

# Cabinet clears 10-km bridge across Ganga

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As part from the major decisions on packages to the sugar sector and increase in wages of Gramin Dak Sevak, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday also approved proposals for a 10-km bridge across river Ganga in Allahabad to be built at a cost of Rs 1,948 crore; implementation of the third phase of installing three lakh solar lamps for street lighting and 25 lakh solar study lamps for students in North Eastern and Naxal-affected States.

The Cabinet even approved revised guidelines on time bound closure of sick and loss making central public sector

enterprises and disposal of their movable and immovable assets. "The surplus land of sick PSUs will be utilised for housing for poor. Out Government will treat this as first right of poor on this surplus land," said Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, detailing the Cabinet decisions.

"The CCEA approved the project for construction of 9.9

km long new 6-lane bridge across the Ganga on NH 96 at Phaphamau in Allahabad with total capital cost of Rs 1,948.25 crore," a statement from the Ministry of Road and Highways said. The project, expected to be completed by December 2021, will resolve the traffic congestion on the existing 2-lane Phaphamau bridge, it said.

It will also ease the rush

during Kumbh, Ardh-Kumbh and other rituals at 'sangam' and will boost the pilgrimage tourism and local economy of Allahabad. "The bridge will also be beneficial for the Lucknow/ Faizabad bound traffic coming from Madhya Pradesh via NH 27 and NH 76 through Naini

Bridge," the statement said. Prasad said there were only

13 bridges on the Ganga between Allahabad to Farakka before May 2014, but later additional 20 bridges were planned, of which 5 have been opened to traffic and 7 are under construction.

As many as three lakh solar street lights will be installed throughout the country with special emphasis on areas where there is no facility for street lighting systems through grid power -- North Eastern States and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts-- under the scheme. Prasad said that 25 lakh solar study lamps will also be distributed to students from this regions. He said this project would cost Rs.1895 crores.