

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways inaugurates Jowai- Ratacherra Section, NH-06

The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Shipping, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the Rehabilitation and Up-gradation of existing road to 2-lane with paved shoulders configuration in Jowai-Ratacherra (Meghalaya Assam border) section of the National Highway- 06 today at Shillong and dedicated the road project to the nation. The 102 km long road was constructed at a cost of 683 crore rupees by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI).

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Nitin Gadkari said the government decided to give highest priority for development of infrastructure in North East, especially in road sector, as prosperity comes from good roads connectivity. In addition, the other two important sectors are industry and agriculture. He also expressed happiness that after Narendra Modi has taken charge as Prime Minister, he has given top priority to the N.E states. The Union Minister asserted that there are various big projects for the NE States and further urged the National Highway and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) to make small packages and give more contracts to the people from the area so as to provide employment opportunities. We have project involvement of 1.50 lakh crore rupees in the NE, he said.

The Union Minister added that the 102 km long stretch of road is very important for the development of industries in Meghalaya as it passes through cement and coal belts of the State. With the travel time reduced from 4 hours to 2.5 hours, now trucks and heavy vehicles coming from Brahmaputra Valley can move smoothly in a record time frame to Silchar in Barak Valley, within Assam and thus providing connectivity to other N.E states like Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and southern Assam. The Union Government is also giving highest priority for regional connectivity through aviation and waterways. The Ministry is also considering options for developing waterways in the Brahmaputra River.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister of Meghalaya Shri Conrad Sangma thanked the government of India and especially the Honourable Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari for having taken up this project way ahead of its time, and that it is truly a very important and historic day and proud moment not only for Meghalaya but for the entire north eastern region. The Chief Minister said that the particular area where this road goes through is a very highly economically active zone, where there are more than ten cement plants, different resources that have been taken out of there including limestone and coal, agricultural products like turmeric and other products that they grow there. He also recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicating Shillong-Nongstoin-Rongjeng-Tura Road to the nation which has now improved connectivity and further economic growth of that region.

Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein and other officials were also present at the inaugural function.

A two-day review meeting of every ongoing national highway project in the North Eastern States with Chief Ministers, Central and State Officials and contractors began after the inauguration by the Union Minister.

NP/EP

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