

With MTHL on the road, Mumbai may see projects worth ₹84K cr begin ops

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to inaugurate the country's longest sea bridge Mumbai Trans-Harbour Link (MTHL) here on Friday. Besides MTHL, the 21.8-kilometer-long bridge, which will connect Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, three other major projects, at a combined cost of over ₹84,000 crore, are expected to start operations in 2024 and are likely to provide further impetus to the city's economic boom.

The six-lane MTHL project was first conceived in the 1970s, and was finally awarded in 2017, to be completed in the early part of 2022. The project will now start operations with a toll fee of ₹250 for one-way single-journey vehicles, according to local news reports.

"Constructing a sea-bridge of this magnitude was anything but a cakewalk. More so, because MTHL's starting point at Sewri is an eco-sensitive zone frequented by flamingos. Mid-sea, there are sub-surface oil pipelines of ONGC and a crucial navigation channel for ship movement," said executives from

Larsen & Toubro, one of the contractors for the project.

Three other mega projects – Mumbai Metro Line -3, the Navi Mumbai Airport and the Mumbai Coastal Road, are also expected to start operations this year. The result, according to industry analysts, would be changes in property prices, a second phase of de-concentration of real estate and a slew of utility projects.

"We may see a phase two of de-localisation and de-concentration, the first phase was the movement from south Bombay to Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC)," said Rajashree Murkute, Senior Director, Head - Infrastructure Ratings at CareEdge. The expected boom in real estate is logical.

"The peripheral locations that will see the improvement in the commutation times to the economic hubs will see demand polarisation and price growth," said Pankaj Kapoor, founder and managing director for Lias Foras, a real estate research company.

The 37,276 crore worth Mumbai Metro line-3, connects the north of the

city (SEEPZ) to south (Cuffe Parade) and is expected to start operations in two phases, first in April and second in September.

According to a Cushman & Wakefield report, 2023 witnessed a growing trend in redevelopment projects within western suburbs, western suburbs prime and south central, largely driven by improved connectivity prospects by metro and upcoming infrastructure projects, namely the Metro Line 3 Phase I and the coastal road. The Mumbai Coastal Road runs parallel to the city's coastline, and is expected to start operations in May this year.

"The developments over the next couple of years will certainly make Mumbai more attractive. While competing cities have struggled with floods in the last few years, Mumbai seems to have had fewer and less intense disruptions," said Manish Agarwal, a veteran infrastructure expert and co-founder for AskHowIndia.org, a public policy non-profit firm.

More projects in the offing
Mumbai's infrastructure boom has more

steam left in it. Some of the big projects underway include India's first high-speed rail, costing more than ₹1 trillion. Cement industry analysts have pegged Mumbai and Gujarat as India's most important markets due to the infrastructure boom.

Others such as Murkute from CareEdge expect a second boom in order books for various companies, which would be utility-focussed.

"What lies ahead, are more utility-focused projects for better inter-city roads, water supply, gas pipeline connections and superior drainage systems, all needed to cater to the real estate development," she said.

Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is executing a new 2000 million litres per day Water Treatment Plant at Bhandup Complex. Plans for the second phase of the coastal road are underway at an estimated cost of upwards of ₹16,000 crore. An underground tunnel project in the southern part of the city is underway, costing more than ₹7,000 crore, according to Larsen & Toubro's press statement, the contractor for the project.

ON STREAM IN 2024

Project	Approx cost (₹ cr)	Delay/cost overrun	To now start
Mumbai Trans Harbour Link	17,000	18 months	Jan 2024
Mumbai Coastal Road	13,060	Earlier timeline was 2023	May 2024*
Navi Mumbai International Airport**	17,000	NA	Dec 2024
Metro Line-3	37,276	Earlier timeline was 2022	April 2024#

* Full operations, #First phase, ** (initial phase)

Source: Nodal agencies, News reports

MUMBAI STILL BUILDING*

Project	Estimated cost (₹ crore)
Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-speed rail	108,000
Twin Tunnel between Andheri- Borivali	13,000
Tunnel project in South Mumbai	>7,000
Second Coastal Road	16,000

Note: *Not an exhaustive list
Source: Company disclosures, nodal authority websites, news reports, official disclosures

