

National masterplan drives infra projects

Digital tool is mainly being used by the railway ministry, dept of telecommunications, highways and ports ministry

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet project GatiShakti national masterplan's digital tool has transformed the way infrastructure projects are being planned and implemented, government officials said.

It is helping identify high-congestion stretches along national highways and railway tracks, offering time-bound solutions and even ensuring more schools in unserved villages.

Over the last one year — since the launch of the GatiShakti national masterplan — around 125 rail projects were identified for doubling or tripling of tracks. It was also to identify if there is any missing connectivity through use of the digital portal that has more than 1,900 data layers of central and state government departments.

Sample this. The entire rail route for food grain movement from Punjab to Assam has double track, barring a 95-km stretch from Gorakhpur to Valmikinagar that is single track, which means trains



from both directions share the same tracks.

After an in-depth study of the route and its surroundings using the digital portal, officials observed that if the track is doubled — one rail track in each direction — it will result in additional movement of 15 goods trains per day. An inter-ministerial panel comprising senior government officials from key infrastructure ministries has recommended doubling of the track.

The work is expected to start

soon, said Amrit Lal Meena, special secretary, logistics division of the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

During the last one year, we have benefitted the most in planning infrastructure projects. The tool has been able to minimise uncertainties and disruption in project planning. Eventually, it will reduce the time and cost overrun of projects that has been an issue," Meena said.

"The other benefit is identifica-

tion of 'critical gaps', which is important for swift movement of freight. Now, officials from the Centre and state governments have started working together to resolve the challenges (in a time-bound manner)," Meena said.

Apart from the railway ministry, the masterplan is being extensively used by the department of telecommunications, highways and ports ministry. It is also being used in the social sector. The Uttar Pradesh government's latest 'Pahuch' programme is making use of the portal

REPORT CARD

22 central ministries and all states get individual portal

1,900+ data layers of central ministries concerned and departments, states uploaded

- Empowered group of secretaries and network planning group set up at central and state levels
- Customised decision-making tools developed on GatiShakti national masterplan for project planning, land parcel evaluation, cost estimation, forest intersections

to ensure the presence of high schools within 5 km of every eligible student.

Officials from Gujarat-based Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N) have been training officials from ministry of road transport and highways and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to draft alignments of the five expressways digitally. Once the alignments are finalised using digital technology, the project will get into the detailed project report (DPR) stage.

This would result in huge savings in survey costs.

Similar training has been conducted for other ministries as well.

The Gati Shakti national masterplan was announced by the Prime Minister in October last year. The masterplan is an integrated plan depicting the economic zones and the multimodal connectivity infrastructure. It aims to integrate the interventions of various ministries and government departments. And, it also addresses the connectivity gaps in such zones.