

# 'Will complete 300 road projects by March 2019'

**EYE ON POLLS?** About 100 of these highway projects to be completed by Dec 2018: Gadkari

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**NEW DELHI:** Union road minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said that his ministry is targeting to complete some 300 highways projects by March 2019, just ahead of the general elections.

The government has decided to reduce the time frame by three months of 300 projects, scheduled for completion in June 2019, and are now likely to be completed by March, Gadkari said.

But the minister insisted that the advancing of deadline to finish the projects has "nothing to do with poll dates", but with an aim to deliver world-class infrastructure projects with "no political interest whatsoever".

"We do not build roads motivated by political interest. Whatever is to happen will happen in the elections but this country should develop, whether there is a government of the BJP or the Congress or any other party. Once a road is built it will benefit all, irrespective of who they (people) voted for," Gadkari said at a press conference.

**ON FAST TRACK**  
HT had on May 19 reported how the NDA government plans to showcase highway development as one of its biggest achievements in the infrastructure sector ahead of the Lok Sabha polls

**Road to 2019: Modi plans big infra push**  
HIGHWAY FOCUS 200 projects likely to near completion by March

**Under construction 200 projects**  
Cumulative value of these works ₹1.5 lakh crore

State	Number of projects	Cumulative value of these works (₹)
Uttar Pradesh	57	₹18,029 cr
Uttarakhand	45	₹21,926 cr
Rajasthan	28	₹21,292 cr
Gujarat	27	₹24,828 cr
Maharashtra	26	₹16,245 cr

Hindustan Times had on May 19 reported how the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government plans to showcase highway development as one of its biggest achievements in the infrastructure sector ahead of the next year's Lok Sabha elections, with close to 200 road projects worth ₹1.5 lakh crore likely to be completed by mid-2019.

Following a two-day review meeting in Goa that ended on Tuesday, Gadkari outlined details of the status of over 700 ongoing projects in 20 states. He

said that out of the 300 projects that the ministry is targeting to complete by March 2019, about 100 projects will be completed by the end of December this year.

Uttar Pradesh (UP), Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are among the states that have performed well in road construction with UP alone building projects worth ₹2 lakh crore, Gadkari said.

The minister added that he has told the chief secretaries of all the states to hold monthly review meetings to expedite projects that may be stuck.

To sort out issues such as delays caused by land acquisition, chief general managers have been directed to visit the sites every ten days to see the progress on the ground, the minister added.

He also expressed hope that the per day road construction target in 2018-19 will be more than 40km. The ministry has also revised the construction target of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) from 5,058km to 6,000km.

Coming down on the consultants allegedly preparing faulty detailed project reports (DPRs), Gadkari said it was one of the reasons behind the projects facing delays.

"Very often DPRs are made without taking actual ground realities into consideration. It has been decided to compile a list of projects that have been delayed for this reason. The consultants making faulty DPRs will be penalised and black-listed. The government will hold back 30% payment of consultants preparing faulty DPRs for highway projects," the minister said.