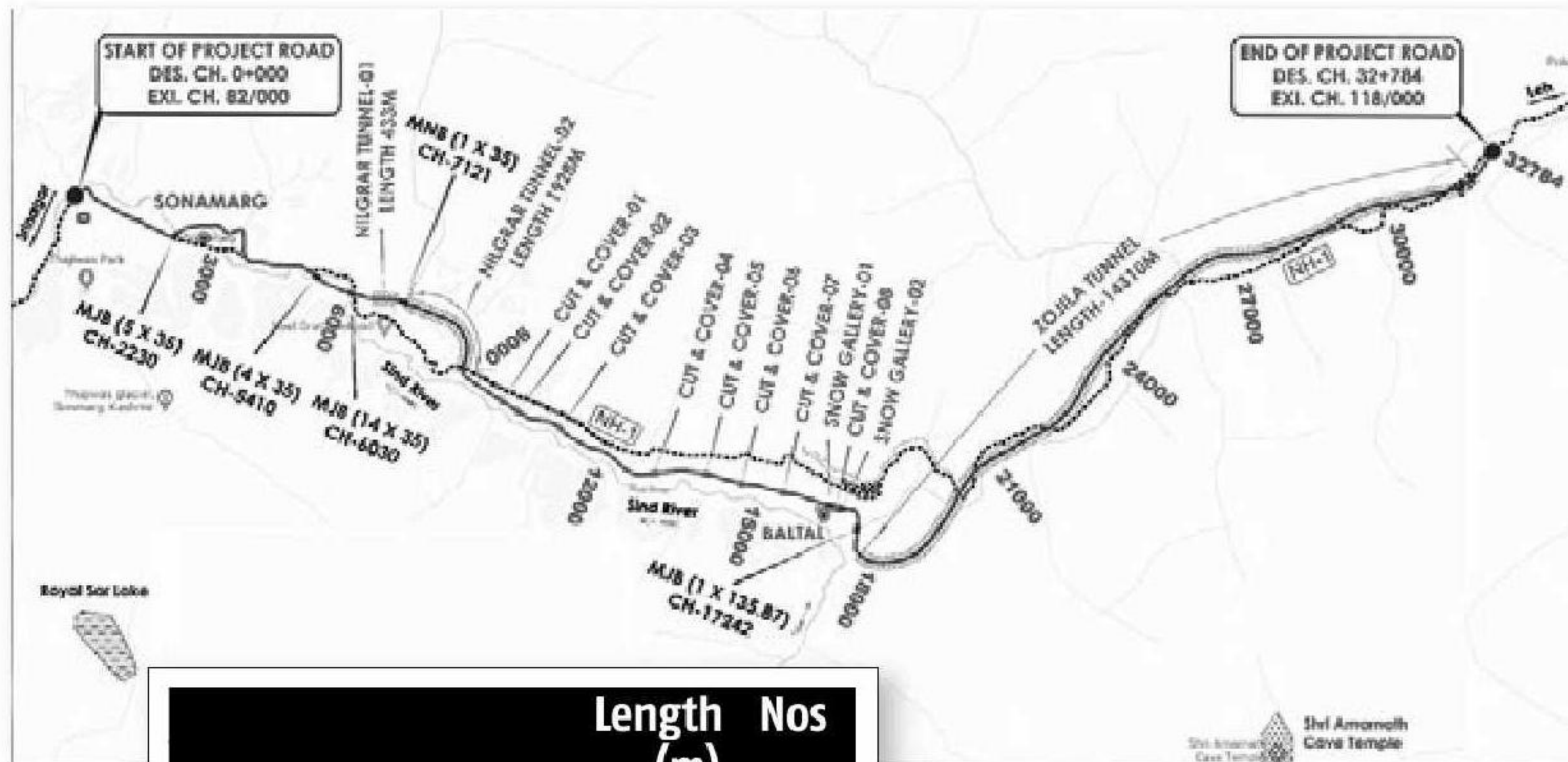


Zojila tunnel construction starts today

After many years, work on the much-awaited Zojila tunnel would commence after Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari initiates the first blasting for the 14.15-km tunnel on Thursday. The tunnel assumes significance as it will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar Valley and Leh on NH-1, with approach Road to Z-morh Tunnel and Avalanche protection structures. The project has a history of re-bidding as attempts to award the project four times were not successful and was eventually given to National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) in July 2016 for implementation on EPC (engineering, procurement, construction) mode. The project involves the construction of a 14.15 km long tunnel at an altitude of about 3,000 metres under Zojila Tunnel pass (currently motorable only for 6 months in a year) on NH-1 connecting Srinagar and Leh through Dras & Kargil. Some important features of the project are given below. **MEGHA MANCHANDA**



	Length (m)	Nos
Tunnel Nilgar T1	433	1
Tunnel Nilgar T2	1,928	1
Zozila Tunnel	14,310	1
Cut and cover	2,350	8
Snow Gallery	450	2
Major bridges	940	4
Minor bridges	35	1
Net length of road	12,338.5	
Total length	32,784.5	

MODIFIED CONFIGURATION OF PROJECT:

SCOPE OF WORK

- ▶ **14.150 km** long bi-directional tunnel without egress/escape passage between Baltal and Minamarg
- ▶ **18.63 km** approach road between Z-Morh tunnel and Zojila tunnels including two tunnels of length 433 m and 1958m in approach road. Net road length is 12 km.

CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

Zojila Tunnel = 6 Years
 Approach road = 2.5 Years

- The project was first conceived in 2005
- It was awarded to M/s ITNL (IL&FS) in July 2017
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid

- the foundation stone at Leh and commenced the work on May 19, 2018
- The project got stuck after M/s. IL&FS went into

- financial problems in July 2019
- The contract was terminated on Jan 15, 2019
- Fresh bids invited on June 10, 2020
- On August 21, M/s.

Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited was awarded the work for its quoted rate of ₹ 4509.50 crore