NHAI clears Rs. 8,000-cr Pathankot-Mandi NH in HP

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has given clearance to the Rs 8,000-crore Pathankot-Mandi four-lane highway project and with this it has also restarted land acquisition process and the NHAI is floating global tender for the construction of the first phase of the project between Pathankot and 32 mile in the next two months. A detailed project report had been completed by Joint Ventures and Infrastructure Casta Limited, a private company and projected Rs. 8,000-crore total cost of the project. The alignment of the new four-lane highway has been altered and now only a few stretches of the old highway will be used. As per the proposal eight bypasses, three tunnels, three railway over bridges and three flyovers will be constructed between Mandi and Pathankot. After the completion of the distance between Pathankot and Mandi the distance will be reduced from 219 km to 171 km. All major towns such as Nurpur, Mattor, Nagrota Bagwan, Palampur, Maranda, Baijnath, Paprola and Joginder Nagar have been bypassed in the new project and apart from this, tunnels will be constructed between Kota and Draman, Mattor and Kashiyari and Bijn and Mandi town, said an official spokesperson.

MahaMetro starts tunneling work on Pune Metro corridor

In order to offset the delay caused by the outbreak of Covid-19, Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MahaMetro) has fast tracked the tunneling and excavation in the underground section of the Pune Metro rail project. The project has crossed Shrivajnagar station, despite a 25% dip in work efficiency because of the lockdown. The tunneling work, which had commenced last December, is now being executed in a single shift, as two shifts earlier. Despite the challenges, the underground tunnel has progressed well as of the two tunnel-boring machines, one has crossed 200 metres beyond Shrivajnagar station, while the other is 20 metres past the location. The machines will now reach Civil Court via Simla office check and CoEP station, while the other is 20 metres past the location. The machines will now reach Civil Court via Simla office check and CoEP ground, said official sources, adding that at the moment, only 1,000 workers are on duty at the various Metro sites across the city, compared to the pre-lockdown strength of 2,800. MahaMetro has reached out to the respective district administrations in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh after some workers expressed a desire to return to Pune and also the labour contractors attached to the project are working hard on bringing the labour force back to the work sites.

BRO launches road construction on border in U’khand

In an attempt to speed up the Munsiyari-Bugdiyar-Milam road on the Indo-China border in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, Border Roads Organization (BRO) recently carried heavy road building equipment by helicopters to Laspa, BRO Chief Engineer Bimal Goswami said, elaborating that copters landed heavy road-building machinery in the tough Himalayan terrain of Uttarakhand’s Juhar Valley near the India-China border. The absence of heavy stone cutting equipment at Laspa near the alignment site of the 65-km had delayed its construction. The Munsiyari-Bogdiyar-Milam road, which is being constructed in the high Himalayan region in the state, will be a link to the last posts on the Indo-China border. After several unsuccessful attempts last year, it finally succeeded this month. Cutting of hard rocks, which are standing straight on a 22-km portion of the road, will now become easy as heavy machines can be transported by helicopters to the spot. Construction of the road was started in 2010 with an amount of Rs 325 crore sanctioned for the project. The road stretch being constructed from both ends and except the 22-km hard portion, cutting work has been completed on 40 km of the road and the remaining portion of the work is being completed on fast track basis.

RLDA announces 5-acre luxury residential project in Delhi

The Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) has decided to develop a railway colony located along the erstwhile Boulevard Road in North Delhi where the project will house high end villas, bungalows and plotted residential development expected to come up on the 5.38-hectare plot. RLDA is floating tenders for this project very shortly as it has targeted to earn Rs 392 crore from this development. The entire land parcel will be available for high-end residential development immediately after the relocation of the existing railway quarters to other locations within Delhi. Commercial development is also proposed on the site facing the busy Lala Hardev Sahai Marg as the site is located close to the Bungalow Zone, Civil Lines, a premium neighborhood in North Delhi, outlined under Zone-C in Delhi’s Master Plan 2021. The locality boasts of prominent institutions such as Delhi University, Delhi Legislative Assembly, Tis Hazari court, among others and as per Delhi Master Plan 2021, the project falls in the Civil Lines Bungalow Zone and is governed by Development Control Regulations (DCR) and Zonal Development Plan for Zone C (Civil Lines).

NHAI unveils R. 300-cr underpass near IGI airport

In a bid to provide hassle free transport facilities to the IGI airport, the government has decided to build a Rs 300-crore underpass near Shri Murli on the Delhi-Gurugram Expressway, said official sources, elaborating that plan, among others, includes the fourth runway, an elevated taxiway, a bigger Terminal 1 and 123 body scanners. Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has directed all civil airports in India to install body scanners. The underpass at NH-8 has been proposed by NHAI and aviation ministry has advised DIAL to contribute 50% of the total cost of the Rs 300-crore project. DIAL estimates a total capex of about Rs 9,783 crore for the currently planned phase. The capital expenditure (capex) for this exercise will be Rs 154 crore. Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has also asked DIAL to get aircraft recovery kit to meet exigencies at IGI. Its expected cost is Rs 19 crore, AERA has decided while determining tariff of IGI till March 31, 2024.
Indian Railways has fast tracked the construction work of the strategically located rail bridge in Bihar. The then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee laid the foundation stone of the two-km-long railway mega-bridge on river Kosi in 2003. The bridge is considered of strategic importance for the country, have to come down to Katihar and others, this will give an alternate route all the way to Indrani, and New Jalpaiguri from where the route to the state of Assam starts. The bridge was sanctioned in the year 2003 at a cost of Rs 323.41 crore and the 17 years have escalated the construction cost to Rs 516.02 crore.

Railway building Rs. 510-cr rail-bridge in Bihar

Indian Railways has fast tracked the construction work of the strategically located rail bridge in Bihar. The then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee laid the foundation stone of the two-km-long railway mega-bridge on river Kosi in 2003. The bridge is considered of strategic importance for the country, have to come down to Katihar and others, this will give an alternate route all the way to Indrani, and New Jalpaiguri from where the route to the state of Assam starts. The bridge was sanctioned in the year 2003 at a cost of Rs 323.41 crore and the 17 years have escalated the construction cost to Rs 516.02 crore.

PBN infuses Rs. 750-cr in Gorakhpur expressway

In a major boost to road infrastructure projects in UP, PNB has extended a credit line of Rs 750 crore for the Gorakhpur Link Expressway, including the Rs 750 crore credit line of the PNB. Gorakhpur Link Expressway is the fifth green field expressway project in UP after Yamuna Expressway, Agra-Lucknow Expressway, Purnavanh Expressway and Bundelkhand Expressway. Another mega Ganga Expressway project has also been proposed, for which the bidding process is likely to be initiated shortly. The Gorakhpur Link Expressway was divided into two packages and awarded to Apcos Infratech and Dilip Buildcon for development. Cutting across Gorakhpur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Ambdekar Nagar and Azampur districts, it is touted to benefit a population of nearly 50 million in the Gorakhpur and adjoining districts by providing fast connectivity for public and goods transport.

U‟hand kick-start Laldhang-Chillarkhal road corridor

Shortly after the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) gave its nod for building the Laldhang-Chillarkhal road corridor through the buffer zone Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand government has now started the construction work on the mega project, state forest minister, Harak Singh Rawat, said elaborating that the road links is an important link route connecting Kotdwar. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has directed building underpasses for animals and forest land transfer, the NBWL had approved the proposed road. The NBWL recommended the proposal for building the road through the buffer zone with certain conditions including that construction of an elevated road (underpass for animals) is under consideration and the road is not directly connecting two suburban centers (as per the NBWL’s initial proposal) for which the NBWL gave its approval. The NBWL approved the project for the Bahundhanda-Chilarkhal road corridor.

Puravankara plans Rs. 1,100-cr realty projects in Bengaluru

Real estate building major, Puravankara will invest around Rs 1,100 crore to develop two new housing projects in Bengaluru as the company has decided to continue with previously planned projects despite the COVID-19 pandemic. It recently launched the two projects on digital platforms. MD Ashish R Puravankara, said elaborating that in the first project, “Provident Woodfield”, the company will develop 356 plots, mostly residential, on a 25 acre land parcel at Electronic City in Bengaluru. The total investment in this project is around Rs 80 crore and will be delivered by 2023-end. In the second project, “Purva Atmosphere”, which is spreading over 13 acres at Thansandra in Bengaluru, it will construct 939 units, priced Rs 59 lakh onwards and they will be completed by March 2025 with an estimated investment of Rs 1,100 crore, he claimed, adding that in recent times there is a steady rise in customer sentiment veering towards homes as their safe haven option, which prompted the company to accelerate the process of the new launches.

L&T secures multiple transports infra contracts

The construction wing of L&T has secured contracts for its various businesses including an EPC contract to construct Packages 11 and 22 of the Delhi Vadodara Expressway, which will be the country's longest expressway of NHAI under its flagship Bharat Mala program. The business wing also secured another EPC contract from the Public Works (Roads) Directorate, Government of West Bengal for the reconstruction of 4 lane Talab ROB (Hemanta Setu) adjacent to Taltala Railway Station on Barrackpore Trunk Road, Kolkata, West Bengal. Its Water & Effluent Treatment Business won yet another EPC contracts from State Water a Sanitation Mission, Uttar Pradesh, to implement water supply schemes for Shivhar and Parasi group of villages in Mahoba and Sonathara districts respectively. The work includes designing of the construction of three intake structures, three water treatment plants of capacity 64 MLD, 1171 km of transmission and distribution pipelines, 20 clear water reservoirs, 37 overhead service reservoirs, 20 pump houses, 7360 house service connections, associated electromechanical a instrumentation works, said an official spokesperson.

SCCL approves mining of five open cast mine blocks

The Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) recently approved plans for five new open cast mining projects apart from purchase of 25 dumpers with 60 tons capacity, Chairman and managing director N Sridhar, said elaborating that in addition to this, the company board also reviewed various measures being taken in the Singareni mines to prevent spread of Covid-19. The Board also cleared proposals for expansions of Doosy OCP and GDK-7 LEPOC in Godavarikhani, besides over burden contract for JVROC-2 in Kothagudem and KKOC project in Mandampati. Deputy Secretaries for Coal and Managing director RR Mishra from Nagpur along with Western Coal Fields chairman and managing director RR Mishra from Nagpur also participated in the Board of Directors via video conference. Special Chief Secretary for Energy Ajay Mishra along with directors of the SCCL – S Shankar, S Chandrasekhar, BH Thakur Rao, N Balamurugeswar who were among the others who also attended the meet.

Govt differing BS-IV norms for construction equipment to 2021

The ministry of road transport and highways is currently contemplating to defer stricter fuel emission norms for construction equipment vehicles, tractors, and harvesters. This comes after recent meetings were made by the agriculture ministry and equipment manufacturers, seeking some time for implementing the next stage of emission norms which were to be applicable October 2020 onwards, said official sources. The transport ministry has proposed that BS VI rules, which were to apply to construction equipment vehicles October 1 onwards, be towards homes as their safe haven option, the proposal is likely to ease up liquidity issues of agricultural and construction equipment manufacturers in the country.
Thyssenkrupp Elevators win two airport contracts

The Pune airport expansion project was recently given the go-ahead as the line will connect 2 essential powerhouses of the country’s most vibrant cities. The Maharashtra Rail Infrastructure Development (MRIDC) completed the DPR for the high-speed rail and sent it to Railway Board & Maharashtra government for approval. As of now, there is no direct rail connectivity among Pune-Nashik. Rail network and rail users have to go via connecting route by Lonavala, Kajrat, Panvel, Diva, Kalyan, Igptu till Nashik. This rail project will be the world’s 1st semi high speed corridor over the broad gauge, Maharai declared. MRIDC/Maharail will be completing the semi-high-speed double line project that will reduce the travel time from Pune to Nashik for about couple of hours. This semi-high speed corridor including double railway broad gauge rail lines from Pune to Nashik will allow the trains to operate at a speed of up to 250 kmph in the future. As both the cities are fastest growing cities of Maharashtra and together constituting 18 per cent of the population of the state & contributing 19% Gross Value. The MRIDC has aimed to operate the Pune-Nashik broad gauge rail line with the commercial speed of 200km per hr with coming addition up to 250 km per hour. The Railway line will touch 3 districts including Pune, Ahmednagar & Nashik by serving seamless connectivity to industrial zones of Pune and Nashik like Alandi, Chakan, Khed, Manchar, Narayangaon, Sinnar & Satpur, said an official spokesperson.

STEC emerges lowest bidder for Rs. 1,126-cr RRTS project

The National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) has invited bids involving the road improvements in Meghalaya in the north eastern region of the country involving an investment of Rs. 1,251 crore, claimed an official spokesperson, elaborating further he added that the scope of work includes upgrading the one lane road stretch into two lanes with paved shoulder. The project in question is on elevators and escalators,” the company said in a statement. The Pune airport expansion project will see investments of Rs 1,000 crore, and the funds will be used for expanding the terminal, cargo handling facilities, roads and parking space to augment capacity. Thyssen Krupp said it expects to complete the elevator and escalator installation work by March 2021. In addition, the company also won the project to install elevators and escalators at the LGBI airport in Guwahati, where it will be installing 25 elevators, 10 escalators and two moving walks.

NHIDCL floats bids for Rs. 125-cr highway project

The National Highways- & Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) has invited bids involving the road improvements in Meghalaya in the north eastern region of the country involving an investment of Rs. 1,251 crore, claimed an official spokesperson, elaborating further he added that the scope of work includes upgrading the one lane road stretch into two lanes with paved shoulder. The project in question is on

IRB Infra secures funds for Mumbai-Pune e-way

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has given green signal to go ahead with a plan to raise Rs 50,000 crore through a special purpose vehicle (SPV) with the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) for the Delhi-Mumbai expressway project and that the road building agency will appoint a merchant banker soon. NHAI’s external financing route was approved at a recent meeting with the finance ministry, the official said, adding that the model would be finalized by next month. This comes amid the Covid-19 virus outbreak as government spending to spur investment in road projects across the country. There are gaps in its requirement which have to be filled. The funds generated through NIIF will be spent over the next three years and once it establishes a model. In July last year, the infrastructure funding body entered into an agreement with the national highways building authority to invest in road projects. The SPV will allow NIIF to take sovereign funds on board and co-invest in projects of the NHAI. All construction risk and land acquisition costs will be borne by NHAI under the SPV and in the first tranche, the construction cost of the 1,320 km long Delhi-Mumbai expressway will be funded. NHAI has proposed to use the SPV funding mode for green field projects and expressways, according to the official sources.
Rajasthan fast tracks Rs. 721-cr highway project

The state government has fast tracked the Beawar-Gomti NH - 8 to be developed from double-lane to four-lane highway and the project as the project has already been approved by the Union transport ministry, said an official spokesperson, adding that National Highway with a length of about 100 km will be completed in two packages. In the first package, about 50 km length will be developed by spending Rs 380.29 crore and in the second package the remaining 50 km length will be built at a cost of Rs 341.33 crore. Under this project, 40 small bridges including 6 flyovers will also be constructed and once it is commissioned the chances of road accidents on this route will be reduced to a greater extent. There were many black spots on this route where accidents were caused due to wrong overtaking of vehicles. Currently, this road is six-lane from Jaipur to Beawar and four-lane from Gomti to Udaipur. After the four-lane road from Beawar to Gomti, traffic from Delhi to Jaipur, Ajmer, Beawar, Udaipur and Ahmedabad will become more streamlined.

GHR Infra launches 4.7-acre residential project

GHR Infra a renowned real estate builder has recently launched a 4.7 acres residential housing project in the upmarket Kondapura area of the city in Telangana. The project, which has been named as GHR Titania, will house four blocks of 480 aesthetically designed smart residential apartments with smart living and smooth connectivity, said Karteek Reddy, CEO, GHR Infra. Infra-structuring that it provides organic plantations, terrace garden, vertical gardens across open spaces. Also included in the project are 23,700 sq ft multipurpose club house, high end outdoor sport courts, indoor swimming pool, gym and fitness centre along with joggers and walking tracks. Titania is the project of the future, which many residents will look forward for its efficient and sustainable luxurious smart apartments and the builder looks forward for an exciting response from the people looking forward to own a premium and smart homes at the IT corridors at Kondapura.

BRO kick-start two strategic roads along China border

The Border Road Organization (BRO) has recently launched two key roads near the China border in eastern Ladakh — the site of a tense border stand-off with country’s northern neighbor. The projects aimed at providing connectivity to important forward area that the military calls Sub-Sector North (SSN), said BRO sources, adding that the first is the strategic Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi (DS-DBO) road that provides connectivity to the country’s northern-most outpost. Daulat Beg Oldi, the second road being built from Sassoma to Saser La will provide an alternative route to DBO near the Karakoram pass in the road axis in south-west of DBO. Both projects are being executed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), which is ferrying 11,815 workers to areas near the China border in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand for building strategic road connectivity. There’s a need to have an alternative road to DBO in Sub-Sector in the northern region. The DS-DBO road can be interdicted at several choke points by Chinese forces during hostilities. While the road from Sassoma to Saser La can connect with DBO, it will be an engineering challenge due to the terrain and may require construction of a tunnel too, said Lieutenant General BS Jaswal (retd), a former Northern Army commander.

Karnataka kick-start Rs. 220-cr airport project

The state CM in Karnataka recently laid the foundation stone for the construction of airport at Shivamogga area of his constituency. The project aimed at constructing the well-equipped airport with matching facilities at Sogane in Shivamogga taluka at a cost of Rs 220 crore on an area of 662.38 acre. The project will be taken up in two phases and is slated to be commissioned a year’s time. The first phase of the airport project consists of runway, taxiway, apron, approach road, peripheral road and compound wall construction. Similarly, the second phase will house, among others, a terminal building, ATC tower, fire station building, among others. The project in question has been planned under the Udan scheme of the Central government and has been envisaged to provide affordable air travel to people. After the stone laying ceremony, he directed official concerned to complete the airport work on time without compromising on the quality of the construction materials.

Feedback Infra wins mass transit system contract

The Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) has recently awarded the contract of carrying out a pre-feasibility study of the Mathura-Vrindavan Mass Transit System in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The purpose behind the initiative is to assess the development and as well as monetization of a Mass Transit System in around a 12 km meter gauge track between Mathura and Vrindavan. The project has been aimed that smoother traveling between Mathura and Vrindavan is going to be more convenient and comfortable. According to details, the 12 km gauge track is not widely used and has a right of way (ROW) of around 20-22 meters. The pre-feasibility study will not be limited to the identification of land banks that are available between Mathura and Vrindavan track as well as the monetization potential of operational assets therein. Feedback Infra will be required to conduct a detailed study on traffic analysis, monetization of project potential, the recommendation of transport solution, as well as estimation of project financial and economic returns. The proposed mass transit solution will comprise a two third lane road along with a bridged monorail system/light rail that can withstand a high footfall of passengers. Ved Parkash Dutta, Vice-Chairman, RLDA, said detailing that the proposed transport system will be instrumental in ushering in commercial development of Vrindavan, which is a popular religious destination.

Grundfos acquires Denmark-based Eurowater

Grundfos has entered into an agreement to acquire Eurowater thereby marking an important milestone in the company’s ongoing efforts to pioneer solutions to tackle global water challenges. Ulrik Gernow, Group Executive Vice President, CEO, at Grundfos, said adding, “Eurowater is an outstanding company and we are truly impressed by its organization and the people we have met. The Eurowater and Grundfos businesses share a number of similarities, including a sharp focus on innovation and offering high-quality products and value-added services to customers. The acquisition aligns closely with Grundfos’ strategy to strengthen its innovation leadership within water technology, and supports the company’s purpose to pioneer solutions to the world’s water and climate challenges and improve the quality of life for people. Eurowater brings a broad portfolio of solutions and a deep understanding of water treatment applications and end-users and enable it to strengthen its value proposition to customers. When complete, this acquisition will further advance us in our important work to address water challenges on a global scale.” “With the global reach and presence of Grundfos and the extensive experience in producing first class products, the company sees great opportunities to boost the development of innovative and water efficient solutions to the benefit of our many customers,” says Torben Buhl, Managing Director for Eurowater. Headquartered in Denmark, Eurowater serves primarily the European industrial and municipal sectors.

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Haryana offers sops for industries relocating from China

Less than a month after suggesting Haryana as an alternate for multinational companies and foreign investors keen on shifting base from China, the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) has issued details of land lease policy for investors. Unlike previous allotments, this time there will be two categories of plots less than one acre (but above 1800 sq metre) and one acre and above. HSIIDC has fixed Rs 10 crore as price for plots less than an acre (above 1,800 sq metre) and Rs 25 crore for plots measuring one acre and above. The plots will be allotted on basis of e-bidding and the winning bidder will have to deposit 20% of the cost upfront and then complete implementation of the project within two years. There is a provision of two extensions of one year each but there will be no extension after four years of allotment. The industries which will be given priority in allotment include auto, auto components and light machines, agro-based food processing and allied industries, textile, apparel, footwear and accessories, and IT and ITeS. Haryana CM had video interactions with representatives of MNCs, especially from US, Korea, and Japan in May and had offered Haryana as an investment destination. Around 60 companies had expressed keenness to invest in India and most of the companies keen to shift their base from China to India have already got units in the state.

NMDC starts mining at Bacheli block in Chhattisgarh

The National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has resumed mining activity at the iron ore complex in Chhattisgarh, NMDC Director (Production) P K Satpathy, said elaborating that the company resumed all mining activities including loading works at Kirandul mine in an area where the mineral from a mine is stored before dispatch through railway rakes. The Bacheli mine, with production of 12 million tons, accounts for about 40 per cent of NMDC’s total output of 33 million tons per annum (MTPA). About the details of NMDC mines in Chhattisgarh, he said the company has two mining complexes of total installed capacity of 29 MTPA. “The company pays around Rs 1,800 crore to the state government as taxes annually. Besides, it spends more than Rs 150 crore annually in Chhattisgarh state itself on CSR activities which include education, medical care, infrastructure apart from providing skill development training for enhancing income generation of the local population,” he said.

NHIDCL floats bid for Rs. 137-cr road in Sikkim

In an attempt to add to the existing road network in the north eastern region, the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) has invited bids for the construction of road works in the state of Sikkim involving an investment of Rs. 137.93-crore. The scope of work in the project includes construction of two-lane specification road with paved shoulder as realignment (green field alignment) of the existing stretch between Lepshing to Gyalshing of NH-510 (design ch 75.000 km to 90.210 km) in Sikkim under SARDP-NE Phase-A framework on engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) basis (Package-V). The project commands a completion period of 18 months, said official NHIDCL sources.

GMR inks green field Bhogapuram airport pact

Airport major GMR Infrastructure has signed an agreement with the Andhra Pradesh government to develop a green field airport at Bhogapuram, near the port city of Visakhapatnam. An official spokesperson said, adding that GMR won the bid by offering to pay Rs 303 per passenger fee; GVK had offered Rs 202. Reliance Airport Developers, Essel Infraprojects, Fairfast India Holdings, and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund had also participated in the bidding. The current state government’s relationship with the Centre helped things as more or less the AA has agreed to shut Visakh airport from 2022. The state government will compensate the AA for that, said an official of the Andhra Pradesh Ports Development Corporation Limited, the nodal agency of Bhogapuram airport. The state Cabinet recently accorded approval to the project. As against 2,700 acres, which was to be handed over for development of the airport, GMR will now get 2,200 acres. The rest 500 acres will be with the state government for development. For GMR, it is the second green field airport project in its kitty in India. The group will also develop the new Mopa airport in Goa. —Bhogapuram airport is a strategically located, high-potential airport, claimed G K Kishore, executive director (South), and chief innovation officer; GMR Airports.

Welspun takes up construction of eight-lane NH stretch

In a recent development in the highway sector, Welspun Enterprises has taken over the construction of eight-laning of Mukarba Chowk Panipat Section (15.500 km to 86.000 km) of NH-64 (New NH-44) at Panipat in Haryana on design, build, finance, operate and transfer basis (DBOT) under the harmonious substitution route, said an official spokesperson of the company, claiming that it has recently received a copy of endorsement agreement between the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and Welspun Infra, a wholly owned subsidiary of Welspun Enterprises, and that the agreement has completed the process of takeover of the highway stretch.

Kerala speeds up Kochi-Bengaluru industrial corridor

The state government in Kerala has fast tracked the execution work of the much-awaited Kochi-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (KBIC) project. Additional chief secretary Akesh Kumar Sharma said, elaborating that KBIC is being executed in partnership between the state and Union governments. The state has finalized and approved the state support agreement (SSA) and shareholder’s agreement (SHA) for KBIC and it has been sent to the Union government. Once the Centre approves it, both the Centre and state will ink the accords and will speed the execution of KBIC. An international agency will be appointed by the National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation for master planning of the land and detailed engineering. After the signing of the agreement, the state will speed up master planning. It will take eight months for the preparation of the master plan and that the project will be managed by special purpose vehicle (SPV) and as of now Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation, (KINFRA) is the nodal agency for the project, KINFRA managing director Santhosh Koshy Thomas said that the agreements for the project would be signed by both the state and central government very shortly.
I ron International has invited bids for new BG electrified rail line in Chhattisgarh involving an investment of Rs. 162.99 crore. The project in question commands scope of work including earthwork and blanket works for railway formation, minor bridges, major bridges, ROB’s, track linking works (including supply of sleepers and ballast but excluding supply of rails) for the feeder lines. The lines connect Chhattisgarh (0.4-4.85 km), Baruad siding (0.4-4.85 km) and Durapur siding (0-0.65 km) in connection with the construction of the new BG electrified railway line of East Corridor-I between Kharissia (0 km) to Dharanipragadh (74.0 km) with a spur from Garihagodha to Gare Pelma over South East Central Railway.

BRO launches construction of 202-km NH in Imphal A construction of the 202 Km long Shangshak-Tengnoupal highway (NH 102-A) has been started by the Border Road Organization (BRO) recently. The organization had launched the project in 1993 but abandoned it without achieving any tangible progress. The project then was brought under the State PWD as a State highway but it also failed on standardization clause. The NH would connect with Imphal-Moreh highway at Tengnoupal-Sila junction. On the other hand, it would also connect Shangshak with Finch Corner and then with Imphal-Ukhrul road the former is being constructed only after it was declared as NH 102-A by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Due tender process is underway for the 83.5 km long Shangshak-Khonglo section of NH 102-A and for the 40.5 km long Khonglo-Kasom Khullen section, the work has been awarded to a contractor with the letter of acceptance and an agreement has also been signed. But the 10 km long Kasom Khullen-Yairipok junction has already been constructed as a part of another project funded by ADB. Work order and letter of acceptance for the 68 km long Yairipok junction to Tengnoupal-Sila junction have been awarded to Rajasthan based M/S Varha. Construction work of the highway began recently in the section, which was awarded to another contractor. The project is slated to be completed in one year provided there are no undue disturbances.

RITES secures tunneling consultancy contract A project portfolio in the country’s road and highway sector, RITES has recently received an order for Consultancy Services and preparation of Detailed Project Report from National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL). In the contract, works also included extending pre-Construction activities for Construction of Highway tunnels across multiple locations including certain sections on Darcha — Padam road on the national highway 301 and also covering approaches in Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh regions. The contract in question has been secured by the RITES in a Joint Venture partnership and its fee is worth Rs. 55 crore.

Incon invites bids for Rs. 162-cr rail infra project I ron International has invited bids for new BG electrified rail line in Chhattisgarh involving an investment of Rs. 162.99 crore. The project in question commands scope of work including earthwork and blanket works for railway formation, minor bridges, major bridges, ROB’s, track linking works (including supply of sleepers and ballast but excluding supply of rails) for the feeder lines. The lines connect Chhattisgarh (0.4-4.85 km), Baruad siding (0.4-4.85 km) and Durapur siding (0-0.65 km) in connection with the construction of the new BG electrified railway line of East Corridor-I between Kharissia (0 km) to Dharanipragadh (74.0 km) with a spur from Garihagodha to Gare Pelma over South East Central Railway.

A&M Group approves Rs. 100-cr for BKC metro line E uro infrastructure development company A&M Development Group has committed Rs 100 crore to a Mumbai metro rail project along with RCC Infra Ventures through its recently formed Indian arm, A-Merli-A&M Infrastructure. The company had bid for Nasdaq-listed Polaris Energy Resources, has sought permission to invest in Chembur- Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) phase of the Mumbai metro project. This will be A&M Development Group’s maiden investment in India after its announcement in April to invest $20 billion in mega projects including smart cities in the country in coming years. The MMO-RCC Infra Ventures joint venture had bagged the contract for the project, but it was cancelled due to the company’s inability to achieve a financial closure. Recently, Oberoi- A&M Infra-Consortium wrote to the state government expressing its commitment to bring in the funds to revive the project. The Oberoi-A&M Infra-Consortium not just looking at just government contracts but also helping private companies facing funds shortage in completing various activities, Indorijy Singh Oberoi, country head (India-Saarc), Oberoi- A&M Infra-Consortium, said, adding that the cost of the project came to Rs 10 billion with RCC and the company plans to take this further to Rs 500 crore for completing projects in roads, low-cost housing and other future projects.

Provident Housing launches 20-acre plotted project P rovident Housing has launched the project in question has been secured by the RITES in a Joint Venture partnership and its fee is worth Rs. 55 crore.

Global Analysts laud Delhi-Mumbai e-way as a silver line A nalysts across the world have taken note of the appreciable pace and progress of Delhi-Mumbai expressway and have lauded the project as a silver lining in the roads sector. A research report by foreign brokerage, Credit Suisse notes that expressway activity is impressive with almost the entire stretch in action. This is the first green field expressway project across residential and commercial segments. It managed to sail flats even during the lockdown and will launch all the future projects on schedule. The developer also plans to double its commercial and retail portfolio to 10 million sq ft by 2023 for which, Puravankara has already acquired land in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad. The developer plans to launch 8.7 million sq ft; over the next three quarters, most of it under its premium affordable housing segment, Provident.

Jindal Stainless surges ahead in export orders J indal Stainless Limited (JSL), India’s largest stainless steel manufacturer, has regained its footing in export volumes by ramp-up production for global markets. With India yet to lift all lockdown restrictions, JSL’s strategic initiative to recapture volumes of Delhi-Mumbai expressway and have lauded the project as a silver lining in the roads sector. A research report by foreign brokerage, Credit Suisse notes that expressway activity is impressive with almost the entire stretch in action. This is the first green field expressway project across residential and commercial segments. It managed to sail flats even during the lockdown and will launch all the future projects on schedule. The developer also plans to double its commercial and retail portfolio to 10 million sq ft by 2023 for which, Puravankara has already acquired land in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad. The developer plans to launch 8.7 million sq ft; over the next three quarters, most of it under its premium affordable housing segment, Provident.

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Goodyear, one of the world’s largest tire companies, announced the appointment of Sandeep Mahajan as the Managing Director of India operations with effect from June 1, 2020 for a period of 5 years or up to the date of superannuation or retirement. He succeeded Mr. Rajeev Anand, who is superannuating from the company after completing more than 38 years of service and will continue as the Chairman of the Board for India operations with effect from June 01, 2020 till December 31, 2020. Mr. Rajeev Anand has held numerous senior leadership positions in India and ASEAN over the past 38 years at Goodyear. Most recently he served as the Chairman & Managing Director of Goodyear India which lasted for more than 11 years. His earlier roles include “Manufacturing Director – ASEAN & India”, “Director Manufacturing & Strategic Initiatives – India” and the Company’s “Chief Operations Officer”. Under his leadership, Goodyear operations grew significantly in India.

Welcoming the new MD, Chairman of Goodyear India and ASEAN, Mr. Harrish Jain, Vice President, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation ( BMC) said, “I am happy to hand over this role to Sandeep Mahajan; I congratulate him on his new role. He has made significant contribution to the company in the past eight years and I am confident that under his leadership Goodyear will further strengthen its position in the India market. His deep knowledge in Retail and diverse experience across domestic and international markets will help Goodyear grow its business in the India region”. The new MD has successfully led Farm, Commercial, OTR and Consumer businesses within Goodyear over the last 8 years. He has been instrumental in consolidating the market leadership of the Farm business in India. Mr. Sandeep Mahajan has over 28 years of experience in working with large and well-known multinational companies. Mr. Sandeep Mahajan started his career with Tata Steel Ltd and has had extensive sales & marketing experience at Hindalco Industries Ltd and LG Electronics. He brings extensive P&L as well as sales and marketing experience, both in Indian and key global markets. Sandeep holds a Bachelor’s degree in Electrical Engineering (Mechanical) and Master’s in Post Graduate Diploma in Management from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

MoRTH orders release of Rs. 8,000-cr to road contractors

The highways ministry issued orders to quickly release Rs. 8,000 crore, the retention money of contractors in proportion to the work done and making changes to enable monthly payments, among other Covid-19 relief measures for improving liquidity with highway contractors and concessionaires. In release orders, the ministry had allowed extensions in project timelines between three to six month and payments to subcontractors via escrow account, besides giving a relaxation in Schedule H that will enable monthly payments to contractors for the work done. The order, ministry had already taken a decision to not withhold money of contractors for cost of idling, and delays in execution of projects. So far, the extension is without cost, but there may be further clarification on this if contractors raise the issue, said official sources, adding it is difficult to assess the claims on idling and delays in construction, these could lead to arbitration in the future. Retention money (which is part of the performance security till construction period), is recommended to be released in proportion to the work already executed in accordance with the contract specification and further retention money from the period from three months up to six months may not be deducted from the bills raised by the contractor. The retention money to be released in case of contracts on engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) basis could be between Rs 3,000 crore and Rs 4,000 crore and in case of projects on hybrid-annuity mode, it could be around Rs 700 crore. With changes in the Schedule H, a sum of Rs 3,000 crore is likely to be released. Generally, agencies like the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) do not establish escrow accounts for EPC contracts. Following the guidelines, an escrow account between NHAI, main contractor and subcontractor could be made, with the subcontractor bearing the withdrawal rights. This will ensure that the smaller players in the sector taken care of. For all national highway tiling contracts, loss in collection of toll will be compensated as per the contract conditions, the guidelines said.

BDA Webinar turns out a big draw

The COVID-19 crisis offers great opportunity to the real estate industry to reshape mega cities like Mumbai but this can only happen if specific policy changes are announced by the authorities. These were the key takeaways from the Brihanmumbai Developers Association (BDA) ‘Mega Unity Webinar’, held in Mumbai recently. The mega webinar brought various developers associations, channel partners associations, architects engineers associations and allied associations together on a common platform for the first time ever and highlighted the pains of real estate sector and come up with practical solutions and suggestions.

Harsh Jain, Vice President, Brihanmumbai Developers Association (BDA), explained, “This pain has brought us all together, it may unite us together also. Real estate has been suffering mutually and now the current crisis of COVID-19 has added to the sufferings. Earlier we were communicating differently with the government and that was not the right way. Unitizing the associations will give us a voice which is stronger and will help us to communicate with the government in the right way.”

Nayan Shah, President, CREDAI MCHI, drew a comparison between real estate as a percentage of India’s economy vis-à-vis that in the USA, UK and China. “About 6% of India’s economy is real estate. India’s real estate value is $1.29-1.40 billion, our share will go upto $500-600 bn in the next 5-6 years. The government of India is spending more than Rs 7 lakh crores in agriculture, while the real estate sector is only asked for Rs30,000 - 40,000 crore to grow from $140 bn to $500-600 bn. We are going to try to get relief from central government and Reserve Bank of India and the finance ministry, not as a matter of sympathy but as a matter of strength and we can make a big difference in the economic status of the country.”

Covid-19: A blessing in disguise for Indian realty sector

Though the outbreak of Covid-19 has had a deep impact on the realty market in India but at the same time NRIs are increasingly shifting their choice to buy properties in India. With thousands of international brands now looking at India over China as their preferred destination for production and business going forward, India is gearing up for some major influx of global investments, that will have an impact across various industries, directly or indirectly. In the current scenario, while many are considering moving their bases back to India to be a part of this growth story, some purely want to invest in their home cities, to feel a sense of security in a known territory. As per one of the leading real estate advisory firms, NRIs investments in India will hit all time high of $13.1 billion in FY 21. Over the years, this cluster with higher disposable income compared to local buyers has become an important driving factor of the real estate market in India. With dollar gaining strength against rupee, a competitive marketplace with negotiations tougher than ever, and a sense of making it back to homeland, being a few among many reasons, developers have experienced a sudden spike in enquiries from international buyers, even while the industry faces the toughest quarter in the past two decades. In view of this, NRIs buyers have become more active and intriguingly the demand continues to grow from such clientele. “Time and again, the real estate industry has proven to be an attractive asset class with healthier relative returns, and with improved affordability in the current scenario,” it has gained attention of both locals and NRIs across the world. The NRI investors have always been the first to forecast such trends and enjoy the first moved advantage, disregarding the general sentiment. Especially since the establishment of RERA, international buyers have gained confidence to invest in India, more than ever, through a more transparent format of engagement, with reliable developers and properties that are registered under RERA, which secures their investment, even while settled abroad. Predominantly, UAE, USA, UK, and Canada are the biggest source of NRI investment in India, with 42% of the total inflow coming from GCC alone. As per the Ministry of External affairs, nearly 8.9 out of 12 + million Indians living abroad are based in West Asia alone, of which there are 3.3 million in the United Arab Emirates. 2.6 million in Saudi Arabia and 2.9 million in Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. GCC contributes close to $40 billion annually as an international remittance to India. Even after having spent a significant part of their work life in these countries, citizenship is not an option available to the Indians based in the Gulf region, which brings them back to India when it comes to investing in assets like a house. Also, with Dirham gaining value against the rupee, NRI enquiries from Dubai have been among the highest and they are expected to make big-ticket investments in the housing projects in the coming months.