



Key Infrastructure Projects Announced in MP

Why in News?

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, announced major infrastructure projects in Madhya Pradesh, including a **four-lane corridor** connecting **key tiger reserves** to boost tourism and a **greenfield highway** between Bhopal and Jabalpur, with construction set to begin next year.

Key Points

- **Tiger Corridor:** The ₹5,500-crore 'tiger corridor' will link **Kanha, Pench, Bandhavgarh, and Panna tiger reserves**, aiming to boost tourism, create jobs, and enhance the state's economy.
- **Highways:** A new 255-km greenfield highway between Bhopal and Jabalpur will be built at a cost of ₹15,000 crore, with the Detailed Project Report (DPR) due by December 2025.
 - A 220-km high-speed corridor connecting Lakhanpuri in Seoni district to Raipur, Chhattisgarh, was also announced.
- **Longest Flyover:** A new 6.85 km flyover in Jabalpur, **the longest in the state**, was also inaugurated and will reduce travel time between Madan Mahal and Damoh Naka from 45 minutes to just 7 minutes.
 - It also includes a 192-meter cable-stayed bridge and **three bow-string bridges**.
 - The flyover, costing ₹1,200 crore, was funded by the **Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF)** and was originally initiated in 2019.

Central Road and Infrastructure Fund

- The Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF), originally known as the Central Road Fund, was established in 2000 under the **Central Road Fund Act, 2000**.
 - The fund is financed through a cess levied alongside the excise duty on petrol and diesel.
- The **Ministry of Finance** now administers the CRIF, whereas it was previously managed by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
- The **Central Road Fund Act (Amendment) of 2018** renamed the fund and expanded its scope, allowing proceeds to **finance other infrastructure projects** such as waterways, railway infrastructure, and social infrastructure like educational and medical institutions.