

Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor, Key Features, Challenges

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Recently, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor**, a world class Infrastructure project **aimed at improving connectivity between the national capital and the capital of Uttarakhand.**

About Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor

The Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor is a **six-lane, access-controlled expressway** developed to reduce travel time and improve regional integration. It is a flagship infrastructure project with both economic and environmental significance.

- The corridor is approximately **210-213 km long** and has been constructed at a **cost of around ₹11,868 crore** under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and executed by the **National Highways Authority of India.**
- It **reduces the distance between Delhi and Dehradun from about 235 km to nearly 210 km**, and **travel time from 6-6.5 hours to around 2-2.5 hours.**

- The expressway passes through **Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand**, connecting key districts such as **Baghpat, Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, and Saharanpur**.
- The corridor is designed as a **high-speed expressway with a minimum speed of 100 km/h**, ensuring faster and safer travel.
- It includes a **spur connection to Haridwar, which links the corridor with the Char Dham highway network** and promotes religious tourism.

Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor Key Features

- The Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor has been **divided into multiple sections** based on geographical conditions, traffic requirements, and construction feasibility to ensure efficient design and execution.
 - The **first section** focuses on decongesting Northeast Delhi and includes elevated stretches in both Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, ensuring smooth traffic flow in urban areas.
 - The **second section** enhances connectivity in western Uttar Pradesh by passing through major agricultural districts, thereby supporting economic activities and market access.
 - The **third section**, from Saharanpur Bypass to Ganeshpur, is a four-lane stretch that provides a transition from plains to hilly terrain.
 - The **fourth section** passes through ecologically sensitive forest areas, including the **Rajaji National Park**, and incorporates multiple environmental safeguards.
- A major highlight of the project is the **20 km eco-sensitive stretch featuring a 10.97 km-long animal underpass and an elevated wildlife corridor**, which facilitates safe movement of animals, including elephants.
- The project includes the **340 metre Daat Kali tunnel**, which improves connectivity and ensures safer travel through the hilly region.
- Wildlife protection measures such as **sound barriers and light barriers** have been installed in collaboration with the **Wildlife Institute of India** to minimize ecological disturbance.
- The corridor is **expected to reduce carbon emissions and improve fuel efficiency** due to smoother traffic flow and reduced congestion.

Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor Concerns / Challenges

The Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor has faced certain **environmental and administrative challenges** during its development phase.

- The project required **diversion of forest land** and led to the **felling of thousands of trees**, although compensatory afforestation has been undertaken.
- It **passes through ecologically sensitive areas** such as the Shivalik forests and Rajaji National Park, raising concerns about biodiversity impact.
- **Land acquisition disputes**, particularly in Ghaziabad, created legal challenges during construction.
- Ensuring long-term effectiveness of wildlife **mitigation measures and environmental safeguards** remains a key challenge.