



## India is poised to witness decent growth in road construction in the long term.

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### Road construction activities are gaining pace in the country once again. How is this driving the demand for compactors?

Demand for compactors is driven by the pace at which road projects are executed. Although many projects are in the pipeline, a prolonged monsoon has affected execution in the short term. The pace of highway construction was 19% lower in the April-August period. More concerning is the lower highway contract awards during the same period, which will impact the compactor demand in the medium term. This was evident by the 30% lower demand for compactors during the April-September 2022 period. However, we are confident that the government is committed to the infra development and hope that demand will pick up as projects are undertaken.

In the long term, India is poised to witness decent growth in the segment as many infrastructure projects like airports, expressways, railway alignments, and irrigation projects are scheduled for execution in the coming years. It is expected to boost demand for all categories of compactors.

### What are the challenges and possible new avenues in the compaction equipment segment?

Compactors are required to meet new emission norms for CEV-5 by April 1, 2024. Increased manufacturing costs due to rising commodity prices and upgrades necessary for adhering to the new emission norm have affected prices. In an effort to keep product prices competitive, compactor manufacturers will have to continually deliver value addition in such a dynamic and competitive market. L&T has developed a Hydraulic Edge Cutter which can be mounted on the L&T 990 HF-i. This

new attachment scores over mechanical edge cutters requiring a helper to constantly monitor the cutter. The hydraulic cutter can be operated from the operator's console.

### What are the critical maintenance practices to be followed for the upkeep of compaction equipment?

Like all other construction equipment, the compactors are designed for a long and trouble-free life if the recommended service schedules are followed. L&T compactors use a highly efficient closed-loop hydraulic system in which a significant volume of the hydraulic oil keeps circulating in the circuit without going to the tank for filtration requiring oil changes as per schedules. Contaminated oil will do irreparable damage to major components, leading to machine breakdowns. For engines compatible with CEV-4 emission norms, Adblue needs to be added to the engine oil. Periodic greasing of joints and bearings increases uptime and ensures longer life of bearings. Filter changes as recommended and cleaning the filters whenever 'clog' indicators come on are essential maintenance practices. L&T conducts scheduled training on all the service aspects. Our training centre publishes a training calendar, which many customers take advantage of.

### How do you look at the future of compactors in India?

The compactor market will consolidate, and players with a long-term vision will reap the rewards. Technology will need to be constantly updated, and support rendered for equipment need to be the best. Digitalisation will be a differentiating factor in the days to come. In the long term, compactor powertrains will follow the current trend in the automobile sector towards vehicles driven with electric and green hydrogen.

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