

# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

## India's longest steel bridge Mahatma Gandhi Setu to be fully functional by June 7th



The longest steel bridge of India, Mahatma Gandhi Setu is all set to be operational by 7th June. Built over the river Ganges in Bihar connecting Patna in the south to Hajipur in the North. It is one of the longest river bridges in India. It is also known as "Ganga Setu", connecting National Highways 22 and 31.

It was inaugurated in 1982 by Late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and is around 5750 metres (18,860 feet) long. As it is being operational early in June, this route will be very helpful for those who have to travel for both personal and commercial purpose.

After years of use, the bridge was subjected to heavy structural and moving loads. The pressure exceeded the design and weight estimation, leading to

the beginning of the Gandhi Setu Rehabilitation project.

The Mahatma Gandhi Setu is also the first cantilever bridge in the country. It is now getting dismantled and converted

into a simple and workable support bridge. The previous existing concrete substructure of the Bridge has been retained.

The superstructure of the MG setu is now getting replaced by a steel deck one.

The Gandhi Setu on River Ganga is like a communication lifeline of Bihar. The State Road Construction Department (RCD) minister Nitin Nabin announced on Friday that the Bridge would become Fully Operational in June.

According to Nitin Nabin, the final touches are done on the eastern flank of the Bridge. The Bridge was being constructed under the Prime Minister's package to Bihar (MoRTH) by the Union Ministry of road transport and Highway. The Union Minister Nitin Gadkari will do the final inauguration of the Gandhi Setu Bridge.

The project was given to Afcons Infrastructure, with Submit OJSC as a joint venture at an estimated cost of 1,742 Crore rupees. The work began in 2017. Initially, the project was supposed to be completed by 2018. However, due to multiple reasons, the deadline was extended. Then further delays happened due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The people who have been travelling through Mahatma Gandhi Setu for years will accept that the Bridge had been in

need of construction since 1999. It was left in the same condition till 2016 when finally, the Central Government approved the reconstruction project.

A few days ago, Afcons Project Minister talked to News 18. SK Mishra said that there used to be a waiting period of 3-4 hours on the Mahatma Gandhi due to traffic jams. It was also due to the poor construction of the Bridge.

According to him, this waiting period will now be reduced to 15-20 minutes.

How will this affect the daily traffic?

The reopening of Mahatma Gandhi Setu will be no less than a blessing for all the travellers. According to estimates, around one lakh people in passenger vehicles will be able to use this Bridge every day.

The overall crossing time will be reduced to 15-20 minutes.

This Bridge is like an important part of the socio-economic development of Bihar. The importance is mainly because of how easily this Bridge connects the south and North Bihar.

How much steel has been used in the construction?

According to the project manager and further reports, around 66,360 metric tonnes of steel were used in the reconstruction of the whole superstructure.