

Budget Series #5

Parvatmala: National Ropeways Development Programme

An Efficient and Safe Alternate Transport Network proposed in Union Budget 2022

(Ministry of Road Transport and Highways)

February 15, 2022

“For the first time in the country, the 'Parvatmala scheme' is being started for areas such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu-Kashmir and the North-East. This scheme will create a modern system of transportation and connectivity on the mountains. It will also strengthen the border villages of our country, which need to be vibrant, and which is also necessary for the security of the country.”

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Parvatmala – An efficient and safe alternate transport

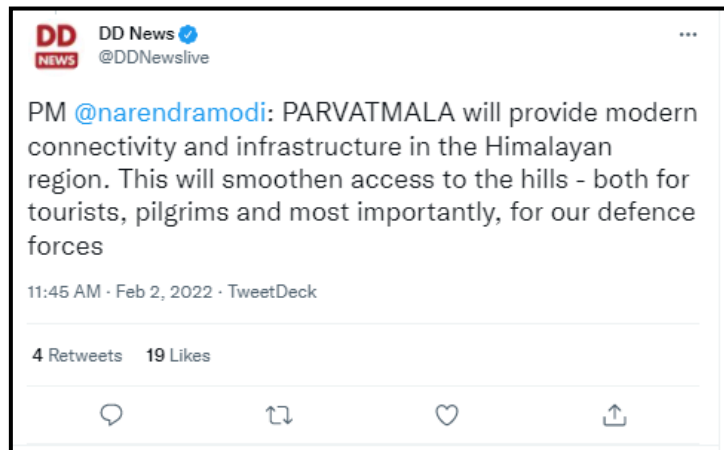
- Union Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting [Union Budget for 2022-23](#), announced the National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala” – which will be taken up on PPP mode.
- It will be a preferred, ecologically sustainable alternative in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas.
- The idea is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism.
- This may also cover congested urban areas, where conventional mass transit system is not feasible.
- Contracts for **eight ropeway projects for a length of 60 km** would be awarded in 2022-23.¹



¹ [Budget_Speech.pdf \(indiabudget.gov.in\)](#)

Significance of 'Parvatmala'

- Developing an efficient transport network is a big challenge in hilly areas. The rail and air transport networks are limited in these areas, while the development of road network has technical challenges. In this backdrop, Ropeways have emerged as a convenient and safe alternate transport mode.



- In February 2021, the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 was amended, enabling the [Ministry of Road Transport and Highways](#) to also look after the development of Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions. The move will give a boost to the sector by setting up a regulatory regime.²
- The scheme is being started in regions like Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir and the other North Eastern states.³

² [Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](https://pib.gov.in)

³ [Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](https://pib.gov.in)

Major Factors Driving Ropeway Infrastructure⁴

Economical mode of transportation: Being an aerial mode, building ropeways involves lower land acquisition costs. Hence, despite having a higher cost of construction per km than roadways, construction cost of ropeway projects happens to be more economical than that of roadways.

Faster mode of transportation: Ropeways have an advantage of getting built in a straight line over a hilly terrain, thus taking minimum time to cover distance.

Environment-friendly: Transportation via ropeways involves low dust emissions. Material containers can be designed so as to rule out any soiling of the environment.

Last mile connectivity: Ropeway projects adopting 3S (a kind of cable car system which has three cables — two for support and one for propulsion) or equivalent technologies can transport 6000-8000 passengers per hour.



Benefits of Ropeways⁵



Source: [Passenger Ropeway | Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority | Government Of Assam, India](#)

- **Ideal for difficult / challenging / sensitive terrain:** This mode of transportation will enable mobility to people living in difficult areas and help them become part of the mainstream.
- **Economy:** Ropeways have multiple cars propelled by a single power-plant and drive mechanism. This reduces both construction and maintenance costs. The use of a single operator for an entire ropeway is an added saving in terms of labour cost.

⁴ [Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](#)

⁵ [Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](#)

- **Flexible:** A ropeway allows for the simultaneous transport of different types of material.
- **Ability to handle large slopes:** Ropeways and cableways (cable cranes) can handle large slopes and large differences in elevation. Where a road or railroad needs switchbacks or tunnels, a ropeway travels straight up and down the fall line.
- **Low footprint:** The fact that only narrow-based vertical supports are needed at intervals, leaving the rest of the ground free, makes it possible for ropeways to be constructed in built-up areas and in places where there is intense competition for land use.



Source: [Incredible India](#)

Ropeways in India

Girnar Ropeway, Gujarat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the ropeway at Girnar, Gujarat on 24 October, 2020. A distance of 2.3 kms is covered in just 7.5 minutes through the ropeway. In addition to this, the ropeway provides a scenic view of the lush green beauty surrounding the Girnar mountain.⁶ These are examples of how fast-completing projects change people's lives. Earlier, the only option to visit Girnar Mountain was by climbing 9,000 stairs. Now, the ropeway has given another facility to devotees. Earlier, it took 5-6 hours to reach the temple, now people cover the distance in a few minutes. In just two-and-a-half months, more than 2.13 lakh people have availed of it.⁷

Guwahati Passenger Ropeway, Assam: Guwahati Passenger Ropeway connecting Guwahati & North Guwahati across River Brahmaputra was completed and inaugurated for public on 24 August, 2020.⁸ At about 2-km long and lying across the Brahmaputra, this is considered to be India's longest 'ropeway over a river'. Built at a cost of Rs 56.00 crores, the ropeway comprises two cabins, each with capacity of 30 passengers and one operator. It is one of the most advanced and longest river crossing Aerial Tramway systems in India.⁹

⁶ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1666803>

⁷ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1689653>

⁸ [Passenger Ropeway | Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority | Government Of Assam, India](#)

⁹ [India's longest 'ropeway over a river' inaugurated today | DD News](#)

Examples of other Ropeways in the Country:

S. No.	Ropeway	State/UT	Specifications
1	Gulmarg Gondola Cable Car, Jammu ¹⁰	Jammu	Situated at 2730m height ¹¹ ; Covers a distance of 2.5 km, ¹²
2	Bi-cable Zig-back Ropeway, Gangtok ¹³	Sikkim	Situated at 1676m height; Covers 1 km distance; 7 minutes ride
3	Mansapurna Karni Mata Ropeway, Udaipur ¹⁴	Rajasthan	4 minute ride ¹⁵
4	Aerial Ropeway, Nainital ¹⁶	Uttarakhand	Situated at 2,270m height; Take 151.7 seconds to reach ¹⁷



Source: Directorate of Tourism Jammu, J&K (jammutourism.gov.in)



Gangtok - Sikkim Tourism



Karni Mata, Udaipur; Source: Incredible India | Things To Do

¹⁰ [J&K Cable Car Corporation \(jammukashmircablecar.com\)](http://J&K Cable Car Corporation (jammukashmircablecar.com))

¹¹ [English Releases \(pib.gov.in\)](http://English Releases (pib.gov.in))

¹² [Official Website of Department of Tourism Govt of Jammu & Kashmir \(jk.gov.in\)](http://Official Website of Department of Tourism Govt of Jammu & Kashmir (jk.gov.in))

¹³ Incredible India | Things To Do

¹⁴ Incredible India | Things To Do

¹⁵ Doodh Talai AKA Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Park - Rajasthan Tourism

¹⁶ Ropeway | Uttarakhand Tourism

¹⁷ Aerial Ropeway | District Nainital, Government of Uttarakhand | India

Upcoming Ropeway Projects under National Ropeway Development Programme



- **MoU with Uttarakhand:** MoRTH has initiated a study for Ropeway development in the country. An MoU has been signed with Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB), Govt. of Uttarakhand, for development of Ropeways in the State. Initially, seven projects have been identified in Uttarakhand. DPR for Kedarnath and Hemkund Sahib Ropeway is in progress and NIT for the same has been invited.¹⁸
- **Gap Funding for Passenger Ropeway system for Pelling to Sanga-Choeling in West-Sikkim:** The Finance Minister stated that the PM-DevINE will be implemented through the North-Eastern Council. An initial allocation of Rs. 1500 crores will be made for the new scheme. This project would tentatively cost Rs. 64.00 crores.¹⁹
- **Gap Funding for Eco-friendly Ropeway (Cable Car) from Dhapper to Bhaleydhunga in South Sikkim:** Under PM-DevINE, with tentative cost Rs. 58.00 crores, it will fund infrastructure, in the spirit of PM GatiShakti, and social development project. These projects (West Sikkim and South Sikkim) will enable livelihood activities for youth and women, filling the gaps in various sectors, the Minister explained. The ropeway project is among the initial list of projects identified under the scheme.²⁰
- **Ropeway project at IbudhouMarjing, Imphal East:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the states of Manipur and Tripura on 4 January, 2022. The Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 22 Developmental Projects worth over Rs. 4800 crores in Imphal, including ropeway project at IbudhouMarjing, Imphal East.²¹
- **Ropeway project to Hemkund Sahib:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Kashi Vishwanath Dham in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on 13 December, 2021. In his speech at the inauguration, PM stated that while the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor has been

¹⁸ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1796251>

¹⁹ [A NEW SCHEME, PRIME MINISTER'S DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR NORTH EAST 'PM-DevINE' ANNOUNCED; Rs. 1500 CRORE ALLOCATED \(pib.gov.in\)](#)

²⁰ [A NEW SCHEME, PRIME MINISTER'S DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR NORTH EAST 'PM-DevINE' ANNOUNCED; Rs. 1500 CRORE ALLOCATED \(pib.gov.in\)](#)

²¹ <https://newsonair.com/2022/01/04/pm-modi-inaugurates-lay-foundation-stone-of-developmental-projects-in-manipur/>

constructed, preparations to build a ropeway to make it easier to visit Hemkund Sahib are underway.²²

- **Other:** Proposals have also been received from Governments of Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Maharashtra, Jammu and Kashmir for development of Ropeways.²³

References

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4. [PM to visit Manipur and Tripura on 4th January \(pib.gov.in\)](#)
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AG/RC/AM

²² [English rendering of PM's speech at inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Dham in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh \(pib.gov.in\)](#)

²³ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1796251>