

Transport sector accounts for a share of 6.4 per cent in India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Road transport has emerged as the dominant segment in India's transportation sector with a share of 5.4 per cent in India's GDP. Road transport demand is expected to grow by around 10% per annum in the backdrop of a targeted annual GDP growth of 9% during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The road network can be broadly classified into five broad categories: (1) Expressway (2) National Highways (NHs) (3) State Highways (SHs) (4) Other Roads and (5) Rural Roads. National Highways comprise less than 2 per cent of the road network, but carry 40 percent of the road-based traffic. State Highways (SHs) and Major District Roads (MDRs) constitute the secondary system of road transportation in the country. The State Highways connect National Highways, district headquarters, important towns, tourist locations and minor ports. About 61% of the total road length in India is accounted for by rural roads. The decadal figures of the road network under all these categories are provided in the **Table**. As would be seen from the table, the aggregate length of roads, which was 0.4 million km in 1950-51 has increased more than 10 fold to 4.24 million km by 2009-10.

<b>Road Category</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2010</b>
Expressways								200
National Highways	19811 (5.0)	23798 (4.5)	23838 (2.6)	31671 (2.1)	33650 (1.4)	57737 (1.7)	65569 (1.8)	70934 (1.7)
State Highways	173723 (43.4)	257125 (49.0)	56765 (6.2)	94359 (6.4)	127311 (5.5)	132100 (3.9)	133177 (3.7)	150342 (3.5)
Other PWD Roads			276833 (30.3)	421895 (28.4)	509435 (21.9)	736001 (21.8)	719257 (19.9)	863241 (20.4)
Rural Roads	206408 (51.6)	197194 (37.6)	354530 (38.7)	628865 (42.3)	1264154 (54.2)	1972016 (58.5)	2140569 (59.1)	2577396 (60.8)
Urban Roads		46361 (8.8)	203013 (22.2)	308631 (20.8)	396536 (17.0)	475666 (14.1)	362935 (5.5)	574516 (13.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>399942</b>	<b>524478</b>	<b>914979</b>	<b>1485421</b>	<b>2331086</b>	<b>3373520</b>	<b>3621507</b>	<b>4236429</b>

Note: Figures within parenthesis indicate per cent to total road length in each road category;

### **1. National Highways**

National Highways are the arterial roads of the country for inter-state and movements of passengers and goods. They traverse the length and width of the country connecting the National and State capitals, major ports and rail junctions and link up with border roads and foreign highways.

Out of the total length (70,934 km) of National Highways as on 31.3.2010, 25 per cent is of single lane/intermediate lane, 52 per cent is of 2-lane standards and the balance of 23 per cent is of 4 – lane standards or more.

In order to expand and improve road connectivity in the country, the Government has launched National Highways Development Project (NHDP). The NHDP is being implemented by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). Government has envisaged huge investment for construction and upgradation of National Highways under various phases of NHDP over the medium term. Details of various phases of NHDP are as under:

**NHDP Phase – I:** This phase was approved in December 2000. It envisaged – (a) Four laning of National Highways comprising golden Quadrilateral (GQ) linking major metros, viz. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai & Kolkata having an aggregate length of 5846 km; (b) North-South and East-West corridors covering 981 km; (c) Port connectivity by upgrading 356 km of NHs linking major ports in the country and; (d) upgradation of 315 km of other National Highways. The total aggregate length of NHs for upgradation envisaged under Phase I was placed at 7498 km. The total length completed upto March 2010 was 7328 km.

**NHDP Phase – II:** This phase was approved in December 2003. The main thrust of this phase involved upgradation (4 laning) of (a) North-South (Srinagar to Kanyakumar) & East-West (Silchar to Porbandar) corridors covering a distance of 6161 km and; (b) upgradation of 486 km stretch of other National Highways. The total length coverage for upgradation under Phase – II involved 6647 km out of which 4465 km has been completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

**NHDP Phase – III:** NHDP Phase-III involves 4-laning of 12,109 km of high-density stretches of NHs connecting State capitals, important tourist places and places of economic importance through Public Private Partnership (PPP) basis. Out of this, implementation of 4815 km on BOT was approved under NHDP Phase IIIA. NHDP Phase IIIB involving implementation of the balances 7294 km was approved in April 2007. Till 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, 1581 km of road length had been completed.

**NHDP Phase – IV:** This phase involved improvement of 20,000 km of NHs to two lanes with paved shoulders.

**NHDP Phase-V:** This phase was approved for six laning of 6,500 km of existing 4 lane highways in October 2006 on Design Build Finance and Operation

(DBFO) basis. This included 5,700 km of GQ and 800 km of other selected stretches.

**NHDP Phase-VI:** This phase, approved in November 2006, envisaged development of 1000 km of access controlled four/six lane divided carriageway expressways on DBFO basis.

**NHDP Phase-VII:** This phase was approved in December 2007 for construction of stand alone ring roads, by-passes (including improvements of NH links in city), Grade Separated Intersections, flyovers, elevated highways, Road Over Bridges (ROBs), underpasses and service roads on BOT Toll basis.

<b>Status of National Highways (as on 31.3.2010)</b>	
Lane Status	Length in km
6 lane and above	731 (1%)
4 lane (2 lane dual carriageway)	14,584 (22%)
2 lane (7 meters)	37,488 (52%)
Single/Intermediate lane	18,131 (25%)
Total length of National Highways	70,934