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Karachi Northern Bypass to Become an Eight-Lane Motorway

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The National Highway Authority (NHA) has announced a major upgrade to the Karachi Northern Bypass, converting the 34-kilometre route into an eight-lane motorway as part of a larger connectivity plan under the M-10 Motorway project.

The upgrade was discussed in a recent meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Communications, chaired by MNA Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani. NHA Chairman Muhammad Shehryar Sultan confirmed that the widened road will run from the ICI Bridge to

Hamdard University Chowk, aiming to ease congestion and facilitate smoother freight transport between Karachi Port and inland destinations.

Additionally, the Northern Bypass will link with the proposed 134-kilometre M-10 Motorway, passing through the Khirthar range to connect with the M-6 Motorway near Jamshoro. This six-lane route is designed to strengthen north-south trade and passenger mobility while reducing traffic pressure inside Karachi.

The remaining 23-kilometre section of the bypass, from Hamdard University Chowk to the M-9 Motorway, will also be expanded to six lanes. NESPAK is currently conducting feasibility studies, and consultant selection is underway.

Committee members raised concerns over frequent toll hikes by the NHA, citing three increases in a short span, despite the policy requiring three-year intervals. The NHA was directed to submit a detailed explanation at the next session.

Motorway Police officials also briefed the committee on speed enforcement. Under Section 279 of the Pakistan Penal Code, FIRs are now registered for speeds exceeding 150 km/h, contributing to a reduction in motorway accidents over the last five months. However, the committee showed interest in shifting toward stricter financial penalties and suspensions instead of criminal charges.

Concerns were also raised about two toll plazas placed within five kilometres of the M-9 Motorway, potentially violating existing regulations. NHA clarified that tolls on bridges are allowed regardless of spacing, but was asked to provide a list of such installations and investigate bridge conditions near Hyderabad.

Regarding the long-delayed M-6 Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway, NHA stated that construction is set to begin in April 2026, funded by the Islamic Development Bank. Land acquisition is expected to begin soon, pending approval from the Sindh government.

The committee also demanded clarification on how a previously disqualified contractor was awarded a PKR 166 billion CAREC Tranche-III project contract. NHA was instructed to coordinate with the Senate committee for further details.

Senior officials from the Ministry of Communications and its attached departments attended the meeting.