

Centre paves way for bridge parallel to Vikramshila Setu

Bhagalpur-Naugachhia Road Gets National Highway Status

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Patna: Decks have been cleared for construction of a four-lane bridge parallel to Vikramshila Setu over the Ganga in Bhagalpur. Road construction minister Nand Kishore Yadav said Union surface transport ministry has accorded national highways (NH) status to Bhagalpur-Naugachhia road, which was a prerequisite for construction of the bridge by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

"Deliberations for declaring the 15km-long Bhagalpur-Naugachhia road as NH

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were held at a meeting between CM Nitish Kumar and Union surface transport minister Nitin Gadkari in New Delhi on August 29. The Centre was requested to grant NH status to this road, thereby paving way for construction of the bridge parallel to Vikramshila Setu. The Centre has given an in-principle approval to the proposal," Nand Kishore told TOI on Thursday.

The minister said a detailed

Long wait for bridge over Ganga in Khagaria

People of Khagaria and its adjoining areas in north-east Bihar are anxiously waiting for the completion of a four-lane RCC cable-stayed bridge over the Ganga near Aguwani ghat under Parbatta block in Khagaria district, about 40km from the district headquarters.

The foundation stone for 3,160-meter-long-bridge along with the approach road with an estimated cost of Rs 1,710.77 crore was laid by chief minister Nitish Kumar on February 23, 2014 at an impressive function organised at KMD College, Parbatta playground.

According to sources, the construction work is being done on a war footing under the supervision of technical experts. The bridge, which is likely to be completed by the end of 2019, will link NH-31 and 107, reducing the distance between Sultanganj and Khagaria, Madhepura, Saharsa and Supaul.

Shahnawaj Ahmad Niyaji, district land acquisition officer said process of acquiring 304.989 acres of land for 20 km-long approach road is underway. "A sum of Rs 90 out of Rs 400 crore has already been allotted for distribution as compensation," he said. TNN

led project report (DPR) for the proposed bridge has already been prepared by the Bihar Rajya Pul Nirman Nigam Limited (BRPNL). "The length of the new bridge will be 4.367km, while that of its approach roads from Bhagalpur and Naugachhia ends will be 0.978km and 8.964km, respectively," Nand Kishore said.

The minister said the new bridge would be constructed with an estimated ex-

penditure of Rs 1,700 crore. "We will start acquiring the land as soon as the bridge project is approved by the Centre," Nand Kishore said.

Road construction department (RCD) sources said the need for construction of the new bridge was felt following dilapidated condition of 4.5km-long and 30 metre wide Vikramshila Setu. Sources said the ball bearings and shockers of the bridge were damaged, result-

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NAND KISHORE YADAV
Road construction minister

ing in increase in the space between the expansion joints. Vikramshila road bridge was inaugurated on June 30, 2001 over the Ganga by the then Bihar chief minister Rabri Devi to ensure reinforcement of Indian military in northeastern region in times of emergency through roadways.

"The new bridge parallel to Vikramshila Setu will ensure smooth road connectivity between north Bihar and Jharkhand as well as Kolkata," the RCD minister said.