrease the number of road accidents witnessed on the road corridor.

INDIAN INFRASTRUCTURE & TENDERS WEEK
BMRC fast-tracks ₹5,300-cr ORR Metro Project

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRC) has fast-tracked the Outer Ring Road (ORR) metro project involving an investment of ₹5,300 crore and is being financed by the Asian Development Bank. The elevated project with a length of 19.9 km with 13 stations along the Light Blue Line is crucial for the city as it passes through the IT corridor housing several multinational companies. According to the DPR prepared by BMRC, for the first — 9.8 km elevated section with six stations (Central Silk Board Junction, HSR Layout, Agara Junction, Bellandur, Bellandur, Kasubeesahalli and construction of a 2.3 km flyover at Central Silk Board) — Mumbai-based Afcons Infrastructions Limited has emerged as the lowest bidder. In the second — 9.7 km elevated section housing seven stations (Kottisranehalli, Marathahalli, ISRO Layout, Doddanekundi, DRDO Sports Complex, Saraswathi Nagar (Mahadevapura) and K R Puram and a 2 km link line to Byappanahalli depot) — Bengaluru-based Shankaranaryana Constructions became the lowest bidder.

GBP Group plans ₹600-cr townships in Zirakpur

Given the emerging business avenues in the realty sector on the outskirts of Chandigarh, GBP Group has decided to invest ₹600 crore to develop a township in Zirakpur. In the new township, stretching across an area of 32 acres, the company will develop 700 flats, 400 plots and 750 commercial units. The project is being developed through bank loans and internal accruals. The company will offer possession of plots within six to nine months, residential units within two-three years and commercial units in 18-24 months. According to Raman Gupta, Director of Branding & Construction GBP Group, in the surrounding areas of Chandigarh, prices are three times as compared to prices in Zirakpur and due to this, the demand is expected to rise in this city because of higher population growth. GBP Group, which was established in 2012, has so far delivered 14 projects spread over an area of 10 million sq ft and more projects being built on an area of 6 million sq ft.

KIIIBF clears ₹289-cr for a bridge at Ponnani in Kerala

KIIIBF has cleared ₹289 crore funds for the construction of a bridge, which will come up across the Bharathappuzha connecting Ponnani harbour with Padnjirekkara. The hanging bridge has been modelled on the lines of the Howrah Bridge in Kolkata. The one km-long sea bridge will pass over the estuary where the Bharathappuzha opens out into the Arabian sea. In 2018, the government had entrusted L&T infrastructure with the task of preparing the detailed project report (DPR), which was submitted to the state government recently. The state agencies are in the process of floating global tender to select companies to undertake the project.

JK Cement launches new grinding unit in Gujarat

JK Cement, India’s premier cement company, has launched its new Grey Cement grinding unit at Balasinor in Gujarat to cater to the requirements of its dealers in the western region. Commercial dispatches have commenced from the unit having a capacity of 0.76mtpa (million tons per annum). The brand has reinforced its growing footprint in India by committing to ‘Cementing the Nation’ and contributing to the country’s economy and industrial prowess. The company has completed its grey cement capacity expansion of 4.2mtpa comprising of (2mtpa) in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh (1.5mtpa) and Gujarat (0.2mtpa). JK Cement has partnered with India’s multi-sector infrastructure needs on the strength of its product excellence, customer orientation and technology leadership. This new plant will not just generate employment opportunities for locals, but also ensure on-time delivery of quality cement for consumers. While every other company is grappling with the adverse impact of the COVID-19 and reworking their organisational strategies, JK Cement is the only brand to have made such an announcement at this critical juncture, eying a strong volume growth in Q2 FY21 along with business and financial synergies.

MoRTH starting construction of ₹35,000-cr Delhi-Katra expressway

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highway (MoRTH) is all set to start the detailed project work on the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra expressway involving an investment of ₹35,000 crore. Union transport minister, Nitin Gadkari, informed that by October 2023, people can travel by road from Delhi to Katra (Maa Vaishno Devi) via Amritsar in less than seven hours. The ministry has floated bids for 160-km of the 634-km greenfield expressway which will take off from Hardwar to Ghaziabad on the right-side bank of the Upper Ganga Canal. The project was announced two years ago by chief minister Yogi Adityanath, who wanted a bypass road for commuters, and for Kanwariyas who use the main Delhi-Meerut-Road during the annual Kanwar Yatra pilgrimage for movement. Sandeep Kumar, chief engineer (Meerut), UP PWD informed that once started, the project will take just two years to complete as the land is already available. This will be a boost for commuters as it will act as a bypass for those travelling to Hardwar and will also serve those travelling to Meerut and Muzaffarnagar.

MoRTH targets 34,800-km highways under Bharatmala Pariyojana

The Union road transport ministry has till date constructed 2,921 km of highways under the Bharatmala Pariyojana and envisaged to build 34,800 km of highways at a cost of about ₹5,35,000 Crore under the ambitious mission. A total of 322 projects with a length of 12,413 km have been awarded as it will act as a bypass for those travelling to Hardwar and will also serve those travelling to Meerut and Muzaffarnagar.

UP approves ₹628-cr Upper Ganga Canal road project

To construct an additional canal road from Ghazabaddo-Hardwar covering a distance of about 111km, the state government’s expenditure and UP finance committee has given their approval for the project involving an investment of ₹628 crore. It is now taken up for UP cabinet’s final approval. The two-lane canal road is proposed from Hardwar to Ghaziabad on the right-side bank of the Upper Ganga Canal. The project was announced two years ago by chief minister Yogi Adityanath, who wanted a bypass road for commuters, and for Kanwariyas who use the main Delhi-Meerut-Road during the annual Kanwar Yatra pilgrimage for movement. Sandeep Kumar, chief engineer (Meerut), UP PWD informed that once started, the project will take just two years to complete as the land is already available. This will be a boost for commuters as it will act as a bypass for those travelling to Hardwar and will also serve those travelling to Meerut and Muzaffarnagar.
Centre & State heighten infra spend in 2nd quarter

To offset the adverse impact of Covid-19, Central and State governments have increased the pace of tendering and awarding new projects in the past few months. A major chunk of the investments went to the projects in roadways, real estate, community services, hospitals, irrigation, tourism and water supply treatment sectors. Project monitoring agency, Project Today, informed that in the September quarter, there was a 146% jump in infrastructure spending and project tenders by the states and a 67% increase in public and private sector tenders as compared to the June quarter, indicating an early sign of economic recovery. Building and construction activity data monitored by the organization indicated that fresh investment by state governments’ agencies surged 146.3% in the second quarter. The Centre has also separately announced new projects entailing investments of ₹54,339 crore in the same quarter, a sequential increase of 93%. States, on account for more than half of all government-funded capital expenditure, have resorted to the deepest cuts in spending due to the pandemic. The improvement in Q2, although over a low base of Q1 when most of the country was languishing under a lockdown, shows that states are willing to return to invest, building physical infrastructure. Similarly, in Q2, the private sector announced 616 new projects worth ₹73,608 crore, recording sharp surge from 315 new projects worth ₹44,714 crore announced in the first quarter of the fiscal.

NHAI heightens the pace of project awards

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has awarded 60% more length of road projects during the first half of FY 2020-21 as compared to the corresponding period of the preceding fiscal, despite the Covid-19 pandemic. This is the highest length of projects awarded in the past three years, during the same period. The fastest-growing construction companies that are being selected after analyzing their last six years annual performances are those that have managed to take a large share in the contracts awarded. NHAI has set a target of awarding 4,500 km of projects during 2020-21 and is likely to exceed the target. According to NHAI, Dilip Buildcon, Larsen & Toubro (L&T), IRB Infrastructure Developers (IRB Infra), Ashoka Buildcon, PNC Infratech and GR Infraprojects are some of the major companies that have been issued the letter of awards in FY21. All these companies have figured in India’s annual listing of Fastest Growing Construction Companies, analyzed and compiled annually by the First Construction Council - an infrastructure think-tank which has been tracking construction companies since 2003.

NHAI floats tender for ₹162-cr road project in Madhya Pradesh

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has invited bids for four-laning of the Gwalior-Shivpuri section of the highway project in Madhya Pradesh. The scope of work entails the construction of the new stretch from 100.75 km to 107.350 km section of the national highway (NH-03) crisscrossing through Madhav National Park, to be executed on the engineering, procurement and construction basis. The estimated cost of the project is ₹162.15 crore and is expected to be completed in 12 months.

APMRC invites bids for High-Speed Rail Stations

The National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL) has invited bids for the design and construction of about 18km of the viaduct between Anand and Sabarmati, including high-speed rail (HSR) stations in Ahmedabad and Sabarmati for the Mumbai- Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor, also known as bullet train project. The alignment has 31 crossing bridges, including six steel truss bridges. It has opened three technical bids covering 64% of the route, which makes 325km out of the total 508km of the MAHSR alignment, including bids for five HSR stations at Vapi, Bhillimora, Surat, Bharuch and Anand/ Nadal out of the 12 scheduled stations.

MAHSR will traverse through Western Railway’s Ahmedabad Junction Railway Station and will be integrated with Saraspur side of the existing Ahmedabad station. Ahmedabad high-speed rail station is to be built over the existing railway platform No.11 and 12. To ensure seamless integration of the high-speed rail station with other modes of rail transport, NHSRCL has designed a user-friendly station layout for Ahmedabad. An integrated building for passengers’ transit has been planned on the eastern side of the existing railway station, where passengers will be able to swiftly switch from one mode of transport to another.

APMRL starts groundwork on ₹22,000-cr metro projects

The National Urban Mass Transit Company Limited (APMRL) has started the groundwork for the construction of Vizag metro rail project for which the preparation of the detailed project report (DPR) is in full swing. The state government has allowed the setting up of a regional office of APMRCL in Visakhapatnam and also deployed staff for the purpose. Of the 140.11km-long metro project in Visakhapatnam, corridors for 79.91km are proposed for the development of light metro rail system and modern tram line system will come up in the remaining 60.2km corridors at a combined investment of ₹22,000 crore. An Urban Mass Transit Company Limited (UMTC) has also been set up by the state government with a capacity greater than light rail, but lower than the typical heavy-rail rapid transit system. The project, which is estimated to be completed by 2024, would span almost 28 km, with two elevated corridors whereby one elevated corridor would span 15.14 km and the other would span 12.70 km and consist of 13 stations. The state cabinet has also given the go-ahead signal for preparing the detailed project report (DPR). In the 2020-21 UP Annual Budget, the state government had made a provision of ₹900 crore for the under-construction Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System. Besides, ₹286 crore and ₹338 crore were allocated for the Agrap and Kanpur metro projects respectively.

Gorakhpur gets 28-km long Light Metro Project

The lenders also disbursed about ₹54 crore to Vatika Group for making part payment of an Indiabulls Housing loan. It sanctioned ₹108 crore to Radiance Realty in September for two projects, at an interest rate of 13%. At least ₹46 crore will be used to refinance loans disbursed by Kotak Mahindra Prime and Kotak Mahindra Investments. It sanctioned ₹116 crore to Concort Infrastructure at 12.5% and ₹100 crore to DN Homes. The loan sanctions to builders are being executed on a case-to-case basis depending upon merits, and some of them are existing customers to the lender. The company has been very selective in lending to builders and exercising due diligence on the projects being taken up for funding. Its confidence comes from the overall viability of the project after taking into account the sales velocity, creditworthiness of the developer, adequacy of security, marketability of the project, cash flows and strength of other collaterals.

LIC Housing sanctions ₹600-cr for realty sector

The housing finance subsidiary of Life Insurance Corporation of India, LIC Housing, has taken the lead and sanctioned ₹600 crore in the last few months to at least five developers including Shriram Properties, Vatika Group and Realty Raide, data collated by data intelligence provider Propstack showed this trend. These range from fresh disbursements to refinance deals where the mortgage lender has taken over loans from other lenders. LIC Housing Finance sanctioned ₹225 crore to Shriram Properties as construction finance at a floating rate of 13.25%. At least ₹65 crore of it will be used to take over an existing loan from Yes Bank. The lender also disbursed about ₹54 crore to Vatika Group for making part payment of an Indiabulls Housing loan. It sanctioned ₹108 crore to Radiance Realty in September for two projects, at an interest rate of 13%. At least ₹46 crore will be used to refinance loans disbursed by Kotak Mahindra Prime and Kotak Mahindra Investments. It sanctioned ₹116 crore to Concort Infrastructure at 12.5% and ₹100 crore to DN Homes. The loan sanctions to builders are being executed on a case-to-case basis depending upon merits, and some of them are existing customers to the lender. The company has been very selective in lending to builders and exercising due diligence on the projects being taken up for funding. Its confidence comes from the overall viability of the project after taking into account the sales velocity, creditworthiness of the developer, adequacy of security, marketability of the project, cash flows and strength of other collaterals.

INDIAN INFRASTRUCTURE & TENDERS WEEK
Kerala to get ₹63,941-cro High-Speed Rail Corridor

The PWD Minister, G Sudhakaran, informed that Kerala government has cleared the Thiruvananthapuram-Kasaragod high-speed rail corridor involving an investment of ₹63,941 crore and it will soon get the green signal from the Union government. Silver Line project will be built in a joint venture between Indian Railways and Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited (KRail), the JV Company. The State’s Cabinet has already given its approval to the detailed project report (DPR), submitted by the project implementing agency KRail. The line will connect the twin destinations through trains with operational speeds of 200 km per hour, covering the 529.45-km journey in four hours. These trains will cover the busy Thiruvananthapuram-Emakulam stretch in 90 minutes, which at present takes more than four hours. Silver Line will run parallel to the existing railway line from Kasaragod to Thrirur, while an alternative greenfield alignment has been chosen for Thrir-Thiruvananthapuram stretch. The trains will have stopovers at Kollam, Chengannur, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Thrirur, Kozhikode, and Kannur en route to Kasaragod. The DPR for the mega rail project was prepared by Paris-based consultant Systra, which had submitted the report to the Union and the State governments for their mandatory approvals.

Birla Estates plans ₹550-cr realty project in Gurugram

Birla Estates, a B K Birla group company, has decided to invest ₹550 crore to develop 700 units of independent floors and high-rise buildings in Gurugram. The company has tied up with the Delhi-based realtor Anant Raj to develop residential township on an area of 73-acre land parcel. The project is being developed under Avasa Projects LLP, a joint venture between Birla Estates and Anant Raj Limited. Birla Estates is negotiating with more landowners to develop residential projects in a joint venture in NCR. KT Jhethandir, CEO, Birla Estates, informed that the company is expecting revenue of ₹4,000 crore from the project.

PNC Infratech receives LOA for ₹289-cr water infra contract

PNC Infratech has announced the receipt of Letter of Award (LOA) in a joint venture (JV) with SPML Infra for the construction of 1.36 crore. The contract, which has been awarded by the State Water & Sanitation Mission, Narmami Gange and Rural Water Supply Department of the state, involves the construction, operation and maintenance of the supply lines for 10 years with an investment of ₹289.83 crore.

Govt invites proposals for EV charging stations on highways

The government has invited proposals for the installation of Electric Vehicles charging stations from entities keen to build and operate charging infrastructure on major highways and expressways across the country. The Department of Heavy Industries has floated an Expression of Interest for inviting proposals from public and private entities to build and operate Public EV charging infrastructure on the Mumbai-Pune, Ahmedabad-Vadodara, Delhi-Agra-Yamuna, Bengaluru-Mysore, Bengaluru-Chennai, Surat-Mumbai, Agra-Lucknow, Eastern Peripheral and Hyderabad-DRR Expressways. Proposals have also been invited for highways including Delhi-Srinagar, Delhi-Kolkata, Agra-Nagpur, Meerut-Gangotri Dham, Mumbai-Delhi, Mumbai-Panaji, Mumbai-Nagpur, Mumbai-Bengaluru and Kolkata-Bhubaneswar. Under Phase-II, the Government intends to support the development of EV charging infrastructure by extending capital grant to organizations for promoting the use of Electric Vehicles (EVs). The Centre has approved Phase-II of FAME India Scheme [ Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid & Electric Vehicles in India] for 3 years commencing from 1st April 2019 with main focus on the electrification of public and shared transportation.

Kerala clears Thammanam-Pullepady four-lane road project

Kerala Government has aimed to augment the east-west road connectivity by building the narrow Thammanam-Pullepady stretch as a four-lane road and to extend it on either side towards MG Road and NH bypass. The road would be 22-metre wide. A median, footpaths on either side and a duct to carry utility cables and pipelines are part of the project. The existing alignment will be altered wherever needed, while junctions will be widened as per KIIFB norms enabling free-flow turns. PWD has completed the survey, which has been submitted to the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) for making fund arrangements. Currently, only two small bridges in the Kollakadavu-Kasavankadavu have four lanes. A critical part of the survey includes soil testing at multiple points to widen and rebuild narrow bridges and culverts on the 4-km corridor which will link Padma Junction on MG Road with Chakkaraparambu on Palavaram-Vyttla NH bypass. KIIFB has already promised the funding to implement the project that would decongest SA and Banerjee Roads. The construction of the four-lane road is also included in the construction of a parallel two-lane bridge at Pullepady and the project is expected to be completed by 2023.

DJB clears mega sewage project worth ₹479-cr

The Delhi Jal Board has cleared the sewage project worth ₹479 crore for building sewage lines network in the Kirari belt of the national capital. The project will cover over 7.25 lakh residents across 114 unauthorized colonies and six villages and will take about three years to complete. DJB sources informed that the sewage generated from these colonies will be taken to the 25 million gallons a day (MGD) Rohini sewage treatment plant. The land for construction of pumping stations at 3 locations like Prem Nagar, Bhagya Vihar and Pratap Vihar has been allocated by the Delhi Development Authority. The overall scheme will involve laying down 423.6kmms of sewer lines and more than 23,000 manholes in the entire belt. The capacities of wastewater pumping stations at Prem Nagar will be 6.5 MGD, Pratap Vihar 41 MGD, and Bhagya Vihar will be able to pump 9 million gallons of sewage per day. Currently, sewage from these colonies is being discharged into the Yamuna River through various drains causing rampant environmental pollution, apart from polluting the river water. The environmental conditions of the unauthorized colonies are also deteriorating because of the lack of proper sewerage and drainage network.

Govt approves 33 Realty projects worth ₹4,197-cr under SWAMIH

The Union Finance Minister informed that 33 housing projects with an investment of ₹4,197 crore have been accorded final approval under the Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) fund which will pave the way for the completion of 25,048 home units. In total, 123 projects have been sanctioned with an investment of ₹12,079 crore that will target to provide relief to 81,308 homeowners. SWAMIH Investment Fund has been formed to complete construction of stalled RERA registered affordable and mid-income category housing projects which are stuck due to paucity of funds. Last year the Union Government had cleared a proposal on this. The SWAMIH Fund is expected to enable the completion of nearly 60,000 homes across India. These projects are spreading across NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune and tier 2 locations including Kannal, Panipat, Lucknow, Surat, Dehradun, Kota, Nagpur, Jaipur, Nashik, Vizag and Chandigarh cities.
RITES secures multiple consultancy contracts

RITES has secured project management consultancy (PMC) work for complete planning, design, execution/construction of buildings and other services for various buildings at IIT Delhi. RITES fees will be around ₹54 crore, also it secured four PMC works and two feasibility study report/detailed project report (FSR/DPR) work from South Eastern Coalfields for an approximate fee of ₹46 crore, both based on the Modi coal (CIL) and RITES. Also, it received an order for the study of the multi-modal integration planning for Surat Metro with a fee of ₹3.24 crore. The work will involve planning and design of passenger dispersal facility at about 35 metre stations on two corridors at Surat metro. The study will be in a total timeline of 12 months.

Centre doubles SARDP to ₹760-cr in NE

The Union government has doubled fund allocation under the Special Accelerated Road Development Program in North-Eastern Areas (SARDP-NE) for the current fiscal to ₹760 crore. Expenditure of ₹380 crore was envisaged to be incurred from the National Investment Fund for the region during 2020-21. The ministry informed that it has enhanced the allocation of funds for the expenditure under SARDP-NE related works during the current financial year and under the revised allocation it almost doubled the amount originally allocated. Of the total amount, ₹330 crore has been earmarked for the Arunchal Pradesh package. The allocations to National Highways in the North Eastern Region under 10 per cent mandatory Pool Fund has seen an upward trend in the last five years. A sum of ₹4,520 crore was allocated for the year 2016-17, ₹6,265 crore for 2017-18, ₹6,210 crore for 2018-19, ₹6,070 crore was allocated for the year 2019-20, and ₹6,780 crore has been allocated for 2020-21 fiscal under the said fund.

Odisha unveils ₹8,796-cr industrial projects

The Odisha government has launched 12 industrial projects, including eight Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and four large units in sectors ranging from health care, renewable energy, steel, IT, cement manufacturing to food processing involving a combined investment of ₹8,796.61 crore with huge job generation avenues. The CM informed that the units are spread across all categories of industries – micro, small, medium and large ones. The state continues its dominance as an attractive destination for the investors despite the adverse impact of COVID-19 across the world. He stressed the need to increase the state’s economic potential of Odisha which has also been impacted by the pandemic. The new industrial units will provide an added impetus to the confidence of investors in the industrial sector.

Volvo Group amongst the 'Best Companies for Women in India'

Volvo Group India has been honoured with the “Best Companies for Women in India” award 2020 (BCWI Award) by Working Mother & Avtar. The recognition is a testimony to the company’s actions that contribute to an inclusive culture, to exploit the full potential of a diverse workforce, providing growth opportunities to women employees to become leaders of tomorrow. This is a recognition based on a survey, which covered key demographics related to a company’s workforce, practices, and policies that organizations have in place to attract, engage, retain and develop women professionals.

NBCC floats tender for ₹129-cr EWS Housing

NBCC (India) has invited bids for the construction of 555 housing units for the economically weaker section (EWS) and a commercial complex under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) at Prothrapur and Brichgunj/Brokhabad Port Blair in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The project, which involves an investment of ₹129.71 crore, has to be built on design, engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) basis. The scope of work includes carrying out civil, electrical, plumbing, STP, HVAC, firefighting and rainwater harvesting tasks. The estimated completion period is of 21 months.

Assam CM launches ₹383-cr flyover in Maligaon

The Assam chief minister has laid the foundation stone of a new flyover connecting Maligaon with Kamakhya Gate and Pandu in the city. The proposed four-lane flyover will start from Maligaon and end after crossing the Kamakhya Temple gate on the Assam Trunk (AT) Road with an extended arm leading to Pandu Ghat. The state PWD department will construct this flyover at a cost of ₹33.72 crore under the State-Owned Priority Development (General) Scheme and it will be completed within two years from the date of starting the construction work.

IPA joins International Port Community System Association

The country’s major ports’ apex body Indian Ports Association (IPA) has become the newest member of the International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSA). A successor to the European Port Community Systems Association (EPCSA), which was launched in June 2011 by six founding members, IPCSA and its members play an important role in global trade facilitation. The electronic communication platforms provided by port community systems (PCSs) ensure smooth transport and logistics operations at hundreds of seaports, airports and inland ports. IPCSA Chairman Hans Rook said, “IPCSA is delighted to welcome the IPA, which brings with it their experience and knowledge on how to develop a national PCS.” The inclusion of the Indian ports through PCS1x platform into IPCSA is a new milestone in IPCSA’s development and will support in the implementation of the new global initiatives. PCS1x has been rolled out by IPA to offer a true single window for the port and maritime community for sharing data and information. PCS1x is addressing the way in which information is passed on a real-time basis by integrating with various stakeholder systems bringing speed, transparency and efficiency leading to a reduction in errors and faster processing times. Since December 2018, PCS1x has tripled the user base and reduced the turnaround time of (customs) batch mode of EDI exchange from 30 minutes to less than four minutes. Currently, 12 major ports have fully implemented PCS1x with over 16,000 users transacting. Private ports including Mundra, Pipavav, Hazira, Kattupalli and Dahej have also commenced adoption. IPA Executive Director Abhijit Singh informed that the government desires PCS1x to be the best in class PCs globally. To keep abreast of the technological developments happening globally, IPA should become part of the international port community network by developing association with bodies like IPCSA.

Assam CM launches ₹383-cr flyover in Maligaon

Terming the rapid infrastructure development in Guwahati as part of the vision of the state government to make the city the gateway to entire South East Asia, the CM stated that the infrastructure development has been taken up as a priority. He also referred to the expansion of Guwahati city in four sides under the State Capital Region Plan and inclusion of Guwahati by the Centre in the first round of the Smart City Project as indicators of the vision of both Central and State governments to make Guwahati and Assam new engines of growth for the country.

Indian Infrastructure & Tenders Week
Panels set up to kick-start stalled road projects in Maharashtra

To expedite stalled road projects across Maharashtra, the state government has constituted 10-member committees of officers from various departments, including forest, in every division of the state. Uthas Debudwar, principal secretary (PWD) informed that the regional sub-committees will address project-specific issues regarding national highways and Central government-funded projects in different divisions. It will aim to resolve various generic issues that would speed up completion of the approved highway projects. The sub-committee will consist of divisional commissioner (chairman) and superintending engineer (national highway) as member-secretary. Other members include chief engineer, chief general manager, regional officer, MoRTH, Navi Mumbai, chief engineer, chief engineer (water supply), chief engineer of MSRDC, chief engineer (electrical), chief officer, MoRTH, Navi Mumbai, chief engineer, chief general manager, regional secretary. Other members include chief commissioner (chairman) and superintending engineer (water supply), chief engineer of MSRDC and forest officer. The committee shall review the generic issues common to all national highway works by conducting quarterly meetings on issues like land acquisition, tree cutting permissions, forest land approvals, shifting of electric and water supply and sewerage pipelines, delayed land approvals, mandatory arrangements have been put in place to kick-start the construction work on the corridor.

Vasavi Group launches luxury towers in Hyderabad

Vasavi Group has launched the premium residential project housing five towers of 32 floors each across an area of over 6 acres in Hyderabad city. It includes oxygen-rich open landscapes with 70% open area and 30% built-up space. The project, which has been named as Vistara will have hi-end facilities, luxurious appeal, ultramodern features and will include conventional parking, green grounds and clubhouse. Yerram Vijay Kumar, Chairman and MD of Vasavi Group informed that Vistara is one of the most premium apartments and a luxurious residential project in the city, and is set to have the best green buildings.

NHAI begins soil testing for Delhi-Mumbai expressway in Faridabad

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has started the soil testing on the Faridabad-Sohna bypass road, which is an extension of the Delhi-Mumbai expressway to DND Flyway in Delhi. In Faridabad, work started near Chandawali Bridge and Sector 37, which are near the proposed interchange without disturbing the traffic. A third spot has been identified at Kaili Mod in Ballabgarh. NHAI has planned the construction of a new ring road from DND Flyway to Sohna and an interchange to connect the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) Expressway with the Delhi-Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway at a cross-section of Sohna, Palwal, Manesar and Nuh. The project has been awarded to a Gujarat-based construction company, which will execute it in a phased manner. NHAI will build the 59-km-long highway in three packages - Package 1 includes an 8-km-long, six-lane flyover from DND to Jaltpur along the Yamuna, while the second package of 25-km from Jaltpur toBallabgarh will be a six-lane, signal-free stretch. Both stretches will have six-lane service roads for local traffic. The third package from Ballabgarh to Sohna, which will be 26km long, will have six lanes with an interchange linking the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway with KMP Expressway. The project is destined to be completed within the next three years.