


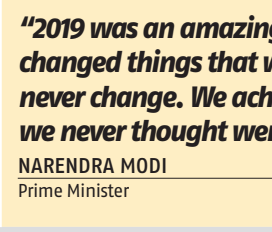
“Assuming turncoat, rudderless, fickle Nitish Kumar has an ounce of intent not to implement NRC in Bihar, he must order suspension of National Population Register with immediate effect until this unconstitutional law CAA is repealed! Walk the talk, Mr CM!”

TEJASHWI YADAV
RJD leader



“It is only Parliament which has got the powers to pass any law with regard to citizenship; not any Assembly. This law is binding on the country. CAA is not related to any Indian Muslim”

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
Union law minister




“2019 was an amazing year for India. We changed things that we thought could never change. We achieved things which we never thought were possible”

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

IN BRIEF

Govt extends Sabka Vishwas scheme till January 15

 With only about a fifth of disputed excise and service tax dues declared under the amnesty or relief scheme till the last day of the four-month window, the government on Friday extended it by another 15 days. With this, the government hopes to shore up revenues to make up for the steep shortfall in tax collections this fiscal year. Although 73 per cent of total eligible taxpayers availed the Sabka Vishwas Legacy Dispute Resolution scheme, they made up for just 18 per cent of the disputed amount, suggesting that taxpayers with large dues have stayed away so far. As many as 180,000 cases are under litigation, arrears, or investigation, with a pending tax demand of ₹3.75 trillion. Of the total 184,000 taxpayers who are eligible to avail the scheme, 133,661 taxpayers have so far submitted their applications by December 31, said CBIC. **DILASHASETH**

Irdai slaps ₹2.18-cr penalty on Hero Insurance Broking

Insurance regulator Irdai has slapped a fine of ₹2.18 crore on Hero Insurance Broking India for violating norms on motor insurance service providers, forcing customers to buy policies from their panel and discriminating policyholders, among others. **PTI**

Lakshmi Vilas Bank appoints S Sundar interim MD & CEO

Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) has appointed S Sundar, its Chief Financial Officer (CEO), as the interim managing director and CEO (whole time director) of the bank with effect from January 1, 2020. As part of this, he has resigned from the post of CFO on Tuesday. He has also been appointed as the additional director of the Bank. In August, the bank's previous Chief Executive Officer Parthasarathi Mukherjee resigned from the position. **BS REPORTER**

NHAI has issued over 11.5 million FASTags so far

Over 11.5 million FASTags have been issued so far, the government said on Tuesday. The National Highways Authority of India started electronic toll collection through RFID-based FASTags on its 523 toll plazas on December 15 for seamless flow of traffic. "Over 11.5 million FASTags have already been issued, with more than 100,000 being issued every day," the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said in a statement. The daily transactional value has crossed ₹52 crore with the number of FASTag payments surpassing 3 million, it added. **PTI**

Manappuram Finance raises ₹350 cr via bonds

Manappuram Finance on Tuesday said it has raised ₹350 crore by issuing bonds on December 15 for seamless flow of traffic. "Over 11.5 million FASTags have already been issued, with more than 100,000 being issued every day," the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said in a statement. The daily transactional value has crossed ₹52 crore with the number of FASTag payments surpassing 3 million, it added. **PTI**

Indore cleanest city for 4th time in a row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, 31 December

Indore was adjudged India's cleanest city for the fourth time in a row while Kolkata was worst performer in the central government's cleanliness survey announced on Tuesday.

In the category of cities having population more than 1 million, Bhopal stood second in first quarter results (April to June), while Rajkot grabbed the second spot in second quarter results (July-September) of 'Swachh Survekshan League 2020'.

The third position was grabbed by Surat in the first quarter and Navi Mumbai in the second quarter.

In the second quarter, Vadara was ranked fourth, followed by Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Nashik, Greater Mumbai, Allahabad and Lucknow.

Among cantonment boards, Delhi Cantt stood first while second and third positions were grabbed by Jhansi Cantt board and Jalandhar Cantt Board respectively in the second quarter. Secunderabad Cantonment Board in Hyderabad was worst performer among other cantonment boards.

In the category of cities with over 1 million population, Bhopal stood second in first quarter

No water beneath the ground and no hope around the corner

The concluding part of a three-part series looks at recharge efforts in a Haryana village even as some farmers in Rajasthan neither have water nor hope

JYOTI MUKUL
Udaipuria/Bhasalta Khurd/Deroli Ahir

Women coming out to talk is usually not the case in most parts of Rajasthan and Haryana. So, when Prem Devi of Udaipuria village in Chomu tehsil of Jaipur district starts to speak, she is not sure whether she should sit or stand while narrating her woes.

Just outside her courtyard is a papaya tree, with plastic wrapped around its fruit that appear big but are yet to ripen. After being prodded to sit, she narrates how two borewells in her holding of less than 0.5 hectare stopped pumping water about six years earlier. Her family now depends on rain-fed irrigation to grow some bajra (local millets) for household consumption and fodder for goats. Her son works on construction projects as an artisan to eke a living.

Among her many complaints is grid electricity. The family used to get a subsidy of ₹833 in the power bill itself but the rules have changed and there is cash transfer into the bank account. "The cash no more comes," she says, as officials clarify that this could be due to non-linking of their bank account.

About eight km from the National Highway 52, which connects Jaipur and

Agra, Murli Dhar in Bharni village of Sri Madhopur tehsil of Sikar district has a similar challenge of dried farmland. His family of 12 survives on the earnings of his labourer-sons. All he can grow after the rainy season is bajra and taramira, an oilseed grown in drier regions of north-western India.

In fact, taramira is close to the mustard crop that is traditionally grown in Rajasthan and Haryana. Dharamveer Dudi, assistant director in the horticulture department, Jhunjhunu district, says as compared to wheat, a better crop for the region is mustard. "If wheat gives ₹2,000 a quintal, mustard gives around ₹4,000. Besides, wheat requires more fertiliser and at least six to seven watering cycles. Mustard requires only three and very little fertiliser," he explains. Also, mustard foliage helps to produce micro organisms which are good for soil health.

Across Jhunjhunu district, right up to Haryana's Mahendragarh, a number of khejri (prosopis cineraria) trees can be seen within the farms. These traditional ones fix nitrogen content in soil and are considered good for the area. "You will mainly see these trees in Rajasthan. Once you cross the border on to Haryana, they won't be seen," says Dudi.



Kashi Ram (left) of Bhasawata Khurd wonders if this road work (pictured) could turn around his fate while Prem Devi of Udaipuria village narrates how two borewells in her holding of less than 0.5 hectare stopped pumping water about six years ago



The road that leads to Narnaul in Haryana is abuzz with six-laning of National Highway 11. Kashi Ram of village Bhasawata Khurd is wondering if this road work could turn around his fate — his dry farmland is along the route and agriculture earns him no income. His family gets water for drinking from a village well; for irrigation, he banks on rainwater. Some years before, he had set up a small poultry unit but it did not last. "I let out the (poultry) shed for weddings now," he says.

Since water scarcity knocks at the

GROUND WATER PROFILE

Figures in bcm*

	Rajasthan	Haryana
Annual groundwater recharge	13.21	10.15
Annual extractable groundwater resource	11.99	9.13
Annual groundwater extraction	16.77	12.50
Stage of groundwater extraction (%)	140	137

* Billion cubic metre

Rajasthan	Haryana
Total assessed blocks	Total assessed blocks
295	128
Over-exploited	Over-exploited
185	78
Critical	Critical
33	3
Semi-critical	Semi-critical
29	21
Safe	Safe
45	26
Saline	
3	

Source: National Compilation on Dynamic Ground Water Resources of India, 2017, CGWB

doors of most areas in Rajasthan and Haryana, the state governments have made micro irrigation practices mandatory with solar powered pump scheme. With power bills virtually nil for irrigation, there is always a danger of over exploitation of groundwater.

V Saravana Kumar, director (horticulture) in the Rajasthan government, says the state will be promoting universal solar water pump controller to incentivise use of solar power for non-irrigation productive use like thrashing, atta chaki, etc. "It will be one connection for irrigation and three for other uses." Besides, component C of the Centre's KUSUM programme will enable farmers to sell the extra power to power distribution companies. This is intended to disincentivise over exploitation of ground water.

The Deroli Ahir village of Mahendragarh district in Haryana has presented another plausible scenario for areas that are close to some irrigation canals. "The dry land problem has been reversed partially," says Bhoop Singh. The village panchayat gave about 1 hectare land to make a pond and to two recharge wells. Overflow from the nearby Narnaul irrigation canal is directed into this land, besides collecting rain water. "This has become a lifeline in the 5-km radius," says Singh who is busy getting a new house ready next to his old house in preparation for his son's wedding in the coming year. He is rather unconcerned that the shadow of the new structure is reducing the output of his solar panels next doors.

Series concludes

MEGA INFRA PUSH

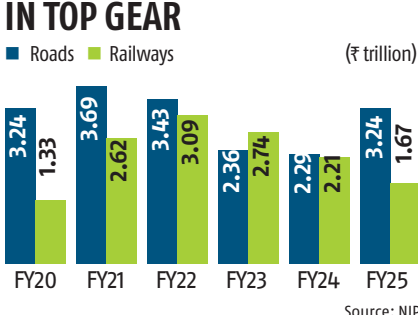
₹19.63-trn road projects in the pipeline

Centre and states will be equal contributors

MEGHA MANCHANDA & SHINE JACOB
New Delhi, 31 December

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ended 2019 on a benevolent note for the road sector by announcing a pipeline of road projects worth ₹19.63 trillion. The new pipeline comprises 39 per cent projects each of the Centre and states, and 22 per cent of the private sector.

"It is good to see the government focusing on substantial infrastructure agenda to put the economy back on track," said Vinayak Chatterjee, chairman, Feedback Infra. As part of the infrastructure vision 2025, the government has envisaged enhanced road connectivity to remote areas and trunk



connectivity to major economic corridors, strategic areas, and tourist destinations through expressways. Ratings agency ICRA said: "Indian infrastructure is likely to witness a massive increase in investment with the target of ₹102 trillion to be spent over the next five years (FY20-FY25)." At a time when economic growth is slowing down, increasing investment in infrastructure can be a booster dose.

While a large development plan is already underway for the national high-ways under the Bharatmala Pariyojana scheme, many states have taken up large road development projects. Similarly, for the Railways, besides the regular capex of railway lines upgrade,

Energy expenditure to have lion's share in NIP

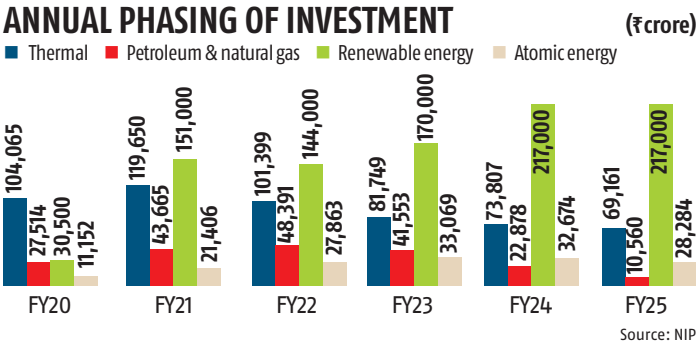
SHREYA JAI
New Delhi, 31 December

To improve energy access and sustainability, the Central government's National Infrastructure Pipeline will have a greater focus on the power sector.

As much as ₹24 trillion worth of investments have been envisaged for the energy sector and the government expects a majority of these coming from private players.

This comes at a time when private investment in the conventional energy space is at an all-time low, with ₹2 trillion worth of stressed assets and renewable energy facing a dearth of investors. In a report released by the Finance Ministry on Tuesday, the Centre laid down the plans for increasing private participation in the energy sector, especially in power distribution. The report forecast India's per capita energy consumption to go up to 1,616 Kwh by 2025, from 1,181 Kwh currently. The Vision 2025 states 24x7 clean and low-cost power available to all households, industry, commercial businesses, and agriculture. It also expects the power generation capacity to touch 619 Gw by 2025 with 50 per cent contribution from thermal and 39 per cent from renewable sources. According to the report, all the investments needed in renewable energy would come from the private sector. "100 per cent of the NIP to be implemented by the private sector. There is a well-stocked pipeline through to FY25 because of 450 Gw target visibility," said the report.

India's current renewable energy capacity stands at 84.3 Gw. This week, ICRA Ratings downgraded the year-end outlook for the renewable energy sector from stable to negative. It said the sector is facing several challenges, including long payment delays by state distribution utilities, execution delays in projects bidding, challenges in project completion and land



acquisition, and transmission connectivity difficulties. "These have impacted investor sentiments in the sector and is reflected in the slow down in tendering of wind and solar projects. It came down to 10.6 Gw in January-September 2019, from 16.7 Gw in the corresponding period of the previous year. Moreover, many of the bids called by central nodal agencies remained under-subscribed," said Sabyasachi Majumdar, group head & senior vice-president-corporate ratings, ICRA.

Regarding conventional energy, the Centre in its NIP has envisaged state governments to take lead in investment. It expects close to 57 per cent of the expected ₹11.8 trillion to

come from the states. The government is also hopeful of opening doors for private players in the power distribution sector, which continues to be sick because of the debt-ridden status of state-owned power distribution companies (discoms).

The report said increased public-private partnership in discoms would lower the losses. It has also proposed other reforms, such as open access in distribution, regular tariff revisions, and extensive smart metering.

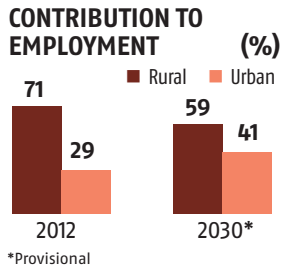
The cumulative loss of discoms stands at ₹28,369 crore by end of FY19, up 88 per cent over the previous year. The RBI in its report on state finances observed the losses of discoms have plagued states' balance sheet as well.

WHICH SECTOR GETS HOW MUCH

FM Nirmala Sitharaman has announced details of infrastructure to be developed in the five-year period ending March 31, 2025, a promise mentioned in the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's manifesto for general elections, and announced in the Budget. While ₹100.2 trillion to be invested during this period would be spread between 12 broad sectors, almost one-third of the projects are still in conceptual stage. **COMPILED BY INDIVIAL DHASMANA**



SECTOR-WISE INVESTMENT	
Sector	Investment envisaged during FY20-25 (₹ cr)
Energy	2,454,249
Roads	1,963,943
Urban	1,629,012
Railways	1368523
Irrigation	772,678
Rural infra	772,765
Digital comm	320,498
Social infra	356,701
Industrial infra	307,462
Ports	100,923
Airports	143,398
Agri and food processing	60,553
Total	10,250,704



INDIA'S POPULATION AND URBANISATION		
Year	Population (bn)	Urbanisation (%)
1991	0.8	25.7
2001	1.0	27.8
2011	1.2	31.1
2030*	1.5	41.7

*Urbanisation to increase the need for infrastructure. Source: Task Force on National Infrastructure Pipeline

Experts: Infra plan needs hand-holding by Centre

The proposed ₹102-trillion infrastructure investment announcement by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman would boost investor confidence, say sector experts and officials.

The plan, however, will need initial hand-holding by the Centre, through higher spending, they add. The FM has said she expected Centre and states to have equal share of the proposed capital expenditure, at 39 per cent, followed by the private sector at 22 per cent.

"Identifying projects' pipeline is a great initiative, to help focus on progress and provide visibility to investors. Sectors like irrigation and railways will likely continue to depend largely on government spending. In the current context, I would expect the same for roads, until bank

financing eases," said Manish Agrawal, partner at consultants PWC India. He expects airports and digital infrastructure to attract private investment.

The head of an infrastructure finance company said, "This scale of money — equity and debt — will need foreign investors' participation, as they bring in long-term capital. They will look for reliability and stability in policy and execution. The recent instances of policy reversals for renewable energy projects in Andhra Pradesh act as dampeners."

Sharad Mahendra, director and chief operating officer at JSW Energy, says how banks and other infra finance companies will approach this "will depend on how the RBI responds".

AMRITHA PILLAY & ABHIJIT LELE