

**IN BRIEF**

**DGCA CONSIDERS WI-FI IN DOMESTIC FLIGHTS**

The civil aviation regulator DGCA is examining a proposal to introduce Wi-Fi service on board flights to adequately address all the related issues, Union Minister Jayant Sinha has said. The Civil Aviation Ministry, in August, had said that security issues were being sorted out for allowing the use of Wi-Fi facility in Indian airspace. "The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is studying the matter to make sure that all considerations are adequately addressed and as soon as that is done, we will issue a statement," the Minister of State for Civil Aviation said on the sidelines of the India Economic Summit. Currently, Wi-Fi services and phone calls are not allowed on flights flying over Indian airspace.

**MAHARASHTRA TO PROMOTE AGRO PROJECTS IN MARATHWADA**

Maharashtra plans to unveil a comprehensive package to promote long-term agriculture-based industries to tackle the farm crisis and unemployment in the drought-prone and backward rural region of Marathwada, according to reports. A special Cabinet meeting where the plan was discussed also emphasised on making all 12,978 villages across eight districts of Marathwada water neutral by 2017-18. Sources in the government have been quoted as saying, "Food parks, textile hubs and tourism will be the core sectors on which nodal departments have been directed to finalise the proposals." Although the final package is still undecided, these sources revealed that the total projects along with private partnership would be worth ₹1 lakh crore. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis held discussions with his ministers including Sudhir Mungantiwar, Sambhaji Nilengekar Pawar, Babanrao Lonikar, and Jaikumar Rawal to outline the broad parameters of the proposal for the underdeveloped region.

**Eliminate accident spots: Gadkari**

Minister of Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari has said that the government is committed to reduce the number of road accidents by 50 per cent in the next two years and is employing various measures to achieve this objective. These measures are geared

to tackle the problem through a multi-pronged strategy which includes effective road engineering solutions at the design stage, rectification of accident black spots, improvement in automobile engineering, driver education and revision and effective enforcement of laws.

Gadkari was speaking at a one-day national level workshop on Road Safety Engineering Measures organised by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways in New Delhi. The minister also spoke on the importance of road engineering in preventing accidents.

**Airports Authority of India launches cargo subsidiary**

State-owned airports operator Airports Authority of India (AAI) has launched a cargo subsidiary.

The company, to be called AAI Cargo logistics and Allied Services Company Ltd, will be 100 per cent owned by AAI. It will have an equity base of ₹20 crore and staff strength of 60 people to begin with.

Speaking at the launch event, aviation minister Ashok Gajapati Raju said, "The success of the company

will be interdependent on a lot of things. I wish them success."

Aviation secretary R N Chaubey said that the company would earn revenues of ₹380 crore "during the first year itself". "The cargo sector has so much of potential. AAI's entry into the cargo space should have happened several years ago," Chaubey said at the launch.

AAI officials said that the company has in equity base of ₹20 crore to start with.

**Road construction pace set to double**

Various reforms initiated by the government to ensure speedy approvals and clearances aided the pace of construction of roads, which improved 40 per cent from an average 4.3 km per day in FY2014-15 to 6 km in FY2015-16 and is likely to reach 11 km by FY2018, says Crisil. The material improvement in the pace of execution can be attributed to policy reforms by the NHAI and facilitations by the government, which are also reducing delays.

**Railway stations to be developed like Smart Cities**

In a major initiative, railway stations and adjoining areas will be redeveloped on 'Smart City lines' for enhancing passenger amenities, easy access to stations and enabling optimal utilisation of land at railway stations.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed in this regard by the Ministries of Urban Development and Railways in the presence of Venkaiah Naidu and Suresh Prabhu.

Dr Sameer Sharma,

Mission Director, Smart City Mission and Rajiv Chaudhary, Advisor, Ministry of Railways signed the MoU.

Both the ministers lauded the joint initiative as a "historic landmark that brings synergy in development of Smart Cities" since there can't be a Smart City without a smart railway station.

Naidu also said on the occasion that this convergence based city development will result in "qualitative improvement" in city life.

**Guj attracts major export earnings**

Gujarat, widely acknowledged as the most business-friendly state in India, figures among the top five states that account for 69 per cent of the country's total export earnings. It is also among two states, the other being Maharashtra, that together account for more than 46 per cent of the merchandise consignments from the country. Analysts attribute Gujarat's domination to the long coastline, cost-effective transport, superior infrastructure ensuring seamless connectivity and port capacity.

# Infrastructure<sup>®</sup>

November 2016 • Vol. 14 No. 4

**TODAY**

₹ 150

India's Premier Magazine for Nation Builders

## IS INFRA BANKABLE NOW?

Though the government's new policy is positive on arbitration and finance, the multi-rate GST and judicial hurdles may take the sheen off lucrative projects...pg 20

"Land acquisition and site-handover delays impact Indian EPC projects."

- Steve Edwards - Chairman and CEO, Black & Veatch  
Pg 26

"High-priced 700 MHz band unsold, and yet spectrum auction was positive."

- DG, COAI, Rajan S Mathews  
Pg 39

Instant Subscription



### FEATURE:

Construction And Mining Equipment...pg 50

### FOCUS:

Telecom Challenges...pg 38

**ASAPP**<sup>®</sup>  
INFO GLOBAL GROUP  
www.Infrastructure Today.in