

Vashi bridge gets green nod, expects HC permit

NEW ARMS WILL FLANK EXISTING CREEK BRIDGE

TRAFFIC ON BRIDGE

2.5 lakh passenger car units per day on the six-lane Vashi bridge



5% annual growth in vehicle population projected

Old bridge is one-way, used only by light vehicles

WHEN WILL IT BE READY?

Construction expected to be over in three years, though HC's project approval is awaited. Initially planned to open with Navi Mum International airport



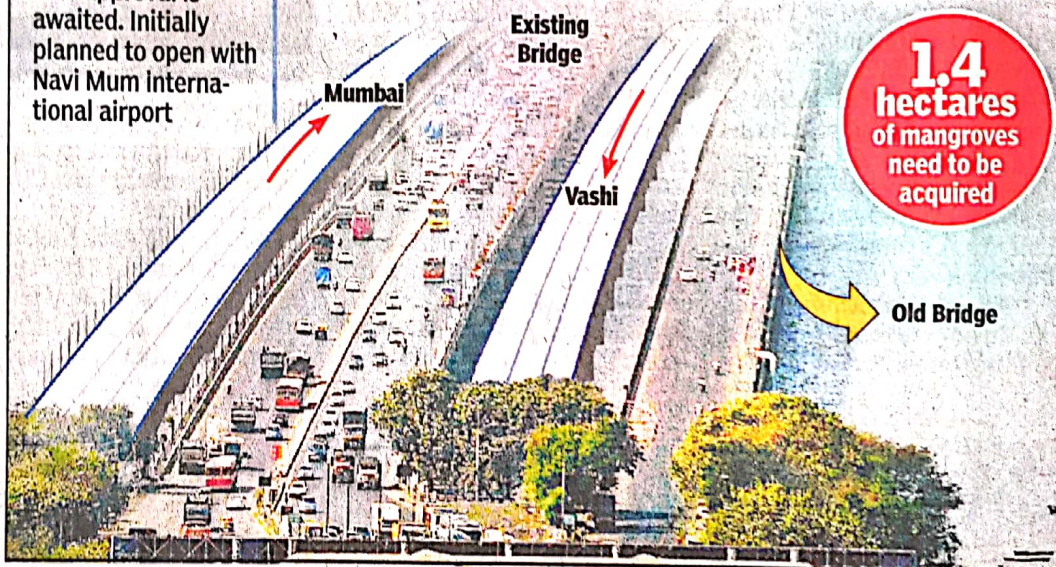
DIMENSIONS AND ALIGNMENT THE NEW BRIDGES

Width
11m each

Length
1.8km each

Each to be **2.5m** from existing bridge

Doubling of Vashi bridge (Thane creek bridge) will be done by laying two 3-lane bridges along it. All 12 lanes of all the arms combined will merged into 10-lane Sion-Panvel highway



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The Vashi bridge expansion project, which aims to facilitate smoother connectivity between Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, has received a major environmental clearance. MSRDC, one of the stakeholders, has asked the contractor to mobilise machinery to commence work with the hope that the clearance, given by the Union ministry of environment and forests (MoEF), is vetted by the Bombay high court (HC).

The MoEF permission is for a 1.4-hectare forest clearance, which is needed to clear mangrove patches on both sides of the bridge towards its Mankhurd and Vashi

ends. The patches had become a point of contention among several authorities. The state government notified the Thane Flamingo Sanctuary in May 2018. The Supreme Court in December directed MoEF to declare as eco-sensitive zones 10km-radius areas around 21 national parks and wildlife sanctuaries across the country, including the Thane Flamingo Sanctuary. This necessitated project clearances from the National Wildlife Board and MoEF.

The last step for the project is a nod from the HC, which in a 2010 order directed that its permission be taken for proposals involving mangrove removal.

MSRDC's managing director, Radheshyam Mopal-

war, said, "L&T can carry out mobilisation work as per a letter of acceptance issued in August 2018. An agreement with L&T will be executed after the HC's clearance. We will now approach the HC for the final nod."

The project cost is pegged at Rs 775 crore, with a joint equity participation of Rs 200 crore each from MSRDC and Cidco. The expected deadline for completion is three years. "Soil testing work has already been done," said Cidco MD Lokesh Chandra.

The bridge is expected to provide smoother connectivity between Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, factoring in future growth of vehicular traffic, also on account of the upcoming Navi Mumbai international airport.