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Chief Executive

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Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project
Leading The Way For New India

Unless specifically mentioned, the articles and statements published in this journal do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board).

Editorial

Railways at The Heart of India's Progress

Indian Railways is witnessing a historic phase of transformation, where its proud heritage converges with modern innovation to drive a bold vision of national development. With a sprawling network of about 137,000 km and over 25,500 trains in operation, it is far more than a means of transport—it is the lifeline that sustains the nation. By linking remote villages with vibrant metropolitan cities, it not only enables seamless travel but also nurtures livelihoods, strengthens trade and brings people and opportunities closer together.

Even in this rapidly evolving era, IR has not lost sight of its commitment to the common man. Affordable travel has always been its hallmark and even today, it provides an annual passenger subsidy of around ₹60,000 crore. This translates into an average fare concession of about 45%, ensuring that travel remains within reach of ordinary citizens despite the availability of modern amenities. It is therefore not surprising that nearly 70% of coaches are in the general and sleeper categories, prioritising accessibility for the majority of passengers.

Technological innovations have infused new momentum into Indian Railways. More than 160 Vande Bharat trains have emerged as symbols of speed and modernity, while 60 Amrit Bharat trains are redefining affordable long-distance travel. The manufacturing of 133 additional Amrit Bharat trains is underway and the newly introduced Vande Bharat sleeper trains have also received positive feedback from passengers.

There is a progress in freight transportation. From about 1055 million tonnes in 2013-14, freight loading has increased to nearly 1650 million tonnes, making India the second-largest freight carrier globally.

Rail electrification has emerged as a key pillar of this transformation. It has resulted in annual savings of around ₹6000 crore and a significant reduction in diesel consumption. The Prime Minister recently noted in Parliament that without such electrification, an additional 1.8 billion litres of diesel would have been required every year.

The pace of reforms has also been noteworthy. Improvements in the transportation of salt and automobiles, construction quality, ticket cancellation and refunds and flexibility in changing boarding points are making IR more passenger-friendly. Clearly, 2026 is emerging as a year of transformation for Indian Railways—a year in which the 'Reform Express' is steadily moving towards new heights.

Do share your feedback on this issue with us!

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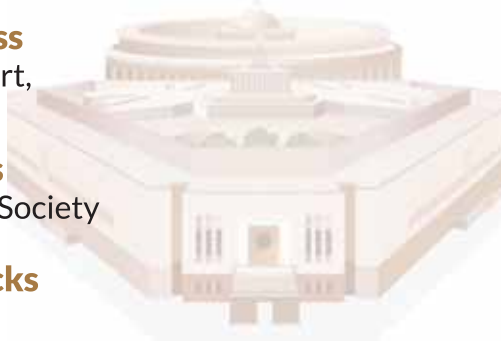
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Prime Minister Inaugurates

8 Redeveloped Amrit Stations,

Dedicates to the Nation Chennai Beach-Chennai Egmore 4th Line in Tamil Nadu

Highlighting India's strides in upgrading its rail network, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated eight redeveloped railway stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme in Tamil Nadu at a programme in Madurai on 1st March, 2026. The stations include Morappur, Pollachi Junction, Bommidi, Karaikkudi Junction, Srivilliputtur, Sholavandan, Thiruvarur Junction and Manaparai. He also dedicated the Chennai Beach-Chennai Egmore 4th line (4.3 km) to the nation.

On the occasion, PM Modi said, "Over the past decade, Indian Railways has undergone a major transformation. It is emerging as a modern, efficient and people-centric mode of transport. This change is especially visible in Tamil Nadu. Since our government came to power, the railway budget allocation for Tamil Nadu has increased nearly nine times. Between 2009 and 2014, the average annual allocation was ₹880 crore. In 2026-27, it has increased to ₹7600 crore."



The Prime Minister further said that more than 1300 km of new railway tracks have been laid in Tamil Nadu and 97% electrification has been achieved. Hundreds of flyovers and underpasses have improved safety and efficiency. He also noted that, last year, he had the privilege of inaugurating the new Pamban Bridge in Tamil Nadu, India's first vertical lift sea bridge, which is a symbol of engineering excellence and has become a major tourist attraction.





Bommidi


Karaikkudi


Srivilliputtur



Sholavandan


Thiruvarur


Manaparai

The Prime Minister said, "Currently, nine Vande Bharat trains and nine Amrit Bharat trains are benefiting the people of Tamil Nadu. The coaches of these high-speed trains are being manufactured at the Integral Coach Factory in Chennai. The 'Make in India' vision is promoting self-reliance and generating employment for the youth."

He further said, "Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 77 railway stations are being modernised, reflecting comfort, accessibility and local identity. Today, eight redeveloped stations in Tamil Nadu have been inaugurated. The Chennai Beach-Chennai Egmore fourth line will benefit thousands of daily commuters in Chennai."

"Funding for infrastructure in Tamil Nadu has tripled compared to the previous decade and the 2026 budget continues this trend with a special focus on the state. The budget has proposed Bengaluru-Chennai and Chennai-Hyderabad Bullet train corridors, which will revolutionise the economy of the entire region," he added.■

PM Inaugurates 3 Redeveloped Amrit Stations in Kerala, Dedicates 65 km Electrification Line to The Nation



Strengthening Kerala's modern and passenger-friendly rail network, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated three redeveloped Amrit Stations—Shoranur Junction, Kuttippuram and Changanasseri—under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme at a programme in Kochi on 11th March, 2026. He also dedicated the 65-km-long Shoranur-Nilambur Road rail line electrification project to the nation and also Flags off Palakkad-Pollachi New Train Services



Shoranur Jn.



Kuttippuram

In this year's Union Budget as well, a record allocation has been made for infrastructure. Kerala will benefit significantly from this investment. Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, Shoranur Junction, Kuttippuram and Changanasseri railway stations have been modernised. Along with this, the electrification of a major section of the Shoranur-Nilambur road rail line has also been completed. Today, the Palakkad-Pollachi train service has also been launched. This will provide greater convenience to the people of both Kerala and Tamil Nadu."

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**



Changanasseri

PM Unveils ₹6146 crore Rail Projects in Assam, Flags off Three New Express Trains

Strengthening rail links across the Northeast, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled railway projects worth ₹6146 crore in Assam via video conferencing from Guwahati on 13th March, 2026 and flagged off three new trains—the Kamakhya-Charlapalli Amrit Bharat Express, the Guwahati-New Jalpaiguri Express and the Narangi-Agartala Express.

As part of these projects, the Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for a Wagon POH Workshop at Bashbari in Kokrajhar, to be built at a cost of ₹256 crore, which will enhance maintenance capacity, operational efficiency and employment opportunities.

On this occasion, the Prime Minister said that the new trains and projects will benefit trade, tourism, students and patients and that improved connectivity will strengthen the regional economy.

He stated that significant steps are being taken to strengthen rail connectivity, including the establishment of a railway workshop. The upcoming rail connectivity to Bhutan and the modernization of various stations will transform the region into a major logistics hub. The stoppage of Vande Bharat and Rajdhani Express trains at Kokrajhar is a symbol of the region's growing prominence.

Additionally, the Prime Minister dedicated to the nation the Rangiya-Murkongselek (558 km), Chaparmukh-Dibrugarh (571 km) and Badarpur-Silchar and Badarpur-Churaibari (315 km) railway electrification projects and laid the foundation stone for the Furkating-Tinsukia double line (194 km), with a total cost of ₹5890 crore. These initiatives will strengthen railway infrastructure in the Northeast and promote economic growth, tourism and regional integration.

Lays the foundation stone of

Periodic Overhaul Workshop at Bashbari

Flags Off

Kamakhya - Charlapalli Amrit Bharat Express
Narangi - Agartala Express
Guwahati - New Jalpaiguri Express

The PM said that over the past decade, significant efforts have been made to reduce the Railways' dependence on foreign resources and minimize oil imports. Today, almost the entire rail network of the country is connected through electrified routes and the target of 100% electrification will be achieved soon. He added, that Due to railway electrification, the country is saving approximately 1.75 billion litres of diesel and the rail network in Assam is also being rapidly electrified."■



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagging off three trains, including an Amrit Bharat Express, at a programme held in Guwahati



PM Unveils ₹634 crore Rail Projects, Inaugurates

6 Amrit Stations

Flags off New Express Train in West Bengal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of railway projects worth over ₹634 crore in Kolkata, West Bengal and flagged off the Purulia-Anand Vihar Terminal (Delhi) Express on 14th March, 2026. The projects are aimed at strengthening connectivity between West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, UP and Delhi.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated six redeveloped Amrit Stations located at Kamakhyaguri, Anara, Tamluk, Haldia, Barabhum and Siuri. The redevelopment of these stations will provide benefits such as better integration of both sides of the city, improved access to stations, regulated traffic movement, well-lit and aesthetically designed entrance porches, improved waiting areas, provision of lifts and escalators, upgraded platform surfacing and covers, free Wi-Fi, enhanced passenger information systems and expanded circulating areas.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagging off the Purulia-Anand Vihar Terminal Express at a programme held in Kolkata

'A rapid campaign is underway across the country to modernise the Railways. Our resolve is that West Bengal should not lag behind in this effort. Therefore, the Central government is working to rapidly expand railway infrastructure in West Bengal. Today, the Automatic Block Signalling system in the Kalaikunda-Kanimohuli section has also been dedicated to the nation. This will enhance the capacity of this busy route, improve safety and increase speed and convenience for passengers.'

The six stations (Kamakhyaguri, Anara, Tamluk, Haldia, Barabhum and Siuri), inaugurated as Amrit Stations, now reflect the rich cultural heritage of Bengal even more prominently. In addition, several other stations in the state are also being redeveloped.

The new Express train service between Purulia and Anand Vihar Terminal will benefit people not only in West Bengal but also in Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. He also noted that new projects related to roads, railways and ports are opening up avenues for the modern future of West Bengal and will benefit farmers, traders, entrepreneurs, students and all sections of society.

Prime Minister ***Narendra Modi***

On the occasion, the Prime Minister even dedicated two railway projects to the nation, including the 16-km-long third rail line between Belda and Dantan and the Automatic Block Signalling system between Kalaikunda and











Kanimohuli. The third line will reduce congestion on a busy rail route, improve punctuality and enable faster movement of passenger and freight trains. It will also ease daily commuting in Paschim Medinipur and nearby areas and boost regional economic activity.■

Railway Development is Fundamentally a Partnership between Industry and Govt: MR

MR was Addressing Budget Webinar on Sustaining and Strengthening Economic Growth in Infrastructure, Logistics and Freight

Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw, addressed the second installment of the Budget Webinar series on 3rd March, 2026, focusing on the theme of 'Sustaining and Strengthening Economic Growth, Infrastructure, Logistics & Freight'.

During the webinar, the minister highlighted three key focus areas for the sector: scaling up capacity in a synchronized manner, strengthening quality and qualification standards and reforming documentation and contractual frameworks to reduce disputes and ensure timely delivery of projects.

Synchronized Expansion of Railway Infrastructure

The Minister underlined the unprecedented growth of India's railway network over the past decade. Approximately 35,000 km of new tracks have been added, surpassing the total railway network of Germany. Further, nearly 99% of the network has been electrified.

The minister emphasized that such rapid scaling poses a major challenge: Enhancing industry capacity and resources in tandem with government expansion. He stressed that railway development is fundamentally a partnership between industry and government. Sudden increases or decreases in project scale can adversely affect industry preparedness. Therefore, skilling, supervision, quality standards and technology adoption must grow in sync with infrastructure expansion. Inputs from industry stakeholders will help shape future reforms.



Prime Minister Addressing the Webinar



Seven new high-speed rail corridors are going to become growth connectors for development.

This year, the budget proposes a record capital expenditure. Construction of high-capacity transport systems, better coordination between railways, highways, ports, airports, and waterways, expansion of separate freight corridors and multi-modal connectivity. All these steps are essential for reducing costs and improving efficiency."

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**

High-Speed Rail Vision and Transformative Projects

Addressing high-speed rail development, MR highlighted the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor as a steep learning curve. He noted that train operations beyond 160 km per hour increase design and operational complexity exponentially.

Through collaboration with the IITs, industry partners and railway engineers, India successfully navigated these challenges.

> *Government and Industry must ramp up capacity, skilling and use of technology together to ensure steady progress.*
>
> **Ashwini Vaishnaw**
> Minister of Railways

Building on this success, the minister announced that the PM has approved seven new high-speed passenger corridors spanning 4000 km.

The Minister emphasized that achieving infrastructural targets will require coordinated efforts across railways, industry, supply chains, equipment manufacturers, service providers, operations and maintenance teams, signalling experts, rolling stock manufacturers and producers of specialized electrical conductors. He invited major construction and design firms to focused workshops to deliberate on these challenges.

Strengthening Quality, Qualification and Tender Norms

The Minister underscored the urgent need to tighten qualification criteria and reduce excessive subcontracting. He said, "Public projects must adhere to even stricter quality and accountability standards, ensuring that government funds are used efficiently and disputes are minimized."

Industry Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

The Minister thanked industry professionals, participants from various ministries, executing agencies and stakeholders who contributed insights during the post-Budget webinar. He said the suggestions will serve as a foundation for reforms across the sector.

He also extended gratitude to Union Ministers Manohar Lal Khattar, Sarbananda Sonowal and K. Ram Mohan Naidu, along with the Secretaries of Ports, Shipping & Waterways; Power; and Civil Aviation. He described the webinar as an effective platform to deliberate on key issues and develop innovative solutions aligned with the Union Budget announcements.■

Railway Minister Reviews Redevelopment Work of Ahmedabad Railway Station



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw reviewing the redevelopment work of Ahmedabad Railway Station

Acknowledging the encouraging progress achieved, Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting, and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw, reviewed the progress of the ongoing redevelopment work of Ahmedabad Railway Station and other railway projects on 28th February, 2026. Calling for sustained focus on quality and timely completion, he directed the officials concerned accordingly.

Indian Railways is upgrading and modernizing more than 1337 stations across the country, with Ahmedabad station being a major project. Under the redevelopment plan, three new platforms will be added, increasing train handling capacity. The station is being modernized from both Kalupur and Saraspur sides, and is being developed as a world-class multimodal transport hub.

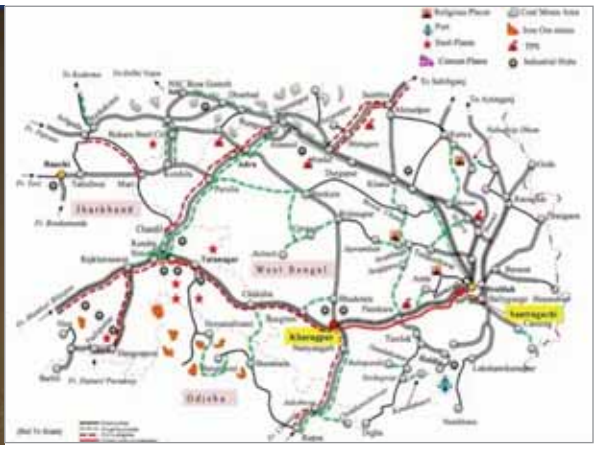
According to the progress report presented during the review, 58.2% of the work on the lower portion of the south side of the Multi-Modal Transport Hub (MMTH) building has been completed, while 24.0% of the work on the upper portion is in progress. Construction on the 7th and 8th floors of the MMTH building is currently underway. Parcel Building T-6 is 99.0% complete. The elevated road project is 67.3% complete, and all construction work on piers P-1 to P-41 has been completed. The station building (concourse and mezzanine/ roof structure) is 20.8% complete, and erection of the concourse structure is in progress.■

Cabinet Clears Two Railways Expansion Projects Worth ₹4474 crore in West Bengal

₹1322 cr Sainthia–Pakur 4th line and ₹3152 cr Santragachi–Kharagpur project to add about 192 km of new railway lines

Marking another major step towards strengthening the country's rail infrastructure, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on 10th March, 2026, approved two projects of the Ministry of Railways with a total cost of ₹4474 crore approximately. These projects include:





MR Ashwini Vaishnaw sharing detailed information on the two railway projects

- Sainthia-Pakur 4th line
- Santragachi-Kharagpur 4th line

The increased line capacity will significantly enhance mobility, resulting in improved operational efficiency and service reliability for Indian Railways. These multi-tracking proposals are poised to streamline operations and alleviate congestion. The projects are in line with PM Modi's vision of a New India, which will make the people of the region 'Atmanirbhar' by way of comprehensive development in the area, which will enhance their employment/self-employment opportunities.

The projects are planned under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, with a focus on enhancing multi-modal connectivity and logistics efficiency through integrated planning and stakeholder consultations. These projects will provide seamless connectivity for the movement of people, goods and services.

The two projects, covering five districts across the states of West Bengal and Jharkhand, will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 192 km. The approved multi-tracking project will enhance connectivity to approximately 5652 villages, which have a population of about 147 lakh.

The proposed capacity enhancement will improve rail connectivity to several prominent tourist destinations across the country, including Bolpur-Shantiniketan, Nandikeshwari Temple (Shaktipeeth), Tarapith (Shaktipeeth), Patachitra Gram, Dhadika Forest, Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary and Rameshwar Kund, etc.

The approved projects are essential routes for the transportation of commodities such as coal, stone, dolomite, cement, slag, gypsum, iron and steel, foodgrains, POL, containers, etc. The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of the magnitude of 31 MTPA (million tonnes per annum). The Railways, being an environment-friendly and energy-efficient mode of transportation, will help both in achieving climate goals and minimising logistics costs of the country, reducing oil imports (6 crore litres) and lower CO_2 emissions (28 crore kg), which is equivalent to the plantation of one crore trees.

Minister of Railways Reviews Passenger Amenities and Security with Officials

Directs Time-Bound Implementation of Access Control and AI-Driven Reforms



CCTV Control Room

- AI-Powered Camera Network to Enable Round-the-clock Surveillance & Ensure that Our Journey and Station Experience are Safe
- Colour-Coded Fluorescent Jackets and Mandatory ID Cards for all Railway and non-Railway Staff to Boost Accountability and Passenger Trust
- QR Code-based Access Control System to be Piloted at New Delhi Railway Station to Streamline Entry of Passengers ahead of Expected Festival Rush during Diwali and Chhath
- RailOne App to be Integrated with Bharat Taxi to improve Passenger Experience and Deliver Seamless Last-mile Connectivity

Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw chaired a comprehensive review meeting with senior railway officials at Rail Bhawan on 20th March, 2026 to assess the progress in station access, passenger amenity upgrades and other security related reinforcements to improve the passenger experience. The meeting focused on measures like access control, crowd management, technology-driven surveillance and ease of mobility within station premises. These reforms will first be implemented at New Delhi Railway Station and, based on the lessons learned, will subsequently be rolled out to other stations.

AI-Powered Camera Network to Ensure Round-the-Clock Surveillance

Comprehensive AI-powered surveillance is to be deployed at New Delhi Railway Station through cameras, covering all nooks and corners of the station premises, including platforms, concourses, entry-exit points and funnel areas prone to unauthorised entry.

An Exception Event Display-based control room will be established where AI processing of live camera feeds will alert monitoring staff to unusual or unsafe events in real time. The Union Minister described cameras as the "eyes" and AI as the "brain" of the system, stressing that all camera coverage zones must be adequately lit to ensure maximum surveillance efficacy.

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) will be additionally deployed to ensure only ticketed passengers access station premises, with a shift from manual checking to surveillance-based monitoring.

Colour-Coded Uniforms and ID Cards for All Station Staff

To bring uniformity and accountability among the large workforce, a colour-coded identification system has been directed for all personnel working in the station. Fluorescent jackets will be worn by Railway employees, while non-employees including vendors, station sahayaks, contractual staff and IRCTC personnel will also wear colour coded jackets of some other colour. This is being done to enable the swift identification of passengers, employees and other non-employees like coolies, the staff of vendors, food, cleaning, parcel and maintenance personnel, present in the station premises, with which the security authorities and the ticket checking staff engage, while performing their duties.

ID cards will be issued to all employees and non-employees, with comprehensive details needed for the identification purpose. The uniform

identification system is meant to be progressively replicated across all stations of the North Zone, with New Delhi Station serving as the model and at a later date in other parts of the country.

QR Code-Based Access Control System to be Piloted at New Delhi Railway Station

A QR code-based entry management system is to be introduced at New Delhi Railway Station as a pilot project ahead of expected festival rush during Diwali and Chhath. The system will regulate entry based on valid tickets, enabling better segregation of Reserved ticket holders, Monthly Season Ticket holders and Unreserved passengers.

RailOne App to be Integrated with Bharat Taxi for Seamless Last-Mile Connectivity

To improve the travel experience for passengers arriving at or departing from New Delhi Railway Station, the RailOne App is to be integrated with Bharat Taxi. The integration, being developed in collaboration with RailTel, aims to reduce the chaos outside station premises, minimise passenger inconvenience and provide a reliable, transparent last-mile transport option.

Bharat Taxi is India's first cooperative-led ride-hailing platform. This is a major milestone in the Government of India's ongoing efforts to strengthen the cooperative sector and promote inclusive, citizen-centric mobility solutions, in line with the vision of 'Sahkar se Samriddhi'.

Holding Areas to Ensure Seamless Crowd Management

The meeting also reviewed the status of holding area upgrades across 76 railway stations. Designated holding areas are being created outside the station building for unreserved travellers, ensuring controlled, phased access to platforms and preventing the flooding of concourses that has historically led to overcrowding and safety risks. The designated entry points will be available for passengers through the holding area for seamless movement.

Signage improvements at all stations have also been directed, with clear and prominently visible signs for both Reserved and Unreserved ticket holders. Train information services are to be upgraded to keep passengers better informed while they wait in designated holding areas. Direct monitoring by the Railway Ministry will continue to ensure sustained improvement in passenger comfort at high-footfall stations across the network.

These measures demonstrate Indian Railways' commitment to transforming the country's busiest stations into safe, well-organised and passenger-friendly spaces. By combining technology and upgraded physical infrastructure, the Railways aims to provide a seamless travel experience, from station entry to last-mile connectivity for the millions of passengers who rely on its services every day.■



Holding Area

52 Reforms Weeks

Under 'Reform Express'

Railway Minister Announces Five Key Reforms

Cargo, Construction & Passenger Convenience in Focus



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on 24th March, 2026, rolled out five new reforms, aimed at making freight movement smoother, improving construction quality, and easing processes for passengers. The steps include changes in how salt and automobiles are transported, tighter construction norms, simpler ticket cancellation and refund rules and more flexibility in choosing boarding points. The move also aligns with the broader push under Gati Shakti to streamline infrastructure and logistics.

Notably, Four other key reforms were earlier announced on 14th and 26th February, 2026. With these additions, the total number of reforms introduced so far in 2026 now stands at nine.

- **Soon Passengers Can Change Train Boarding Station Up to 30 Minutes Before Departure**
- **Railway Aims Refunds to Curb Last-Minute Speculative Bookings and Ensure Tickets for Genuine Passengers at No Extra Cost**
- **The Automobile Industry Can Now Design Specialized Containers to Carry Automobiles**
- **Railways Introduces Corrosion-Resistant Stainless Steel Containers with Top-Loading and Side-Discharge Mechanism to Boost Its Share in Salt Transportation**
- **Seven Key Changes to Construction Norms Announced to Strengthen Project Quality, Accountability and Timely Delivery**

5. **Reform in Salt Transportation**
6. **Reform in Automobile Transportation**
7. **Improving quality of construction**
8. **Cancellation of tickets & Refund Rules**
9. **Change of Train Boarding Point**

Reform 5

Reform in Salt Transportation

Introduction

- India is one of the largest producer and exporter of salt globally
- Major producers - Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Rajasthan
- Total production of salt in India: ~ 35 million tons
- Transportation by Railway: ~ 9.2 million tons per annum
- Modal share of Railways in:
- Transportation of industrial salt ~25%
- Transportation of Salt for human consumption ~65%
- 62% of the rail traffic is for distance of 1000 - 2500 km

Key issues and solutions

- Wagon design not ideal for salt transportation
- Salt causing corrosion of wagons
- Issues related to Loading and Unloading
- Multiple handling ⟶ consequent losses
- Loading in open wagons with tarpaulin lining and covers
- Solutions
- Shift towards containerization in special containers with non-corrosive feature
- Mechanized loading and unloading
- Containerized transport will facilitate seamless multimodal trasportaion.
- Containers can be placed in production and consumption points for loading and uploading



Reform 6

Reform in Automobile Transportation

Single Stack	Double Stack
	

Size of Indian Auto market

- Total: 31 million units annually
- Passenger vehicles: 5 million units

Rail co-efficient in passenger vehicles ~24%

Major originating points

- Mahesana (Gujarat)
- Chinchwad and Bidadi (Pune)
- Penukonda (Andhra Pradesh)
- Melpakkam (Tamil Nadu)
- Walajabad (Tamil Nadu)
- Farakhanagar (Gurugram)

Issues and steps taken

Issues faced

- Wagon design with limited carrying capacity
- Chances of damage to vehicles during transportation

Steps taken

- Introduction of specialized wagons for auto carriers
- Single stack
- Double stack

Introduction of specialized wagons for auto carriers

- Single stack
- Double stack

Reform 7

Improving Quality of Construction

Eligibility Criteria Strengthened

- Single work threshold raised from 35% to 50% of tender cost.
- Introduction of 20% "similar nature of work" clause in EPC contracts to ensure rail specific expertise.

Fixed Bid Security (2%): Ensures only serious bidders

Bid Capacity will be calculated for all projects above 10 Cr

Strict ban on corrupt, fraudulent, anti-competitive practices; strong punitive measures

Mandatory Work Plan

- Detailed execution plan required before project start
- Enables better monitoring and timely execution.

Reduced Sub-Contracting

- Contractor must carry out works for 60% of total price directly under its own supervision and Subcontracting is allowed to 40% only (earlier 70%)

Additional Performance Guarantee (5%)

- Applied when bids are significantly lower than the estimated cost
- Deterring non-serious bidders and safeguarding project quality.

Benefits

- **Transparency & Integrity:** Ethics & punitive provisions safeguard fairness in procurement & execution.
- **Quality Assurance:** Stronger eligibility & reduced subcontracting improve execution standards.
- **Timely Delivery:** Additional Performance Guarantee, Fixed Bid Security and bid capacity checks to prevent delay from under-resourced contractors.
- Stronger infrastructure delivery framework.

Reform 8

Cancellation of Tickets & Refund Rules

Reforms in ticketing

- Agents and touts tend to hoard tickets
- To overcome this problem Changes introduced in Tatkal booking:
- Introduced Aadhaar-based OTP
- Booking restricted for first 30 minutes
- Anti-bot solutions deployed to filter non-genuine users
- > 3 Crore suspicious user IDs deactivated

Cancellation of tickets & Refund Rules

Background

- Charting advanced from 4 hours to new 9-18 hours now
- This enables passengers to plan their travel efficiently

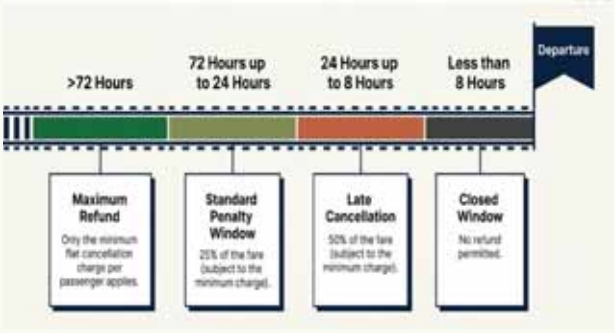
Modification in rules to take care of change in charting times

- 48/12/4 hrs changed to 72/24/8 hrs

Travel Class upgradation

- Travel class upgradation allowed up to 30 minutes before departure for counter tickets
- Previously, passenger could upgrade travel class only before charting
- This will provide more options for comfortable travel to passengers right till the last moment

New Cancellation norms for confirmed ticket



Reform 9

Change of Train Boarding Point

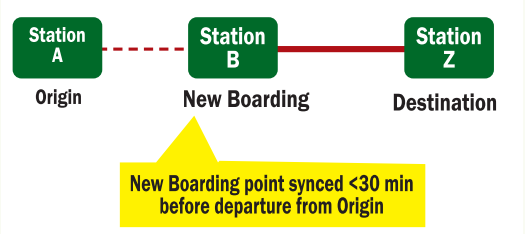
- Freedom to passenger to change their boarding point 30 minutes before scheduled departure of the train
- Specially useful in major cities with multiple stations, where a passenger can opt to board from any of those stations
- Currently, change of boarding point is allowed before preparation of chart

Change of Train Boarding Point: The Change explained

- **Scenario:** Passenger holds confirm ticket between Station A and Z. Due to sudden change in plan he wants to change the boarding point from Station A to B.
- Now, he will be able to digitally update his boarding location from A to B up to 30 mins before the train leaves origin station A

Benefits

- Enables last-minute changes in travel plans
- Passengers can board from convenient stations
- Better onboard management and seat utilization





Status of Implementation



better Onboard Services

- Trains identified across Zonal Railway for Deployment: 86 trains (list enclosed)
- Eligibility criteria and technical evaluation parameters issued after consultation with all stakeholders and finance concurrence on 13.03.2026
- Zonal Railways have already initiated process for empanelment of suitable agencies.

Implementation in Zonal Railways

- EOI for Empanelment already floated by 5 Zonal Railways. All other Zonal Railways to float the Eol in next one week.
- Empanelment of service providers, floating of tenders and awarding of contracts is expected to be completed by all Zonal Railways by Jun'26.

Rail-based Logistics through Gati Shakti Cargo Related Facilities

- The policy has been notified and consultations are being done with industry for launching new terminals under GCT 2.0

Rail Tech Policy

- Innovation Proposal received till 23rd March, 2026: 123
- Rejected: 29
- Proposals Under Review: 94



Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw replying to questions in the Parliament

Ongoing Transformation of Indian Railways Marks The Beginning of A New Era for National Transporter: MR

Indian Railways is witnessing unprecedented expansion and modernisation, supported by a record budgetary allocation of around ₹2.78 lakh crore in the Union Budget 2026–27. Responding to the discussion in Parliament on the Demands for Grants (2026–27) of the Ministry of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw on 17th March, 2026 highlighted that a key structural reform in the Railways was the merger of the Railway Budget with the General Budget, which has led to three major benefits. He described the ongoing transformation of Indian Railways as a shift from “slow growth” to “super-fast transformation”, marking the beginning of a new era for the national transporter.

Firstly, it enabled substantial enhancement in budgetary support, increasing from about ₹25,000–30,000 crore earlier to around ₹2.78 lakh crore in the current financial year. Secondly, it facilitated continuous decision-making and approvals throughout the year, including sanctioning of projects, introduction of new services and technology adoption. Thirdly, it brought in greater transparency and institutional monitoring, with projects being reviewed through systems involving the Ministry of Finance and NITI Aayog.

Record Budget Allocation and Financial Position

The Minister stated that the Union Budget 2026–27 provides a record allocation for Indian

- **Government Remains Committed to Serving the Poorest by Continuously Improving the Travel Experience at an Affordable Price**
- **MR Terms Shift of IR from "Slow Growth" to "Super-Fast Transformation" as a New Era**
- **With about 1,37,000 km Railway Track and more than 25,500 Trains, Indian Railways Helps People and Freight Move from One Part of the Country to Another for Work and Build Economy**
- **With more Non-AC Coaches, Indian Railways Prioritizes Needs of Common Citizens: MR**
- **Government Offers Heavily Subsidized Rail Travel in India; Absorbs 45% of Every Passenger Ticket Cost, Making Fares Lower Than Neighbouring Nations and Much Lower Than the Developed World for a More Modern Travel Experience**
- **200 New Intercity Trains besides 238 New Suburban Trains for Mumbai with Automatic Door-Closing Systems to Boost Short-Distance Travel**
- **Besides 5 Lakh Jobs in 10 Years and 1.43 Lakh Direct Jobs in the Last 2 Years, Railway Projects Are Generating Millions of Indirect Employment**
- **Enhanced Station Amenities and Tech-Driven Maintenance Practices Redefining Travel Experience in India**



Railways, benefiting all states across the country and supporting accelerated infrastructure development.

MR explained that the major expenditure components of Railways include staff costs of about ₹1.19 lakh crore, pension expenditure of around ₹64,000 crore, energy costs of approximately ₹32,000 crore and finance costs of about ₹23,000 crore. Despite these substantial expenditures, Railways continues to maintain a modest surplus.

He further noted that electrification has resulted in savings of approximately ₹6000 crore, with diesel consumption steadily declining due to increased electrification.

Infrastructure Expansion and Capacity Enhancement

The Minister highlighted the significant expansion in railway infrastructure over the past decade. Freight loading has increased from about 1055 million tonnes in 2013–14 to around 1650 million tonnes, making Indian Railways the second-largest freight carrier globally.



Track construction has accelerated substantially, with approximately 35,000 km of new tracks laid, compared to about 15,000 km in the earlier period. Electrification has also seen rapid progress, increasing from about 5200 km to nearly 47,000 km, achieving over 99% network electrification.

In terms of safety infrastructure, the number of Road over Bridges (RoBs) and Road under Bridges (RuBs) has increased from around 4000 to about 14,000. Automatic signalling has expanded from about 1500 km to over 4000 km.

The Minister also stated that LHB coaches, which are safer and more modern, have increased significantly, with about 48,000 coaches added in recent years. Locomotive production has also risen to around 12,000 units, while wagon induction has crossed 2 lakh units.

Tunnels, Freight Corridors and Strategic Connectivity

The Minister underlined that a major milestone has been achieved in tunnel construction. While about 125 km of tunnels were constructed till 2014, an additional 486 km of tunnels have been constructed thereafter, significantly improving connectivity in difficult terrains such as the Northeast and Jammu & Kashmir.



He further noted that the Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs) have seen substantial progress, with around 2800 km completed and about 480 freight trains operating daily on these corridors.

Operational Performance and Network Growth

Railway Minister stated that Indian Railways currently operates about 25,571 trains daily, ensuring smoother travel during peak seasons such as Holi, Diwali and Chhath.

The total railway network has expanded to approximately 1,37,522 Rkm, with continuous annual growth. Additionally, the Railways now has about 3.86 lakh wagons and around 98,000 coaches, both at record levels.

Safety Improvements

The Minister emphasised that safety remains a core priority, with focused interventions in track maintenance, rolling stock maintenance, technology adoption and training practices.

He stated that railway accidents have reduced by about 90%, supported by systematic root cause analysis and corrective measures. Investment in safety has also increased significantly, with about ₹1.2 lakh crore being allocated towards safety-related works.

On safety technology, he highlighted the progress of Kavach, the indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection system. Approximately 3000 km of network has already been covered, with work underway on about 20,000 km and installation planned on around 8000 locomotives.

He emphasised that Kavach is a comprehensive safety system, involving optical fibre networks, telecom towers, data centres and onboard equipment, comparable in complexity to a full telecom infrastructure.



Passenger Services and Affordable Travel

The Minister stated that Railways continues to prioritise affordable travel for common citizens. Around 70% of coaches are general and sleeper class, ensuring accessibility for the majority of passengers.

He informed that additional general coaches have been introduced, including about 1250 coaches in 2024–25 and around 860 in 2025–26.

Railways is currently providing a passenger subsidy of approximately ₹60,000 crore annually, translating to an average concession of about 45% per passenger. In suburban sections like Mumbai, an additional subsidy of around ₹3000 crore is provided.

Introduction of New Train Services

The Minister highlighted the introduction and expansion of modern train services. Currently, more than 160 Vande Bharat services are



operational, along with 60 Amrit Bharat train services catering to affordable long-distance travel.

He also informed that the manufacturing of 133 Amrit Bharat trains is underway. In addition, Vande Bharat Sleeper trains have been introduced and their performance has received positive feedback.

Railways is also undertaking production of 238 new suburban trains for Mumbai with automatic door-closing systems and around 200 new MEMU (to be branded as Intercity) trains for short-distance travel.

Special Trains and Passenger Convenience

The Minister stated that special train operations have expanded significantly to meet seasonal demand. While earlier around 2000–2500 special trains were operated annually, this time a record number of special trains are operated for the convenience of people.

During major festivals, such as Diwali and Chhath, about 12,383 special trains were operated, while over 1500 trains have already been run during Holi.

He further noted that holding areas are being developed at 75 major stations and over 1200 new EMU/MEMU services have been introduced to improve passenger convenience.



Employment and Recruitment Reforms

The Minister stated that approximately 5 lakh jobs have been provided in Railways over the past decade, with 1.43 lakh recruitments currently underway.

He highlighted the introduction of a structured annual recruitment calendar, ensuring predictability and transparency. Railway recruitment examinations are being conducted across 150 cities in 15 languages, with participation of around 3.6 crore candidates.

He also informed that a centralised monitoring system (war room) has been established to address grievances promptly and ensure smooth conduct of examinations.



Technology, Innovation and Make in India in Railways

Continuing his response, The Minister highlighted the growing role of technology and Make in India across all domains of Indian Railways, including operations, maintenance, infrastructure and passenger services.

He informed that the RailOne App, launched in July 2025, has gained significant traction, with over 2.5 crore downloads and facilitating approximately 9.5 lakh ticket transactions daily. The app integrates multiple passenger services including reserved and unreserved ticketing, platform tickets, train enquiries, PNR status and grievance redressal on a single platform.

The Minister further stated that the Passenger Reservation System (PRS) has been comprehensively modernised after several decades. The upgraded system is being rolled out in phases and is expected to significantly improve booking efficiency and transparency. Improvements in the Tatkal booking system have also been implemented to curb misuse through automated bots and unauthorized software, resulting in better availability for genuine users.



He also noted the deployment of AI-based systems, including cameras for wildlife protection and advanced technologies such as IoT, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for predictive maintenance across the network.

Under the Make in India initiative, Indian Railways has emerged as a significant exporter, with railway exports crossing ₹24,000 crore, reaching countries such as Germany, USA, France, UK, Australia and others.

Station Redevelopment and Capacity Augmentation

The Minister stated that Indian Railways has undertaken one of the largest station redevelopment programmes globally, covering approximately 1300 stations. Out of these, about 180 stations have been completed, while nearly 500 stations are at advanced stages of completion.

He emphasised that, unlike global practices where stations are often shut down during reconstruction, Indian Railways is executing redevelopment works while maintaining continuous train operations, ensuring safety and minimal inconvenience to passengers.

In addition, capacity augmentation works have been taken up in 48 high-demand cities, including construction of additional platforms, stabling lines, pit lines and coaching terminals, which will significantly enhance operational efficiency in the coming years.

Integrated Planning through PM Gati Shakti

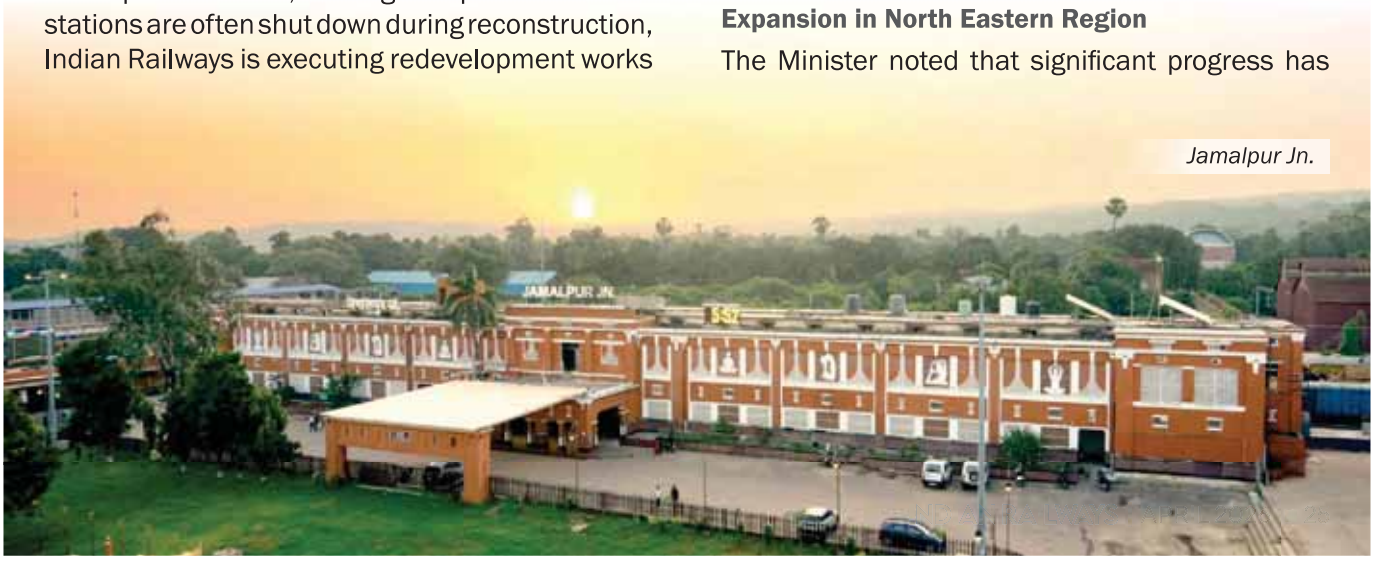
The Minister highlighted that railway expansion is now being planned through the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, which uses geospatial mapping for integrated infrastructure planning.



Through scientific assessment of demand from industries, urban centres and logistics nodes, new railway projects have been identified systematically. Since 2014, approximately 27,000 km of new railway projects have been sanctioned, with a total investment of about ₹4.27 lakh crore.

Expansion in North Eastern Region

The Minister noted that significant progress has



Jamalpur Jn.



been made in improving rail connectivity in the North Eastern region. States such as Mizoram have been connected to the railway network, while connectivity projects in Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim are progressing rapidly.

He stated that improved rail connectivity has contributed to reduced transportation costs, improved logistics and better accessibility in the region.

Railways and Cultural Connectivity

The Minister highlighted efforts to strengthen rail connectivity to major cultural and religious centres across the country.

Comprehensive infrastructure development plans have been prepared for major events such as Kumbh gatherings in cities like Nashik, Ujjain, Haridwar, Rajahmundry and Kumbakonam. These include station upgrades, additional bridges, underpasses, track doubling and signalling improvements to handle large passenger volumes efficiently.

Project Execution and Land Acquisition Challenges

The Minister stated that timely execution of railway projects requires active cooperation from State Governments, particularly in land acquisition.

He noted that delays in land acquisition in certain regions have impacted project progress. He emphasised that railway development is a collaborative effort under the federal structure and faster land acquisition would help accelerate project implementation across states.

Reforms in Passenger Experience and Cleanliness

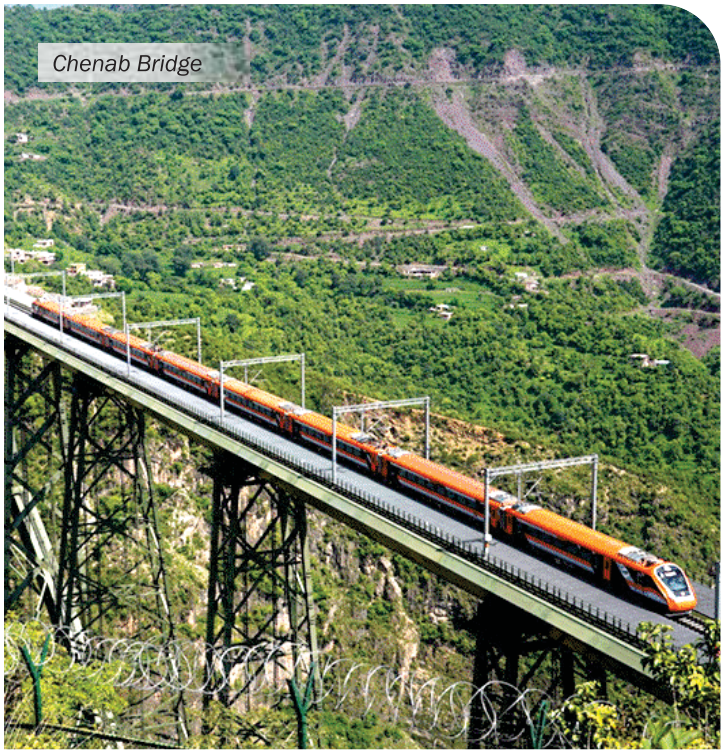
The Minister highlighted ongoing reforms aimed at improving passenger experience, particularly cleanliness. A new initiative has been launched on a pilot basis in long-distance trains, where continuous cleaning is ensured from origin to destination across all classes, including general coaches. This initiative is being implemented in selected trains across zones and is expected to enhance overall passenger satisfaction.

Border Infrastructure and Strategic Connectivity

Concluding his response, the Minister highlighted the significant emphasis being placed on rail connectivity in border and strategic areas.

He stated that multiple projects have been undertaken to strengthen connectivity in border regions, enhancing both strategic mobility and regional development. In Jammu & Kashmir, works such as Baramulla–Uri extension (DPR stage), Qazigund–Budgam doubling and surveys for Jammu–Rajouri–Poonch connectivity are being progressed.

In the North Eastern region, several projects are advancing, including preparation and completion of DPRs for new lines such as Lanka–Silchar, Dekargaon–Silghat and other strategic routes. Surveys and construction activities are also underway for capacity enhancement, including additional lines between New Jalpaiguri and Kamakhya.



Chenab Bridge



Sabarmati Bullet Train Station

The Minister further stated that international connectivity projects, including links with neighbouring countries such as Bhutan, have also been taken up.

In northern and western border areas, projects such as Anupgarh–Khajuwala, Jaisalmer–Barmer–Bhildi and other routes along the India–Pakistan border are being developed to improve accessibility and logistics.

In Himachal Pradesh and adjoining regions, works such as the Beri–Manali–Leh (DPR stage) and Ghanauli –Baddi line are progressing. Similarly, in Punjab and other northern states, new lines and capacity enhancement projects are underway.

He also highlighted a strategically important project in the Siliguri corridor, where plans are being developed for a 30 km underground double-line corridor to ensure uninterrupted connectivity in critical situations.

Additionally, along the India–Nepal border, multiple doubling and capacity enhancement projects are being undertaken, including sections such as Narkatiaganj–Raxaul–Sitamarhi–Darbhanga–Muzaffarpur, to strengthen cross-border connectivity and regional development.

High-Speed Rail and Bullet Train Progress

The Minister provided an update on the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (Bullet Train) Project, stating that construction is progressing rapidly.

Key Milestones include

Over 300 km of via-duct construction completed.

Significant progress in pier construction, track laying and station development

Bridges Completed Across Multiple Rivers

Work underway on India's first undersea rail tunnel, with progress already achieved.

He stated that the project is targeted for phased commissioning starting 2027, with trains expected to operate at speeds of up to 350 km/h, reducing travel time between Mumbai and Ahmedabad to under 2 hours.

The Minister also informed that seven additional high-speed rail corridors have been announced, which will expand India's high-speed network to approximately 4000 km in the future.

Acknowledgement of Railway Workforce

The Minister acknowledged the contribution of approximately 12.5 lakh railway employees, including loco pilots, track maintainers, station staff and technical personnel, who ensure uninterrupted railway operations across the country, often working during festivals and challenging conditions.

He emphasised that Indian Railways' transformation is the result of collective efforts of its workforce, supported by sustained policy focus and investment.

Conclusion

The Demands for Grants sought Parliamentary approval for the Ministry's detailed expenditure proposals from the Consolidated Fund of India, encompassing key priorities such as capacity augmentation, safety enhancement, network decongestion and passenger amenities, while balancing significant operational commitments.■

Common Man's Train: Amrit Bharat Express

Combining Speed, Safety and Passenger Comfort, Records over 100% Sleeper Class Occupancy

Passenger Capacity Boosted With 860 General Coaches



As the railway network straddles across state boundaries, trains are introduced across such boundaries as per network requirement.

To provide an affordable means of transportation to low- and middle-income families, Indian Railways has introduced Amrit Bharat services that are fully non-AC modern trains. The present composition of Amrit Bharat trains consists of 11 General Class coaches, 8 Sleeper Class coaches, 1 pantry car and 2 luggage-cum-Divyangjan coaches.

High speed and enhanced safety standards are the hallmarks of these trains, with the following enhanced features and amenities:

- Better aesthetics of seats and berths with enhanced look and feel on the lines of the Vande Bharat Sleeper.
- Jerk-free semi-automatic couplers.
- Improved crashworthiness in coaches by provision of crash tubes.
- Provision of CCTV systems in all coaches and luggage rooms.
- Improved design of toilets.
- Improved design of ladders for ease of climbing onto the berth.
- Improved LED light fittings and charging sockets.
- Provision of an EP-assisted braking system.
- Aerosol-based fire suppression system in toilets and electrical cubicles.
- USB Type-A and Type-C mobile charging sockets.
- Emergency talk-back system for two-way communication between passengers and the Guard/Train Manager.
- Non-AC pantry with enhanced heating capacity.
- Fully sealed gangways with quick release mechanism for easy attachment and detachment.

As on 18th March, 2026, 60 Amrit Bharat Express services are being operated across the Indian Railways network

Amrit Bharat Trains
11015/11016 Lokmanya Tilak (T) - Saharsa
13697/13698 Gaya - Delhi
15293/15294 Muzaffarpur - Charlapalli
15557/15558 Darbhanga - Anand Vihar (T)
15561/15562 Darbhanga - Gomtinagar
15567/15568 Bapudham Motihari - Anand Vihar (T)
22361/22362 Rajendranagar (T) - New Delhi
13433/13434 SMVT Bengaluru - Malda Town
13435/13436 Malda Town - Gomtinagar
15133/15134 Chhapra - Anand Vihar (T)
14047/14048 Sitamarhi - Delhi

14627/14628 Saharsa - Chheharta
19623/19624 Madar - Darbhanga
16601/16602 Erode - Jogbani
19021/19022 Udhna - Brahmapur
15671/15672 Kamakhya - Rohtak
20609/20610 New Jalpaiguri - Tiruchchirappalli
16597/16598 SMVT Bengaluru - Alipurduar
11031/11032 Panvel - Alipurduar
16107/16108 Tambaram - Santragachi
13065/13066 Howrah - Anand Vihar (T)
22587/22588 Sealdah - Banaras
20603/20604 New Jalpaiguri - Nagercoil
15949/15950 Dibrugarh - Gomti Nagar
16121/16122 Tambaram - Thiruvananthapuram Central
16329/16330 Nagercoil - Mangaluru
17041/17042 Charlapalli - Thiruvananthapuram North
16619/16620 Podanur-Dhanbad
16357/16358 Nagercoil-Charlapalli
15673/15674 Charlapalli - Kamakhya

Besides the introduction of new train services, including Vande Bharat sleeper services, this is an ongoing process and depends on various factors, which include:

- Capacity of the section.
- Availability of paths.
- Availability of required rolling stock.
- Availability of matching infrastructure for rolling stock.
- Maintenance requirements of railway tracks and other assets.
- Occupancy and traffic requirements of the section.

Occupancy

On Indian Railways, the occupancy pattern of trains is not uniform throughout the year and it varies between lean and peak periods. During peak rush periods, the occupancy of the trains, especially on popular routes, remains full, whereas during lean periods and on less popular routes, there is sub-optimal utilization.

However, for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 (upto January, 2026), the overall average occupancy of Amrit Bharat Express trains in Sleeper Class has been above 100%.

General Coaches

With a view to meet the demand of passengers travelling in unreserved coaches, Railways have significantly increased the facilities for passengers demanding general class travel. During the last financial year 2024-25 alone, 1250 general coaches have been utilised in various long-distance trains. In the current financial year (upto February, 2026), 860 Coaches have been utilised for permanent augmentation.

To cater to the travel demand of the low and middle income families, Indian Railways have taken up manufacturing of 17,000 non-AC coaches (general/sleeper).

Indian Railways constantly endeavour to cater to the travelling needs of all sections of society by providing various types of coaches which includes both Non AC and AC coaches.

On IR, the percentage of Non-AC coaches is about 70%, as indicated below:

Distribution of coaches

Non-AC coaches (general and sleeper)	₹~62,000	~70%
AC coaches	~27,000	~30%
Total coaches	~89,000	100%

Due to higher availability of general coaches, the number of passengers traveling in general/ unreserved coaches has shown an increasing trend as shown below:

Passengers in general/unreserved coaches

Year	No. of Passengers
2020-21	99 Cr (Covid year)
2021-22	275 Cr (Covid year)
2022-23	553 Cr
2023-24	609 Cr
2024-25	651 Cr

The number of seats available for non-AC passengers has also increased. The current composition is as follows:

Distribution of seats

Non-AC seats	~ 54 lakhs	~ 78%
AC seats	~ 15 lakhs	~ 22%
Total	~ 69 lakhs	100%

Further, to cater to the needs of passengers desirous of availing unreserved accommodation, Indian Railways (IR) operate unreserved non-AC passenger trains/ MEMU / EMU etc. for affordable travel, which are in addition to the unreserved accommodation (coaches) available in Mail/ Express services.

Special Trains

The number of special trains operated across the Indian Railways network to facilitate the passengers during summer/winter vacations and festivals like Holi, Durga Puja, Diwali, Chhath, Christmas, Sabrimala, Id-ul-fitr etc. is as below:

Year	No. of trips
2023-24	~40,500
2024-25	~85,400
2025-26 (upto Feb, 2026)	~74,800

To provide greater accommodation for passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper coaches, the extant policy regarding composition of Mail/ Express trains provides for 12 General class and Sleeper class non-AC coaches and eight AC coaches in a train of 22 coaches, thereby providing greater accommodation for passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper coaches.

Maintenance of Coaches

Further, regular actions are taken to ensure and improve maintenance standards and cleanliness of coaches, as follows:

- Maintenance of coaches is carried out at coaching terminals in line with laid-down detailed guidelines and prescribed standards.
- Mechanized Coach Cleaning is being ensured during maintenance for better cleaning of the coach, including interior, exterior and toilets.
- Onboard housekeeping staff service is being provided to ensure cleanliness during the run and Clean Train Station services are also provided for en-route attention.
- Regular monitoring is done through inspections by nominated officials in divisions/depots and workshops, etc across Zonal Railways.
- Regular training of staff is also undertaken to ensure safety and comfort of passengers.

Sanitation In General Coaches

Cleanliness is an ongoing process and Indian Railways makes continuous efforts to keep trains well-maintained and clean. Cleaning of coaches including general coaches is done at both ends, including mechanised cleaning. Toilets are cleaned frequently and there is a well-established redressal mechanism for addressing cleanliness issues during the run of the train.

Provision of Clean Train Station (CTS) has been made for limited mechanised cleaning attention to identified trains. All trains have been fitted with bio-toilets, which help in maintaining cleanliness in trains as well as at tracks/stations. Regular inspections are conducted for monitoring cleanliness.■

Kind Attention

AUTHORS/WRITERS contributing articles for the magazine are requested to restrict their articles to a reasonable size. Ideally an article should not exceed 1000 WORDS.

In view of the space constraints of the magazine, sometimes it becomes difficult to include longer articles. All are requested to appreciate our problem and co-operate.

editorindianrailways@gmail.com

Vande Bharat Sleeper and Chair Car Trains
Delivering Affordable Travel for All Sections of Society

Over 160 Vande Bharat Services Strengthening Connectivity and Improving Onboard Experience across Regions



Indian Railways (IR) is focussed on providing affordable, good quality services to all sections of society. With a view to improve travel experience of the passengers, Indian Railways have introduced indigenously designed and manufactured Vande Bharat (Sleeper and Chair Car) Express services with modern coaches, advanced safety features and passenger amenities.

Vande Bharat Services [Chair Car]

Indian Railways, with a view to improve travel experience of the passengers, have introduced indigenously designed and manufactured Vande Bharat trains with modern coaches, advanced safety features and passenger amenities.

As on 12th March, 2026, the following more than 160–Vande Bharat train services (Chair Car) are being operated over the Indian Railways network.

Vande Bharat Trains
22435/22436 New Delhi - Varanasi
22439/22440 Sri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi
20901/20902 Gandhinagar Capital - Mumbai Central
22447/22448 Amb Andura - New Delhi
20607/20608 Mysuru - MGR Chennai Central
20825/20826 Nagpur - Bilaspur
22301/22302 New Jalpaiguri - Howrah
20833/20834 Secunderabad - Visakhapatnam
22223/22224 Sainagar Shirdi-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)
22225/22226 Solapur - Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)
20171/20172 Nizamuddin - Rani Kamlapati
20701/20702 Tirupati - Secunderabad
20643/20644 Coimbatore - Chennai
20977/20978 Chandigarh - Ajmer
20633/20634 Thiruvananthapuram- Kasargod
22895/22896 Puri - Howrah
22457/22458 Dehradun - Anand Vihar
22227/22228 Guwahati - New Jalpaiguri
20911/20912 Nagpur - Indore
22229/22230 Madgaon - Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)
22349/22350 Ranchi - Patna
20661/20662 Dharwar - Bengaluru
20173/20174 Rewa - Rani Kamlapati
22549/22550 Gorakhpur - Prayagraj
12461/12462 Sabarmati - Jodhpur
22925/22926 Okha - Ahmedabad
20665/20666 Tirunelveli - Chennai Egmore
20677/20678 Narsapur - Chennai
20703/20704 Yesvantpur - Kacheguda
20631/20632 Thiruvananthapuram- Mangaluru
26963/26964 Udaipur - Asarva
22347/22348 Patna - Howrah
20835/20836 Puri - Rourkela
20897/20898 Ranchi - Howrah
22415/22416 New Delhi - Varanasi

20641/20642 Coimbatore - Bengaluru Cant
20645/20646 Mangaluru - Madgaon
20705/20706 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T) - Nanded
22477/22478 Sri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi
22425/22426 Anand Vihar - Ayodhya Cantt.
22487/22488 Amritsar - Delhi
22962/22961 Mumbai Central - Ahmedabad
20707/20708 Visakhapatnam - Secunderabad
20663/20664 Chennai - Mysuru
22233/22234 Patna - New Jalpaiguri
22470/22469 Khajuraho - Nizamuddin
22231/22232 Bengaluru - Kalburagi
20841/20842 Visakhapatnam - Bhubaneswar
22345/22346 Gomti Nagar - Patna
20887/20888 Varanasi - Ranchi
22545/22546 Dehradun - Lucknow Jn
22490/22489 Varanasi - Meerut City
20627/20628 Nagercoil - Chennai Egmore
20671/20672 Bengaluru Cantt - Madurai
22500/22499 Deoghar - Varanasi
22309/22310 Jamalpur - Howrah
20871/20872 Rourkela - Howrah
20893/20894 Patna - Tatanagar
20892/20891 Tatanagar - Brahmapur
22303/22304 Gaya - Howrah
20669/20670 Pune - Hubballi
20673/20674 Pune - Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj (T)
20101/20102 Secunderabad - Nagpur
20829/20830 Visakhapatnam - Durg
21893/21894 Patna - Tatanagar
21895/21896 Patna - Tatanagar
20176/20175 Banaras - Agra Cantt.
26901/26902 Veraval - Sabarmati
26401/26402 Srinagar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra
26403/26404 Srinagar -Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra
26502/26501 Patliputra - Gorakhpur
26751/26752 KSR Bengaluru - Belagavi
26406/26405 Amritsar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra
26101/26102 Pune - Ajni
26302/26301 Jogbani - Danapur
26481/26482 Delhi Cantt - Jodhpur
26471/26472 Delhi Cantt - Bikaner
26462/26461 Delhi - Firozpur Cantt.
26651/26652 Ernakulam - KSR Bengaluru
26506/26505 Khajuraho - Banaras
26504/26503 Saharanpur - Gomtinagar

Vande Bharat services (Sleeper)

For long distance travel the Sleeper variant of Vande Bharat Express has been indigenously designed and developed. Two such trains have already been manufactured. After extensive trials, these trains have been introduced on Indian Railways. The First Vande Bharat Sleeper service viz. Howrah-Kamakhya Vande Bharat Sleeper Express has commenced regular operation w.e.f. 22nd January, 2026.

As on 12th March 2026, the following two Vande Bharat train services (Sleeper Car) are being operated on the Indian Railways network:

27575/27576 Howrah - Kamakhya Vande Bharat Sleeper Express

Besides, introduction of new train services, including Vande Bharat services and its variants, is an on-going process, which depends on various factors which include:

- Capacity of that section.
- Availability of path.
- Availability of required rolling stock.
- Availability of matching infrastructure for rolling stock.
- Maintenance requirement of railway tracks and other assets.
- Occupancy and the traffic requirement of the section.■

Indian Railways Renews 54,600 km of Tracks During 2014-26

High-speed track stretches, supporting 130 kmph and above, grow from 5036 km in 2014 to 23,713 km in 2026

As part of sustained efforts to strengthen railway infrastructure, upgradation and renewal of tracks is a continuous and ongoing process. The track renewal is carried out as per the established laid down criteria based on age, traffic carried, condition etc. Track renewal works are planned and executed, duly prioritising the condition of the track and various other factors so as to ensure that the track is safe for the running of trains at the permitted speed.

The details of track renewal carried out across the entire railway network during 2014-2026 (up to Feb 2026) are as under:

Track renewed	~ 54600 km

Safety of train operations is accorded top priority on Indian Railways (IR). There is a well-established system of inspection and maintenance of railway tracks as prescribed in the IR's Permanent Way Manual.

The tracks on IR are regularly inspected by designated officials as per the laid-down schedule. This includes daily patrolling, on-foot inspection, trolley inspection and footplate/rear-window inspection by the officials concerned. Further, to assess the health of the track geometry objectively, Track Recording Car (TRC) and Oscillation Monitoring System (OMS) runs are conducted at scheduled frequencies. The entire railway network of Indian Railways is covered through TRC and OMS runs. Based on various inspections, necessary action is taken in a time-bound manner to ensure the safety of the track.

Strengthening, upgradation, modernisation and improvement of track infrastructure are a continuous and ongoing process over IR. The following measures are being taken by IR to upgrade its tracks

- Modern track structure consisting of 60 kg, 90 Ultimate Tensile Strength (UTS) rails; wider and heavier Pre-stressed Concrete Sleepers (PSC) with elastic fastening, fan-shaped layout turnout on PSC sleepers and H-beam sleepers on girder bridges are being used while carrying out primary track renewals.
- Thick Web Switches and Weldable CMS Crossings are being used in turnout renewal works.
- Supply of 260 m-long rail panels has been increased to avoid welding of joints, thereby improving safety and riding quality.
- Thick Web Switch Expansion Joints are being used in place of earlier conventional/improved SEJs.
- Adoption of better welding technology for rails i.e. Flash Butt Welding.
- Adoption of a mechanised system for track maintenance using high-output plain tampers and points-and-crossing tampers for improved maintainability and reliability of the track.



- Deployment of state-of-the-art machines, including Rail Grinding Machines, to further improve asset reliability.
- Mechanisation of track-laying activities through the use of track machines like PQRS, TRT, T-28 etc.
- Interlocking of Level Crossing (LC) gates for enhancing safety at LC gates.
- Use of advanced Phased Array technology for testing of rails and welds.
- Deployment of Integrated Track Monitoring Systems (ITMS) and Oscillation Monitoring System (OMS) for comprehensive health assessment to ascertain optimal maintenance requirements.
- Adoption of portable Track Measuring Trolleys for continuous recording of track parameters in yards.
- Using a web-enabled Track Management System (TMS) for integration and data analytics of the track inspection records received through various sources to enable precise maintenance inputs.

Sectional Speed (kmph)	2014		2026 (up to Feb' 26)	
	Track km	%	Track km	%
130 & above	5036	6.3	23,713	22.4
110 - 130	26,409	33.3	62,036	58.7
< 110	47,897	60.4	19,923	18.9
Total	79,342	100	1,05,672	100

As a result of the above measures, there has been a significant increase in the speed potential of the tracks. The details of speed potential of railway tracks during 2014 vis-a-vis 2026 are given in the above table.■

Railways Achieves 16,398 km Safety Fencing Milestone, ₹209.38 Crore Project Progresses on Ground



Safety of train operations is accorded top priority on Indian Railways (IR). As one of the important safety measures, the provision of safety fencing has been taken up on routes where the permitted speed of train operations exceeds 110 kmph, as well as at other vulnerable locations, to prevent trespassing and ensure safe train operations. Pedestrian subways are also being provided along with safety fencing in order to facilitate the crossing of railway alignments by cattle, pedestrians and smaller vehicles.

A work has been sanctioned, costing ₹209.38 crore, for providing safety fencing along the entire Lonavala-Pune-Daund route. The work includes the construction of 290 km of fencing with pedestrian subways. The tender has been awarded for the entire length of the section and about 150 km of fencing has been completed to date.

Zone-wise details of safety fencing:

Zonal Railway	Length of fencing provided (in Fencing km)
Central	966
Eastern	754
East Central	730
East Coast	533
Northern	736
North Central	2721
North Eastern	613
Northeast Frontier	153
North Western	1539
Southern	827
South Central	2326
South Eastern	209
South East Central	365
South Western	255
Western	2257
West Central	1415
Total	16,398

First-Mile Pick-Up, Mid-Mile Rail Transport and Last-Mile Delivery Power Indian Railways' Parcel Logistics Push

'Rail Parcel' app-based platform, ₹14,500 crore infrastructure push and door-to-door services drive Railways' parcel logistics expansion

Strengthening freight logistics and regional connectivity, Indian Railways has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to enhance freight efficiency, ensure seamless connectivity and provide robust first- and last-mile solutions.

To improve the efficiency of rail freight handling at the terminals, Indian Railways has adopted a two-pronged approach: encouraging development of modern rail freight terminals under the Gati Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal (GCT) Policy and augmenting/upgrading the infrastructure at railway-owned goods sheds. Upto 5th March, 2026, 128 GCTs have been commissioned and in-principle approvals for 288 GCTs have been issued across Indian Railways. In addition, for improvement of customer amenities at goods and parcel terminals across the country, an amount of ₹14,500 crore has been allocated for the financial years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26.

CONCOR, a PSU under the Ministry of Railways, is also providing door-to-door parcel services by utilizing the JPP-RCS on the Delhi-Kolkata and Mumbai-Kolkata sectors. CONCOR is also providing door-to-door logistics services under a pilot project at Sonik Goods Shed.

The Joint Parcel Product (JPP) initiative with India Post was introduced on a pilot basis in 2022 over certain routes to target the business-to-customer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) markets, with a focus on the e-commerce and MSME markets, at an affordable price as per market trends for weight categories between 35 kg and 100 kg. Under the scheme, India Post provided first- and last-mile services and Indian Railways provided the middle-mile services.

Based on the experience gained from the pilot, the JPP scheme was made available for other parcel aggregators as well and was renamed Joint Parcel Product – Rapid Cargo Service (JPP-RCS). Under the scheme, online booking of JPP-RCS (in units of VPs) is done by empanelled parcel aggregators through the "Virtual Aggregation Platform" (VAP) developed by IR. Currently, seven pairs of scheduled (time tabled) services are operating between specific locations, which have been planned on the basis of market demand and operational feasibility. The total revenue generated from the JPP-RCS during the current year (up to February 2026) is approximately ₹56 crore.



A pilot project for the development of a comprehensive "app-based platform" for railway parcel logistics was launched by South Central Railway on 2nd February, 2026, for a period of one year. Under this pilot project, door-to-door parcel services are being provided in association with logistics service providers. The integrated parcel logistics app, "Rail Parcel", has been developed as a digital market place wherein selected logistics service providers are onboarded as partners. These logistics partners offer a range of services including first-mile pick-up, last-mile delivery, value-added services such as packaging, etc., with Railways providing the mid-mile transportation through rail services.

The project is being implemented at 17 stations across seven cities viz., Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Guntur, Rajahmundry, Bengaluru and Chennai. At present, three private logistics partners have been onboarded through an Expression of Interest process.■

₹836 crore Kalyan-Murbad New Rail Line Sanctioned

Network expansion has been taken up in a big way by Indian Railways, including the rail network situated in Maharashtra. Budget allocations have increased significantly over the last 10 years. The budget allocation for infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/partly in the state of Maharashtra, is as under:

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹1171 crore/year
2025-26	₹23,778 crore (more than 20 times)

Kalyan–Murbad (28 km) new line project has been sanctioned at a cost of ₹836 crore on a 50:50 cost-sharing basis with the Government of Maharashtra. It has been declared a Special Railway Project for land acquisition. The project requires 214 Ha of land. Land acquisition proposals have been submitted to the state Govt. and they are in various stages of acquisition.

Increasing Train Handling Capacity in Mumbai

Presently, about 120 originating Mail/Express trains and about 3200 suburban trains are handled daily in the Mumbai area.

The following works have been completed:

Location	Details
Bandra Terminus	3 pit Lines have been completed
Mumbai Central	Platform extension for 24 LHB coaches
Jogeshwari	2 additional platforms
Dadar	1 additional platform
Vasai Road	6 platforms, 3 pit lines and 5 stabling lines
Panvel-Kalamboli	5 platforms, 4 pit lines and 2 sick lines
Kalyan	6 platforms and 4 pit lines
LTT	4 platforms and 2 pit lines
Parel	6 platforms, 5 pit lines, 6 stabling lines
Virar	25 stabling lines
Dahanu Road	11 stabling lines
Mira Road	25 stabling lines

Platform Length Extension: In addition to the above, platform extension work at 34 stations to accommodate 15 car EMUs has been taken up.



New Projects for Increasing Capacity: To improve the capacity of the rail network in the Mumbai suburban area, Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP)-II costing ₹8087 crore, MUTP-III costing ₹10,947 crore and MUTP-IIIA costing ₹33,690 crore have been sanctioned. These projects include the following works in the Mumbai Suburban area:

Name of Project	Cost in Cr.
CSMT-Kurla 5th & 6th Line (MUTP-II) (17.5 km)	891
Mumbai Central-Borivali 6th Line (MUTP-II) (30 km)	919
Extension of Harbour Line from Goregaon-Borivali (MUTP-IIIA) (7 km)	826
Borivali-Virar 5th & 6th Line (MUTP-IIIA) (26 km)	2,184
Virar-Dahanu Road 3rd & 4th Line (MUTP-III) (64 km)	3,587
Panvel-Karjat Suburban Corridor (MUTP-III) (29.6 km)	2782
Airoli-Kalwa (elevated) Suburban Corridor link (MUTP-III) (3.3 km)	476
Kalyan-Asangaon 4thLine (MUTP-IIIA) (32 km)	1759
Kalyan-Badlapur 3rd& 4th line (MUTP-IIIA) (14 km)	1510
Kalyan-Kasara 3rd Line (67 km)	793
Naigaon-Juichandra double chord Line (6 km)	176
Nilaje-Kopar double chord Line (5 km)	338
Kalyan Yard remodeling work	866

New Generation Trains: To enhance passenger carrying capacity, 238 rakes of 12 cars each with doors have been sanctioned under MUTP-III and IIIA at a cost of ₹19,293 crore. The process for procurement of these rakes has been taken up.■

Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project

Gujarat: Major Civil Works Near Completion, 8 Stations' Foundations Laid

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) Project (508 km) is the only HSR project under execution. The project passes through the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra and the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, with 12 stations planned at Mumbai, Thane, Virar, Boisar, Vapi, Billimora, Surat, Bharuch, Vadodara, Anand, Ahmedabad and Sabarmati.


Surat Bullet Train Station

The entire land (1389.5 ha) for the MAHSR project has been acquired. All statutory clearances have been obtained. All 1651 utilities have been shifted. The delay in land acquisition in the state of Maharashtra impacted the project till 2021. Land acquisition picked up in Maharashtra in 2022.

The progress of major items so far is as under:

Gujarat (352 km):

Item	Progress
Foundation	352 km
Piers	352 km
Girder Casting	342 km
Girder Launching	331 km
Track Bed Construction	152 km
OHE Masts Erection	121 km

Maharashtra (156 km):

Item	Progress
Foundation	84 km
Piers	75 km
Girder Casting	12 km
Girder Launching	5 km

Out of a total of 12 stations, foundation works have been completed at eight stations (Vapi, Billimora, Surat, Bharuch, Anand, Vadodara, Ahmedabad and Sabarmati). In the Maharashtra section, foundation work is in progress at three stations (Thane, Virar, Boisar) and excavation work at the BKC station is near completion and the casting of the base slab has started.

Seventeen river bridges have been completed. Work is in an advanced stage for 4 major river bridges (Narmada, Mahi, Tapti and Sabarmati) in Gujarat and is in progress on 4 river bridges in Maharashtra. Work on depots (Thane, Surat and Sabarmati) is in full swing.

Civil works at Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) are progressing satisfactorily. Excavation works have achieved about 91% progress and concreting works are at various stages, with 100% completion of the basement slab at Level-4. The work of the undersea tunnel (approximately 21 km) has commenced, out of which 4.8 km of tunnel between Ghansoli and Shilphata in Maharashtra has been completed.

To ensure seamless passenger connectivity, the government has planned multimodal integration of Bullet Train stations with the existing Mumbai suburban railway network and upcoming metro lines. The integration includes passenger connectivity with Metro Line 2B and Metro Line 3 through convenient pedestrian access at BKC station.

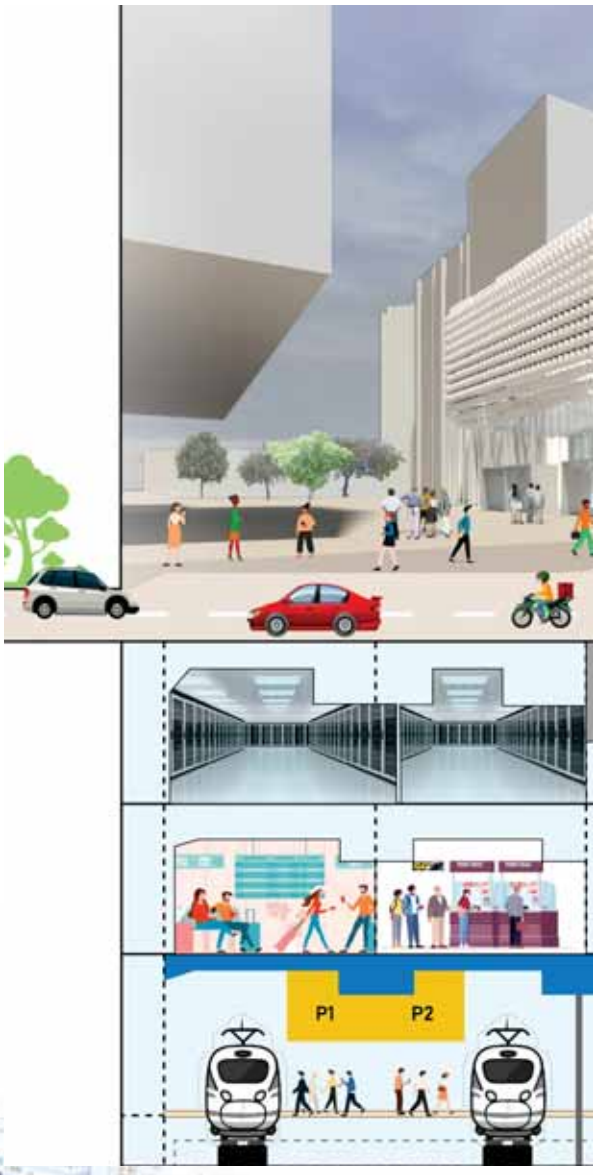
Bullet train project is a very complex and technology-intensive project. Exact timelines for completion of the project can be reasonably ascertained after the completion of all associated works of civil structures, track, electrical, signaling and telecommunication and supply of trainsets. ■

BKC Underground Station of Platforms to Be Ready at 10-Storey Depth

Mumbai Bullet Train station, located at Bandra Kurla Complex, is the only underground station on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train corridor.

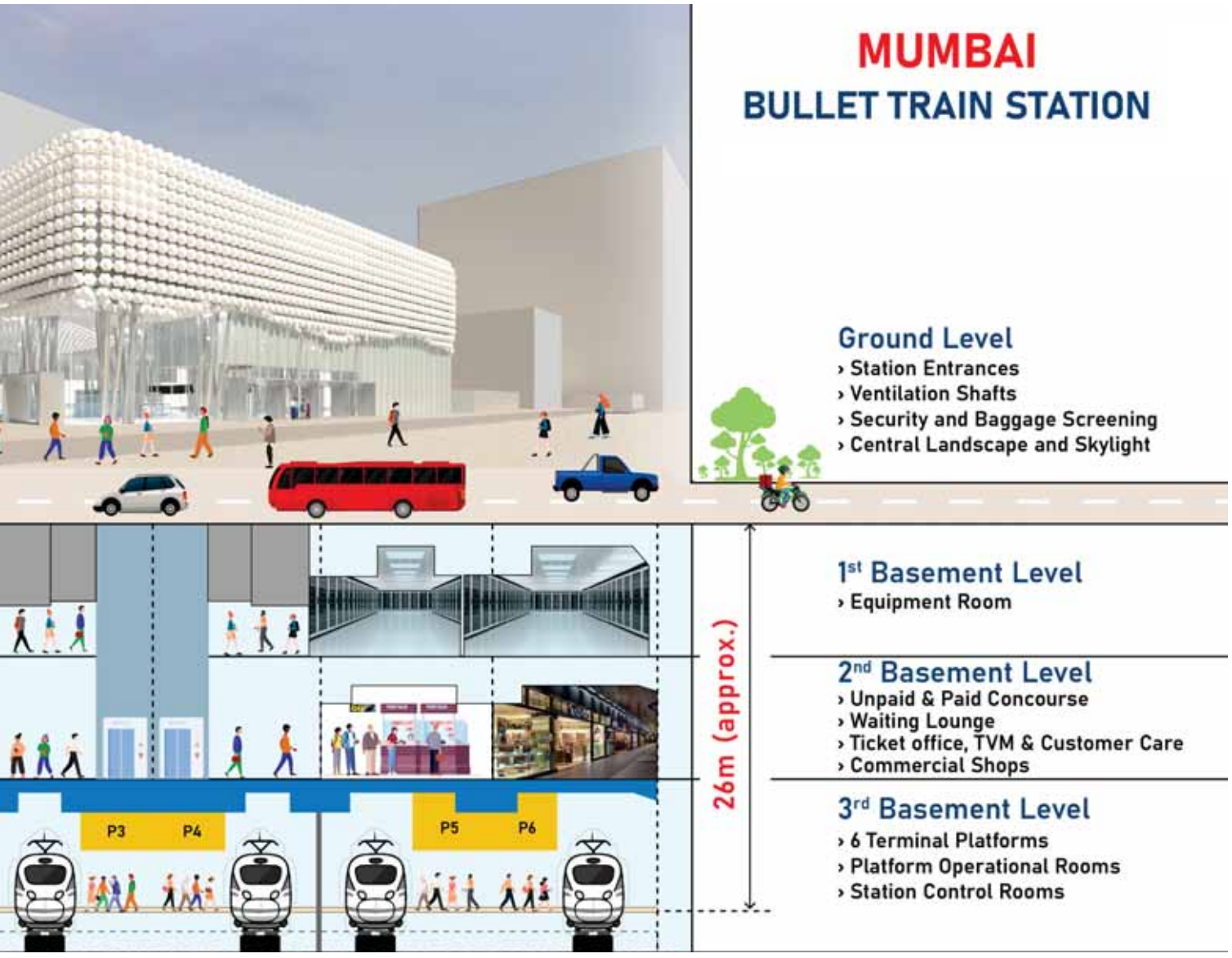
The platform is planned at a depth of about 26 metres from the ground level. There will be three floors, including the platform, concourse, and service floor. Excavation for the said work is being done to a depth of 32 meters (approximately 100 ft) from ground level, which is equivalent to a 10-storey building. The station will have six platforms, and the length of each platform is approximately 415 metres (sufficient to accommodate a 16-coach Bullet train). The station will have connectivity with metro and road networks. Two entry/exit points are planned—one to facilitate the access to the nearby Metro Line 2B station, and other towards the MTNL building.

The station has been designed to make ample space available for passenger movement and amenities at the concourse and platform levels. Dedicated skylight provisions have been made for natural lighting.





Under Construction Mumbai Bullet Train Station



Station Progress

Approx. 94% of excavation work (i.e., 17.51 lakh cubic meter) has been completed. A total of 18.7 lakh cubic metre of earthwork is required to be excavated from this site

Three batching plants with a capacity of 120 cubic metre per hour are functional at site. The batching plants are provided with an ice plant and a chiller plant, which help in controlling the temperature of concrete.

The site is provided with a modern concrete laboratory, with facilities like the Water Permeability Test and the Rapid Chloride Penetration Test, etc. All tests related to concrete are conducted on site, and samples are sent to reputed laboratories intermittently.

Construction will be done using M60-grade concrete for the Base slab and M80-grade for the columns. The Base slab will form the deepest construction level for the Bullet Train station. Approximately 2 lakh cubic metre of concrete will be poured for the base slab casting. So far, 84,349 cubic metre of concrete has already been poured.

The Base Slab is being cast with M60-grade, temperature-controlled concrete. Each base slab casting requires 3,000 to 4,000 cubic metres of concrete at controlled temperatures, which is being produced by in-situ batching and chiller plants.

100% of the secant piling (3384 nos.), Capping Beam (2203 rmt.), and Flood Wall (2078 rmt.) works have already been completed for the site.■

New Railway Track Commissioning in Odisha Registers over 3.5 times Increase

2150 km Commissioned During 2014–25 as Against 267 km in 2009–14

226 km of Khurda Road-Bolangir New Line Commissioned, All Seven Tunnels Excavated on Final 75-km Daspalla-Purunakatak Section

57 km of Salegaon-Budhapank 3rd and 4th Line Commissioned; 6 Major Bridges and 2 Stations Complete on Remaining 28 km



Railway has taken up infrastructure upgradation in Odisha in a big way.

Railway Budget: Budget allocation in the recent years has increased significantly. Budget allocation for infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/partly in the State of Odisha is as under:

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹838 Cr./year
2025-26	₹10,599 Cr. (Nearly 13 times)

Track Construction: The details of commissioning/ laying of new track falling fully/partly in the State of Odisha during 2009-14 & 2014-25 is as under:

Period	New Track Commissioned	Average Commissioning of New Tracks Per Year
2009-14	267 km	53 km
2014-25	2,150 km	195 km (More than 3.5 times)

Project Sanctioned

As on 1st April, 2025, 49 projects (19 New Lines and 30 Doubling), of a total length of 4010 Km, costing ₹67,496 crore, falling fully/ partly in Odisha, are sanctioned, out of which 1429 km length has been commissioned and an expenditure of ₹28,043 crore has been incurred upto March' 2025. The summary is as under:-

Category	No of sanctioned Projects	Total Length NL/GC/ DL (in Km)	Length Commissioned till Mar'25 (in Km)	Total Exp upto Mar' 25
New Lines	19	1544	256	6270
Doubling/ Multi-tracking	30	2466	1173	21,773
Total	49	4010	1429	28,043

Recently Completed Projects

Details of some of the recently completed projects falling fully/partly in Odisha are as under:

Name of Project	Cost (in Cr ₹)
Daitari-Banspani New Line and Jakhapura-Haridaspur 3rd Line (179 km)	1317
Jharsuguda - Sardega New Line (50 km)	1598
Haridaspur-Paradeep New Line (82 km)	2397
Angul-Sukinda New Line (104 km)	2834
Champa-Jharsuguda 3rd Line (152 km)	1227
Sambalpur-Titlagarh Doubling (182 km)	2262
Rourkela-Jharsuguda 3rd Line (101 km)	1313
Banspani-Daitari-Tomka-Jakhapura Doubling (164 km)	1827
Sambalpur-Talcher Doubling (174 km)	1539
Raipur - Titlagarh Doubling (203 km)	1171
Jharsuguda-Sardega Doubling (50 km)	3200

Ongoing Projects

Further, some of the main projects falling fully/ partly in which have been taken up are as under:

Name of Project	Cost (in Cr ₹)
Junagarh-Nabarangpur New Line (116 km)	2865
Nabarangpur-JeyporeNew Line (41 km)	748
Jeypore-Malkangiri New Line (130 km)	2344
Malkangiri – Pandurangapuram New Line (174 km)	3592
Buramara-Chakulia New Line (60 km)	1459
Gunupur-Therubali New Line (74 km)	1166
Puri - Konark New Line (32 km)	492
Badampahar-Kendujhargarh New Line (82 km)	1876

Bangriposi-Gorumahisani New Line (86 km)	2269
Bargarh Road-Nawapara Road New Line (138 km)	2622
Vizianagram-Titlagarh 3rd Line (265 km)	6996
Jarapada- Budhapank 3rd & 4th Line with flyover at Talcher (101 km)	810
Budhapank- Salegaon via Rajatgarh 3rd & 4th Line (170 km)	2023
Nergundi - Vizianagaram 3rd Line (385 km)	4963
Kottavalasa-Koraput Doubling (189 km)	2500
Koraput-Singapur Road Doubling (165 km)	2362
Jagdalpur-Koraput Doubling (107 km)	1547
Jharsuguda-Bilaspur 4th line (206 km)	2596
Bondamunda-Ranchi Doubling (159 km)	3029
Narayangarh-Bhadrak 3rd line (153 km)	2136
Bhadrak-Nergundi 3rd Line (92 km)	1284

Progress of Major Projects:

- Khurda Road-Bolangir (301 km) new line: The latest cost of the project is ₹5089 crore. Expenditure of ₹4311 crore has been incurred on this project upto March, 2025. An outlay of ₹1938 crore has also been provided in the financial year 2025-26. Status of project is as under:
- Khurda Road – Daspalla (106 km) : Commissioned
- Daspalla – Purunakatak (75 km) : Works have been taken up.
- Purunakatak – Bolangir (120 km) : Commissioned

Status of Daspalla – Purunakatak (75 km) is as under:

Activity	Scope	Status
Tunnel	7 nos (11.96 km)	6 nos completed (7.7 km). Works taken up in balance 1 tunnel
Important Bridge	5	All completed
Station Building	5	Works have been taken up

Construction of 3rd and 4th line between Salegaon- Budhapank(85 Rkm): The work has been taken up. Status is as below:-

- Salegaon – Rajathgarh (23 km) : Commissioned
- Rajathgarh – Dhenkanal (20 km) : Land acquisition and forest land diversion completed. 4 major bridges completed. Balance work has been taken up.
- Dhenkanal – Meramundali (34 km) : Commissioned
- Meramundali – Budhapank (8 km) : Land acquisition and forest land diversion completed. 2 major bridges and 2 stations completed. Balance work has been taken up.



Presently, Bhubaneswar–Rayagada–Jeypore–Koraput sector is being served by the daily service of Bhubaneswar-Jagdalpur Hirakhand Express. Moreover, Koraput is connected to Kottavalasa by 3 pairs of train services while Kottavalasa is further connected to Bhubaneswar by 06 pairs of train services.

Trains serving Koraput-Kottavalasa sector

Train No. and Name
Kirandul - Visakhapatnam Express
Kirandul - Visakhapatnam Passenger
Koraput - Visakhapatnam Passenger

Trains serving Kottavalasa-Bhubaneswar sector

Train No. and Name
Tambaram - Santragachi Amrit Bharat Express
SMVT Bengaluru - Alipurduar Amrit Bharat Express
SMVT Bengaluru - Balurghat Express
SMVT Bengaluru - Radhikapur Express
Secunderabad - Bhubaneswar Visakha Express
Charlapalli - Shalimar East Coast Express

Major Railway Projects Underway in Himachal Pradesh to Strengthen Connectivity and Enhance Passenger Convenience

Amb Andaura is an existing station on Morinda – Rupnagar – Anandpur Sahib – Daulatpur Chowk line which is taken up for extension and join Mukerian on Jalandhar – Jammu Route. Nangal Dam – Daulatpur Chowk (60 km) of this project has been commissioned. Works have been taken up in Daulatpur Chowk – Mukerian (42 km). Section wise progress is as under:

- **Daulatpur Chowk- Kartoli Punjab (10.5 km): All Works completed.**
- **Kartoli Punjab – Talwara (13.65 km):**

Activity	Scope	Status
Viaduct	9.2 km	Works taken up, about 25% completed
Major Bridges	1	Works taken up
Minor Bridges	7	Works taken up
ROBs	2	Works taken up
RUBs	8	Works taken up

- **Talwara –Mukerian (28.70 km):**

Activity	Scope	Status
Major Bridges	13	Works taken up, about 70% completed
RUBs	40	29 completed, Works taken up in balance 11 RUBs
Station Building	3	2 completed, Works taken up in balance 1 Station Building

Chandigarh-Baddi New line (33 km): Chandigarh-baddi (33 km) new line project is sanctioned at a cost of ₹1540 cr on 50:50 cost sharing basis with Government of Himachal Pradesh (HP). The work of Chandigarh-Baddi (30 km) new rail line project has been taken up. An expenditure of ₹1068.88 crore has been incurred up to February, 2026.

Progress of the project is affected due to non-deposition of their share of project cost by Government of Himachal Pradesh. Details are as under:

Total Expenditure	Share of Govt. of HP (50%)	Money deposited by Govt. of HP	Balance
1069	534	348	186

(in crore)

- **Nangal Dam–Daulatpur Chowk (60 km) Section of Amb Andaura–Mukerian Line Commissioned**



- **Daulatpur Chowk–Kartoli Punjab 10.5 km Section Completed, Talwara–Mukerian 28.7 km Section Advances with 70% of Major Bridges and 29 RUBs Completed**
- **Bhanupalli–Bilaspur–Beri 63 km New Line Progresses with 15 Tunnels and 10 Major Bridges Completed, but Project Success Depends on HP State Government Support**
- **Chandigarh–Baddi 33 km New Line Project Advancing; 75% Viaduct Work Completed**
- **Bilaspur–Manali–Leh 489 km Strategic Himalayan Rail Line DPR Prepared, Connecting Key Towns Across HP and Ladakh Including Mandi, Manali, Keylong, Sarchu and Leh**

Status of the project is as under:

Activity	Scope	Status
Land Acquisition	97 Ha	Completed
Forest Clearance	-	Completed
Viaduct	9 km	Works taken up, 75% completed
Major Bridges	15	Works taken up
ROBs	2	Works taken up
Station Building	3	Works taken up

Moreover, to improve rail connectivity in Himachal Pradesh, Survey for Baddi-Ghanauli new line (25 Km) has been completed and Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared.

Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri New Line (63 km)

Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri (63 km) New Rail Line project has been sanctioned on cost sharing basis having 25% share of State Government

of Himachal Pradesh and 75% share of Central Government. Further, full cost of land beyond ₹70 crore is to be borne by Government of Himachal Pradesh. Detailed estimate of the project was sanctioned at a cost of ₹6753 crore including land cost of ₹1617 crore.

Land Acquisition Status

In Himachal Pradesh, 124 Ha of land is required for the execution of the project. Against this requirement, only 82 Ha have been provided by State Government of Himachal Pradesh. Work has been taken up on the available land. Land beyond Bilaspur to Beri is yet to be handed over by Government of Himachal Pradesh. Non-availability of land is adversely affecting the project.

An expenditure of ₹7729 crore has been incurred. Details are as under:

Total Expenditure	Share of Govt. of HP (50%)	Money deposited by Govt. of HP	Balance
7729	2,781	847	1,934

(in crore)

Status of the project:

Activity	Scope	Status
Tunnel	16	15 completed, Works taken up in balance 1 tunnel
Major Bridges	27	10 completed, Works taken up in 14 bridges
ROBs	8	6 completed, Works taken up in balance 2 ROBs
RUBs	5	4 completed, Works taken up in balance 1 RUB
Station Building	6	3 completed, Works taken up in balance 3 stations

The progress of this project is affected due to non fulfillment of their commitments by State Govt.

The Government of India is geared up to execute projects, however success depends upon the support of Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Bilaspur – Manali – Leh New line (489 km)

Bilaspur – Manali – Leh new line is identified as strategic line by Ministry of Defence. The survey has been completed and Detailed Project Report has been prepared. The project passes through difficult terrain of Himalayas, which are full of geological surprises and numerous problems. The total length of the project is 489 km including tunnels of 270 km length. Anticipated cost of the project as per Detailed Project Report is ₹1,31,000 crore.

The alignment passes through Beri, Sundernagar, Mandi, Manali, Sissu, Darcha, Keylong, Sarchu, Pang, Rumtse, Upshi, Kharu and terminates at Leh Terminus, connecting important towns of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

Pathankot – Joginder Nagar Gauge Conversion (200 km)

Survey of Gauge Conversion of existing Pathankot – Joginder Nagar narrow gauge section (200 Km) has been sanctioned and field survey has been taken up for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR).

After preparation of DPR, sanctioning of project requires consultation with various stake-holders including State Governments and necessary approvals viz. appraisal of NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Defence etc. As sanctioning of projects is a continuous and dynamic process, exact timelines cannot be fixed.

Himachal Pradesh

Railway Budget: Budget allocation for Infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/ partly in the state of Himachal Pradesh is as under:

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹108 crore/year
2025-26	₹2716 Cr. (More than 25 times)

Projects Sanctioned

As on 1st April, 2025, 3 new line of total length 214 km, costing ₹17,622 crore, falling fully/ partly in the state of Himachal Pradesh are in construction stage, out of which, 64 km length has been commissioned and an expenditure of ₹8280 crore has been incurred upto March, 2025. The status of work is summarized as under:-

Category	No. of Projects	Total Length (in km)	Length Commissioned (in km)	Expenditure upto March 2025 (₹ in Cr)
New Lines	3	214	64	8280

Over 90% Punctuality in 24 Divisions of Railways

Integrated IT Systems, Advanced Monitoring Systems, LHB Coach Induction, AI-Based Timetable Analysis and Utilising New Generation High Capacity Locomotives also Improving Punctuality

The punctuality of train services is measured on terminating basis and expressed in terms of the percentage of trains arriving at the destination station within specified time limit after the scheduled arrival time of the train.

Monitoring of Punctuality

Punctuality is accorded high priority on Indian Railways (IR). IR makes all possible efforts to run trains on time. To ensure regular, continuous and real-time monitoring of punctuality of trains, technological tools and IT systems have been put in place.

IR is using an integrated digital platform for monitoring of train operations comprising Integrated Coaching Management System (ICMS) and Control Office Application (COA) which are integrated with National Train Enquiry System (NTES).

Progressive advancement for automatic uptake of timings by the train movement itself, is being achieved through GPS devices fitted locomotives {Real-Time Train Information System (RTIS) and Remote Monitoring and Management of Locomotives & Trains (REMMLOT)} & Data loggers integrated with the station signalling system.

Data loggers ensure real time and realistic reporting of arrival/departure of passenger trains at stations.

IR has been replacing conventional coaches (ICF coaches) by modern light weight LHB coaches having state-of-the art technology. The production units of Indian Railways are producing only LHB coaches from April 2018 onwards. The production of LHB coaches has continually increased during the years and more than 50,000 LHB coaches have been turned out. IR has also been proliferating Vande Bharat, Namo Bharat Rapid Rail and Amrit Bharat trains, quick acceleration and deceleration.

To improve punctuality, IR also undertakes rationalisation of time tables. One such exercise,



in a scientific manner, was undertaken with the assistance of IIT- Mumbai using their traffic simulator. The exercise also aimed at provisioning of fixed Integrated Maintenance blocks on all sections to minimise detention and improve punctuality.

New generation High capacity Locomotives are being utilised for right powering of trains.

29,848 GPS Based Portable 'Fog Safe Device' (FSD) Provided to Loco Pilots; Modified Semi-Automatic Stop Signal System Introduced to Ensure Safer Operations in Fog

With a view to minimise and mitigate the effect of fog and to assist the Loco Pilots run the train during foggy weather conditions the following steps have been taken by Indian Railways:

(a) **GPS based Fog Safe Device** : A Global Positioning System (GPS) based portable 'Fog Safe Device' (FSD) is being provided to Loco Pilots, which displays upcoming critical landmarks such as approaching signal, level crossing gates, permanent speed restrictions etc. in advance during poor visibility conditions like fog. This device is used for safe train operation especially during winter season and to help reduce stress on loco pilots while running in poor visibility conditions. As on 31.01.2026, there are 29848 Fog Safe devices available over IR.

(b) **Modified Semi-Automatic Stop Signal (MASS) System:** MASS has been introduced on the



Automatic Signalling territory during abnormal conditions like fog and bad weather impairing visibility. The system helps minimise delay in train operation during foggy weather conditions.

Train operation during fog and poor visibility conditions is an essential component of the training curriculum and the same has already been incorporated in the Transportation Module and Technical Module of the prescribed training syllabus for Loco Pilots (LPs) and Assistant Loco Pilots (ALPs).

Results/Outcomes

Due to these initiatives, Indian Railways, during 2025-26 (upto February, 2026) recorded an overall punctuality of more than 77%.

No. of Divsions	Punctuality Percentage
24	Punctuality of more than 90%
19	Punctuality between 80% & 90%
All divisions of Indian Railways	77%

The Challenges

Several factors, both internal and external, affect punctual running of trains which include foggy weather, path constraints, asset maintenance, alarm chain pulling, agitations, cattle run over and other unforeseen circumstances. The major challenges that affect running of trains include:

1. **Mixed Traffic:** Different types of trains with different speeds run on the same track. Vande Bharat, Mail/Express, Passenger trains, Suburban, Freight trains, Military consignments, Engineering machines, etc. having different speed utilise the same track. This leads to requirement of precedence for passenger carrying trains over freight and other trains affecting the through running of trains.

Indian Railways has been taking many measures including infrastructure projects such as Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) and Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) to create dedicated freight paths to give exclusive access to freight trains.

2. **Heavy Traffic load:** Indian Railways runs approximately 25,000 trains per day including suburban and freight trains. The major routes like Delhi - Howrah, Mumbai - Kolkata, etc are highly congested affecting punctual running of trains.

Capacity increase of Existing Network

Increase of capacity of existing rail network has been taken up in a big way during the last 11 years. The details of new tracks commissioned are as under:-

Period	New Track Commissioned	Average Commissioning of New Tracks
2009-14	7599 km	4.2 km/day
2014-25	34,428 km	8.6 km/day (more than 2 times)

Further, as on 1st April, 2025, across Indian Railways, 431 Railway infrastructure projects (154 New Line, 33 Gauge Conversion and 244 Doubling) of total length 35,966 km, costing approx. ₹6.75 lakh crore are sanctioned. The summary is as under:

Category	No of Projects	Total Length NL/GC/DL (km)	Length Commissioned till Mar'25 (km)	Total Exp upto Mar'25 (₹ in Cr)
New Lines	154	16,142	3,036	1,45,318
Gauge Conversion	33	4,180	2,997	22,753
Doubling / Multitracking	244	15,644	6,736	1,22,858
Total	431	35,966	12,769	2,90,929

Zone-wise/year-wise details of all Railway projects are made available in public domain on Indian Railway's website.

With these capacity augmentation works, the punctuality of the trains will improve.■

Railways Completes Key Infrastructure Projects Spanning over 1900 km to Strengthen Rail Connectivity across the Nation

300 Railway Projects Sanctioned in Last 3 Years Under PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, Covering 13,808 km

The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP) was launched in October, 2021 to bring a transformative change in the approach towards planning and execution of infrastructural projects pertaining to the transportation sector. The NMP, spanning across the entire country has brought in synergy between the infrastructural sectors such as railways, shipping, roadways, telecommunications, pipelines, etc. through collaboration amongst concerned Ministries/ State Governments/Departments, speeding up the clearances needed for the project completion as well as planning at a faster pace.

Indian Railways has immediately imbibed the principles of Gati Shakti in its project planning process, expediting appraisal, sanction and execution of projects. On ground survey, route alignment, deciding alternative route to avoid passing through forest and wildlife areas, connectivity to ports, mines, collieries is done through PM Gati Shakti Institutional mechanism developed by BISAG-N. This has led to enhancement in the quality of preparation of Detailed Project Report and reduction in project cost.

Now survey of all New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling projects are taken up under PM Gati Shakti Institutional mechanism developed by BISAG-N for the development of multimodal connectivity infrastructure to various Economic Zones with an objective to have integrated planning, enhanced logistics efficiency, first and last mile connectivity, throughput enhancement and remove gaps for seamless movement of people, goods/ commodities i.e. agricultural products, fertilizers, coal, iron ore, steel, cement, limestone etc.

Capacity enhancement of the railway network has been taken up by Indian Railways in a big way during the last 11 years. The details of commissioning/laying of new track across Indian Railways is given below:

- **51 New Line, 17 Gauge Conversion, 232 Doubling**
- **Spread Across Border Areas, Small Towns, and Ports, These Projects Promote Regional Socio-Economic Development, Enhance Connectivity, Boost Employment, Tourism and Industrial Growth**
- **Higher Funding, Delegation of Powers, Close Monitoring, and Regular Follow-Up with State Governments for Land, Forestry and Wildlife Clearances Helping in Fast Implementation**

Period	New Track Commissioned	Average Commissioning of New Tracks
2009-14	7599 km	4.2 km/day
2014-25	34,428 km	8.6 km/day (more than 2 times)

Some of the Projects completed are as follows:

Name of project	Length (in km)
Udhampur-Srinagar- Baramulla New Line	272
Bhairabi-Sairang New Line	51
Deoband-Roorkee New Line	27
Churu-Ratangarh Doubling	43
Tori-Shivpur 3rd Line	44
Araria-Galgalia New Line	110
Himmatnagar-Khedbrahma Guage Conversion	55
Bahraich-Nanpara-Nepalganj Guage Conversion	56
Domingarh-Gorakhpur -Kusumi 3rd Line & Gorakhpur-Nakaha Doubling	21
Vijapur-Ambaliyasan Guage Conversion	43
Pune-Miraj-Londa Doubling	467

Manmad - Jalgaon 3rd Line	160
Phephna –Indara- Mau -Shahganj Doubling	150
Adraj -Moti -Vijapur Guage Conversion	40
Katni -Bina 3rd Line	279
Gandhidham- Adipur Quadrupling	21
Khatuwas - Narnaul Doubling	24
Penukonda- Dharmavaram Doubling	42

During the last 5 years, 308 projects (New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling) costing approx. ₹2,93,000 cr have been sanctioned on Indian Railways. This will enhance the capacity of railway network to run more number of trains.

Some of the major projects sanctioned are as follows:

Project Name	Cost (₹ in cr)
Chopan – Chunar doubling (102 km)	1553
Guntur – Bibinagar doubling (239 km)	3238
Mudkhed – Medchal and Mahbubnagar – Dhone doubling (418 km)	5655
Samakhiali – Gandhidham Quadrupling (53 km)	1571
Merta City – Ras and Bypass at Merta Road new line (56 km)	1038
Lumding – Furkating doubling (140 km)	2334
Ajmer – Chanderiya doubling (178 km)	1813
Motumari–Vishnupuram with RoR doubling (100 km)	1746
Bikramshila – Katareah new line with new bridge on river ganga (26 km)	2549
Gunupur – Therubali new line (74 km)	1326
Malkangiri – Pandurangapuram new line (174 km)	4109
Badampahar – Kendujhargarh new line (82 km)	2106
Junagarh – Nabarangpur new line (116 km)	3274
Buramara – Chakulia new line (60 km)	1639
Ajanta Caves Rail Connectivity (174 km)	7105
Bangriposi – Gorumahisani new line (86 km)	2549
Chandil – Anara – Damodar 3rd line (121 km)	2170
Bargarh Road–Nawapara Road new line (138 km)	2926
Sardega–Bhalumuda new double line (37 km)	1360
Varanasi–Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Multitracking with rail cum road bridge on river ganga (15 km)	2642
Jalgaon – Manmad 4th line (160 km)	2773
Bhusawal – Khandwa 3rd & 4th line (131 km)	3514
Sambalpur – Jarapada 3rd & 4th line (127 km)	3916
Jharsuguda – Sason 3rd & 4th line (35 km)	1181
Gondia – Ballarshah doubling (240 km)	4819
Kharsia – Naya Raipur – Parmalkasa 5th & 6th line (278 km)	8741
Wardha – Balharshah Quadrupling (135 km)	2381
Ballari – Chikjajur doubling (185 km)	3342
Koderma – Barkakana doubling (133 km)	3063
Itarsi – Nagpur 4th line (297 km)	5451
Dangoaposi – Jaroli 3rd & 4th line (43 km)	1752
Secunderabad – Wadi 3rd & 4th line (173 km)	5012
Furkating – New Tinsukia doubling (194 km)	3634
Bakhtiyarpur – Rajgir – Tilaiya doubling (104 km)	2192
Gondia – Dongargarh 4th line (84 km)	2223
Wardha – Bhusawal 3rd & 4th line (314 km)	9197
Hosapete – Bellary quadrupling (65 km)	2372
Kasara – Manmad 3rd & 4th line (131 km)	10,154
Punarakh – Kiul 3rd & 4th line (50 km)	2668
Gamharia – Chandil 3rd & 4th line (55 km)	1168
Sainthia- Pakhur 4th Line (81 km)	1569
Santragachi- Kharagpur 4th line (111 km)	2905
Nergundi – Barang & Khurda Road – Vizianagaram 3rd line (385 km)	5618
Son Nagar – Andal Multi tracking (375 km)	13,606
Gorakhpur Cantt – Valmiki Nagar doubling (96 km)	1270

Jaipur – Sawai Madhopur doubling (131 km)	1269
Luni – Samdari – Bhildi doubling (272 km)	3531
Narkatiaganj – Raxaul – Sitamarhi – Darbhanga & Sitamarhi – Muzaffarpur doubling (256 km)	4553
Prayagraj (Iradatganj) – Manikpur 3rd line (84 km)	1640
Tirupati – Pakala – Katpadi doubling (104 km)	1332
Ratlam – Nagda 3rd and 4th line (41 km)	1,018
Aluabari Road – New Jalpaiguri 3rd & 4th line (57 km)	1786
Aurangabad (Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar) – Parbhani (177 km)	2179
Bhagalpur – Dumka – Rampurhat doubling (177 km)	3169
Itarsi – Bina 4th line (237 km)	4329
Vadodara – Ratlam 3rd & 4th line (259 km)	8885
Devbhumi Dwarka (Okha) – Kanalus doubling (141 km)	1457
Badlapur – Karjat 3rd and 4th line (32 km)	1324
Delhi – Ambala Cantt 3rd & 4th line (194 km)	5983
Gondia – Jabalpur doubling (231 km)	5236
Manmad – Indore new line (360 km)	18,529
Errupelam – Amaravati – Nambur new line (57 km)	2245
Vadhavan Port and New Palghar station new double line (22 km)	1507
Deshalpar – Hajipir – Luna and Vayor – Lakhpat new line (145 km)	2526



Regional Cuisines in Trains:

IRCTC to customize the menu in trains to include items of regional cuisines, seasonal delicacies and health food options, including millet-based products.

Under the above mandate, the menu has been designed by IRCTC based on passenger feedback.

States	Cuisine Items
Odisha	Dalma, Chenna Poda
Tamil Nadu	Set Dosai, Palakatti Chettinad
Karnataka	Medu Vada
Rajasthan	Pyaz Kachori
Maharashtra	Vada Pav
West Bengal	Machher Jhol
Gujarat	Thepla
Jharkhand	Singara, Fuluri, Aloo Chokha, Aloo Parwal
Madhya Pradesh	Kanda Poha, Indori Poha, Sev Tamatar Sabji, Ajwain Paratha, Ragi Bhakhri, Patra Bhagar, Khoya Chicken, Ragi Thepla, Bhey

FORM IV

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I, Sanjeev Gupta, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/
(Sanjeev Gupta)
Publisher

Railways Secure US $942 Million FDI in 11 Years as Infrastructure Investment Gains Pace

MoUs with 4 countries align with ₹26,000 crore exports built on domestic production of rolling stock and components

As per the government's FDI Policy Circular dated 15th October, 2020, as amended from time to time, 100% FDI is permitted under the automatic route under the railway infrastructure sector. The permitted areas include construction, operation and maintenance of the following:

- Suburban corridor projects through PPP.
- High speed train projects.
- Dedicated freight lines.
- Rolling stock, including trainsets and locomotives/coaches manufacturing and maintenance facilities.
- Railway electrification.
- Signalling systems.
- Freight terminals.
- Passenger terminals.
- Infrastructure in industrial parks pertaining to railway line/sidings, including electrified railway lines and connectivity to the main railway line. and
- Mass Rapid Transport Systems.

A total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) equity inflow from 2014-15 to 2025-26 (up to December 2025) in the railway sector is US$ 942 million.

The Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) for capital investment in Railways was ₹29,055 crore in 2013-14. In order to provide adequate support for network expansion, rolling stock augmentation, safety improvement, passenger amenities, road safety works and technology upgradation, the Government of India has consistently augmented the Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) every year and for 2026-27, ₹2.78 lakh crore has been allocated. Adequate domestic funding has helped the Indian Railway sector to invest more in infrastructure and technology in order to compete with the global market.

Further, as an ongoing process of international technical collaboration, the Ministry of Railways has signed MoUs with Switzerland, Germany, Russia, Spain, etc. The MoUs have been signed for technical cooperation in the areas of freight and passengers operations (multi modal transport), High-Speed Rail development and IT solutions for railway operations and administrative purposes, predictive maintenance of assets etc.

Export to Other Countries

Over the past decade, India has developed a strong and diversified railway manufacturing ecosystem comprising Indian Railways' production units and industry base.

Presently, the industry manufactures almost the entire range of railway rolling stock, such as locomotives, passenger coaches, wagons and critical components such as traction motors, gear boxes, motorized bogies, traction transformers, metro cars, propulsion system, traction and auxillary converters, cable harness, electronic cards, magnetics in India.

These items are exported to both developed as well as developing countries such as Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, USA, France, Germany, Mozambique, Mexico, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Romania, Spain and Italy etc.

With this supportive ecosystem in place, during 2016-17 to 2025-26 (up to January 2026), the total value of exports in the railway sector from India has reached US$ 3355 million (₹26,000 crore).■



Rising Trust in Rail Safety
52,000 Criminals Arrested in 5 Years

Crackdown strengthens passenger security, ensuring safer journeys

The protection of railway property is entrusted to the Railway Protection Force (RPF). The RPF is empowered to register cases of theft, dishonest misappropriation, abetment, connivance, and conspiracy against railway property under the provisions of Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1966. The cases are registered against the offender and enquiry is conducted, followed by submission of a complaint to the competent court i.e the court of the Special Railway Magistrate and in few states, in the district courts where special railway courts are not established.

During the last five years (2021–2025), a total of 52,494 persons were arrested. Out of these, complaints were filed against 50,432 offenders in the respective courts. During the last five years (2021–2025), a total of 12,157 incidents of stone pelting were registered, in which 8,441 persons were arrested by RPF/GRP. During the last five years (2021–2025), only three incidents of derailment attributable to miscreant activities occurred on IR i.e. one each in the Waltair Division of East Coast Railway, the Jhansi Division of NCR, and the Chennai Division of SR.

Further, in order to prevent incident of any criminal tampering with railway tracks, following steps are being taken by railways:

Regular State Level Security Committee of Railways (SLSCR) meetings are being conducted, which have been constituted in each State under the chairmanship of DGPs/Commissioner of police of respective States/Union territory with representatives of RPF, GRP and Intelligence units. Further close liaison is made by RPF with the State Police/GRP authorities at all levels to control Crime, registration of cases, their investigation and safe running of trains with focus on sabotage incidents, sharing of intelligence etc.

Besides Central & State Intelligence agencies, Intelligence unit of RPF i.e. Crime Intelligence Branch (CIB) & Special Intelligence Branch(SIB) have been deployed to collect intelligence and take necessary action in coordination with concerned authorities for detection and prevention of any criminal activity. Frequent patrolling of identified black spots and vulnerable sections are being done by Railways, RPF, GRP & Civil Police. Regular drives are conducted to remove loose and scattered materials lying near to the railway tracks which can potentially be used by miscreant for putting obstruction on railway track.

The people living near railway track are being sensitized about the consequences of putting foreign material on track, removing rail components, making reels etc. and are requested to keep watch and report any suspected activity immediately. Surveillance is also kept using drones and putting solar powered stand alone CCTV cameras.



RPF Flags 4328 NDPS Cases in 3 Years

During the year 2023, 2024 and 2025, the RPF detected 1220, 1392 and 1716 NDPS cases, respectively, which were handed over to the empowered LEAs for further legal action.

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has been empowered to conduct search, seizure and arrest under the provisions of Section 42 and 67 of the NDPS Act, 1985, through a Gazette notification dated 11th April, 2019. However, the RPF is not empowered to register and investigate cases under the NDPS Act. Therefore, the NDPS recovered and persons arrested by the RPF are handed over to the GRP or other empowered LEAs for further legal action.■

RailMadad and 139 Helpline
A Solution to Every Problem During Travel

RailMadad is Indian Railways grievance redressal mechanism that provides passengers an integrated platform for grievances, assistance and inquiry. In RailMadad, passengers can seek redressal through multiple channels such as Helpline number-139, RailMadad Web, App and SMS. RailMadad also allows passengers to share feedback on the resolution of their grievances.

Indian Railways serves nearly 58 crore meals annually across its trains, with complaints averaging only about 0.0008%, which includes complaints related to overcharging. Following inquiries into these complaints, fines amounting to ₹2.6 crore have been imposed over the past three years. During the year 2025, 3 incidents of assault on railway passengers by Pantry Car staff have been reported. Legal action has been taken against the Pantry Car staff by the respective Government Railway Police.

IR continuously endeavour to make available food items to the travelling passengers as per the prescribed rates. Necessary steps are accordingly taken by Indian Railways from time to time to ensure the same. Following steps have been taken by Railways to curb overcharging in trains:

- SMS is sent to passengers with a link of menu and tariff to make them aware of rates.
- Installation of Point of Sale (POS) machines for billing and cashless payments.
- Conducting awareness campaigns to promote billing and curb overcharging.
- Rates stickers on Packaged Drinking Water (PDW) Buckets and Tea/Coffee urns.
- Introduction of e-pantry service in Mail/ Express trains to facilitate passengers to book meals through an online module.
- Implementation of QR code enabled Identity Cards to onboard catering staff.
- Distribution of pamphlets to create awareness regarding the rate of catering items and Packaged Drinking Water bottles.
- Special Inspection Drives to check overcharging and billing issues.
- Imposition of suitable penalty in cases of overcharging, if any.



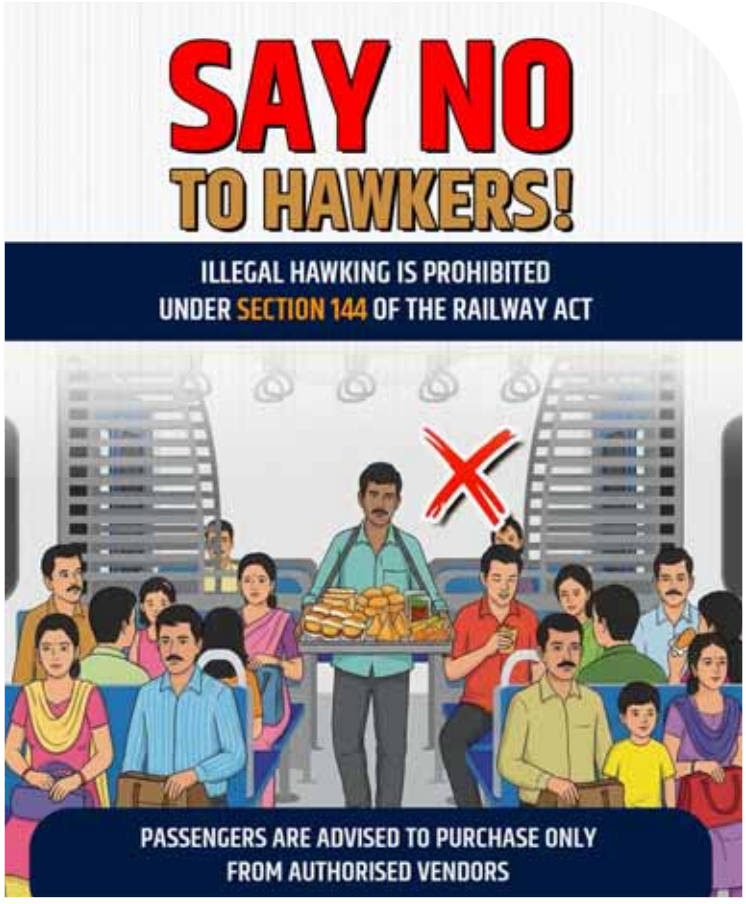
In case any such incident in trains is reported, prompt and appropriate punitive action is taken against the service providers for deficiency in service.■

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Railways Enforce QR Code Verification for Vendors to Rein in Unauthorised Hawking in Passenger Areas

Unauthorized hawking and vending in the passenger area on Indian Railways is prohibited. It is an offence punishable under Section 144 of the Railways Act, 1989. Regular inspections are conducted by designated officials and the RPF to check and prevent the entry of unauthorised vendors in trains. Special drives are also conducted by the Railways and IRCTC officials to curb unauthorised vending in railway premises from time to time.

To establish the identity of authorised vendors in trains, issuance of QR code-enabled identity cards in the name of individual vendors/helpers/staff deployed for managing onboard catering services has been made mandatory. This QR code is linked to establish the authenticity of the staff by displaying the vendor's name, Aadhaar number, medical fitness, police verification details, etc. Other measures taken to curb unauthorised vending include QR codes on food packets, which display name of the kitchen and date of manufacture, etc.



Following measures have been taken to improve quality, hygiene and food safety

- Supply of meals from designated Base Kitchens.
- Commissioning of modern Base Kitchens at identified locations.
- Installation of CCTV cameras in Base Kitchens for better monitoring of food preparation.
- Shortlisting and use of popular and branded raw materials, like cooking oil, atta, rice, pulses, masala items, paneer, dairy products, etc. for food production.
- Deployment of food safety supervisors at Base Kitchens to monitor food safety and hygienic practices.
- Deployment of onboard IRCTC supervisors on trains.
- Regular deep cleaning and periodical pest control in Base Kitchens and pantry cars.
- In order to ensure compliance with food safety norms, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) certification by designated food safety officers for each catering unit has been made mandatory.
- Regular food sampling as part of the inspection and monitoring mechanism to ensure the quality of food on trains.
- Third-party audits are done to examine the hygiene and quality of food in pantry cars and Base Kitchens. Customer satisfaction surveys are also conducted.
- Surprise inspections by food safety officers.
- Regular training is conducted by IRCTC to enhance the skills of catering staff, focusing on customer service areas i.e., communication, courteous behaviour, service standards, personal grooming and hygiene.

Digital Surge in Ticketing
88% of Bookings Go Online

IRCTC's Anti-BOT Technology, Mitigates 64% of Malicious Traffic to Ensure Genuine Users Can Access Tickets

3.04 Crore User Accounts Deactivated in 2025

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has provided the facility to book reserved tickets online saving passengers from the trouble of going to reservation counters to book the tickets thus saving travel time and transportation costs.

IRCTC incurs substantial expenditure on providing online ticketing facility and in order to defray the cost incurred in maintenance, upgradation and expansion of ticketing infrastructure, a very nominal convenience fee is levied by IRCTC.

The online ticket booking facility provided by IRCTC is one of the most passenger friendly initiatives of Indian Railways and its acceptance can be gauged from the fact that at present approximately 88% of the reserved tickets are booked online.

Clerkage is levied on cancellation of all waitlisted tickets including cancelled through IRCTC website as per the Railway Passengers (Cancellation of Tickets and Refund of Fare) Rules, 2015, notified through Gazette notification and as amended from time to time. Review and rationalization of policy is a continuous and ongoing process.

To prevent the misuse of the reservation facility & to ensure transparency, the following steps have been taken by Indian Railways:

i. With effect from 01-07-2025, tickets under Tatkal Scheme can be booked through the website of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)/its app only by Aadhaar authenticated users.

ii. During the opening day of general reservation of ARP, the reserved general tickets can be booked through the website of IRCTC or its app only by Aadhar authenticated users.

Measures taken in this regard have improved ease of booking by reducing instant booking of tickets. The system has also been made more equitable by restricting multiple bookings using fake accounts.



No user account has been deactivated due to non-linking of Aadhaar.

The comparative details of number of tickets booked online and through counter during financial year of 2025-26 (upto February, 26) is as under:

Financial Year	No. of tickets booked online (in crore)	No. of tickets booked through counter
2025-26 (upto February, 26)	48.25	6.15

(in crore)

IRCTC adopts broad parameters for identifying fake/malicious user ids/User accounts like, unrealistic mobile numbers, disposable email domains, IP Addresses, Sequential and Gibberish User IDs etc. During calendar year 2025, 3.04 crore user accounts were deactivated and 2.94 crore user accounts were put under temporary

suspension with option of Revalidation. However, during the period 01.01.2025 to 28.02.2026, 1,80,474 user accounts have been re-activated.

Aadhaar authentication provides instantaneous verification of user uniqueness, which is critical considering the time-sensitive nature of Tatkal ticket booking. The introduction of Aadhaar authentication has helped in preventing the creation and operation of fake or unauthorized agent-controlled multiple user accounts by imposing a uniqueness constraint.

This measure acts as an effective safeguard against account multiplication and automated misuse, thereby ensuring fair allocation of Tatkal tickets. Consequently, Aadhaar authentication has contributed to improved ticket availability for genuine passengers by reducing unfair booking practices and enhancing transparency in the online Tatkal booking system.

Further, following steps have also been taken by IRCTC to ensure that tickets are made available to the genuine users by eliminating the Network of Ticket Scalping:

To optimize system performance, IRCTC has already implemented a Content Delivery Network (CDN) to offload static content and reduce direct traffic on NGeT website servers.

Further, Anti BOT Technology is in place which helps in mitigating malicious/suspicious attempts which on an average is mitigated to the extent of 64%.

This helps in mitigating malicious traffic and providing static content reducing load on system and thus enhancing the experience for genuine and verified users.

Substantial quantum of malicious traffic is intercepted frequently.

408 complaints have been lodged on the National Cyber Crime Portal pertaining to 4.07 lakh suspicious PNRs until 28 February, 2026.

13,023 suspicious email domains have been blocked in the year 2025-26 until 28 February, 2026.

Further, IRCTC carries out continuous monitoring to curb fraudulent activities by analysing booking patterns and user registrations through comprehensive data analysis. User IDs found suspicious during such analysis are deactivated as a preventive measure. A grievance redressal mechanism is available on the IRCTC website and mobile application. Requests received from users through their registered email ID and mobile number are examined in detail, and genuine user IDs are reactivated based on the outcome of such analysis. Taking steps to ensure transparency in booking of general as well as Tatkal tickets based on feedback received on various platforms is a continuous and ongoing process.■

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Railways Provides 43,230 Jobs in FY 2025–26

Over 2800 Locomotives Equipped with Waterless Urinals, Improving Working Conditions for Loco Pilots

Railways, being a Central government organisation, conducts recruitment for non-gazetted personnel on an all-India basis. Presently, recruitment against 1,43,086 vacancies of non-gazetted personnel is being undertaken by Indian Railways as per the annual calendars for 2024 and 2025.

During January to December, 2024, 10 Centralized Employment Notifications (CENs) for 92,116 vacancies were notified, for which the details of the first-stage/single-stage Computer Based Tests (CBTs) are as under:

Exam	Candidates	Cities
1st Stage CBT for the post of ALP (18,799 vacancies)	18,40,347	156
CBT for the post of Technician (14,298 vacancies)	26,99,892	139
1st Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS/CMA (7951 vacancies)	11,01,266	146
CBT for the post of RPF-SI (452 vacancies)	15,35,635	143
CBT for the post of RPF-Constable (4208 vacancies)	45,30,288	147
CBT for Paramedical Categories (1376 vacancies)	7,08,321	143
1st Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) (8113 vacancies)	58,41,774	141
1st Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under Graduate) (3445 vacancies)	63,27,473	157
CBT for Ministerial & Isolated Categories (1,036 vacancies)	4,46,013	139
CBT for Level-1 post (32,438 vacancies)	1,08,28,261	152
Total Candidates	3,58,59,270	

(in 15 Languages)

2nd stage CBTs for the following posts has also been completed:

Exam	Candidates	Cities
2nd Stage CBT for the post of ALP (18,799 vacancies)	2,66,363	112
2nd Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS/CMA (7,951 vacancies)	1,17,339	118
2nd Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) (8,113 vacancies)	1,21,931	129
2nd Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under Graduate) (3,445 vacancies)	51,978	79
Total Candidates	5,57,611	

(in 15 Languages)

Computer Based Aptitude Test (CBAT) for the post of ALP and Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) and Computer based Skill Test for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate-level) and Ministerial & Isolated Categories have also been completed. Details are as under:

Exam	Candidates	Cities
CBAT for the post of ALP (18,799 vacancies)	1,32,044	84
Translation Test for Ministerial & Isolated Categories	1233	8
CBAT for the post Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	13,616	38
Computer Based Typing Skill Test (CBTST) for the post Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	30,341	58
Computer Based Typing Skill Test (CBTST) for the post Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate-level)	13,145	44
Total Candidates	1,90,379	

(in 2 Languages)



Panels for more than 43,000 candidates for various posts including the posts of Technician, Junior Engineers, Paramedical Categories, Sub-Inspectors & Constable (RPF) and Assistant Loco Pilots have been finalised. Majority of them are in safety categories.

In addition, as per Annual Calendar for the year 2025, nine Centralized Employment Notifications (CENs) for 50,970 vacancies have also been issued. Details are as under:

CEN No.	Post Name	No. of Vacancies notified	Month of Notification
01/2025	Assistant Loco Pilots	9970	March, 2025
02/2025	Technician	6238	June, 2025
03/2025	Paramedical categories	434	July, 2025
04/2025	Section Controller	368	August, 2025
05/2025	Junior Engineer/ Depot Material Superintendent	2585	October, 2025
06/2025	Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	5810	October, 2025
07/2025	Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate)	3058	October, 2025
08/2025	Isolated Categories	312	December, 2025
09/2025	Level-1	22,195	December, 2025
Total		**50,970**	

First stage/Single stage Computer Based Tests (CBTs) for 12,923 posts has been completed. Details are as under:

Exam	Candidates	Cities
1st Stage CBT for the post of ALP (9,970 vacancies)	10,03,719	141
CBT for the post of Section Controller (368 vacancies)	4,33,748	131
1st Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS (2,585 vacancies)	5,74,351	133
CBT for the post of Technician (6238 vacancies)	8,41,525	117
CBT for the post of Paramedical Categories (434 vacancies)	3,19,396	106
Total Candidates	31,72,739	

(in 15 Languages)

The Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) examinations are quite technical in nature entailing large scale mobilization of men and resources and training of manpower. Railway overcame all these challenges and successfully conducted the recruitment in a transparent manner following all laid down guidelines. No instance of paper leakage or similar malpractice has occurred during the entire process.

Recruitment done in Indian Railways during 2004-2005 to 2013-2014 vis-à-vis during 2014-2015 to 2025-2026 is given as under: -

Period	Recruitments
2004-2005 to 2013-2014	4.11 lakhs
2014-2015 to 2023-2024	5.08 lakhs
2025-26 till date	41,343

Further, as a system improvement, the Ministry of Railways has introduced a system of publishing annual calendar from 2024 for recruitment to various categories of Group 'C' posts. The introduction of annual calendar is benefitting the aspirants in the following manner:

- More opportunities for candidates;
- Opportunities to those becoming eligible every year;
- Certainty of exams;
- Faster Recruitment process, Training and Appointments

Appropriate administrative attention and necessary action are taken in accordance with the prescribed framework for handling complaints received regarding medical negligence and deficiencies in hospital functioning.

Establishment of new healthcare facilities and up-gradation of existing ones is an on-going process, depending on the requirements of the beneficiaries and developments in the field of Medical Science.■

Railways Provides Comprehensive Healthcare to Employees and Pensioners Through Network of 582 Health Units and 128 Hospitals

Over 5100 Doctors Recruited in Indian Railway Health Service During 2014–2025
Indent for 620 Doctors Placed on UPSC for the Year 2025 and 2026



Indian Railways provides comprehensive healthcare to its employees, both serving and retired along with their eligible dependents. The healthcare facilities are provided through a network of railway health institutes. Presently, there are 582 Health Units and 128 Railway Hospitals existing on Indian Railways.

These Railway hospitals have required infrastructure, essential medical equipment and trained healthcare personnel to provide comprehensive healthcare to Railway beneficiaries.

Occurrence and filling up of vacancies including those of medical staff are continuous processes on Indian Railways considering its size, spatial distribution and criticality of operation. Adequate and suitable manpower is provided to cater to the regular operations, changes in technology, mechanisations and innovative practices. The vacancies are filled up primarily by placement of indents by Railways with Recruitment agencies as per operational and technological requirements.

Recruitments in Indian Railway Health Service (IRHS) are made through Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for the Ministry as a whole. During the periods 2004–2013 and 2014–2025, a total of 2277 and 5140 doctors, respectively, were recruited. In addition, indent for 620 doctors was placed on UPSC for the year 2025 and 2026.

IR also contribute towards medical education by being a part of the Post Graduate medical education programme run by National Board of Examination in Medical Sciences (NBEMS). Post Graduate Diploma, Doctorate and Fellowship medical courses are being run for both Railway and Non-Railway doctors under this programme. Indian Railways has now decided to establish Post Graduate Medical Institutes attached with Railway hospitals. This shall further contribute towards enhancement of number of specialist medical professionals in India. First one has been started at Northern Railway Central Hospital, New Delhi.■

Historic Freight Operations in Mizoram

25,900 Quintals of Rice Delivered to Sairang, 42-Wagon FCI Cargo Train Completes First Run

With the introduction of passenger and freight train services, Mizoram has experienced a significant transformation in both passenger transportation and the movement of goods across the state. This development has not only improved connectivity but also contributed to economic growth and further strengthened tourism in the region.

In a significant historic milestone, the first-ever Food Corporation of India (FCI) food grain cargo train arrived at Sairang Railway Station on 3rd March, 2026. The cargo train comprised 42 wagons carrying around 25,900 quintals of rice from Punjab. This marks an important step in strengthening rail-based freight connectivity in the state and improving the supply chain of essential commodities. The successful unloading of the inward FCI food grain rake at Sairang demonstrates the growing operational capability of the station and highlights the expanding role of railway infrastructure in supporting Mizoram's logistics and food distribution network.

It may be mentioned that the inauguration of the 51.38-km Bairabi-Sairang railway line on 13th September, 2025, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked a historic milestone for the people of Mizoram. This major infrastructure project has brought Aizawl onto India's railway map by directly linking the state to the national railway network.

Freight Performance in Mizoram

Freight operations on the Bairabi-Sairang section have gained significant momentum since its commissioning. It may be noted that the first freight rake, comprising 21 cement wagons, was successfully moved to Sairang shortly after inauguration, marking the beginning of regular freight movement to the state. From April 2025 to March 2026, Sairang Terminal handled more than 30 freight rakes, indicating the gradual development of rail-based cargo movement in Mizoram. During this period, 3.5 rakes of cement were unloaded at the terminal. In addition to cement, other commodities handled through rail include automobiles (2 rakes), fertilizers (0.5 rake), stone chips (20.5 rakes) and sand (4 rakes).

Notably, the first inward automobile rake carrying 119 passenger vehicles was received at Sairang in December 2025, demonstrating the line's capability to handle high-value bulk consignments. Indian Railways has also initiated measures to strengthen parcel logistics, including the introduction of refrigerated parcel van services to facilitate transportation of horticultural and perishable produce, thereby expanding market access for local farmers and traders.

Tourism Gains Momentum in Mizoram

The newly opened railway line in Mizoram has



A team of FCI and Railway officials alongwith the first foodgrain train at Sairang Railway Station

given a boost to tourism, with the state witnessing a steady increase in the number of visitors over the past six months. Railway services in Mizoram reached a new milestone with the arrival of the Bharat Gaurav Deluxe AC Tourist Train at Sairang Railway Station for the very first time on 12th February, 2026, under the "North East Discovery" circuit.

This premium tourist train, carrying 81 tourists from different parts of India as well as other nations such as the United States and Nepal, underscores Mizoram's growing visibility on the national and international tourism map. Improved accessibility has attracted both domestic and international visitors, which contributes to employment generation in hospitality and allied sectors, promoting eco-tourism and cultural tourism and positioning Mizoram as an emerging destination in the Northeast under the broader vision of inclusive growth and regional integration.

Increasing Passenger Footfall

Since the commencement of train services on the Bairabi–Sairang route in September 2025, public response has been overwhelming. The Sairang-Anand Vihar Rajdhani Express has recorded occupancy exceeding 150% in both directions. The Sairang-Guwahati Express and Sairang-Kolkata Express have similarly registered strong occupancy levels of over 100%, clearly reflecting robust demand and strong public acceptance of railway services from Sairang. On 9th February,



2026, a new train service from Sairang to Silchar was flagged off, further strengthening regional mobility and connecting Mizoram with the important educational, medical and commercial hub of the Barak Valley in Assam.

The expansion of railway connectivity marks a turning point for Mizoram. By improving transportation, stimulating economic growth and boosting tourism, the railways are playing a vital role in the state's transformation. As infrastructure continues to develop, Mizoram is steadily emerging as an accessible and attractive destination in Northeast India.■

Metro Railway Launches Hands-on Training Centre at Central Park Depot



As part of continued system improvement, a Platform Screen Door (PSD) Model Room was commissioned at the Central Park Depot Campus of Metro Railway in the gracious presence of S. S. Mishra GM, Metro Railway, Kolkata, on 5th February, 2026. Principal Heads of all departments of Metro Railway were also present at this programme.

The purpose of this Model PSD Room is to upscale knowledge by imparting hands-on training of the system through exhibits and physical simulation practices to the frontline and maintenance staff of the Green Line.

This hands-on training will help improve preventive and on-demand maintenance practices. This will also improve response time, thereby enhancing the reliability of the PSD system. This ultimately shall benefit passengers by enhancing safety and travel experiences.■

₹327 Crore Redevelopment to Transform Hyderabad Station: Union Minister

G. Kishan Reddy, Minister of Coals and Mines, inspected the progress of ongoing redevelopment works at Hyderabad (Nampally) Railway Station on 5th March, 2026. He was accompanied by Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway and other senior officials.

Later, addressing media personnel at the station, Reddy stated that the Hyderabad Railway Station is being redeveloped at a cost of ₹327.27 crore with iconic urban infrastructure and world-class amenities in line with the brand image of the city. He informed that the station handles 60 trains per day with an average footfall of 28,000 passengers.

Further, the Union Minister stated that Telangana has been allocated a Railway budget of ₹5454 crore for the financial year 2026-27. He added that infrastructure projects like new lines, doubling,



third line, bypass line, station redevelopment and safety enhancement works, worth ₹47,984 crore, are under progress in the state. He further said that 346 km of new lines and 513 km of double line, third line, fourth line and bypass works have been completed in the state. The indigenous Automatic Train Protection System, Kavach 3.2, has been deployed on 639 Rkm, covering 63 stations in Telangana.■

Kharagpur and Adra MPs meet South Eastern Railway General Manager, Review Projects and Passenger Amenities



Members of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from the Divisional Committee of Kharagpur and Adra Divisions of SER met with Anil Kumar Mishra, General Manager of South Eastern Railway, in Kolkata on 18th February, 2026. A total of 10 MPs attended, with the meeting chaired by MP Shatrughan Prasad Sinha.

MPs Soumendu Adhikari, Avimanyu Sethi, Abhijit Gangopadhyay, Pratap Chandra Sarangi, Prasun Banerjee, Chandra Prakash Choudhary, Sajda Ahmed, Kalipada Saren and June Maliah were also present at the meeting.

During the session, attending MPs advised the Railway authority on various issues associated with train services, stoppages, cleanliness and the expeditious completion of railway projects, etc., for the benefit of passengers.

Mishra stated that the suggestions offered by the MPs for the development of passenger amenities and railway infrastructure would be reviewed with the utmost importance.

Lalit Mohan Pandey, Divisional Railway Manager, Kharagpur, Mukesh Gupta, Divisional Railway Manager, Adra, Soumotra Majumdar, Additional General Manager/SER and the Principal Heads of Departments of SER also attended the meeting.■

Railways Celebrates International Women's Day with Awards and Activities

The Ministry of Railways celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) at Vichar (Conference Hall), Rail Bhawan, New Delhi, on 13th March, 2026, bringing together women employees to celebrate the achievements of women and mark a call to action for gender equality. The event honoured the achievements of women and reaffirmed the commitment to gender equality, witnessing the participation of approximately 350 women officials.



Railway Board Chairman and CEO Satish Kumar, along with other senior officials, felicitating winners at Rail Bhawan

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Railway Board, Satish Kumar presided over the function as the Chief Guest, while Member (Finance), Railway Board, Manjusha Jain graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. Various engaging activities, including a skit, health talk, yoga demonstration, dance and song performances, quiz, fun games, etc., were organized as part of the celebrations.

Recognizing excellence in various fields, merit certificates and cash awards were presented to the winners of the Essay and Pot Decoration Competitions, as well as to the Best Sportswomen and Best Cultural Artists. These competitions were held on 26th February, 2026. The awardees are as follows:



Manjusha Jain, Member (Finance), Railway Board, inaugurating a special health check-up camp at Rail Bhawan

Winners of Essay Competition

1st Prize: Alice R. Tirkey, Director

2nd Prize: Sunita Swami, Assistant Section Officer

3rd Prize: Rashmi Saini, Stenographer

Winners of Pot Decoration Competition

1st Prize: Khushboo Varshney, Personal Assistant

2nd Prize: Neetu Verma, Personal Assistant

3rd Prize: Harshita Singh, Personal Assistant

Best Sports Women Awardees

1st Prize: Bidhisha Bhattacharjee, Statistical Inspector

2nd Prize: Deepa Arora, Private Secretary

3rd Prize: Chanchal Rani, Junior Secretariat Assistant

Best Cultural Artists Awardees

1st Prize: Shivangi Tomar, Stenographer

2nd Prize: J. Nirupama, Principal Staff Officer.

G. Vijaya Lakshmi, Principal Private Secretary.

Nidhi Chauhan, Personal Assistant

3rd Prize: Neha Mann, Section Officer

As part of the IWD celebrations, a special health check-up camp was also organized exclusively for women officials of the Railway Board's office on 9th March, 2026, in collaboration with Northern Railway Central Hospital. A total of 116 women employees availed the health check-up facilities.

Western Regional Meet at GSV Discusses Governance, Resource Mobilisation

The Capacity Building Commission (CBC), Government of India, organised a Western Regional Consultative Workshop on Sustainable Financing, Governance and Resource Mobilisation for Training Institutes in Vadodara on 5th March, 2026. Hosted by Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV), the workshop brought together 26 participants from Civil Services Training Institutions (CSTIs) across western states to deliberate on key reforms in institutional financing and governance.

The workshop sessions established a shared alignment on the draft framework structure and policy direction. Two thematic groups discussed key issues at the workshop. The first group focused on sustainable financing. The second group focused on governance and resource mobilisation.



CBC noted that insights from the Western regional consultation would feed into the consolidated national-level recommendations aimed at strengthening sustainable financing mechanisms, improving governance structures and enhancing resource mobilisation capabilities across the civil services training ecosystem.■

Western Railway Earns ₹1.72 Crore from Film Shooting in 2025-26

Western Railway (WR) has scripted a notable success story in 2025–26, setting new standards in film shooting revenue through streamlined processes and enhanced industry engagement. During this period, up to 15th February, 2026, WR earned the highest-ever revenue of around ₹1.72 crore from film shootings, which is almost 25% more than the previous year. The previous best performance was during 2022-23, when WR earned approx ₹1.64 crore from film shooting, reflecting steady growth in this segment and placing WR among the leading railway zones in the country in generating such revenue.

WR has simplified and streamlined the process of granting shooting permissions, enabling production houses and filmmakers to obtain necessary approvals in a time-bound manner. Now, through a single-window system, the production houses have to submit an application for shooting and all other railway clearances are managed by the PR department, after which permission is issued.



It is noteworthy that, for the first time, film shooting inside India's most modern and premium train, Vande Bharat, was permitted by WR. Some of the films shot on WR locations include—O Romeo, Fateh, Tera Yaar Hoon Main, Sikandar and advertisements such as Lizol, Pay TM, Colgate and many more.

WR remains committed to strengthening coordination with the film industry, creating new opportunities and enhancing non-fare revenue in the future.■

Elephant Corridor

Gets Smart Surveillance To Warn Trains Of Wildlife Movement



Arun Kumar Das

The quiet of a foggy winter morning was briefly broken at 6.36 am when an alert from the track detection system signalled the presence of an elephant near the railway line. Inside the Station Superintendent's office, the warning triggered a flurry of calls to nearby stations and level crossing gates along the New Jalpaiguri-Alipurduar route.

The entire 155-km-long route in North Bengal went on alert mode, with train movements restricted to 25 km per hour as a precautionary measure. However, the elephant remained on the trackside for just 45 seconds and disappeared into the nearby thick forest and it was all clear for regular movement of goods and passenger trains. "We keep extra vigil on the route from 5 pm to 6 am the next morning daily because this is the period when elephants usually cross the tracks," said SK Sunil, Station Superintendent.

"The train speed is restricted to 25 km per hour during this time and it is mandatory for the loco pilots to slow down train movement on this particular stretch during this period. If any movement is detected, then drivers of all incoming trains, station masters of all stations and level crossing gatemen are immediately informed," Sunil said. The route, also known as the elephant corridor because of the frequent movement of the elephants along the tracks, is a sensitive one.

Just a few years ago, this Banarhat-Caron section had witnessed the killing of six elephants on the tracks in 2016-17. But now the Railways has put in place elaborate arrangements with the installation of an elephant detection system to prevent animal runovers on the tracks. Installed by Bitcom, the Intrusion Detection System (IDS) seems to be working fine in the region, as there have been no such elephant runovers on the tracks since then. The IDS is a fiber-based system that works on the principle of Distributed Acoustic Sensing (DAS). Optical fibres are being laid along the tracks for receiving sensor-based signals at the monitoring centers in stations.

Explaining the system, Irfan Azam, Senior Section Engineer, who is part of the IDS installation programme, said, "The detection, classification and location of events are based on the quantitative measurement of Rayleigh backscatter and the time delay between transmitted pulse and received backscatter."

The system has been developed through trials and measurements after closely following elephant movement in the region. Everything is taken into account, including the weight of the elephant, the duration between one step of the elephant and the next step and all other necessary factors.

Irfan further said the IDS works on a sensor system. The sensor detects the elephant from its weight and sends alarm signals to the monitoring machine installed at the stations. There are 10 stations along the route where IDS is operational.

"The hooter system at the level crossing gate and the honeybee sound system get activated as an additional step once the elephant is detected on the tracks," said Irfan.

"Accidents used to happen earlier when there was no IDS here and no speed restriction in force for the train operations. But after the installation of the IDS, the number of accidents has reduced," said Sunil. He further added, "We get sensor-based alarms three to four times a day, but the crucial period is during the night when we have to be extra cautious."

In order to make the system more comprehensive, the Railways is now planning to install the system in the forest areas as well to keep a close watch on the movement of elephants. "We get regular information about the elephant movement from the forest department and we coordinate with them to prevent any possible mishaps on the track," said Irfan. About false alarms, he added that the system is calibrated periodically to prevent them. Since optical fibre is being laid within 20m from the track, the sensor detects elephant movement near the tracks.

Currently, the system is operational in 47 km of the 155-km-long section. This 47 km stretch is the most vulnerable section in the region and the area was selected for system installation after closely monitoring elephant movement in the nearby forest.

Aiming at preventing elephant deaths on rail tracks, Indian Railways (IR) is exploring the use of latest AI-based technology equipped with a multilayered system with seismic sensors and RF cameras to protect the wild animals across the country.

Recently, in the early hours of 20th December, 2025, Sairang-New Delhi Rajdhani Express collided with a herd of elephants in Changjurai village in Assam's Hojai district, leading to the deaths of eight animals. The impact also caused the derailment of five coaches and the locomotive, disrupting train operations in the section.

As part of the reforms, the Railways has sought out-of-the-box ideas to strengthen safety mechanisms with the latest technology. We are also exploring possibilities to upgrade the existing elephant detection system with the latest technology to make it fool-proof system.

Every year, dozens of elephants are killed on India's railway tracks, particularly in forested rail corridors of eastern and southern India. For IR, the challenge is both technological and ecological.

According to the Railways, the technology under consideration, though presently being used for perimeter security around sensitive installations, has also been used by several game and wildlife parks in Europe and Africa for wildlife security as well as warning highway traffic about potential danger of migrating wildlife.

The challenge is how to detect elephants early enough and reliably enough, to slow or stop a train moving at speed often at night, in heavy rain, through dense vegetation. Over the past few years, IR has turned to advanced sensing technology, most notably an Elephant Intrusion Detection System (EIDS) that uses optical fibre cables laid along railway tracks.

However, the field experience suggests that future systems must move away from fibre-based elephant detection systems towards seismic ground sensors combined with thermal or radar confirmation, supported by AI.

Since the fibre-based system detects movement from the vibrations created by elephants, the problem is that the forest is full of vibrations. Cattle, wild boar, deer and even humans walking near tracks generate detectable signals. Tractors, forest department vehicles, maintenance equipment, falling trees, flowing water during monsoon and strong winds shaking roots can all cause vibrations, thus confusing the system.

False alarms, especially during the monsoon, can lead to repeated train slowdowns. Over time, this creates alert fatigue among staff and resistance to acting on warnings.

According to the Railways, the multilayered elephant detection system is the next step for the public transporter, in which seismic sensors should replace optical fibre as the primary ground-detection layer, with fibre retained where already installed and thermal systems used selectively.

As IR expands these systems, there is an urgent requirement to detect wild animal movement accurately, early and consistently, without overwhelming operators or disrupting train operations. For that, listening to the ground itself may prove more reliable than listening through a cable buried beside it.■

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. How many reforms have been announced so far out of the total 52 reforms?

(a) 15 (b) 3

(c) 9 (d) 7

2. How long before the departure of the train can passengers now change their boarding station?

(a) 72 hours (b) 30 minutes

(c) 24 hours (d) 2 days

3. How many proposals have been received so far under the Rail Tech Policy?

(a) 0 (b) 100

(c) 250 (d) 123

4. How many kilometers of trackside fencing has been completed for safe train operations?

(a) 16,398 (b) 1532

(c) 18,746 (d) 73,655

5. How many Gati Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminals have been commissioned so far?

(a) 300 (b) 128

(c) 120 (d) 288

6. Which mobile app is used for both reserved and unreserved ticket booking?

(a) Halt Agent (b) Rail Madad

(c) RailOne (d) None of the above



7. How many litres of diesel are being saved annually due to electrification in Indian Railways?

(a) 50 crore litres (b) 100 crore litres

(c) 320 crore litres (d) 180 crore litres

8. Under which river is India's first road-cum-rail tunnel planned?

(a) Ganga (b) Brahmaputra

(c) Yamuna (d) Sabarmati

9. Approximately, how many trains are operated daily by Indian Railways?

(a) 15,000 (b) 7,250

(c) 19,000 (d) 25,571

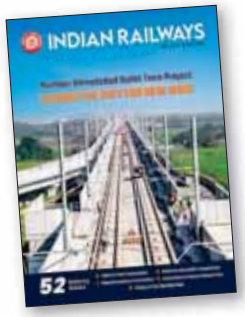
10. What is India's global rank in freight transportation by rail?

(a) Second (b) Fifth

(c) Seventh (d) Twelfth

Right Answers

1- (c)	2- (b)	3- (d)	4- (a)	5- (b)
6- (c)	7- (d)	8- (b)	9- (d)	10- (a)



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