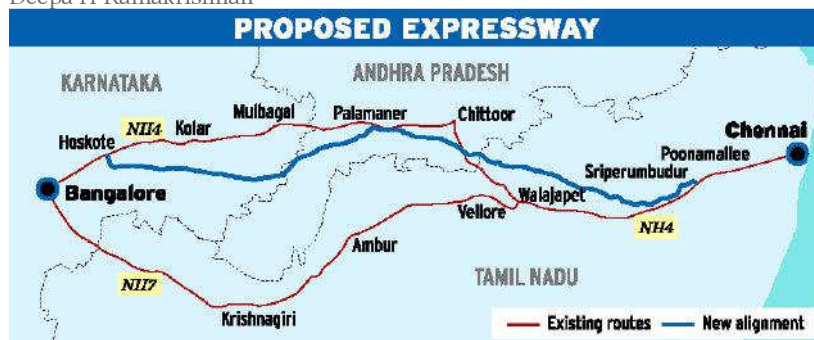


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Project report on Bangalore-Chennai Expressway may get ready by March

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The ambitious Bangalore-Chennai Expressway project, which will cut down travel time and fuel consumption, is picking up steam with work on the detailed project report (DPR) likely to be completed by March.

The green field project would also act as a catalyst of development in the 260-km route from Hoskote near Bangalore to Sriperumbudur, nearly 40 km from Chennai. It is estimated to cost a whopping Rs.6,000 crore. Of this Rs.5,000 crore would be towards the construction work alone —at the rate of Rs.20 crore per kilometre.

The proposed six-lane expressway would serve as an alternative to the present popular NH 7 from Bangalore to Krishnagiri, NH- 46 Krishnagiri to Ranipet and NH 4 Ranipet to Chennai route, which is 372 km long and witnessing a significant increase in traffic. The project, proposed under the National Highways Development Project Phase VI, would take the Kolar, Chittoor route and have 12 major intersections in all. It would be a toll road facility.

National Highways Authority of India, Chief General Manager, I.G. Reddy, told *The Hindu* that the process for land acquisition has been initiated and villages involved along the proposed alignment of the expressway in the three States have been finalised and proposal for publication of 3 (a) Notification is under preparation.

“The Central Government has given in-principle approval for the project. Environmental clearance has to be sought for the project as a portion of the alignment was passing through reserve forest area. Already no objection certificates have been obtained from the governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka for the project. The alignment has been fixed, detailed engineering study for the project is on and soil tests are also underway,” Mr. Reddy said.

Egis-BCEOM International S.A. and SECON Pvt. Ltd. are the consultants for preparation of DPR.

The expressway that would come up on Build Operate Transfer (BOT) basis is designed for six lane divided carriageway with 1.5 metre unpaved shoulder and 3 metre paved shoulder.

A six metre wide median has been proposed for safety and for future widening. Public consultations to elicit the opinions of the residents affected due to the proposed alignment have also been completed, he added.

Meanwhile, sources in the Industries Department said that the DPR for the first phase of the Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor of Excellence (CBICE) from Chennai to Ranipet is ready. The DPR for the remaining stretch is under preparation.

It would pass through Chennai-Ranipet-Hosur-Bangalore. The Centre had planned the corridor along National Highways 4, 7 and 46, linking Chennai and Bangalore through Nellore and Chitradurga. However, the State Government chose to go with the traditional route. Plans have also been drawn up to develop the Madurai-Tuticorin-Tirunelveli corridor and the Coimbatore-Salem corridor.

(With inputs from N. Anand)

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