



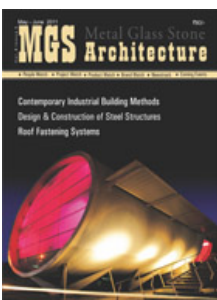
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Highway projects of Rs. 60,000cr up for grab



The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has decided to award 59 road projects involving a whopping investment of Rs. 60,000cr during the current fiscal. Though the construction work of targeted projects is spread over three years but the decision of awarding projects worth 7,994km in the current fiscal has factually opened up new business vistas worth Rs. 42,000cr for various segments including cement, steel, bitumen, construction and material handling equipment.

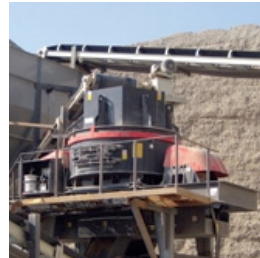
According to World Bank sources, in the road construction segment, lion share of the funds of about 70 percent is used for buying the related raw materials and the rest of the amount goes for meeting labor, construction equipment and allied machinery costs. The national highways development and maintenance, which is currently going on at a massive scale across the country, is bound to push the demand for cement and bitumen consumption to new highs. That apart, the economic impact of roads is said to be the highest as they not only push consumption of raw materials but also provide smooth connectivity to remote areas in the countryside thereby giving rural folks an easy access to market, which in turn results in increasing their income and again stepped up demand for goods and services.

They added claiming that India is currently the second largest manufacturer of cement and has taken a lead in pushing the growth rates among other prominent industries such as, pushing cement demand in the real estate, heightened activities in the road construction and allied infrastructure sectors. In addition, the cement sector remained unscathed and maintained its growth momentum even during the economic slowdown and as per reports the annual cement production in the next couple of fiscals will grow at a rate of about 12 percent. Similarly, with large number of road projects involving huge investment in the next decade will also open up huge construction and material handling equipment across the country.

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23 July 2011

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