

## **Shri Gadkari says highways can be used for laying optic fibre, oil and gas pipelines**

The Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Shipping Shri Nitin Gadkari has said that Information Technology holds the key to providing transparent and effective governance in the country. Shri Gadkari was speaking at INFOCOM 2017 organized by ABP Group and Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises in New Delhi today.

Commending the role played by Indian engineers and software experts worldwide Shri Gadkari said that if we wish to build and maintain a competitive edge over the world, we need to leverage technology to get the maximum returns from our assets. He said the Road Transport & Highways Ministry has around 2 lakh kilometres of highways, and he has offered the use of this entire stretch for laying optic fibre and oil and gas pipes. This, he said, could earn the Ministry some revenue that can be further utilized for constructing and maintaining roads.

Speaking about the road transport sector Shri Gadkari said that very soon the issue of driving licences will be entirely computerised . The fitness of a person for issue driving licence will be decided through a computer programme with no human interference. This will greatly enhance safety on roads by ensuring that licences are issued only to deserving drivers.

Shri Gadkari further said that E-tolling rolled out by his Ministry last year has helped cut down the traffic congestion at toll plazas on the National Highways. Trucks and other vehicles bearing FASTags are not required to stop at the toll gates, as the toll gets paid electronically through these RFID tags. The minister said efforts are being made to get more and more vehicles to use FASTags. Soon these will be available with vehicle dealers and new vehicles will come with the tags already attached. Besides easing congestion, e-tolling will also help reduce pollution and prevent unnecessary wastage of fuel – both corollaries of the long wait at toll plazas.

Telecom Secretary Ms Aruna Sundararajan also spoke on the occasion.

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