

## Indian Infrastructure: Development of the best by use of today's technologies

Nov 14, 2022: Example of Indian Achievements during the last few years

After 1947, the process of building India's infrastructure re-started after a gap of a thousand years. Due to the multiple demands on the government's resources, the investment in infrastructure were only where it was most urgently required. Since 2014, India is developing infrastructure, which is the best in the world.

As an example, let us see the video of the infrastructure of Southern part of India. Please see the video. (If you are an Indian, you will take pride in the new infrastructure, which India has been building during the last few years.)

<https://tinyurl.com/2j4fzaa4>

Why was INFRASTRUCTURE so poor in 1947: More than 2500 years back, India had two famous highways: UTTAR PATH (Northern Highway) and DAKSHIN PATH (Southern Highway). Along with the feeder highways, these formed the life-line for knitting the nation together. Along these highways, the scholars moved from one University to the other. The pilgrims, traders and kings and their armed forces also used the highways for their own purpose.

After the Mughal empire weakened at the end of the seventeenth century, the British started organizing an army of Indian mercenary soldiers, officered by the British. Using this army, they started capturing territory. All the revenue generated from the area, over which they ruled, was used either to have even a larger army or for taking home to UK goods and treasures, which could be sold in Europe. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, East India Company had taken over the whole of the country and in 1857, the Monarch of UK took over India.

But till 1947, when the British left, the British Government's investment in infrastructure were only for satisfying the requirements of the British Indian armed forces or for greater exploitation of the resources of India.

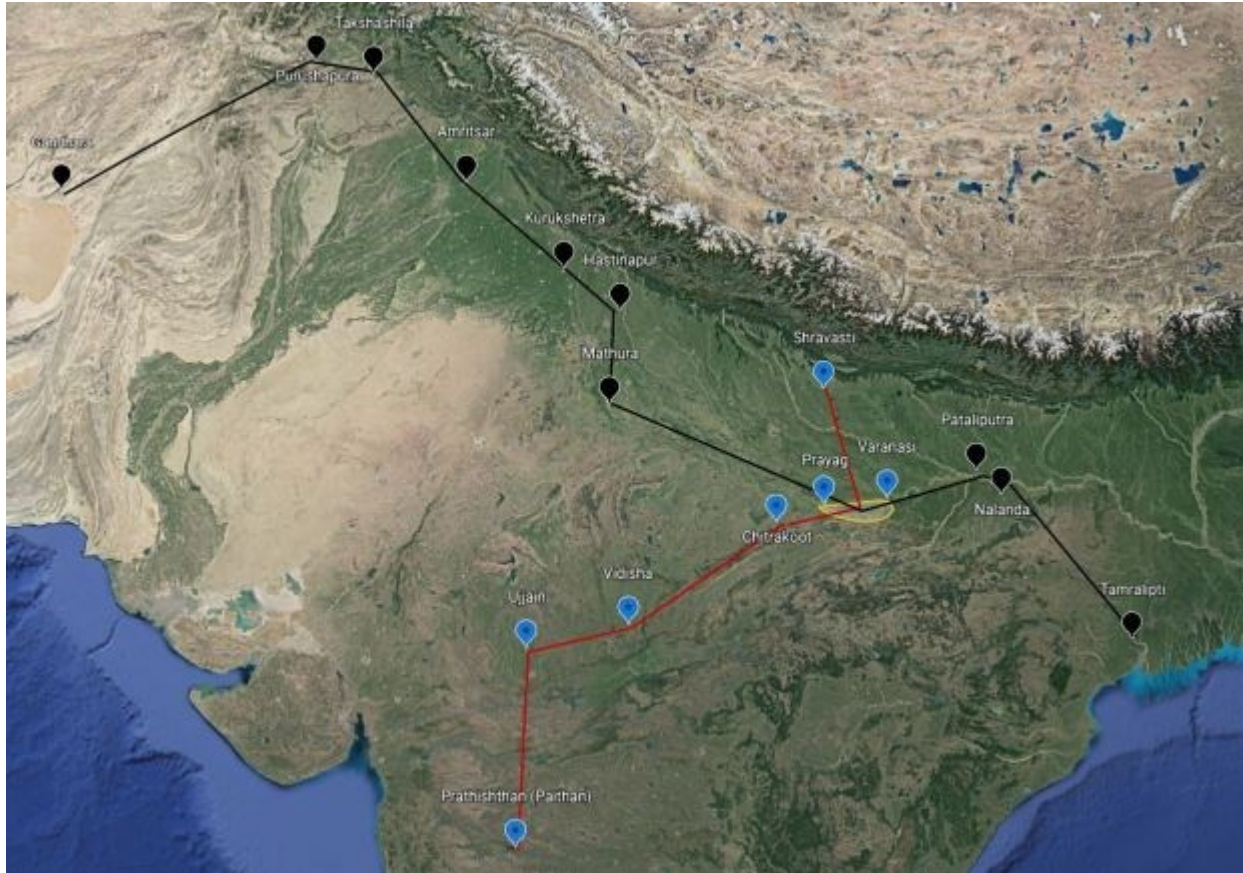
**Note:** *Please see information about the two major historical highways of ancient India, which exist even today in some form.*

UTTAR PATH (Northern Highway) – connecting Gandhar (called Kandhar in Afghanistan today) with Purushpura (Peshawar), Takshashila (Taxila), Lavpur (Lahore), Indraprastha (Delhi),

Kanyakubja (Kannauj), Prayag, Varanasi, Nalanda, Patliputra (Patna) and the port city of Tamralipta (Tamluk in Midnapore district, West Bengal) in the Gangetic delta in the Bay of Bengal.

Some ancient literature also talks of connection of the highway with Pragjyotishpur (meaning Light of the East, called Guwahati today), in Kamrup (called Assam today).

Feeder roads were established that connected the Uttarapatha to ports off the coast of Gujarat and Sindh. This facilitated trade along the Arabian Sea and further inwards into Mesopotamia.



Through the Himalayan section of the road, called the *Himavatpatha*, trade progressed from the fertile Gangetic plain onto Central Asia and further to present day Turkey and Central Europe. An eastern branch from the Himavatpatha connected to the Silk route, leading back into present day China and helped spread Buddhism in that country.

From the port of Tamralipta, trade flourished with the far East countries of Kambuja Desha (Cambodia), Suvarnabhumi (Myanmar/Thailand/Indonesia) and Sri Lanka.

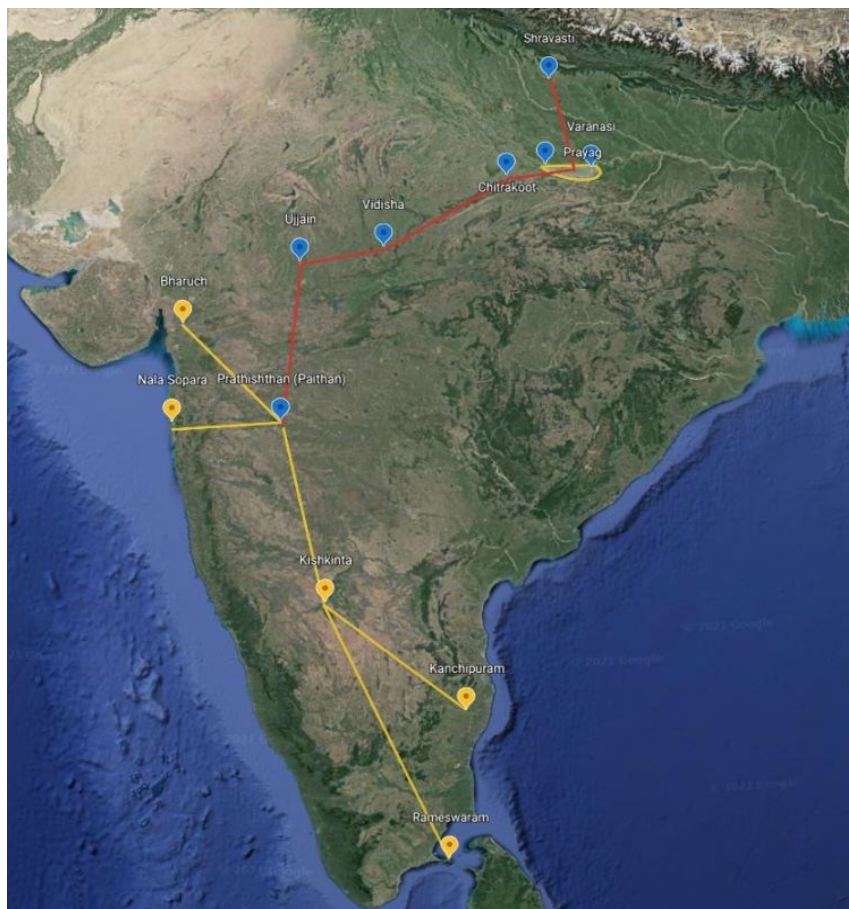
Uttarapatha to Grand Trunk Road: Improvements to the road were done by Sher Shah Suri (in the 16<sup>th</sup> century), notably planting trees and digging wells and constructing rest houses at frequent intervals. Later, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after the conquest of Punjab, the British rebuilt the

road and renamed it as the 'Grand Trunk Road'. Today NH 44 and NH 19 covers most part of the Uttarapatha.

DAKSHIN PATH (Southern Highway) – connecting Shravasti (the twin villages of Saheth and Maheth, northwest of Balrampur) in the foothills of Himalayas with Varanasi, Prayag, Chitrakoot, Vidisha and Ujjayini (Ujjain) before terminating at Pratihthana (Paithan) in the Deccan.

Feeder roads were developed that connected Pratihthana with the famous trading port of Nala Sopara on the Arabian Sea as well as to Bharuch and further West to Dwaraka.

From Pratihthana roads connected further south to the Chera, Chola and Pandyan kingdoms in Tamil country.



SOME GREAT TRAVELLERS on THE HIGHWAYS: When Lord Ram was sent to *vanvas*, he along with Sita and Lakshman spent nearly a dozen years at Chitrakoot. Following Sita's kidnapping by Ravana, Lord Ram would have made his way through the Dakshinapatha down to the South touching Kishkindha (near present day Hampi, Karnataka) before reaching Rameswaram on the Eastern coast. Once again references to Lord Ram and the Ramayana all along the important towns of the Dakshinapatha stand testimony to this journey.

Sage Agastya travelled with a band of followers from Dwaraka and settled down in the Tamil country. Agastya is believed to have helped codify Tamil language.

Tholkappiyar who wrote Tholkappiyam, the original Tamil grammar treatise, is said to have traveled from Kanchipuram via the highway system to meet Panini at Takshashila.

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