INDIAN RAILWAYS

MARCH 2026 | PRICE `20

52 Reforms Weeks

Powering The Nation Forward



Declared Reforms

- Better on-Board Services
- More Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals
- Rail Tech Policy
- e-RCT System for End-to-End Digitisation of Railway Claims Tribunal



The Railway Employees' Co-operative Credit Society Limited,

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10 gm - 24 Ct Gold Coin



20 gm - 24 Ct Gold Coin



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Cover Photo
52 Reforms, 52 Weeks
Powering The Nation Forward

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

Indian Railways Gives New Momentum To A Developed India With 52 Reforms

Aligned with the national mission of building a "Developed India," Indian Railways plays an indispensable and reform-oriented role. Recognized as the lifeline of the nation, it is presently undergoing carefully planned, efficiency-driven and technology-integrated transformations. The pledge to implement 52 reforms in 52 weeks reflects the breadth of this vision and the seriousness behind it. Beyond mere administrative reform, it represents a thoughtful effort to recalibrate institutional frameworks and organisational ethos.

In February, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced four significant reforms—on board cleaning in general coaches, Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals, the Rail-Tech Policy and e-RCT. These initiatives aim to simultaneously enhance passengers' convenience, freight efficiency and technological innovation. Notably, on board cleaning in general coaches will start with 80 trains and will be gradually expanded to all trains, ensuring a qualitative improvement in cleanliness standards.

These 52 reforms envision extensive use of Artificial Intelligence and cutting-edge technologies. Operations, safety, ticketing, maintenance and inspection processes are being digitalised and made data-driven. The Rail-Tech Policy is a revolutionary step in this direction. It will provide a dedicated digital portal connecting startups, researchers and innovators with Indian Railways.

The Rail-Tech Policy has been designed after studying successful models like the IDEX initiative in the defence sector, frameworks of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and innovation policies in the telecommunications sector. Learning from these experiences, IR has sought to remove procedural bottlenecks and create a transparent, simple and innovation-friendly ecosystem.

Significant progress is also being made in infrastructure development. In February, two separate Cabinet meetings approved six railway projects. With a total cost of ₹27,581 crore, these projects will expand the railway network by 696 kilometers, benefiting states including Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand. Prepared under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, these projects aim to strengthen integrated planning and multimodal connectivity.

It is evident that Indian Railways is not just expanding tracks; through systemic reforms, technological innovation and a citizen-centric approach, it is strengthening the foundation of a developed India. The tangible outcomes of these 52 reforms are expected to be clearly visible in the near future.

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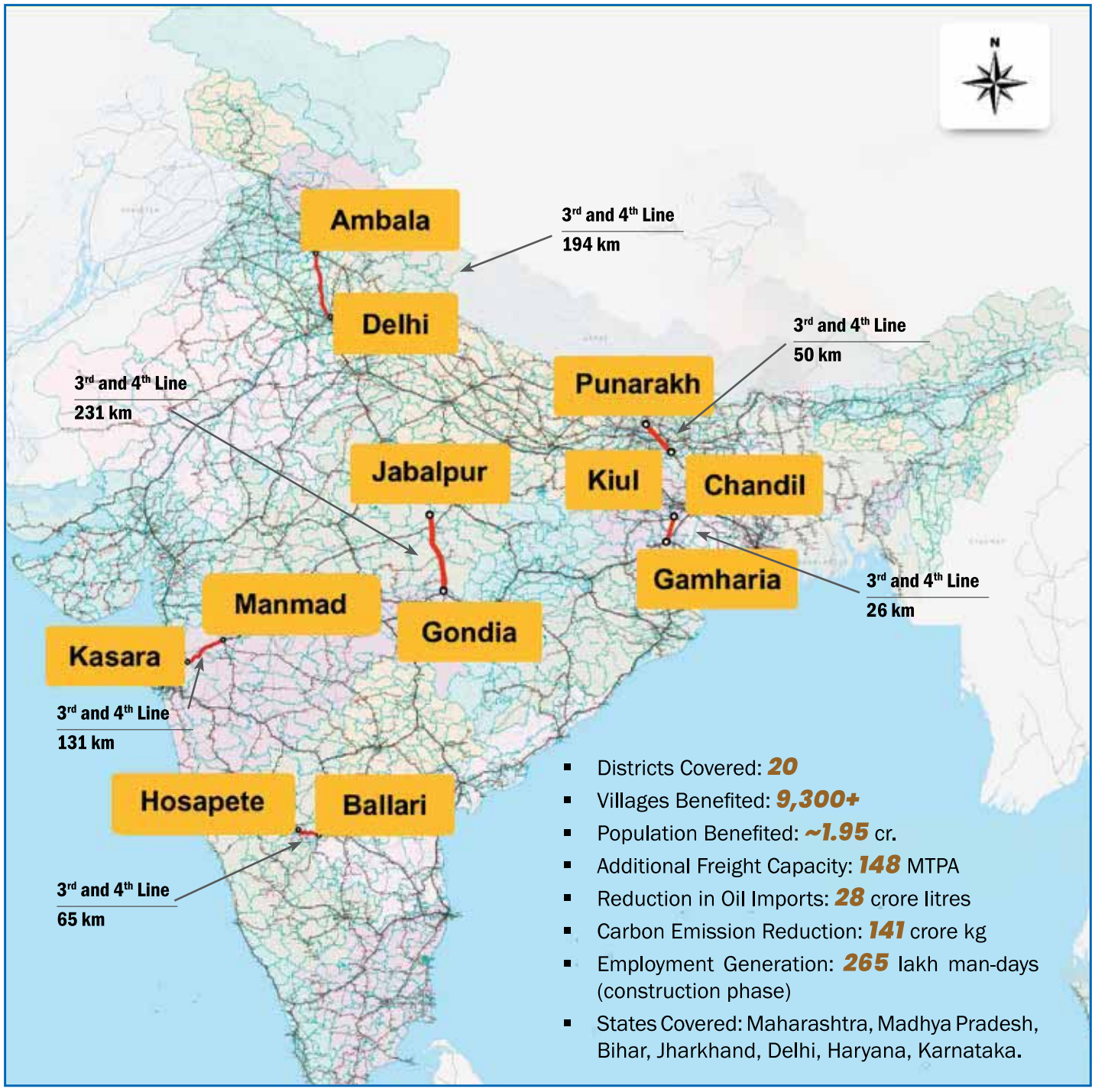
G.V. Venkatesan



Train 22226 Solapur–Mumbai Vande Bharat negotiates the dramatic curves of Bhor Ghat, just before Palasdhari, where engineering meets the timeless beauty of the Western Ghats.

Union Cabinet Approves Six Multi-Tracking Railway Projects Worth ₹27,581 Crore

696 km Network Expansion to Benefit 20 Districts





MR Ashwini Vaishnaw sharing detailed information about railway projects at the National Media Centre

The Union Cabinet has approved six multi-tracking railway projects aimed at increasing line capacity across 20 districts in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Delhi, Haryana and Karnataka. With these approvals, the existing network of Indian Railways will expand by approximately 696 km (307 km + 389 km). The total estimated cost of the projects is about ₹27,581 cr. (₹9072 cr. + ₹18,509 cr.) and all projects are targeted for completion by 2030–31.

Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs granted approval on 13th February and 24th February, 2026 for these key Ministry of Railways initiatives.

Six Approved Multi-Tracking Projects

Gondia–Jabalpur Line Doubling: ₹5236 cr.

Punarkh–Kiul Third and 4th Line: ₹2668 cr.

Gamharia–Chandil Third and 4th Line: ₹1168 cr.

Kasara–Manmad Third and 4th Line: ₹10154 cr.

Delhi–Ambala Third and 4th Line: ₹5983 cr.

Ballari–Hosapete Third and 4th Line: ₹2372 cr.

These projects will improve connectivity to more than 9300 villages (5407 + 3902) and benefit nearly 19.5 million people (9.8 million + 9.7 million population). During the construction phase, approximately 26.5 million man-days of direct employment will be generated.

The enhanced line capacity will significantly improve passenger and freight movement, reduce congestion and strengthen operational efficiency and service reliability of Indian Railways. The initiatives align with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and aim to promote regional development by creating employment and self-employment opportunities.

Developed under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, the projects emphasize integrated planning and multi-modal connectivity to enhance logistics efficiency. They will facilitate seamless movement of people, goods and services while reducing logistics costs.

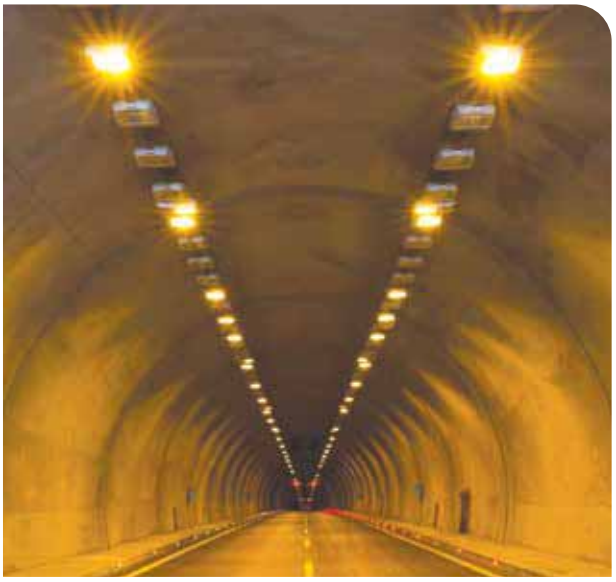
From a tourism perspective, rail connectivity will improve access to key destinations such as Kachnar Shiv Temple (Jabalpur), Kanha and Pench National Parks, Dhuandhar Waterfall, Chandil Dam, Trimbakeshwar Jyotirlinga, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, Hampi (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), Ballari Fort and Tungabhadra Dam.

The combined capacity enhancement will enable an additional freight loading of about 148 million tonnes per annum (52 + 96 MTPA). Key commodities such as coal, steel, iron ore, cement, fertilizers, food grains and POL will benefit from smoother transportation. The projects are expected to reduce oil imports by about 280 million litres (28 cr. litres) and cut carbon emissions by approximately 1.41 billion kg (141 cr. kg), equivalent to planting nearly 50 million trees.

Cabinet Approves India's First Road–Rail Twin-Tube Tunnel under the Brahmaputra River

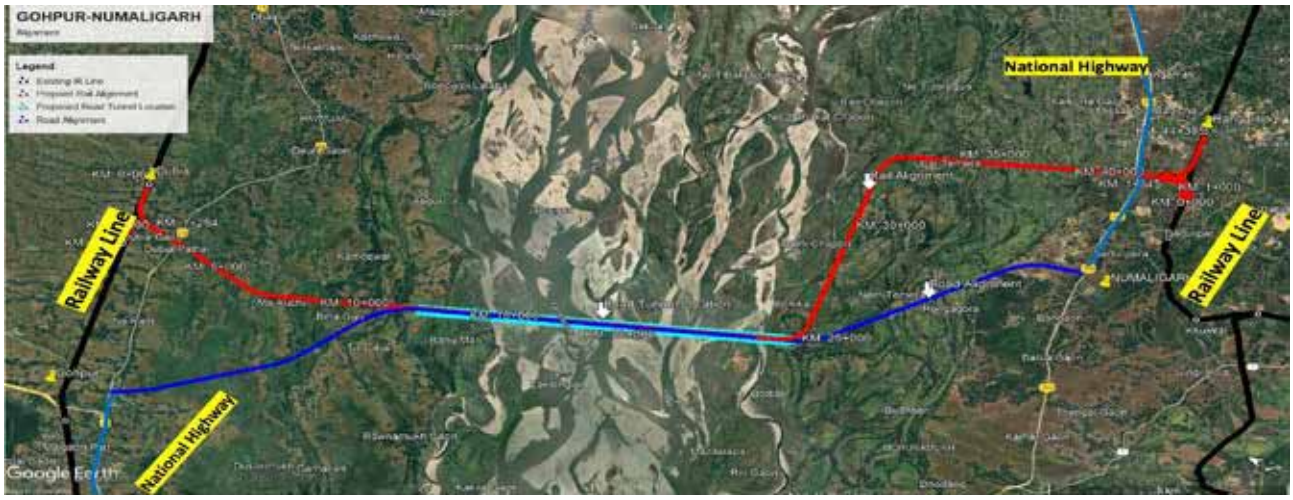
The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on 13th February, 2026 approved construction of 4-Lane Access-Controlled Greenfield connectivity from Gohpur on NH-15 to Numaligarh on 715 section including 15.79 km. of Road-cum-Rail Tunnel under Brahmaputra River to be developed at a total capital cost of ₹18,662 crore in Assam on Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC).

Currently, connectivity between Numaligarh on NH715 and Gohpur on NH-15 is 240 km. from existing Kaliabhambhora road bridge near Silghat on NH-52 which takes 6 hours passing through Numaligarh, Kaziranga National park and Biswanath Town. To address these challenges, the project is proposed to be developed as 4-Lane Access-Controlled Greenfield connectivity from Gohpur on NH-15 to Numaligarh with Road cum Rail tunnel under Brahmaputra River. This would be first underwater Road cum Rail tunnel in the India and 2nd in world. The project will provide significant benefit to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and other North-Eastern States. This will enhance the efficiency of freight movement, reducing logistics cost and driving socio-economic growth in the region.



The project alignment integrates with 2 major National Highways (NH-15 and NH-715) and 2 Railway lines i.e. Rangia-Mukongselek Railway Section under Rangia Division of NFR on Gohpur Side and Furkating-Mariani loop line section under Tinsukia Division of NFR on Numaligarh side. The project providing seamless connectivity to key economic, social and logistics nodes across Assam. Additionally, the project will enhance

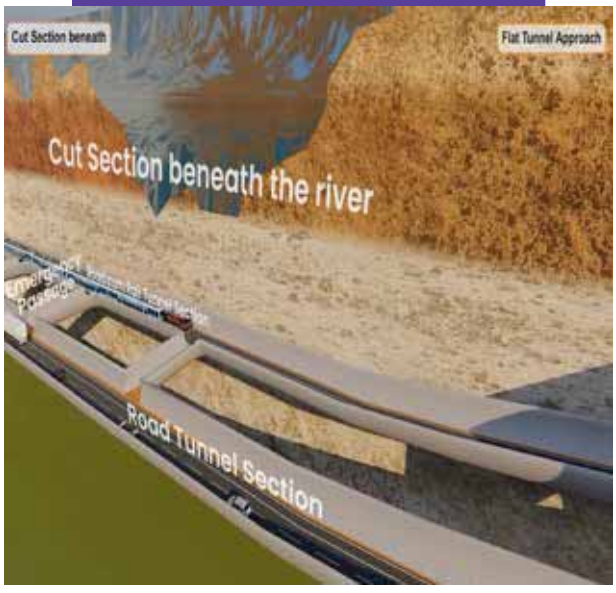




multi-modal integration by connecting with 11 Economic Nodes, 3 Social Nodes, 2 Tourist Nodes and 8 Logistic Nodes, providing enhanced connectivity with 4 Major Railway Station, 2 Airport and 2 inland water way thereby facilitating faster movement of goods and passengers across the region.

Upon completion, the project will play a pivotal role in strategic considerations, regional economic growth, strengthening connectivity between major economic centers and opening new avenues for trade and industrial development. The project will also generate approximately 80 lakhs person-days of direct and indirect employment and will open new avenues of growth, development and prosperity in surrounding regions.■

Guhpur to Numaligarh



Project Details

Feature	Details
Project Name	Construction of Twin Tube TBM road Underwater tunnel 2 Lane each under River Brahmaputra along with provision of Railway infrastructure in one of the tubes, in the state of Assam on EPC Mode with total length of project as 33.7 km.
Corridor	Gohpur on NH-15 – Numaligarh on NH-715
Length (km)	33.7 km.
Total Civil Cost (₹ cr.)	11,982.36 cr.
Total Capital Cost (₹ cr.)	18,662.02
Project Length	Instant Project of Length 33.77 km.
Twin Tube TBM Tunnel with Railway in one of the tubes	15.79 km.
Total Road cut and cover	1.26 km.
Total Rail cut and cover	4 km.
Major Roads Connected	National Highways – NH-15 and NH-715
Rail Line connected	Rangia-Mukongselek Railway Section under Rangia Division of NFR on Gohpur Side Furkating-Mariani loop line section under Tinsukia Division of NFR on Numaligarh side
Major Cities / Towns Connected	Numaligarh, Tezpur, Gohpur Dibrugarh in Assam and Itanagar In Arunachal Pradesh
Employment Generation Potential	80 Lakhs Man-Days of Direct and In-direct
Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in FY-25	Estimated at 4680 Passenger Car Units (PCU)

Railway Minister Flags off Two Train Services from Bhopal



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw virtually flagging off the Bhopal-Chopan and Bhopal-Dhanbad Express trains from Rail Bhawan

Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw on 24th February, 2026 said the proposed Dedicated Freight Corridor from Dankuni (West Bengal) to Surat (Gujarat) will serve as a strong foundation for the large-scale industrial development of Madhya Pradesh.

The Minister was speaking while virtually flagging off Bhopal–Dhanbad–Bhopal New Tri-Weekly Express and Bhopal–Chopan–Bhopal New Weekly Express at Rail Bhawan, New Delhi.

The launch ceremony was held at Bhopal railway station in the presence of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, Deputy Chief Ministers Jagdish Devda and Rajendra Shukla, Members of Parliament Alok Sharma and Dr. Rajesh Mishra, Members of Legislative Assembly Radha Singh and Riti Pathak and other dignitaries.

These new train services have been introduced keeping in view the convenience of rail passengers and the growing demand for direct connectivity from Madhya Pradesh to Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand.

The Railway Minister stated that railway development in Madhya Pradesh has reached an unprecedented scale during the Prime Minister's historic third term.

He informed that projects worth approximately ₹48,000 crore, directly connecting with Madhya Pradesh, have been sanctioned during this period.

MR mentioned that the long-awaited Indore-Manmad new railway line, a dream project for the region, has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of ₹18,000 crore. The Bhusawal-Khandwa third and fourth line project has been approved at ₹3,500 crore, while the Prayagraj-Manikpur third line project has been sanctioned at ₹1640 crore. The Ratlam-Nagda third and fourth line project has been approved at ₹1000 crore.

In addition, the Itarsi-Nagpur fourth railway line project has been sanctioned at ₹5400 crore. The important Itarsi-Bhopal-Bina fourth line corridor, a crucial high-density route, has been approved at ₹4300 crore. The Vadodara-Ratlam third and fourth line project has been sanctioned at ₹8800 crore. He said the Cabinet has also approved the Gondia-Jabalpur doubling project at a cost of ₹5200 crore.

Other major ongoing projects include Ramganj Mandi-Bhopal, Lalitpur-Singrauli, Indore-Budni, Bina-Katni third line, Satna-Rewa and Katni-Singrauli doubling, Katni grade separator and gauge conversion projects, which will significantly improve rail capacity, punctuality and freight movement.



Madhya Pradesh CM Dr. Mohan Yadav, Deputy Chief Minister Jagdish Devda and other dignitaries at the programme organised at Bhopal Railway Station

The Minister said to enhance freight and logistics efficiency, the Union Budget has proposed a new Dedicated Freight Corridor from Dankuni (West Bengal) to Surat (Gujarat), passing through Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The Railway Minister informed that this new freight corridor will serve as a strong foundation for the large-scale industrial development of Madhya Pradesh. This 2,052 km East-West corridor will connect with the existing Western Dedicated Freight Corridor, enabling seamless movement of goods to western ports, reducing pressure on the existing rail network and accelerating industrial growth.

The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister expressed his pleasure that the newly introduced train service has commenced operations, ensuring daily rail connectivity to Singrauli. He described the development as a significant gift for the region. He conveyed his gratitude to Railway Minister and noted that, apart from Singrauli, the train would also benefit people travelling between Singrauli and Dhanbad, where many residents are engaged in trade, business and employment.

Railway Development in Madhya Pradesh

The Union Budget 2026–27 has allocated a record capital expenditure (Capex) of ₹2,93,030 crore for Indian Railways and a record ₹1.20 lakh crore for safety. In this sequence, MP has received ₹15,188 crore for railway development, which is 24 times higher compared to the period 2009–2014. This record allocation will provide new momentum to railway infrastructure, safety, security, passenger amenities and freight capacity in MP.

At present, railway projects worth ₹1,18,379 crore are in progress in the state and 100% electrification of railway lines in Madhya Pradesh has been completed. Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 80 stations are being redeveloped, some of which have already been inaugurated by the Prime Minister in 2025.

In the field of safety, a plan has been prepared to implement the Kavach system over 4591 route kilometers in Madhya Pradesh. For passenger convenience, 5 pairs of Vande Bharat Express and 4 pairs of Amrit Bharat Express trains are being operated in the state. Additional Vande Bharat Express, Amrit Bharat Express and new trains will also be introduced this year.■

MoU Signed for Establishment of 'Bharat Container Shipping Line' Co.

Under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed among the Shipping Corporation of India, Container Corporation of India, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority, V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority, Chennai Port Authority and Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited for the establishment of the Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL).

Additionally, a separate tripartite MoU was signed among the V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority, Indian Railway Finance Corporation and Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited for financing the Outer Harbour Project at Tuticorin.

The MoUs were signed in the presence of Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal and Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology Ashwini



Vaishnaw, reflecting coordinated efforts in shipping, ports and rail-linked logistics. Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shantanu Thakur, Chairman & CEO, Railway Board, Satish Kumar and other distinguished dignitaries were also present on the occasion.■

Railway Minister Inaugurates Two RoBs in West Bengal,
Flags off Asansol–Bokaro Train Service



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw flagging off the new Asansol-Bokaro train service through video conferencing

Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated the Siuri Road over Bridge, Kumarpur Road Over Bridge and flagged off the new Asansol–Bokaro train service through video conferencing on 8th February, 2026.

Speaking on the occasion, The Minister mentioned that this year a record budget allocation of ₹14,205 crore has been allocated for Railway in West Bengal which is more than 3 times than the average allocation during 2009-2014. He said Railway Projects worth about ₹92,000 crore are continuing in West Bengal which will facilitate infrastructural transformation in this state.

The Minister also mentioned that recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has initiated more than a dozen new trains to facilitate enhancement in rail connectivity for the people of West Bengal. The first Vande Bharat Sleeper train started running from West Bengal. This indicated the visionary initiative of 'Purvoday' taken by the Prime Minister towards development of this region. He also stated that the first Bullet Train for West Bengal has been announced in this year's Rail Budget and this Bullet Train will start from Siliguri. At the same time, the Prime Minister has approved for an East-West freight corridor connecting West Bengal with Gujarat, the Railway Minister said.



Dignitaries present at the programme organised at Siuri Railway Station

The Minister mentioned that another initiative is being taken for construction of an underground rail corridor at the chicken-neck part of North Bengal as a strategic step for safe and secured transportation.

Siuri Road over Bridge

The newly constructed Road over Bridge (RoB) in lieu of Level Crossing No. 22B/T near Siuri Railway Station has been completed at a project cost of ₹42 crore. The bridge will remove long waiting time at the level crossing and ensure faster, safer and smoother daily travel for residents of Siuri and adjoining areas.

Kumarpur Road over Bridge

Another major infrastructure addition is the Road Over Bridge at Kumarpur in lieu of Level Crossing No. 1Spl/E between Barachak and Hirapur Yard Line, constructed at a cost of ₹55 crore. Located on the important GT Road corridor, it serves as a key link between Asansol city, large parts of Paschim Bardhaman district and Jharkhand.



New Asansol–Bokaro Train Service

The new train service between Asansol and Bokaro Steel City will strengthen connectivity between two major steel hubs of the country. The service will benefit industrial workers, daily commuters and local residents.■

MR Flags off New Train Service Between Sairang and Silchar

Inaugurates Hospitality Services at Guwahati Railway Station

Giving a major boost to the development and rail connectivity in the Northeast, Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated blended hospitality services at Guwahati Railway Station in Assam through video conferencing on 9th February, 2026 and also flagged off a new train service between Sairang and Silchar.

Meanwhile, modern hospitality facilities at Guwahati railway station, including sleeping pods, a modern air-conditioned lounge and multi-cuisine restaurants will enhance passenger comfort and provide a refined, hygienic and customer-friendly travel experience.

Lalduhoma, Chief Minister of Mizoram; Parimal Suklabaidya, Member of Parliament from Silchar; Kanad Purkayastha, Member of the Rajya Sabha; and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, MR said the Centre has significantly increased rail funding for the region over the past decade, with a record allocation of ₹11,486 crore in the Union Budget 2026-27 for northeastern states.

The Railway Minister further stated that projects worth around ₹72,468 crore are already underway in the region.

He said this focus reflects Prime Minister belief that development of the Northeast is integral to a "Viksit Bharat" and that every region must progress together.



Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma and other dignitaries present at the programme organised at Sairang Railway Station



MR Ashwini Vaishnaw and other ministers flagging off the new Sairang-Silchar train service through video conferencing

MR highlighted that the Bairabi–Sairang railway line, which connects Mizoram's capital to the IR network, has been a historic and technically challenging project completed under this expanded focus.

He pointed out that the new passenger train service between Sairang and Silchar will significantly improve regional integration, benefiting residents of southern Assam, Mizoram and other northeastern states.

Lalduhoma expressed gratitude to the Railway Minister. He highlighted various railway projects and initiatives connecting Mizoram and Assam, which will benefit the region.

Over the past decade, the Northeast's railway map has been rapidly transformed, with long-pending projects becoming reality and state capitals steadily linking to the national network.

The commissioning of Mizoram's 51 km Bairabi–Sairang broad-gauge line last year brought Aizawl onto India's railway map for the first time and the extension of passenger services up to Silchar now takes this connectivity forward, improving mobility and driving growth across the region.■

52 Reforms Weeks

Railway Minister Announces Four Important Reforms

Better on-Board Services
More Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals
Rail Tech Policy
e-RCT System for End-to-End Digitisation of Railway Claims Tribunal



Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways unveiling the digital portal to connect startups and researchers under the Rail Tech Policy

Indian Railways is playing a decisive role in advancing the vision of a Viksit Bharat. The nation's lifeline is moving beyond conventional systems and entering a new era defined by innovation, efficiency and accountability. The resolve to implement 52 reforms in 52 weeks reflects this transformative approach. It is not merely a policy announcement, but a structured campaign to reshape work culture, integrate advanced technology and enhance service delivery across the network.

In February 2026, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced four major reforms on 14 and 26 February. These include the introduction of on-board housekeeping services in general class coaches, the development of 'More Gati Shakti' cargo terminals, the Rail Tech Policy and the launch of e-RCT. The on-board cleaning initiative has been rolled out in 80 trains in the first phase and will be gradually extended to all trains. Importantly, AI-based monitoring systems will be deployed to ensure quality control, transparency and accountability in cleanliness management.

The 'More Gati Shakti' cargo terminal initiative aims to make freight transportation faster, better integrated and more competitive. The Rail Tech Policy marks a significant step toward institutionalizing innovation by connecting startups, researchers and technology experts with IR through a dedicated digital portal.

Additionally, the complete digitization of the Railway Claims Tribunal through the e-RCT system will enable online filing, processing and disposal of claims, making the process faster, more transparent and accessible from anywhere in the country. Collectively, these reforms are transforming Indian Railways into a modern, technology-driven and citizen-centric organization aligned with the vision of a developed India.

Reform 1

Better on-board Services

Objectives of the Reform

- To prioritize clean and hygienic travel experience.
- To establish clear responsibility and accountability for deployed service providers.
- To engage professional, self-disciplined, pro-active service providers who exceed customer expectations.
- To leverage technology for monitoring, feedback and performance

Features of the Reform

- Integrated Cleaning, Linen and Petty Repairs Model.
- Multi-tasking and cross-skilled staff as passenger interface.
- Engagement of leading service providers with a proven track record.
- Technology-enabled real-time monitoring.
- Flexibility to adopt route-specific team deployment models for long-distance trains.
- Phased implementation over two years, with periodic review.

Scope of On-board Services

- All coaches including (General Coaches) toilets, basins and garbage collection.
- Attending minor repairs and coordinating water filling as required.
- Checking and reporting status of safety equipment.
- Trained supervisors and service staff. Phased implementation over two years, with periodic review.

Trains

Zones	Count	Zones	Count
CR	6	NWR	5
ECoR	6	SCR	5
ECR	5	SECR	4
ER	5	SER	3
NCR	6	SR	5
NER	5	SWR	5
NFR	5	WCR	5
NR	5	WR	5
Total : 80			



Reform 2

Rail Based Logistics Through Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals



Introduction

GCT Policy 2022 brought the first major reform in freight terminals:

- Clear timelines for approval of GCT.
- Common user facilities to be developed at railway cost.
- Elimination of staff charges to GCT operators.
- GCT Terminal permitted on railway land.
- Simplified, faster and hassle-free approval process for operators.
- Development of 124 multi-modal cargo terminals within 3 years with traffic potential of ~200 million tonnes/year (~₹20,000 cr revenue)

Features of New Policy

- **Cargo related facilities on railway land:** Development of warehouses, grinding units, processing and aggregation permitted on spare railway land.
- **Underutilized goodsheds:** Can be developed as GCT and cargo facilities.
- **Migration to GCT Policy:** Easier migration of sidings and private freight terminals with simplified process.
- **Common User Facilities (CUF):** Definition expanded to include Y-Connection, Rail-over-Rail, etc.
- **Multi-GCT Connectivity:** Clear methodology defined for providing connection.

Features of New Policy

- **Standard layouts:** Standard layouts of the Gatishakti terminals have been made a part of the policy
- **Simplified Dispute Resolution:** Framework for dispute prevention outlined in the policy. Dispute resolution has been simplified with powers delegated to DRM.
- Long term contracts of 50 years for GCT and Cargo related facilities.

Significance of New Policy

- Promotes multi-modal logistics through Rail integration with road, ports & industrial corridors
- Reduce logistics cost by promoting integration of cargo related activities with freight terminals.
- Revenue enhancement through Guaranteed Railway Freight (GRF)

Reform 3

Rail Tech Policy

Introduction

- IR aims to engage innovators, start-ups, industry and institutions to promote innovation.
- New policy simplifies selection of innovators.
- New **"Rail Tech Portal"** for innovation.
- Innovation challenge can be initiated by any innovator or departmental user.

Features

- Single-stage detailed submission of proposals by the innovator.
- Scale-up grant increased more than 3 times.
- Maximum grant doubled for prototype development and trials.
- User friendly interface.

Innovation Challenges

- AI based Elephant Intrusion Detection System.
- AI based fire detection system in coaches.
- Drone based broken rail detection system.
- Rail stress monitoring system.
- Sensor based load calculation device on parcel vans (VPUs).
- Solar panel on coaches.
- AI based coach cleaning monitoring system.
- Obstruction detection in foggy environment.
- AI based pension, dispute resolution.



Reform 4

e-RCT

System for End-to-End Digitisation of Railway Claims Tribunal

Introduction

- A citizen centric reform and a digital solution designed to streamline and modernize processing of court cases in Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT).
- It aims to improve efficiency, accessibility and transparency in all 23 RCT benches to be connected digitally across India.
- It will benefit litigants to file their cases from anywhere electronically easily with 24/7 availability.

Features: Three key modules

- E-Filing: 24/7 online filing from anywhere.
- CIS - Case Information System.
- Centralized digital database from case filing to final judgment.
- Tracks progress of judgment, including hearings, evidence submission and adjournments.
- DMS - Document Management System: Digital centralised repository of all case related documents including orders and judgments

Features of New Policy

- Easy online filing of Railway claims from anywhere.
- Automatic alerts/notifications to all users.
- Real-time case volumes and monitoring leading to faster resolution.
- Automated document handling and real-time insights to benches.
- Use of AI for processing cases.



RAILWAYS IN PARLIAMENT

Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw's replies to questions in the Parliament

Indian Railways' AI-enabled Intrusion Detection System Detects Presence of Elephants on Railway Tracks

Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha on 4th February, 2026 informed that Indian Railways has developed Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled Intrusion Detection System (IDS) to prevent elephants from being hit by trains on railway tracks and presently this system is working over 141 Rkms on critical and vulnerable locations identified by forest department in Northeast Frontier Railway.

He stated that the Ministry of Railways, in coordination with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has taken several protection measures to prevent elephants from being hit by trains on railway tracks.

The Minister said one of the innovative measures taken is development of an AI-enabled Intrusion Detection System (IDS) for detecting presence of elephants on railway tracks using Distributed Acoustic Sensors (DAS).

> **"Indian Railways' AI-enabled Intrusion detection system (IDS); designed to generate alerts for loco pilots, station masters and control room to prevent death of elephants on railway tracks using distributed acoustic sensors (DAS)"**
>
> **Ashwini Vaishnaw**
> Minister of Railways



The Railway Minister mentioned that the system components include optical fibre, hardware and pre-installed signatures of elephant locomotion, adding that the system is designed to generate alerts for loco pilots, station masters and control room about the movement of elephants in proximity of railway tracks, for taking timely preventive action.

IDS have also been sanctioned for identified corridors across Indian Railways covering	
NFR	403.42 Rkm
ECOR	368.70 Rkm
SR	55.85 Rkm
NR	52 Rkm
SER	55 Rkm
NER	99.18 Rkm
WR	115 Rkm
ECR	20.3 Rkm

The Railway Minister stated that works of in case of any hitting incident of an elephant with a train, Zonal Railways investigate the matter in close coordination with the forest department and take immediate steps accordingly. These include imposition of suitable speed restrictions at identified locations and alerting train crews as well as station masters. Regular meetings with forest officials concerned are conducted to update and sensitise the train crew. In the past five years, an average of about 16 incidents have been reported, he said.

Other protection measures to prevent elephants from being hit by trains on railway tracks include construction of underpasses and ramps for the movement of elephants at identified locations, installation of suitable fencing along tracks in vulnerable locations to discourage elephants from approaching towards railway lines, provision of signage boards at all identified elephant corridors to pre-warn the loco pilots, clearance of vegetation and edible items surrounding the track within railway land and providing LED lights with a solar system in forest area.

Deployment of elephant trackers engaged by forest department for timely action by alerting station master and loco pilots, are taken.

To prevent the movement of wild animals/ elephants near railway tracks, innovative Honey Bee buzzer devices have been installed at level crossings. The sound created by this device acts as a repellent to move elephants away from railway tracks.

Thermal vision cameras are also being tried for detecting presence of wild animals on straight tracks during night/poor visibility which alerts loco pilots for presence of wild animals, the Railway Minister added.■

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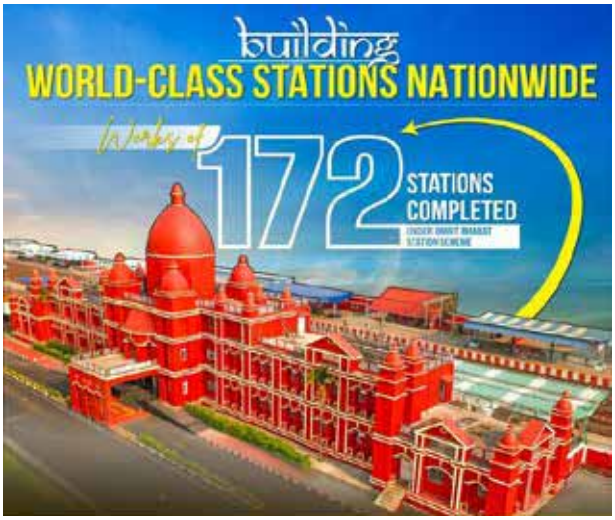
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Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

172 Stations Redeveloped Out of 1337

For redevelopment of stations with a long-term approach, Ministry of Railways has launched Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. So far, 1337 stations have been identified for development under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Development works at railway stations under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme have been taken up at a good pace. Till now, works have been completed at 172 stations. Names of stations completed so far are as following:



Alnavar, Amb Andaura, Ambikapur, Amgaon, Anandpur Sahib, Anara, Ayodhya Dham, Badami, Bagalkot, Baijnath Paprola, Balrampur, Bantawala, Barabhum, Baramati, Bareilly City, Baripada, Barmer, Barpali, Begumpet, Beohari, Bhanupratappur, Bhilai, Bhind, Bijnor, Bimalgarh, Bommidi, Bundi, Chanda Fort, Chalakudi, Changanassery, Chennai Park, Chidambaram, Chinchpokli, Chinna Salem, Chirayinkeezh, Cuttack, Dakor, Derol, Deshnoke, Devlali, Dharwad, Dhule, Dongargarh, Fatehabad, Fatehpur, Fatehpur Shekhawati, Gadag, Gangapur City, Godda, Godhra Jn., Gogameri, Gokak Road, Gola Gokarnath, Gomti Nagar, Govardhan, Govind Garh, Govindpuri, Govindpur Road, Hafizpeta, Haibargaon, Haldia, Hapa, Harpalpur, Hathras City, Hodal, Idgah Agra Jn., Izzatnagar, Jaisalmer, Jam Jodhpur, Jam Wanthali, Joychandi Pahar, Junnor Deo, Kakinada Town, Kalyani Ghoshpara, Kamakhyaguri, Kanalus Jn., Karaikkudi Jn., Karamsad, Karimnagar, Katni South, Kedgaon, Khairthal, Khambhaliya, Khalilabad, Koppal, Kosamba Jn., Kulitturai, Kuttipuram, Lasalgaon, Limbdi, Lohardaga, Lonand Jn., Mahe, Mahuva, Mailani, Mandal Garh, Mandawar Mahwa Road, Madhupur, Manaparai, Mandi Dabwali, Mangalagiri, Mannargudi, Matunga, M.C.S. Chhatarpur, Mithapur, Morappur, Morbi, Muktsar, Munirabad, Muri Jn., Murtizapur Jn., Nainpur Jn., Nandura, Narmadapuram, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Itwari Junction, Okha, Orchha, Palitana, Panagarh, Panki Dham, Parel, Parlakhemundi, Pirpainti, Piska, Pokhrayan, Pollachi Jn., Polur, Porbandar, Rajgarh, Rajmahal, Rajula Jn., Ramghat Halt, Rayanpadu, Saharanpur Jn., Sahibzada Ajit Singh Mohali, Sahebgunj, Samakhiyali, Samalpatti, Sanchi, Sankarpur, Savda, Seoni, Shahad, Shajapur, Sholavandan, Shoranur Jn., Shridham, Siddharth Nagar, Sihor Jn., Siuri, Sri Bala Brahmeswara Jogulamba, Srirangam, Srivilliputtur, St. Thomas Mount, Sullurpeta, Suraimanpur, Swaminarayan Chappia, Talcher, Tamluk, Thawe, Thiruvarur



Redeveloped Thiruvarur Railway Jn.

Jn., Tiruvannamalai, Tuni, Ujhani, Urkura, Utran, Vadakara, Vadala Road, Vidisha, Vriddhachalam Jn., Wadakancheri, Warangal.

Station Redevelopment : The scheme involves preparation of master plans and their implementation in phases to improve the stations. The master planning includes:

- Improvement of access to station and circulating areas.
- Integration of station with both sides of city.
- Improvement of station building.
- Improvement of waiting halls, toilets, sitting arrangement, water booths.
- Provision of wider FoB/air concourse commensurate with passenger traffic.
- Provision of lift/escalators/ramp.
- Improvement /Provision of platform surface and cover over platforms.
- Provision of kiosks for local products through schemes like 'One Station One Product'.
- Parking areas, multi modal integration.
- Amenities for Divyangjans.
- Better passenger information systems.
- Provision of executive lounges, nominated spaces for business meetings, landscaping, etc. keeping in view the necessity at each station.■

42,677 LHB Coaches Manufactured During 2014-25

The production of Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches, which are manufactured by IR. LHB coaches are known for higher safety standards, lower maintenance costs and superior operational efficiency. IR are further scaling production to meet future demand. Through indigenous production of LHB coaches, IR is strengthening the Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.

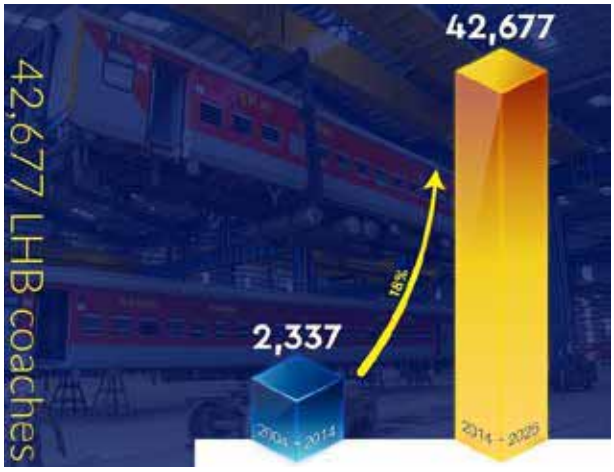
The Railway Minister mentioned that the IR manufactured a total of 2337 LHB coaches between 2004–14, while 42,677 coaches were manufactured during the period from 2014-25 which is a rise of more than 18 times.

MR further stated that technologically superior LHB coaches have better riding, improved aesthetics and features like lightweight design, anti-climbing features, air suspension (Secondary) with failure indication system, stainless steel shell and disc brake system etc. 2004-14

Period	Manufacturing of LHB Coaches
2004-14	2337
2014-25	42,677 (More than 18 times)

Regarding proliferation of LHB coaches, it is mentioned that the work of replacement of ICF coaches with safer and more modern LHB coaches has been taken up in a phased manner.

The Minister also mentioned that at present, there are three coach manufacturing units operational in India under the Ministry of Railways. The cost of development of coach manufacturing units varies



depending upon factors such as location, the type of coaches proposed to be manufactured, planned production capacity and the machinery and plant to be installed.

Expenditure on the development of coach manufacturing units is incurred over extended periods and across multiple phases covering the initial setting up of the units as well as subsequent upgradation and augmentation of the facilities from time to time. For example, the expenditure incurred on the setting up of the latest operational coach manufacturing unit- Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli is ₹3042.83 crore.

Further, ₹2443 crore has been sanctioned for various projects related to the upgradation/ augmentation of the three operational coach manufacturing units viz. ICF, Chennai, RCF, Kapurthala and MCF, Raebareli.■

Railways Place Top Priority on Cleanliness of Coaches



Indian Railways has dedicated budgetary provisions for maintaining cleanliness and hygiene at stations and trains and no component of passenger fare is charged on account of providing cleanliness in trains. Railway Minister said cleanliness is a continuous process and Indian Railways makes every endeavour to keep coaches in properly maintained and clean condition.

Railways have taken several measures to monitor and ensure cleanliness and hygiene in coaches including washrooms.

Mentioning some of these measures, the Railway Minister stated that mechanised coach cleaning is being ensured during primary maintenance for better cleaning of the coach including interior, exterior and toilets, on-board housekeeping staff service is being provided to ensure cleanliness on run and to attend to any passenger grievance, clean train station service has been introduced for mechanised cleaning in identified trains, including washrooms during their scheduled stoppage enroute; and dedicated team of staff equipped with high pressure jet machines and cleaning equipment carries out cleaning followed by drying of coach toilets.

Details of Bio-toliets Installed in Coaches

Period	Bio-Toilets Installed
2004-14	9587
From 2014 to now	3,61,572

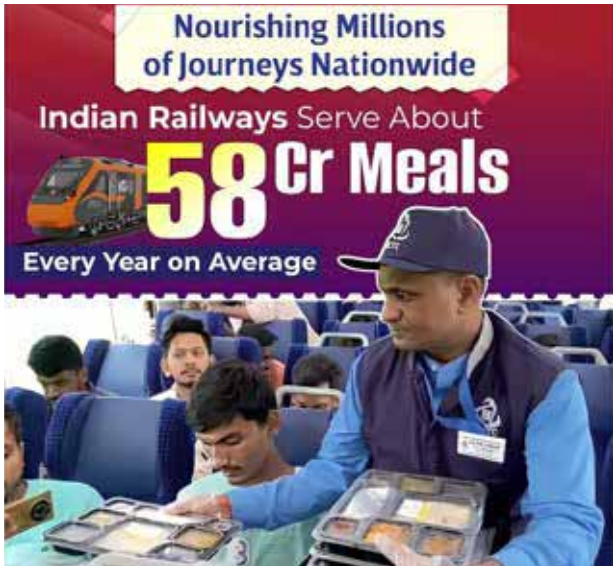
All passenger coaches have been installed with bio-toilets so that no human waste is discharged from coaches on the track resulting in improved cleanliness level. Regular monitoring is done through inspections and feedback received through Rail Madad/RailOne app and other passenger interfaces, he added.

Waste Management

Effective management including disposal of waste generated in trains and Railway stations, catering units and coaches is accorded high priority by Indian Railways for enhanced users' experience. Various initiatives taken in this regard are as follows:

- Waste collected inside trains is disposed of at nominated en-route stations, identified for waste disposal.
- On board housekeeping Staff are strictly mandated not to throw garbage on tracks and strict penalties are imposed on violation.
- Rag picking is done along railway tracks to maintain cleanliness.
- Plastic bottle crushing machines (PBCMs) are installed at stations as per requirement.
- Provision of two bin type dustbins has been carried out at various stations for segregation of bio-degradable and non-biodegradable waste, at source.
- Based on local conditions, feasibility and requirement, tie-ups for waste disposal, have been made between local Railway authorities and municipal bodies.
- Infrastructure like Sewage treatment plants (STPs), effluent treatment plants (ETPs), material recovery facility (MRF) has been installed and commissioned, on need basis, at a number of locations over Indian Railways.
- Passenger awareness campaigns are regularly conducted across Indian Railways for encouraging them to dispose garbage in dustbins provided in trains.
- Regular checks/surprise checks are conducted by supervisors/senior officials at Divisional, Zonal and Headquarter level.

Indian Railways Serves about 58 crore Meals Every Year



Indian Railways serve about 58 cr. meals every year on average. About only 0.0008% complaints are received on average. Based on inquiry on these complaints during the last three years, a fine of ₹2.6 cr. has been imposed.

In order to take passenger feedback, the complaint management system over Indian Railways has been strengthened, simplified and made more accessible over the last few years through the introduction of RailMadad Portal. With the launch of RailMadad Portal, Indian Railways provided passengers a single window system to register complaints and suggestions.

IRCTC and Railway officials conduct surprise and periodic checks to ensure compliance with catering standards on trains. IRCTC has deployed supervisors and catering assistants for ongoing monitoring of onboard services and real-time resolution of passengers grievances. To enhance inspection coverage, IRCTC has engaged additional Hospitality Monitors for sectional oversight of catering services on mail express trains.

Indian Railways 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 on board 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.

11650 Stalls/Units Allocated



In response to a question about stalls at railway stations, the Railway Minister stated that to ensure availability of adequate facilities for travelling passengers, allotment of stalls at railway stations is done through e-auction/e-tender in accordance with extant policy in vogue from time to time.

He mentioned that at present, there are 11,650 stalls/units at railway stations, allocated to eligible applicants including those from SC/ ST communities. There is no provision in the extant policy for allocation of free stalls at railway stations, the Railway Minister added.

Indian Railways Provides Affordable Transportation Services to over 720 Crore Passengers Annually



Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw in a reply to a question in the Lok Sabha on 11th February, 2026 informed that Indian Railways provides affordable travel to over 720 crore passengers annually with 57,200 non-AC coaches and 54 lakh non-AC seats.

Infrastructure Sector	Progress since 2014
National Highways	About 58,232 km long National Highways/Expressways has been added in the National Highways/ Expressways network.
Railways	About 35,000 km new railway tracks have been added.
Airports	90 nos. operational airports have been added.
Metro	848 km length and 21 more cities have been added in the Metro network.

Therefore, modal distribution is also changing accordingly to the change in infrastructure growth.

Non-AC Coaches (General and Sleeper 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 December 2025), 767 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) over the next 5 years.

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

Distribution of Coaches		
Non-AC coaches (general and sleeper)	~57,200	~70%
AC coaches	~25,000	~30%
Total coaches	~82,200	100%

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 %
~ 54 lakhs	~ 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.

Overall, the passenger patronage of Indian Railways is showing steady and rapid growth trend, with consistent increase recorded during as under:

Year	% Growth w.r.t previous year
2022-23	~ 82% (previous year 2021-22 being Covid year)
2023-24	~8%
2024-25	~6%

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 Feneral/Unreserved Coaches

Year	Nos. 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.

Moreover, to provide greater accommodation for the passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper Coaches, the extant policy regarding composition of Mail/Express trains provides for 12 General class & Sleeper class non- AC coaches and 8 AC-coaches, in a train of 22 coaches, thereby providing greater accommodation for the passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper Coaches.

In its constant endeavour to provide additional accommodation to travelling passengers, during 2025-26 (up to December 2025) IR have introduced 245 trains services, extended 101 train services and frequency of 8 services have also been increased.

New Design Trainsets

245 New Trains Introduced, 101 Services Extended and Frequency of 8 Services Increased Across India in First Nine Months of FY 2025-26

Indian Railways is focused on providing affordable, good quality services to all sections of society. IR have developed and introduced the following trains:

Vande Bharat Chair Car (164 Services): 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. Presently, 164 Vande Bharat train services (Chair Car) are being operated on the Indian Railways network.

Vande Bharat Sleeper (2 Services): To improve travel experience of the long journey passengers and set new benchmarks in terms of safe and comfortable journey, Vande Bharat Sleeper trains are provided with modern coaches having advanced safety features and passenger amenities. Presently, 2 Vande Bharat Sleeper services are being operated on the Indian Railways network.

Amrit Bharat (54 Services): To provide affordable means of transportation to the low and middle income families, Indian Railways have introduced Amrit Bharat services that are fully non-AC modern trains. The present composition of Amrit Bharat consists of 11 General Class coaches, 8 Sleeper Class coaches, 01 Pantry car and 02 Luggage cum Divyangjan coaches. Increased speed and enhanced safety standards are the hallmarks of these trains. Presently, 54 Amrit Bharat Express services are being operated on the Indian Railways network.



Namo Bharat Rapid Rail (4 Services): IR have introduced Namo Bharat Rapid Rail services. These services are aimed to enhance the travel experience to the suburban and regional commuters for short distance travel. Presently, 4 Namo Bharat Rapid Rail services are in operation.

Special Trains

65,000 Special Trains Operated and 767 Coaches Permanently Added Till Dec, 2025

IR also operates Special train services during festivals, holidays, etc. to cater to the extra needs of passengers and supplement the accommodation available by regular services.

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

Year	No. of special train trips
2023-24	~40,500
2024-25	~85,400

IR also operates Special train services during



festivals, holidays, etc. to cater to the extra needs of passengers and supplement the accommodation available by regular services. In addition to the above, the load of trains are also augmented, both on a permanent and temporary basis, to generate additional accommodation for different segments of passengers.

The rationalised fare structure has facilitated the wider expansion of these services across the country reflecting strong passenger demand for these services. Vande Bharat services have high occupancy level on all major routes with occupancy of Vande Bharat near 100% demonstrating a change in passenger preferences.

Fare

Indian Railways Passenger Fares Among Lowest Globally; Ordinary Class 2.5 Times Cheaper than Neighbouring Countries including Pakistan and Sri Lanka

Indian Railways provides affordable transportation service to more than 720 crore passengers annually. The fare structure of Indian Railways besides considering the socio-economic factors also largely aligns with the relevant best practices adopted by different railway systems of the world.

There is no concession in fare in Vande Bharat trains, however four seats as reserved quota are earmarked for persons with disabilities (Divyangjans) in chair car of each train service.

The fares of Indian Railways are among the lowest in comparison to other countries in the world.

A comparison of the Indian Railways passenger fares (ordinary class) with the fares of the similar segment of services of the neighbouring countries is as under:

Country	Approx lowest fare per PKM	Comparison with India
India	~ ₹ 0.20	~
Pakistan	~ ₹ 0.54	~ 2.5x higher
Bangladesh	~ ₹ 0.37	~ 1.5x higher
Sri Lanka	~ ₹ 0.5	~ 2.5x higher

Fares of Semi-High Speed Trains like Vande Bharat 9 Times Cheaper than Japan and 3 Times Cheaper than China

Passenger fare in Vande Bharat (semi high-speed train) when compared with the near similar segment of services in Chair Car (AC) for a journey of around 300-400 km is as under:

Country	Approx lowest fare per PKM	Comparison with India
India	~ ₹2.19	~
China	~ ₹7	~ 3x higher
Japan	~ ₹20	~ 9x higher
France	~ ₹13	~ 6x higher

Note: Comparison of fares in above tables is based on information as available in public domain.

There is no plan to implement dynamic fares in Vande Bharat Chair Car or Vande Bharat Sleeper trains.

Indian Railways gave subsidy of ₹60,466 crore on passenger tickets in 2023-24. This amounts to concession of 45% on an average, to every person, travelling on Railways. In other words, if the cost of providing service is ₹100, then the price of ticket is ₹55 only. This subsidy is continuing for all passengers. Further, concessions beyond this subsidy amount are continuing for many categories like 4 categories of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjans), 11 categories of patients and 8 categories of students.

Indian Railways fixes the fares with due consideration of the cost of service, value of service, affordability, competition from other competing modes, socio-economic considerations etc. Fares of different train services are determined also by the type of services/facilities offered

Evaluation of various alternatives for rationalization of passenger fare is a continuous and ongoing process. Feedback regarding various passenger related policies including passenger fare are being received continuously through

various forums such as passenger associations, consultative committees at station, division, zonal levels etc.



Indian Railways has undertaken two rationalizations of passenger fares during the financial year 2025–26 after a gap of 5 years. These revisions have been carried out uniformly and in a calibrated manner across applicable classes. The first rationalization was implemented with effect from 1st July, 2025, in which there was no increase in fare of Second Class Ordinary up to 500 km and thereafter increase of half paisa per passenger per kilometer (PKM). There was a marginal increase in fares of Ordinary (Sleeper Class and First-Class) by half paisa per PKM, in Mail Express Non-AC Classes by one paisa per PKM and in AC Classes by 2 paisa per PKM.

The second rationalisation was implemented with effect from 26th December, 2025, in which there was no increase in fares of Second Class Ordinary up to 215 km and thereafter increase of one paisa per PKM. There was a marginal increase in fares in Ordinary (Sleeper Class and First-Class) by one paisa per PKM and in Mail Express Non-AC Class and AC Classes by two paisa per PKM.

The increase in fares has been low, ranging from half paise per km to two paise per km of travel. Keeping the affordability concerns of low and middle income passengers, there has been no increase in fare in the last ten years for Suburban service and season ticket holders. It is estimated that less than half the trips will have a marginal increase in fare.■

Lower Energy Cost, Better Maintenance Practises and Increased Freight Led to Surplus in Railways

The operating ratio, gross traffic receipts and net revenue of Indian Railways in the last three financial year (FY) is given below:

Financial Year	Operating Ratio	Gross Traffic Receipts	Surplus
2022-23	98.10%	2,39,983	2517
2023-24	98.43%	2,55,273	3260
2024-25	98.22%	2,65,114	2660

(₹ in crore)

CAGR of Railways Gross Traffic Receipts in 2024-25 over 2022-23 is 5.1%. The Zonal Railway-wise Surplus/Shortfall are available in Annual Statistical Statement of Indian Railways which is available on website of Indian Railways (https://indianrailways.gov.in).■

406 Trains Operating Daily on EDFC and WDFC, Creating Additional Capacity on Conventional Rail Network



Ministry of Railways has taken up construction of two Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) viz. Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) from Ludhiana to Sonnagar (1337 km) and the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) from Jawaharlal Nehru Port Terminal (JNPT) to Dadri (1506 km) at a total cost of ₹1,24,005 cr. The work on EDFC has been completed and commissioned. In WDFC, 1404 RKm out of total 1506 Rkm has been completed and commissioned. The balance work on WDFC from Vaitarna-JNPT section (102 Rkm) has been taken up. DFC has contributed to creating additional paths on the conventional network by diverting freight traffic to EDFC and WDFC. Presently, 406 average trains per day are being run on these corridors.■

Indian Railways Plans to Manufacture 260 Rakes of Vande Bharat Sleeper Trainsets



The process of development of new rolling stocks like Vande Bharat Sleeper necessitates a holistic approach, combining technological innovation, strategic planning and manufacturing to ensure a safe, reliable and comfortable travel. This involves development of prototype, extensive testing and trials followed by series production,

The Vande Bharat Sleeper Train manufacturing programme is being executed in a phased manner through prototype development, trials and series production by BEML & Integral Coach Factory, Chennai and technology partners.

A total of 260 rakes of Vande Bharat Sleeper train sets have been planned for manufacture and induction of these train sets into regular passenger service will be undertaken in a phased manner based on demand and operational readiness.

To improve travel experience of the passengers and set new benchmarks in terms of safe and comfortable journeys, these train sets have been provided with modern coaches having advanced safety features and passenger amenities.

These include jerk-free semi permanent couplers and anti-climbers fitted with KAVACH, higher acceleration with design/operating speed of 180/160 Kmph and a crashworthy design of car body complying with EN standards.

Fire barrier doors at the end of each coach for compliance of fire safety standards, improved fire safety–an aerosol based fire detection and suppression system in electrical cabinets and lavatories and a regenerative braking system for energy efficiency.

Air conditioning units provided with indigenously developed UV-C lamp-based disinfection system for deactivating 99 per cent harmful bacteria from conditioned air to improve the hygiene standards inside the passenger area and there will be centrally controlled automatic plug doors and fully sealed wider gangways.

CCTVs in all coaches, emergency talk-back unit for communication between passenger and train manager/loco pilot in case of emergency and for divyangjan passengers, special lavatory in the driving coaches on each end.

Centralised coach monitoring system for better condition monitoring of passenger amenities such as air conditioning, saloon lighting etc and ergonomically designed ladder for ease of climbing on to upper berths.■

130+ kmph Sectional Speed Tracks Grow Nearly 4 Times in 11 Years, Now Covering 22.2% of Total Network

High-Speed and Safety Upgrades Achieved Through Modern Rails, Mechanized Maintenance, Advanced Track Monitoring System, ABS and Complete Track Circuiting

Upgradation and improvement of railway tracks and signalling on Indian Railways to increase the speed potential have been carried out in a big way during last 11 years. Improvement of track infrastructure is a continuous and ongoing process over Indian Railways. The following measures are being taken by Indian Railways to upgrade railway tracks, signalling etc.:

- 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.
- The thick web switches and weldable CMS crossings are being used in turnout renewal works.
- Supply of 260m long rail panels have 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 mechanized system for track maintenance using high output plain tampers and points and crossing tampers for improved maintainability and reliability of track.
- Deployment of state-of-the-art modern machines including Rail Grinding Machines to further improve asset reliability.
- Mechanisation of track laying activities through use of track machines like PQRS, TRT, T-28 etc.
- Use of advanced Phased Array technology of testing of rail and welds.
- Deployment of Integrated Track Monitoring Systems (ITMS) and Oscillation Monitoring System (OMS) for comprehensive health assessment to ascertain optimal maintenance requirements.



- Using 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.
- Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation of points and signals in place of old mechanical signalling have been provided at 6660 stations as on 31st December, 2025.
- Interlocking of Level Crossing Gates (LC) has been provided at 10097 Level Crossing Gates upto 31st December, 2025 for enhancing safety at LC Gate.
- Axle counters for automatic clearance of Block Section, BPAC (Block Proving Axle Counter) are provided to ensure complete arrival of train without manual intervention before granting line clear to receive next train and to reduce human element. These systems have been provided on 6142 Block Sections up to 31st December, 2025.
- Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) that enhances line capacity within existing track infrastructure has been provided at 6625 Rkm upto 31st December, 2025.
- Indian Railways has also gone for implementation of indigenously developed



automatic train protection (ATP) system which required safety certification of highest order. Kavach has also been adopted as a National AT system in July 2020. After extensive and elaborate trials, Kavach version 4.0 has been successfully commissioned on 1297 Rkm, covering the high density Delhi - Mumbai and Delhi - Howrah routes. On the Delhi - Mumbai route Kavachver 4.0 has been commissioned on Junction cabin - Palwal - Mathura - Nagda section (667 Rkm) and Ahmedabad - Vadodara - Virar section (432 Rkm) and on the Delhi - Howrah route on Gaya - Saramatan (93 Rkm) and Bardhaman - Howrah section (105 Rkm).

- Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verification of track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6665 stations up to 31st December, 2025.
- All unmanned level crossings (UMLCs) on Broad Gauge (BG) route have been eliminated by January 2019.

As a result of above measures, there has been significant increase in speed potential of the tracks. The details of speed potential of railway tracks during 2013-14 vis-a-vis 2025-26 are as under:

Sectional Speed (kmph)	2013-14		2025-26 (up to Jan 2026)	
	Track Km	%	%	Track km
130 & above	5036	6.3	23,477	22.2
110 - 130	26,409	33.3	61,711	58.4
< 110	47,897	60.4	20,484	19.4
Total	79,342	100	1,05,672	100

130+ kmph Sectional Speed Tracks Grow Nearly 4 Times in 11 Years Across India, Expanding from 5036 km to 23,477 km and Now Covering 22.2% of Total Network.

On Indian Railways, the average speed of the train services is dependent inter alia on the maximum permissible speed (MPS) of the sections, track structure, geometry along the route including gradients and curves, topographical conditions, number of stoppages enroute, line capacity utilisation of sections, maintenance works in the section etc. Accordingly, the train services have been charted at the maximum permissible speed of the respective sections over which the trains are being operated. Further, speeding-up of train services is an on-going process on Indian Railways.■

Electronic Interlocking on High-Density Network (HDN) and Highly Utilized Network (HUN) Routes: ₹421.41 crore



To further enhance safety and operational efficiency, Indian Railways has approved the implementation of Electronic Interlocking (EI) at 34 stations across Northern Railway routes where Kavach is being rolled out. This includes 21 stations in the Delhi Division at a cost of ₹292.24 crore and 13 stations in the Ambala Division costing ₹129.17 crore.

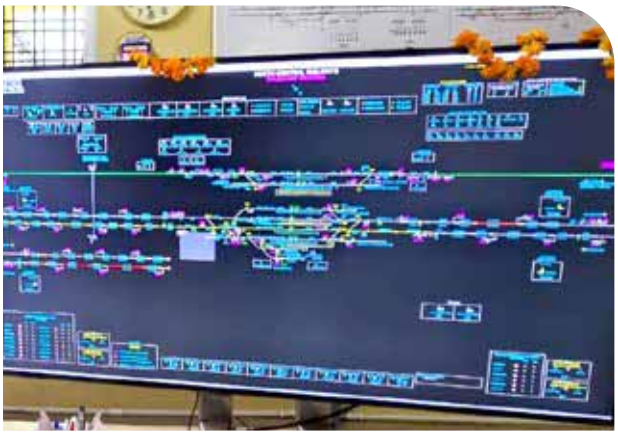
These upgrades will enable faster and safer train operations, improve the reliability of signalling systems, support higher train frequencies on high-density routes and complement modern train protection systems.■

Indian Railways Safety Measures Yield Results as 58% Drop in Signalling Failures Contributes to Sharp Decline in Accidents

Enhanced safety measures lead to a 66% decline in railway staff deaths during track maintenance activities

Modernization of Signalling System Infrastructure Indian Railways (IR) is continuously modernizing current infrastructure of its signalling system as under:

- To improve reliability, Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation points and signals in place of old mechanical signalling have been provided at 6660 stations as on 31st December, 2025.
- Interlocking of Level Crossing (LC) Gates has been provided at 10,097 Level Crossing Gates up to 31st December, 2025 for enhancing safety at LC Gates.
- Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verification of track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6665 stations up to December, 2025.
- Axle counters for automatic clearance of Block Section, BPAC (Block Proving Axle Counter) are provided to ensure complete arrival of train without manual intervention before granting line clear to receive next train and to reduce human element. These systems have been provided on 6142 Block Sections up to 31st December, 2025.
- Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) that enhances line capacity within existing track infrastructure has been provided at 6625 Route km upto 31st December, 2025.
- Other reliability enhancement measures by embedding redundancies into the various signalling systems are being incorporated viz
  (i) provision of dual detection systems,
  (ii) redundancy in power supplies and
  (iii) redundancy in transmission media etc.
- Provision of power operated lifting barriers at interlocked level crossing gates with sliding boom to enhance reliability for improvement in train operation.
- Signalling assets maintenance are planned and under taken during Rolling Block introduced in Indian Railways (Open Lines) General Rules vide Gazette notification dated 30th November, 2023, wherein work of integrated maintenance/repair/replacement of assets is planned up to 52 weeks in advance on rolling basis and executed.
- Detailed instructions on issues related with safety of Signalling, e.g. mandatory correspondence check, alteration work protocol, preparation of completion drawing, etc. have been issued.
- System of disconnection and reconnection for S&T equipment as per protocol has been re-emphasized.
- Regular counseling and training of staff is undertaken.



In view of the above measures, signalling failures has reduced by about 58% during last 11 years. Further, as a consequence of various safety measures taken over the years, there has been a steep decline in the number of accidents.

Number of Consequential Train Accidents has reduced as shown in the table below:

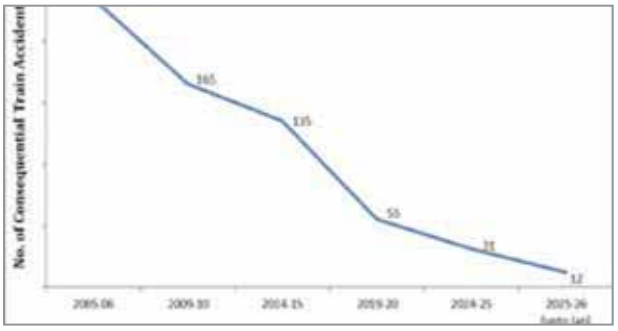
Year	Consequential Accidents
2014-15	135
2025-26 (Till date)	12 (90% lesser)

Another important index showing improvement in safety in train operations is Consequential Accidents Index, the details of which are as under:-

Consequential Accident Index:

Year	Accident Index
2014-15	0.11
2024-25	0.03 (73% lesser)

This index measures number of consequential accidents as a ratio of total running kilometers of all trains.



Accident Index = No. of consequential accidents /No. of trains X million kilometers run Safety and Welfare of Track Maintenance Employees.

Focus on Safety and Welfare of Track Maintainers

Following measures have been taken for the safety and welfare of track maintener:

- Railway track maintainers have been equipped with essential safety gears while working in hazardous environments. The major safety equipment like Retro Reflective Safety Jackets (Luminous Vests), Safety Shoes, Gloves, Safety Helmet with detachable miner's light, Tricolour Light Emitting Diode (LED) 3 cell torch, Rain Coat, Winter Jacket etc have been provided to them.
- In order to enhance efficiency and reduce physical strain of these employees, lightweight tools and equipment like spanners, hammers, crowbars etc have been provided. In addition, battery/ hydraulic operated machines and automated systems have been devised for light maintenance tasks like extracting/ inserting fittings, tightening bolts, lubrication of rails joints etc to minimise physical fatigue and improve productivity.
- Mechanised maintenance of tracks using various types of Track Machines have been introduced for all types of strenuous jobs such as tamping, ballast cleaning, lifting & aligning of track as well as grinding, cutting, drilling of rails etc to reduce the manual efforts. Multi-utility/ rail-borne vehicles have been provided for track maintenance to mobile gangs.
- To reinforce safety practices, regular counselling and medical examinations are carried out. Regular training sessions are conducted to raise awareness about potential hazards. The "Personal Safety First" programme with proper safety protocols is conducted through seminars and workshops, where these employees are trained on 'How to stay safe while working on or near the track'.



- Regular training programmes on track safety rules, use of machines/ tools, first-aid etc are conducted through Zonal Training Centres (ZTC) with practical and visual training aids for better appreciation.
- As regards to welfare measures to employees, they have been provided Gang Tools cum Rest Room, Gang Huts, Toilets facilities at manned level crossing, water bottle (2 litre, heat

insulated), family accommodation to take care of education and health of dependents. Further, Risk and Hardship Allowances have been provided according to the nature of duty of the track maintainers.

- Flexibility in duty roaster as per climatic conditions and requirements are permitted. Recognition and awards for exemplary performance in safety and maintenance of tracks are done for encouragement of track maintainers.
- The VHF based Approaching Train Warning System gives an advance warning to staff through a handheld VHF receiver device on changing the Advance Starter Signal to green for coming trains in the block section. These devices are being provided to staff working on railway track of all routes for added safety in addition to normal protection precautions. This system is being introduced progressively across the Indian Railways network. About 340 block sections have been covered so far with this system.
- As a result of the above safety measures, there is 66% reduction in number of deaths of railway staff during track maintenance work from 196 in 2013-14.

IR Pays ₹30.75 cr as Ex-Gratia and ₹23.53 cr as Compensation to Next of Kin in Train Accidents during last 3 years

Railways follow a compensation mechanism under which an amount of ₹25 lakhs (w.e.f. 01.01.2016) as ex-gratia lumpsum compensation is paid by the Railways to the family/dependents of an employee who loses his/her life due to accidents in the course of performance of duty.

Compensation for Death and Injury of Railway Passengers in Train Accidents: Accidents victims are paid ex-gratia relief soon after an accident or untoward incident. Total amount of ex-gratia paid by the Railways to the next of kin of deceased in train accidents during the last three years (2022-23 to 2024-25) is ₹30.75 crore.

Compensation for death and injury of railway passengers in train accidents and untoward incidents, as defined under Section 124 and Section 124-A (read with Section 123) of the Railways Act, 1989, is decided by Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) on the basis of a claim application filed by the victims/their dependents before RCT and it disposes of the cases after following the due judicial process.

Railway Administration pays compensation when a decree is awarded by RCT in favour of the claimant and the Railways decide to implement the decree. The compensation amount is over and above the ex-gratia amount.

MR further stated that the amount of compensation paid by the Railways to the next of kin of deceased in train accidents during the last three years (2022-23 to 2024-25) is ₹23.53 crore. It may be noted that the compensation paid in a year need not necessarily relate to the accidents/ casualties in that year alone.

The amount paid in a year depends upon the number of cases finalised by Railway Claims Tribunals (RCTs) or other Courts of Law in a particular year, irrespective of the year(s) in which the accidents have occurred. Compensation is paid within 30 days after the receipt of judgment.

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Over 5 Lakh Recruitment in Indian Railways During 2014-2025

Selection in progress for 1.43 lakh non-gazetted vacancies across multiple operational and technical categories

Presently, recruitment against 1,43,086 vacancies of non-gazetted personnel has been taken up on Indian Railways as per Annual Calendar 2024 and 2025.

During January to December 2024, 10 Centralized Employment Notifications (CENs) for 92,116 vacancies were notified for filling up of posts of Assistant Loco Pilots (ALPs), Technicians, Sub-Inspectors, Constables in Railway Protection Force (RPF), Junior Engineers (JEs)/ Depot Material Superintendent (DMS)/ Chemical & Metallurgical Assistant (CMA), Paramedical Categories, Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate), Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate), Ministerial & Isolated Categories and Level-1 categories such as Assistants, Track Maintainers and Pointsman.

First stage/Single stage Computer Based Tests (CBTs) for 59,678 posts has been completed. Details are as under:-

Exam	Candidates	Cities
1st Stage CBT for the post of ALP	18,40,347	156
(18,799 vacancies)	18,40,347	156
CBT for the post of Technician	11,01,266	146
(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	58,41,774	141
(4208 vacancies)	45,30,288	147
CBT for Paramedical Categories	4,46,013	139
(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 and Isolated categories		
(1036 vacancies)	4,46,013	139
Total Candidates	2,50,31,009	

In 15 Languages

Second stage CBTs for the posts of ALP, JE/ DMS/CMA and Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate and Under-Graduate) have also been completed. Details are as under:

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 (7951 vacancies)	1,17,339	118
2nd Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) (8113 vacancies)	1,21,931	129
2nd Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate) (3445 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 and Isolated Categories	1233	8
CBAT for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	13,616	38
Computer Based Typing Skill Test (CBTST) for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate-level)	30,341	58
Total Candidates	1,77,234	

In 2 Languages

CBT for 32,438 vacancies for level -1 categories has commenced from 27th November, 2025 in 140 cities in 15 languages. Physical efficiency Test (PET) for 4208 vacancies of Constable (RPF) has been completed on 6th December, 2025.

Panels for more than 34,000 candidates for various posts including the posts of Technicians, Junior Engineers, Paramedical Categories, Sub-Inspectors (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	368s	August 2025
05/2025	Junior Engineer/ Depot Material Superintendent	2585	
06/2025	Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	5810	
07/2025	Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate)	3058	
08/2025	Isolated Categories	312	December 2025
09/2025	Level-1	22,195	December 2025



The 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 2004-05 to 2013-14 vis-à-vis during 2014-15 to 2024-25 is given as under:

Period	Recruitments
2004-05 to 2013-14	4.11 lakh
2014-15 to 2024- 25	5.08 lakh
2025-26 (till date)	34,929

Further, as system improvement, the Ministry of Railways has introduced a system of publishing the annual calendar from 2024 for recruitment to various categories of Group 'C' posts. The introduction of the 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.■

Indian Railways' Automatic Train Protection System Kavach implemented over 2200 Rkm

Kavach, Indian Railways' indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system, which provides train protection as well as collision prevention capabilities for trains, has now been implemented over 2200 Rkm. The expenditure on safety related activities has increased over the years as under:

Expenditure/Budget on Safety related activities (₹in Cr.)				
2013-14	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
39,200	87,336	1,01,662	1,14,022	1,17,693

This year, in January, Indian Railways achieved a major milestone by installing the Kavach Version 4.0 safety system on 472.3 Rkm in a single day in a single month, the highest ever so far.

The newly covered routes include Vadodara–Virar (344 km) on Western Railway, Tuglakabad Junction Cabin–Palwal (35 km) on Northern Railway and Manpur–Sarmatanr (93.3 km) on East Central Railway. Further, track side Kavach implementation work has been taken up on 23,360 Rkm covering all GQ,GD,HDN and identified sections of Indian Railways.

Progress of key items of Kavach on High density routes including Delhi–Mumbai and Delhi–Howrah corridors are as under:

Item	Progress
Laying of Optical Fibre Cable	8570 km
Installation of Telecom Towers	938 nos.
Station Data Centre	767 station
Installation of Track side equipment	5672 RKm
Provision of Kavach in Loco	4154





Trackside Kavach Implementation Taken Up on 23,360 Rkm Covering All Golden Quadrilateral, Golden Diagonal, High Density Network and Identified Sections of Indian Railways

With this expansion, Kavach Version 4.0 now covers 1306.3 Rkm across five Indian Railways Zones, strengthening safety on major corridors such as the Delhi–Mumbai and Delhi–Howrah routes. Additional sanctioned works cover 2667 Rkm, with execution underway.

The system has been successfully tested through automatic braking trials. Further expansion is underway, including Vadodara–Nagda and Virar–Mumbai Central and speed upgrades up to 160 kmph are planned under 'Mission Raftar'.

Kavach, which is combined with advanced AI-enabled monitoring and predictive tools is helping the Indian Railways build a safety ecosystem that grows stronger, faster and more reliable every year.

The results are clear: consequential train accidents have declined sharply, from 135 in 2014–15 to 31 in 2024–25 and further to 11 in 2025–26 (up to November).

These improvements reflect a sustained focus on accident prevention, modern technology investment and a commitment to ensuring every journey is as safe as it is essential.

This safety transformation is reinforced by sustained financial investment. Indian Railways has steadily increased its spending on safety from ₹39,200 crore in 2013–14 to

₹87,336 crore in 2022–23, ₹1,01,662 crore in 2023–24, ₹1,14,022 crore in 2024–25 and ₹1,17,693 crore in 2025–26, underscoring a long-term commitment to strengthening safety infrastructure across the rail network.

Kavach is an automated situational awareness system that provides train protection and accident prevention capabilities. It safeguards against dangerous incidents caused by human error, operational limitations and equipment failures by adding a critical layer of safety to train operations. The system assists loco pilots through a real-time in-cab display of signalling information such as movement authority, target speed, target distance and signal aspects, which are essential for safe operations beyond 120 kmph.

Developed by Indian Railways through the Research Designs & Standards Organization (RDSO), Kavach protects trains against Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD), excessive speed and collisions. By providing this additional safety layer, it plays a vital role in operations across India's high-speed and high-density rail network.

The development and deployment of Kavach have been undertaken in a phased and systematic manner. Initial field trials on passenger trains commenced in February 2016.

Based on operational experience and the Independent Safety Assessment carried out by an Independent Safety Assessor (ISA), three firms were approved during 2018–19 for the supply of KAVACH Version 3.2.

With over 1465 route kilometres on South Central Railway and the experience gained therefrom, the system has continued to evolve through successive improvements and upgrades. These developments culminated in a revised specification, enabling enhanced functionality and suitability for wider application across the Indian Railways network.

Subsequently, KAVACH was adopted as the National Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system in July 2020. Implementation involves infrastructure, onboard and communication-related activities, including provision of trackside, station-based and locomotive-borne equipment, along with necessary telecommunication and optical fibre infrastructure to support reliable system operation.

Continuous improvements based on operational experience and independent safety assessments led to the approval of Kavach 4.0 in July 2024. It is a significant milestone in railway safety and is designed to meet the requirements of India's diverse and high-density rail network. Version 4.0 represents a significant technological leap.

These systematic upgrades make Kavach 4.0 more robust, responsive and suitable for large-scale deployment across India's diverse and high-density rail network. The system has also been certified to meet global safety standards by the Independent Safety Assessor (ISA).■

12,300 Coaches and 460 Locomotives Equipped with CCTV Cameras to Enhance Passenger Safety and Security Across the Network

Indian Railways has taken up the work of installation of CCTV cameras in coaches and locomotives with the purpose of improving safety and security of the passengers. The provision of CCTV cameras is expected to deter miscreant activities, vandalism, thefts and also assist in investigation of the incidents. Accordingly, Zonal Railways and Production Units have initiated action for procurement and installation of CCTV cameras in coaches and locomotives.

Till date, approximately 12,300 coaches (including all operational rakes of Vande Bharat and Amrit Bharat trains) and 460 locomotives, plying over IR's network, are equipped with CCTV cameras.■



Indian Railways Approves Major Infrastructure Projects Across the Nation

Strengthening India's rail network and regional connectivity, Indian Railways has approved a series of key projects, including third-line construction, line doubling and bypass alignments. These initiatives aim to enhance operational efficiency, improve safety, reduce travel time and extend benefits to common man, while supporting economic growth and seamless mobility across strategic corridors.

Uttar Pradesh

Third Line Between Aunrihar–Varanasi City (31.36 km), ₹497.07 Crore



Indian Railways has sanctioned the construction of a dedicated third line between Aunrihar and Varanasi City under North Eastern Railway. This busy section currently handles high volumes of passenger and freight traffic, including essential commodities such as cement, coal, food grains, iron, steel and industrial materials. The addition of a third line will enable Seven more trains in each direction daily and accommodate freight growth of 1.99 MTPA, enhancing overall network fluidity. Utilisation of current line capacity, now at 87.93% will increase to over 102%, significantly reducing congestion, improving punctuality and supporting smoother travel for millions of passengers. This upgrade will also play a key role in boosting logistics efficiency for local industries and strengthening trade corridors in eastern Uttar Pradesh and adjoining regions.

Rajasthan

Doubling of Ringas – Sikar (50.06 km), ₹470.34 Crore



The doubling of the Ringas–Sikar section in Rajasthan under North Western Railway marks a major capacity boost on this important regional route. With an anticipated five additional trains per direction each day and freight traffic increase of 2.36 MTPA, this project will improve reliability and line speeds for both passenger and freight services. Enhanced



operational efficiency will further improve connectivity across Rajasthan's industrial and pilgrimage zones, including access to sites such as Khatu Shyamji and Salasar Balaji. Current utilization of 77% capacity is expected to rise to 210% by 2029–30, allowing the network to handle future traffic growth seamlessly. For local commuters and businesses, this doubling project means reduced delays, punctual services and improved goods movement that will directly support economic activity and employment opportunities in the region.

Madhya Pradesh

Ujjain Bypass Line Connecting Naikheri – Chintaman Ganesh (8.60 km), ₹189.04 Crore



The Ujjain bypass line project under Western Railway will provide a strategic diversion that removes the need for train reversals at Ujjain Junction, substantially improving sectional capacity and operational efficiency. This corridor, which facilitates major religious and tourist traffic, especially in view of the upcoming Simhastha Kumbh Mela in 2028 will enhance seamless train movements for lakhs of devotees who visit Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga and other revered sites. The absence of reversals will reduce delays and improve timetable reliability, particularly during peak festival seasons. This project also ensures smoother handling of daily passengers and freight services, meeting both current demands and future growth. Locals, commuters and pilgrims alike will benefit from faster transit and better service resilience.

These projects exemplify the Indian Railways' commitment to inclusive and sustainable transport development, bridging connectivity gaps, improving service reliability and driving India's railways toward a modern, efficient and citizen-centric future.

Jharkhand

Barbenda–Damrughutu Doubling and Damrughutu–Bokaro Steel City 3rd and 4th Lines: ₹815.32 crore: Barbenda–Damrughutu Doubling and Damrughutu–Bokaro Steel City 3rd and 4th Lines in Jharkhand are major capacity expansion projects under South Eastern Railway and a cornerstone of India's Energy, Mineral and Cement Corridor. Currently, the line operates at 108% utilisation, with train detention ranging between 90 and 150 minutes, handling 78 trains daily (38 passenger and 40 freight) and supporting a freight throughput of 35.22 MTPA. Without intervention, utilisation was projected to reach 132% by 2028–29.



The project strengthens connectivity to key industrial and energy hubs, including Central Coalfields, cement and steel plants, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited Depot, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited Depot and the Bokaro Steel City industrial ecosystem. By enhancing capacity, the expansion will directly improve energy logistics, industrial output and the efficiency of national supply chains.

Punjab

Rajpura Bypass Line (13.46 km), Northern Railway: ₹411.96 crore: The approval of the Rajpura Bypass Line will significantly enhance capacity and operational efficiency on the Ambala–Jalandhar section, one of the busiest corridors on Northern Railway. The project will provide direct rail connectivity between New Shambhu Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) station and Kauli station on the Rajpura–Bathinda line, enabling freight trains to bypass the congested Rajpura Yard. This will streamline freight movement, ease pressure on existing lines and support the projected rise in traffic demand, while ensuring smoother integration with the DFC and more reliable passenger and freight operations across the region.■





Kerala

DPR Survey Sanctioned for 7 Projects with 160 kmph High-Speed Potential in the state

To augment and improve the railway network in Kerala, the following surveys have been sanctioned for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for higher speed potential of 160 kmph:

Route	Length (Km)
Shoranur-Mangalore 3rd and 4th Line	307
Coimbatore-Shoranur 3rd & 4th line	99
Shoranur – Ernakulam 3rd Line	106
Ernakulam-Kayankulam 3rd line (via Kottayam)	115
Kayankulam-Thiruvanathapuram 3rd Line	105
Thiruvanathapuram-Nagercoil 3rd Line	71
Turavur-Ambalappuzha Doubling	46

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

The Government of Kerala is currently working on a semi-high speed line named a Silver Line. The DPR of Silver Line (Thiruvananthapuram–Kasaragod) project was prepared by Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL), a Joint Venture Company of State Government of Kerala and Ministry of Railways. KRDCL has been advised to revise the DPR in line with latest technical standards, such as adoption of broad gauge for integration with the IR network, flatter ruling gradient, proper drainage scheme for yards and sections, provision of Kavach, 2×25 kV electrification and taking environmental safeguards during construction and operation and integration with existing rail network etc.

However, The Government of Kerala is insisting to consider Silver Line Project as stand alone project.

Alappuzha–Ambalapuzha Doubling (12.66 km): ₹324.16 crore

This strategically important project removes a critical single-line constraint on the Ernakulam–Turavur–Kayankulam route. Once completed, it will enable nine additional passenger trains per day in each direction, add 2.88 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) of freight capacity and generate additional annual earnings of ₹3.23 crore. The project will significantly improve operational efficiency by reducing detention for both passenger and freight trains.

By addressing the last remaining single-line stretch on this corridor, it ensures smoother and uninterrupted train movement, enhancing travel reliability for long-distance passengers and strengthening inter-State freight flows within Kerala, while decongesting major junctions for faster, seamless travel.

Palakkad Town–Parli Bypass Line (1.80 km): ₹163.57 crore

The Palakkad bypass project provides immediate operational and passenger benefits by eliminating engine reversal at Palakkad Junction in Kerala for multiple train services. It reduces average detention of passenger trains by 40-44 minutes and cuts freight detention by up to 120 minutes per train, while also supporting additional passenger services planned from Palakkad Junction.

By streamlining train movements, the bypass will significantly improve punctuality on routes connecting Shoranur, Thiruvananthapuram and Pollachi, while easing congestion at one of Southern Railway's busiest junctions.

Angamali – Sabarimala New Line Project

Angamali - Sabarimala via Erumeli new line project was sanctioned in 1997-98 on 50:50 cost sharing basis. Work on Angamali-Kaladi (7



km) and long lead works on Kaladi-Perumbavoor (10 km) was taken up. However, further works on this project could not be taken forward due to protests by local people against land acquisition and fixing of alignment of the line, court cases filed against the project and inadequate support from the Government of Kerala. Accordingly, the project was kept under abeyance in Sept, 2019.

Subsequently, to provide connectivity to Sabarimala Shrine, a survey on alternate alignment i.e. Chengannur - Pamba (75 km) new line was also carried out. However, the project was not found feasible.

Meanwhile, the estimated cost of the Angamali - Sabarimala via Erumeli new line project was updated at ₹3801 crore and submitted to Government of Kerala for the acceptance of the estimate and willingness to share cost of the project.

In August 2024, the Government of Kerala communicated their conditional consent. The Government of Kerala was requested by Railway to submit unconditional consent for sharing the cost. Hence the Minister of Railways requested the Chief Minister of Kerala to acquire land using their share of 50% of the cost of the project. Once land acquisition by State starts, work can proceed further.

Budget allocation in the recent years has increased significantly. Budget allocation for infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/partly in Kerala including Angamali – Sabarimala project is as under:

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹372 crore/year
2025-26	₹3042 crore (more than 8 times)

Now, on the request of Ministry of Railways, the Govt. of Kerala has initiated land acquisition proceedings and the Angamali – Sabarimala new line project has moved forward. Ministry of Railways is following up the land acquisition process with Govt. of Kerala.

Tirur (Kerala) Presently Being Served by 90 Train Services: Tirur is presently being served by 90 train services including 20631/20632 Mangaluru Central-Thiruvananthapuram Central Vande Bharat Express, inter alia providing connectivity to cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, etc. To facilitate the passengers of Tirur, stoppage of 22475/22476 Hisar-Coimbatore Express has been provided at Tirur w.e.f 28th January, 2026. Further, 16329/16330 Nagercoil-Mangaluru Junction Amrit Bharat Express (with scheduled stoppage at Tirur), has also been introduced w.e.f 27th January,2026.

Besides, provision of stoppages of train services depends on the traffic justification, operational feasibility including availability of extra time on the section and availability of matching infrastructure such as Platform length etc.■





Tamil Nadu

77 Amrit Stations Identified for Redevelopment in the state; Work Completed at 18 Stations

9 Pairs Each of Vande Bharat and Amrit Bharat Express Running Across the State



The Ministry of Railways has said that a total of 77 Amrit Bharat stations in Tamil Nadu have been identified for complete redevelopment, of which work has already been completed at 18 stations.

The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme is a long-term plan to improve railway stations across India in a step-by-step manner. Under this scheme, detailed plans are made for each station and the work is done in phases, based on what each station needs.

The goal is to make stations cleaner, more comfortable and easier to use. This includes improving entry and exit points, waiting halls, toilets, platforms and roofing. Facilities like lifts, escalators and free Wi-Fi are added wherever needed. There are also better signs and information systems to help passengers.

Some stations will have executive lounges and special areas for business meetings. Local products will be sold at kiosks under the 'One Station One Product' scheme and efforts will be made to make stations look greener and more attractive.

The Amrit Bharat Mission scheme also focuses on upgrading the station buildings, connecting both sides of the city through the station and linking stations with other transport options like buses and metros. Special care is being taken to make stations friendly for persons with disabilities. Eco-friendly solutions, noise-free tracks and better planning are also part of the improvements. In the long run, the aim is to turn stations into vibrant city centres that serve many purposes beyond just travel.

Since 2014, approximately 1350 km of tracks have been constructed. Indian Railways in Tamil Nadu has also achieved 97 per cent electrification, with 2386 km of rail lines electrified during this period.

According to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, "Made in India" modern trains are ensuring improved and affordable travel for the people of Tamil Nadu, with nine pairs each of Vande Bharat Express and Amrit Bharat Express services currently operational.

The Minister stated the Government of India remains fully committed to Tamil Nadu's development.

He further informed that budget allocation to Tamil Nadu has increased more than 8.5 times since 2014, reaching ₹7611 crore in FY 2026–27.

For ongoing railway projects, only 24% of the required land has been handed over, that is 1052 hectares out of 4326 hectares. ₹1465 crore has already been paid to the Tamil Nadu government for land acquisition. Several critical projects are delayed due to pending land acquisition with the state government.



Land acquisition remains a major challenge for several projects. As much as 91 per cent land acquisition is pending for the Madurai–Tuticorin new line via Aruppukkotai (144 km), while 86 per cent land acquisition is pending for the Tindivanam–Gingee–Tiruvannamalai new line (71.33 km).

The foundation stone for the Rameswaram–Dhanushkodi new line project was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019; however, land acquisition is yet to begin.

Despite these challenges, the Centre has sanctioned multiple new lines, doublings and third and fourth lines, with the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) also prepared for further capacity expansion to support Tamil Nadu's economic and industrial growth.

Irugur–Podanur Doubling (10.77 km): ₹277.42 crore

One of the most significant developments for Tamil Nadu is the approval for the doubling of the Irugur–Podanur section, a crucial link on the Chennai–Thiruvananthapuram corridor. This project will allow the operation of 15 additional passenger trains per day and increase freight capacity by 3.12 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), with annual net earnings expected to rise by ₹11.77 crore.

Currently, line capacity utilisation stands at 60%, but with this expansion, it is projected to reach 131% by 2027–28, highlighting the urgency and strategic importance of the project. With multiple quadruplication projects already completed or underway on adjoining stretches, the doubling of this section will ensure that the entire Chennai–Coimbatore–Podanur belt transforms into a high-capacity, four-line corridor. This will directly benefit industrial hubs such as Coimbatore, improve terminal operations at Podanur and support new train services to northern destinations.

These approvals reaffirm that Indian Railways remains fully prepared to deliver world-class rail infrastructure at scale. With timely cooperation from State Governments, these projects will translate into faster journeys, higher freight efficiency, improved safety and sustained economic growth.

29 Rail Surveys Covering 2501 km Sanctioned in Four Years Across Tamil Nadu Including 6 New Lines and 23 Doubling Projects

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

Project	Cost (₹ in cr)
Dindigul-Palani-Pollachi gauge conversion (121 km)	610
Pollachi-Palghat gauge conversion (56 km)	350
Pollachi-Podhanur gauge conversion (40 km)	400
Quilon - Tirunelveli - Tiruchendur gauge conversion (357 km)	1122
Mayiladuturai-Thiruvarur-Karaikkudi gauge conversion (187 km)	1338
Madurai-Bodiyakannur gauge conversion (90 km)	593
Chengalpattu-Villupuram doubling (102 km)	670
Tiruvallur-Arakkonam 4th line (27 km)	83
Chennai Central-Basin Bridge doubling (2 km)	31
Thanjavur-Ponmalai doubling (48 km)	370
Villupuram-Dindigul doubling (273 km)	2000
Chennai Beach-Korukkupet 3rd line (5 km)	168
Chennai Beach-Attipattu 4th line (22 km)	293
Omalur-Metturdam Patch doubling (29 km)	327
Chengalpattu-Villupuram and Tambaram-Chengalpattu-3rd line (133 km)	1122
Salem-Magnesite Junction-Omalur doubling (11 km)	115
Madurai-Maniyachi-Tuticorin doubling (160 km)	1891
Maniyachi-Nagercoil doubling (102 km)	1752
Chennai Beach-Chennai Egmore doubling (4 km)	272
Karaikal-Peralam new line (23 km)	373
Northern End Port connectivity to Karaikal Port (1 km)	18

Some of the projects falling fully/partly in the State of Tamil Nadu which have been taken up are as under:

Project	Cost (₹ in cr)
Tindivanam-Nagari new line (184 km)	3631
Morappur-Dharmapuri new line (36 km)	359
Nagapattinam-Tiruturaipundi new line (43 km)	742
Trivandrum-Kanyakumari doubling (87 km)	3785
Arakkonam yard 3rd and 4th line (6 km)	98
Perambur - Ambattur 5th and 6th lines (6 Km)	178

In last three years i.e. 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 and current FY 2025-26, 29 surveys (06 new line and 23 doubling) covering a total length of 2501 km has been sanctioned falling fully/ partly in the State of Tamil Nadu.

Execution of important infrastructure projects falling fully/partly in the State of Tamil Nadu are held up due to delay in land acquisition. Status of land acquisition in Tamil Nadu is as under:

Total Land required for Projects in Tamil Nadu	4326 ha
Land Acquired	1052 ha (24%)
Balance Land to be acquired	3274 ha (76%)

Support of the Government of Tamil Nadu is needed to expedite the land acquisition.

Name of the Project	Total land required (in ha)	Land acquired (in ha)	Balance Land to be acquired (in ha)
Tindivanam-Tiruvannamalai new line (71 km)	276	33	243
Attiputtu-Puttur line (88 km)	189	0	189
Morappur-Dharmapuri new line (36 km)	92	45	47
Mannargudi-Pattukkottai new line (41 km)	196	0	196
Thanjavur-Pattukottai line (52 km)	152	0	152

Further, Rameshwaram – Dhanushkodi new line (18 km) was sanctioned at a cost of ₹734 cr. The Foundation Stone of the project was laid on 1st March, 2019. However, the project could not be started because the land acquisition has not been undertaken by the State Govt. of Tamil Nadu.

Government of India is geared up to execute projects, however success depends upon the support of Government of Tamil Nadu.

Sanction of any railway project depends upon many parameters/factors which include the following:



Anticipated traffic projections and remunerativeness of the proposed route

- First and last mile connectivity provided by the project.
- Connection of missing links and providing additional route.
- Augmentation of congested/saturated lines.
- Demands raised by State Governments/ Central Ministries/Public representatives.
- Railway's own operational requirements.
- Socio-economic considerations.
- Overall availability of funds.

Completion of Railway project/s depends on various factors which include the following:

- Land acquisition by State Government
- Forest clearance.
- Shifting of infringing utilities.

Statutory clearances from various authorities:

- Geological and topographical conditions of area.
- Law and order situation in the area of project site.
- Number of working months in a year for particular project site etc.
- All these factors affect the completion time and cost of the project/s.



West Bengal

Indian Railways Sanctions Road over Bridge to Decongest High-Traffic Level Crossing in the state

Reinforcing India's transport infrastructure agenda, Indian Railways has approved Road over Bridge (RoB) project and new halts focused to extend rail accessibility to underserved communities.

Replacement of Level Crossing No. 101 with Road Over Bridge (Katihar Division, West Bengal): ₹176.99 Crore

In response to severe traffic congestion and space constraints at Level Crossing No. 101 between Malahar Halt and Samsi on the Katihar Division, Northeast Frontier Railway will construct a road over bridge. With approximately 4,21,001 Traffic Vehicle Units recorded in a recent census, the existing level crossing has long posed safety and congestion challenges. The new ROB, including an additional light ROB at diversion will eliminate traffic bottlenecks, reduce road–rail conflicts and significantly improve safety for motorists, pedestrians and emergency services. Fully funded at 100% by Indian Railways, this vital infrastructure improvement will deliver uninterrupted connectivity to residents and traders in the area, easing daily commutes and reducing travel time.

New Passenger Halt at Chandipur, West Bengal

The proposed passenger halt at Chandipur between Kalikakhali and Lavan Satyagraha Smarak stations on the Panskura–Digha line in South Eastern Railway's Kharagpur Division has been approved. This halt will improve local accessibility, particularly benefiting residents, students and daily commuters along the coastal and semi-urban belt. The station will also support tourism flows to the popular Digha beach area, stimulating economic growth in local markets and making daily rail travel more convenient for families and workers.

New Passenger Halt Near Sidhu Kanho University (Between Purulia and Gourinathdham), West Bengal

A passenger halt station near Sidhu Kanho University on the Purulia–Gourinathdham section of Adra Division has been approved. Located between Purulia and Gourinathdham stations, this halt will directly benefit students, faculty and local residents by ensuring easier and safer rail access to the university and adjoining communities. The new halt will reduce travel time and support education-linked mobility in the region, especially for economically vulnerable populations.

New Passenger Halt at Sidhi Jamra (Between Radhagaon and Pundag), West Bengal

Indian Railways has approved the passenger halt at Sidhi Jamra on the Radhagaon–Pundag section in the Adra Division following local demand, expanding rail accessibility in rural West Bengal. Positioned just a short distance



Road over Bridge Katihar

from both regional nodes, this halt will promote daily commuting, ease regional movement and link residents of small villages with economic and social opportunities in nearby towns. The halt is expected to facilitate convenient travel for students, workers and families.

New Passenger Halt at Nashipur (Between Murshidabad and Jiaganj), West Bengal

Approved in response to local demand, the Nashipur halt on the Bhadrpur–Lalgola section of Eastern Railway will connect communities between Murshidabad and Jiaganj. The new halt will provide a reliable and convenient boarding point for rural commuters, daily wage workers, traders and students, reducing dependence on road transport and facilitating efficient last-mile connectivity.

New Passenger Halt at Jangalpara (Earlier Rasulpur), West Bengal

The halt at Jangalpara on the Howrah–Goghat section in Howrah Division was approved following local demand, delivering improved rail access between Talpur and Takipur halts. This addition will serve local commuters, school-going students and workers, supporting daily travel needs and strengthening suburban transport linkages that contribute to enhanced quality of life and regional economic participation.

New Passenger Halt at Rangmati (Between Torang and Suisa), Jharkhand

The new halt at Rangmati on the Muri–Gonda section in the Ranchi Division will improve connectivity for residents of adjacent hamlets and rural communities, providing direct rail access to local marketplaces and educational institutions. With rail mobility now closer to homes, citizens will enjoy reduced travel costs and better integration with regional transport networks.

Together, these approvals mark a decisive step toward expanding safe, inclusive and accessible rail connectivity, ensuring that the benefits of railway infrastructure reach every citizen.■

USBRL Project Generated over 5 crore Man-days of Employment

The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project has made substantial socio-economic contributions to the region, with employment generation being a significant aspect of its impact, adding that the project has generated more than 5 crore man-days of employment.

According to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw the USBRL project of total length 272 km has been recently commissioned and it covers the districts of Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban, Srinagar, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam and Baramulla of Jammu and Kashmir. He said another crucial facet of the USBRL Project's socio-economic development efforts has been the construction of over 215 km of approach roads, which include construction of a tunnel and 320 small bridges. This road network has helped the local population in improvement of their connectivity with other areas and also improvement in socio-economic states, the Minister stated.

MR mentioned that with the all-weather, reliable and comfortable rail connectivity of the valley portion with the rest of the Indian Railways network, tourism will get a big boost. He informed that to extend the rail connectivity of existing Srinagar–Baramulla section, a survey for Sopore to Kupwara (34 km) New Line has been sanctioned and the Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared.

MR stated that however, the project has been dropped because it was found to be infeasible. To further improve rail connectivity, in the Border region, the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of projects–Qazigund–Srinagar–Budgam doubling (118 km) and Baramulla to Uri new line (40 km)--have also been prepared, the Minister informed.

The Minister said after preparation of the DPR, sanctioning of project requires consultation with various stake-holders including state governments and necessary approvals viz. appraisal of NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance etc. As sanctioning of projects is a continuous and dynamic process, exact timelines cannot be fixed, he said.■

Aadhaar-Based Authentication

Deactivation of 3.03 Crore Suspicious User IDs in 2025

60.43 Billion Malicious Bot Requests Blocked in Last Six Months of 2025

The reservation ticket booking system of Indian Railways is a robust and highly secure IT platform equipped with industry-standard, state-of-the-art cyber security controls. Indian Railways has taken the following measures to prevent auto filling of forms by hacking tools and curb fraud in tatkal ticketing booking through internet and to safeguard the system from cyber attacks:

Aadhaar authentication to book tatkal tickets – To curb misuse and improve fairness in tatkal bookings, Aadhaar based One-Time Password (OTP) verification for online tatkal ticket booking has been introduced. Aadhaar authentication provides instantaneous verification of user uniqueness, which is critical considering the time-sensitive nature of tatkal ticket booking. It helps in preventing the creation and operation of fake or unauthorized agent-controlled multiple user account 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. It has contributed to improved ticket availability for genuine passengers and enhancing transparency in the online tatkal booking system.

Application layer Security Control - Several application level security controls have been implemented including CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart) mechanism deployed at multiple levels to avoid scripting, Brute-Force Attack and also DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) attacks.

A number of security measures have also been applied for handling the OWASP (Open Web Application Security Project) for application security vulnerability.

To optimize system performance Indian Railways has implemented a Content Delivery Network (CDN) to offload static content and reduce direct traffic on internet ticket booking website system. Further, Anti-bot solutions such as AKAMAI are deployed to filter non-genuine users which help in mitigating malicious/suspicious attempts on



the internet ticket booking website system and ensure smooth booking for genuine passengers. This helps in checking malicious traffic. Use of multiple protective layers such as network firewalls, intrusion prevention systems, application delivery controllers and web application firewall to safeguard the system against cyber threats.

Network and Infrastructure Layer Security Controls – The entire ICT (Infrastructure & Communication Technologies) infrastructure has been deployed on high availability mode to minimize failures.

The system is protected by industry-standard state-of-the-art and data centre grade network and security equipment consisting of network firewalls, network intrusion prevention system, application delivery controllers and web application firewalls.

The system is also protected from volume-based DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) attacks with ISP (Internet Service Provider) layer, DDoS Detection and Mitigation Services through multiple ISPs with aggregated DDoS mitigation capacity nearly 30 Gbps.

The enterprise level Content Delivery Network (CDN), anti–bot, secure DNS and Web Application Firewall (WAF) services for enhanced security, better customer experience, reducing web traffic load, resource optimisation and threat mitigation have been deployed.

For comprehensive cyber threat intelligence services, RailTel has been engaged to undertake

Deep-Dark Web Monitoring, Digital Risk Protection and improve incident response.

- **Physical Security Controls** – The system is hosted in a captive data center facility Chanakyapuri, New Delhi secured with CCTV footage and restricted physical access. The facility is ISO 27001 (ISMS) certified.
- **Security Audit and Monitoring** - The system is integrated with CERT-In TSAP (Threat & Situational Awareness Projects) for round the clock monitoring of security incidents and events.

The system has been integrated with CERT-In's "Madhu-Sanjal" wherein CERT-In has deployed the honeypot sensor for monitoring the attacker behaviors, suspicious events/intrusions attempts and learning their tactics and improve defence against cyber threats.

Security log monitoring of the system is being done by on-premises security team for detection and mitigation of security incidents.

- **Administrative measures** – Several anti-fraud measures have been adopted to prevent unauthorized access and to ensure seamless booking for genuine users.
- Rigorous revalidation and verification of user accounts have been done. About 3.03 crore suspicious user IDs have been deactivated in the year 2025.
- Regular security audits of the reservation system are carried out by CERT-In empanelled information Security Audit Agencies. Moreover, internet traffic related to the ticketing system is continuously monitored by CERT-In and the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) to detect and prevent cyber attacks.
- 376 complaints have been lodged on the National Cyber Crime Portal pertaining to 3.99 lakh suspicious bookings.
- 12819 suspicious email domains have been blocked in the year 2025.

The details of spurious attempts denied to access the e-ticketing system during the last six months is as under:	
December 2025	Out of 14.28 billion requests, 07.25 billion were bots.
November 2025	Out of 20.07 billion requests, 14.03 billion were bots.
October 2025	Out of 24.04 billion requests, 17.00 billion were bots.
September 2025	Out of 19.04 billion requests, 12.05 billion were bots.
August 2025	Out of 11.04 billion requests, 05.07 billion were bots.
July 2025	Out of 09.06 billion requests, 05.03 billion were bots.



Indian Railways' Electrification Reduces Diesel Consumption by 178 Crore Litres in FY 2024-25, Delivering a 62% Cut Since FY 2016-17

25 States Achieve 100% Railway Electrification
10,932 Rkm Electrified Since FY 2023–24

Electrification of railway network on Indian Railways (IR) has been taken up in mission mode. So far, about 99.4% of broad Gauge (BG) network has been electrified. The electrification in remaining network has been taken up. Electrification carried out during 2014-25 and before 2014 is as under: electrification of railway network on Indian Railways (IR) has been taken up in mission mode. So far, about 99.4% of broad gauge (BG) network has been electrified. The electrification in remaining network has been taken up. Electrification carried out during 2014-25 and before 2014 is as under:

Period	Route Kilometer
Before 2014 (about 60 years)	21,801
2014-25	46,900

Zone wise status of electrification is as under:

ZONE	% Electrified
Central Railway	100%
East Coast Railway	100%
East Central Railway	100%
Eastern Railway	100%
Konkan Railway	100%
Kolkata Metro	100%
North Central Railway	100%
North Eastern Railway	100%
Northern Railway	100%
South Central Railway	100%
South East Central Railway	100%
South Eastern Railway	100%
West Central Railway	100%
Western Railway	100%
North Western Railway	99%
Northeast Frontier Railway	99%
Southern Railway	98%
South Western Railway	96%

State/UT wise status of electrification is as under:

STATE	% Electrified
Andhra Pradesh	100%
Arunachal Pradesh	100%
Bihar	100%
Chandigarh	100%
Chhattisgarh	100%
Delhi	100%
Gujarat	100%
Haryana	100%
Jammu & Kashmir	100%
Jharkhand	100%
Kerala	100%
Madhya Pradesh	100%
Maharashtra	100%
Meghalaya	100%
Mizoram	100%
Mizoram	100%
Nagaland	100%
Odisha	100%
Puducherry	100%
Punjab	100%
Telangana	100%
Tripura	100%
Uttar Pradesh	100%
Uttarakhand	100%
West Bengal	100%
Rajasthan	99%
Assam	98%
Tamil Nadu	97%
Karnataka	97%
Goa	91%

All new line / multi-tracking projects are being sanctioned and constructed with electrification.

During last five years (2020-21 to 2024-25), expenditure amounting to ₹29,826 crore has



been done on railway electrification projects including Tamil Nadu.

Since 2023-24, 10,932 Rkm electrification has been done till Jan' 2026.

The completion of Electrification project(s) depends on various factors like forest clearances by officials of forest department, shifting of infringing utilities, statutory clearances from various authorities, geological and topographical conditions of area, law & order situation in the area of project(s) site, number of working months in a year for particular project site due to climatic conditions etc. All these factors affect the completion time of the project(s).



With electrification, there has been reduction in the consumption of diesel on Indian Railways. Indian Railways have been able to save 178 crore litre in Diesel consumption in the year 2024-25 with respect to 2016-17, which is a saving of 62%, thus reducing the import dependency of crude oil.

Amount spent by Indian Railways on total energy consumption for traction during 2024-25 is ₹32,378 crores.

Details of the amount spent by Indian Railways on the maintenance of electric and diesel locomotives are available in Annual Statistical Statement of Indian Railways which is available on website of Indian Railways (https://indianrailways.gov.in).

Railways is moving towards electric traction because of the environmental and cost considerations. While tests on bio-diesel have been done, electric traction is far more beneficial than bio-diesel.

Indian Railways to Transport Industrial Salt in Stainless Steel Containers for the First Time

Historic Loading of Industrial Salt in Stainless Steel Containers from the Gandhidham Region

The Gandhidham region of WR has achieved a historic milestone in freight transportation. For the first time, Indian Railways successfully loaded industrial salt in stainless steel containers from the Neelkanth Zone in Gandhidham. This innovative initiative marks a significant step toward safe, hygienic and high-efficiency transportation of bulk industrial commodities. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw appreciated this pioneering effort through a post on X.

Divisional Railway Manager, Ahmedabad Division, stated that this successful trial of transporting industrial salt in stainless steel containers is an excellent example of Indian Railways' innovation-driven logistics strategy. It will not only ensure safe and clean transportation of sensitive bulk commodities but also provide industries with faster, reliable, and environmentally friendly freight solutions. Western Railway will continue to promote such innovative initiatives in the future to encourage "Freight on Rail."

Fast and Highly Efficient Trial

During the trial, 34.2 tonnes of industrial salt were loaded in just 15 minutes, while unloading was completed in only 5 minutes.

This achievement demonstrates reduced turnaround time and enhanced operational efficiency in railway freight logistics. The loading operation was successfully carried out at the weighbridge located near the Kandla Special Economic Zone (KASEZ).

Technical Details

- **Container Type: Stainless Steel Container**
- **Length: 20 feet**
- **Height: 8.5 feet**
- **Width: 8.5 feet**

The container is made of stainless steel and is suitable for transporting salt and other corrosive bulk commodities. Its high corrosion resistance ensures longer container life and protection of the cargo.



Loading can be carried out through a silo system or by using a Proclain machine from the top. Each container is provided with two top openings measuring 7×4 ft, enabling quick mechanized loading.

The tare weight of each container is 3 tonnes. Two containers can be loaded on a BLCS/BLSS wagon, providing a net payload of 68.4 tonnes per wagon, which is comparable to BOXN open wagons. A full BLSS rake of 48 wagons can transport approximately 3300 tonnes of salt.

A New Direction in Logistics

The use of stainless-steel containers for transporting industrial salt offers the following advantages:

- **Safe and corrosion-free transportation**
- **Faster loading and unloading processes**
- **Pollution-free and hygienic handling**
- **Reduced turnaround time and improved logistics efficiency**

Compared to the conventional BOXN loading, this system eliminates the need for manual wagon cleaning, removes the requirement for tarpaulin lining or coating, significantly reduces loading and unloading time, minimizes cargo contamination and wastage, and improves wagon turnaround time. It promotes higher operational efficiency and mechanization.

The use of stainless-steel containers for transporting dry bulk commodities such as salt is a first-of-its-kind initiative at the global level, marking a major innovation in container-based bulk logistics in Indian Railways.■

Initiative Launched to Expand Post-Retirement Career Opportunities for Agniveers and Serving Army Personnel

Railways to Recruit Over 5000 Ex-Servicemen as Pointsmen on Contract Basis to Fill Vacancies

Railways Reserved 14,788 Posts for Ex-Servicemen in FY 2024–25 Vacancy Notifications

In a significant step towards deepening institutional collaboration, Indian Railways and the Indian Army have introduced a "Framework of Cooperation" aimed at expanding post-retirement employment opportunities for Agniveers and serving Army personnel transitioning to civilian life.

Spearheaded by senior leadership from the Army and the Ministry of Railways, the initiative is designed to ensure a smoother shift from military to civilian careers. It will also increase awareness about job prospects within the Railways and create a dedicated support system to assist retiring personnel.

This collaborative framework underscores a shared commitment to providing veterans with meaningful second-career pathways while supporting broader national development goals.

Major Employment Opportunities for Ex-Servicemen

To provide employment avenues for ex-servicemen and ex-agniveers:

- 10% horizontal reservation in Level-2/above posts and 20% in Level-1 posts has been provisioned for ex-servicemen.
- Additionally, 5% reservation in Level-2/above posts and 10% in Level-1 posts has been earmarked for ex-agniveers.

In the years 2024 and 2025, a total of 14,788 posts were reserved for ex-servicemen in railway vacancy notifications, including:

- 6485 posts in Level-1
- 8303 posts in Level-2/above

Recruitment to Level-1 (erstwhile Group D) and Level-2/above posts is conducted through Railway Recruitment Centres (RRCs) and Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), respectively, via competitive examinations.

Immediate Engagement Through Contractual Appointments

To promote faster engagement of ex-servicemen and address existing vacancies, the Ministry of Railways has decided to recruit ex-servicemen as 'Pointsmen' across Indian Railways on a contract basis until regular recruitment processes are completed.

More than 5000 Level-1 posts are currently being processed at the Zonal and Divisional levels. So far, 9 Divisions have entered into MoUs with concerned Army organizations for hiring of Pointsmen.

The collaborative framework also calls upon Army recruiting organizations to proactively engage with Railway Divisions to expedite the filling of these posts.

Harnessing Collective Strengths for Nation Building

Indian Railways and Indian Army share valuable skills, discipline, technical competence and leadership qualities developed during service, contributing significantly to nation building. A substantial number of soldiers retire at a comparatively young age with rich operational and managerial experience, along with strong discipline and national fervour.

The cooperation between Indian Railways and Indian Army plays a vital role in logistics and personnel movement. Strategic infrastructure projects such as the Dedicated Freight Corridors and the Udhampur–Srinagar–Baramulla Rail Link have enhanced rapid deployment capabilities for troops and equipment. Skill-sharing initiatives are also being promoted through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya.

The framework promotes structured engagement of ex-servicemen and ex-agniveers within the existing recruitment system and strengthens long-term collaboration. The initiative underscores the Government's commitment to leveraging the experience and discipline of armed forces veterans while strengthening national infrastructure and security coordination.

National Energy Conservation Awards 2025: SCR Bags Four Awards for Energy Efficiency

Marking a prestigious national occasion, the National Energy Conservation Awards-2025 function was held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on 14th December, 2025, where awards were presented to outstanding achievers in energy efficiency. South Central Railway (SCR) was honoured with four National Energy Conservation Awards for 2025.

In the Government Buildings (Open Category), the Diesel Traction Training Centre (DTTC), Guntakal, received the 'Best Performing Unit' award. In the Transport Category/Railway Stations, Raichur Railway Station, Kacheguda Railway Station, and Lingampalli Railway Station were recognised with Certificates of Merit.

President of India, Droupadi Murmu, presided as the Chief Guest at the function. Brij Mohan Meena, Principal Chief Electrical Engineer, SCR; K. Nagendra Prasad, Chief Electrical General Engineer, SCR; Chandra Shekar Gupta, DRM, Guntakal Division; Santosh Kumar Verma, DRM, Hyderabad Division; Dr. R. Gopalakrishnan, DRM, Secunderabad Division; along with other senior officers, attended and received awards for stations in their jurisdiction.■



President Droupadi Murmu presented the 'Best Performing Unit' award to Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, GM, SCR, for DTTC, Guntakal

Bulk Cement Transport by Rail in Tank Containers Yields Positive Results

Indian Railways' efforts to increase loading and promote rail-based movement of bulk cement in tank containers is bringing positive results and many cement companies have approached the Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) for the movement of bulk cement in tank containers.

According to the Ministry of Railways, Indian Railways' reforms in bulk cement transportation have received good response. The CONCOR is also facilitating the setting up of silos in its terminals for bulk cement handling and storage. Deepening the reforms and to make its schemes attractive, Indian Railways had recently brought down charging on GTKM basis from 90 paisa to 85 paisa per tonne per kilometer.



The reforms support faster turnaround and reduced handling losses compared to bagged cement. It also facilitates adoption of tank containers in bulk cement logistics, improving plant-to-market efficiency. Earlier, Indian Railways was charging haulage on per TEU basis as per the distance slab for movement of bulk cement in tank containers with a graded discount on haulage in the empty return direction, i.e., 50% in the first year, 40% in the second year, 30% in the third year, 20% in the fourth year, 10% in the fifth year and no discount from the sixth year onwards.

However, this basis of charging was found to be unattractive for cement producers and was acting as a deterrent to shifting bulk cement movement to rail from road. In order to increase loading and promote rail-based movement of bulk cement in tank containers, Railways brought reform in rates to make win-win situations for Railways and customers.■

Four-Lane Doraha RoB to Transform Connectivity across Malwa Region: MoSR



The construction of the four-lane Railway over Bridge (RoB) at Level Crossing No. 164AB in Doraha will emerge as a landmark infrastructure project, significantly strengthening connectivity between the Malwa region, the capital of Punjab and adjoining districts, said Ravneet Singh Bittu, Union Minister of State for Railways and Food Processing Industries. During the event, Vinod Bhatia, Divisional Railway Manager, Ambala, Rajiv Ranjan Raju, Chief Engineer (Road Safety Project) and other senior officers were present.

Addressing the media after laying the foundation stone of the much-awaited four-lane RoB, the Minister stated that the project, estimated to cost ₹70.55 crore, will be completed within the next year.

The Minister informed that works on Railway over Bridges (RoB), Railway under Bridges (RuB) and Low Height Subways (LHS) are currently underway at 166 locations across the state, with a total investment of ₹1480.09 crore. He underscored that there is no shortage of funds for railway infrastructure development in Punjab and reiterated the Government's strong commitment to modernizing and expanding the rail network in the state.

He further highlighted that the annual railway budget allocation for Punjab today is nearly 25 times higher than during the 2009–2014 period, amounting to ₹5673 crore.

Currently, infrastructure projects worth ₹26,382 crore are in progress across Punjab, encompassing new track construction, station redevelopment, safety enhancement measures and other capacity augmentation initiatives. Additionally, 30 railway stations in the state are being comprehensively redeveloped under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, with a total investment of ₹1311 crore, aimed at providing modern passenger amenities and improved facilities.

The Minister also extended his appreciation to the Prime Minister and the Railway Minister for approving the construction of the 3rd and 4th railway lines between Delhi and Ambala. This significant project forms part of the broader initiative to quadruple the highly utilized Delhi–Jammu corridor, a crucial arterial route linking the National Capital Region with northern states.■

Parliamentary Standing Committee Visits ICF

Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways visited Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, on 6th January, 2026.

The delegation was led by Dr. C M Ramesh, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways. During the visit, the Members inspected the Shell and Furnishing manufacturing activities. The delegation was briefed about the production processes and quality control measures. Besides, the ongoing modernization initiatives of the organization was also briefed.

Subsequently, the Committee had a meeting with



U. Subba Rao, GM/ICF and other senior officers. During the meeting, various aspects related to coach production, technological advancements, capacity augmentation and future initiatives of ICF were discussed.■

Coffee Table Book on Karnataka Bharat Gaurav Train Launched

Union Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti, V Somanna, launched the coffee table book "Karnataka Bharat Gaurav Train: Journey of a Thousand Shrines" at Rail Bhawan on 23rd February, 2026.

Speaking at the launch of the coffee table book, Somanna stated that the remarkable initiative was conceptualised and driven by Dr. Anup Dayanand, IRTS (Retd). He mentioned that the book is a rich visual and narrative tribute to one of Indian Railways' most impactful cultural and spiritual tourism initiatives.

MoSR said the book beautifully captures the spirit, vision and collective effort behind a pioneering model that seamlessly integrates faith, culture, heritage and modern rail infrastructure. He stated that it is historic that under the Bharat Gaurav Scheme, more than 30,000 devotees from Karnataka have fulfilled their lifelong dream of visiting Kashi and other sacred destinations at an affordable cost.

The book vividly showcases the train as a "moving gallery of India," detailing its thoughtfully designed coaches, onboard amenities, curated spiritual circuits and end-to-end passenger experience.

Special focus is given to how comfort, accessibility and affordability were prioritised, particularly for senior citizens and first-time pilgrims through policy support and state subsidies. At its core, the book chronicles the conception, evolution and successful execution of the Karnataka Bharat Gaurav Train under the Bharat Gaurav Policy.



Karnataka Bharat Gaurav Train: The train represents a flagship pilgrimage tourism initiative under Indian Railways' Bharat Gaurav Policy. It repositions Railways from a mere transporter to an enabler of tourism, culture and spiritual connectivity. The initiative aligns with national programmes such as "Dekho Apna Desh" and "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat," fostering national integration through shared spiritual experiences.

Through themed journeys such as Kashi Darshan, Jyotirlinga Darshan, Shakti Peetha Yatra, Dakshina Yatra, Dwarka Yatra and Puri Jagannath Yatra, the train connects Karnataka pilgrims to major spiritual destinations across India. The all-inclusive packages cover rail travel, vegetarian meals, accommodation, local transportation, tour guides and sightseeing, ensuring a seamless and dignified experience.

As of the latest data, 46 trips have been successfully operated with 28,786 pilgrims travelling, generating approximately ₹25.57 crore in earnings for IR while advancing the larger objective of inclusive pilgrimage tourism.■

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

111-Year-Old John Morris Fire Engine Wins Two Trophies at 59th Statesman Vintage & Classic Car Rally 2026

Honoured with the 'Indian Oil Heritage Preservation Trophy' and the 'Automotive Trust British Heritage Preservation Trophy'



The prestigious vintage John Morns Fire Engine housed at the National Rail Museum, New Delhi and meticulously maintained by the staff of Lallaguda Workshop, SCR won two trophies at the 59th Statesman Vintage & Classic Car Rally 2026, held in New Delhi on 8th February, 2026. The rally covered a distance of 90 km, from the Statesman Building to Greater Noida and back to Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

This year, the John Morris Fire Engine was honoured with the "Indian Oil Heritage Preservation Trophy, celebrating the essence of vintage rally and awarded to the oldest vehicle participating in the event. It was also awarded the 'Automotive Trust British Heritage Preservation Trophy recognizing British-manufactured motor cars for impeccable maintenance and preservation of heritage in pristine condition.

The story behind John Morris Fire Engine is interesting. The Morris Fire Engine was built in 1914 by John Morris & Sons Ltd., Salford, Manchester. Morris, known for inventing the instantaneous coupling, partnered with Belsize Motors in 1912 to produce fire engines. Their vehicles were widely adopted by fire brigades worldwide until 1921, with over a hundred units supplied. Today, only two Morris-Belsize fire engines survive-one in National Rail Museum, New Delhi and another in London. The New Delhi model is unique for retaining its original Shrewsbury and Challenger solid tyres. Its components, like the radiator from Oatway Brothers and clutch from British Hele-Shaw, highlight the specialized craftsmanship of the era. It holds the Ajax Gun-Metal Turbine Pump as a part of its fire equipment.



Earlier, Satish Kumar, Chairman & CEO Railway Board inspected the John Morris Fire Engine on 7th February, 2026. He appreciated the NRM and Lallaguda Workshop staff, SCR for the exceptional maintenance standards and announced a cash award of ₹50,000 for the John Morris Fire Engine. After won the trophies Satish Kumar, Chairman & CEO Railway Board, Devender Kumar, Secretary, Railway Board and EDCC S. M Sharma also congratulated the team of NRM and Carriage Workshop, Lallaguda and commended their dedicated efforts. On this special occasion, Ms. Aashima Mehrotra, Executive Director (Heritage), Railway Board and Dinesh Kumar Goyal, Director, National Rail Museum graced the event with their presence.

7th All India Conference of GRP Chiefs Aimed at Strengthening Passengers' Security

The 7th All India Conference of Government Railway Police (GRP) Chiefs, convened by the Railway Protection Force, was held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on 24th February, 2026 to deliberate on measures for enhancing the security of passengers, railway infrastructure and operations, in view of emerging security challenges.

The deliberations recognised that Indian Railways, due to its vast geographical spread, high passenger footfall and open-access architecture, remains vulnerable to a wide range of threats including organised crime, trafficking of narcotics, vandalism, stone pelting and potential acts of sabotage. The conference aimed to develop a holistic security framework combining technology, intelligence, field coordination and community engagement.

The conference emphasised leveraging modern technology like FRS based CCTV cameras, AI-enabled video analytics and drone surveillance.

One of the major highlights of the conference was the deliberation and formulation of a roadmap to curb the menace of drug trafficking as the railway network is vulnerable for the transport of drugs and narcotic substances.

The high-level conference, presided over by Director General, RPF, Sonali Mishra, witnessed the participation of DGPs, ADGPs and senior officers from the GRP of various states and union territories.

The conference was graced by the presence of Chairman & CEO, Railway Board, Satish Kumar as well as Members of the Railway Board. Deliberations also focused on improving basic infrastructure facilities for the GRP personnel. Emphasis was laid on fostering close coordination and joint efforts to effectively address the issues discussed during the conference.

The DG RPF highlighted the new technological tools that are being adopted by RPF in its field operations for better identification of criminals and detection of crime.



Airbus Inaugurates Centre of Excellence at GSV

With a focus on ground breaking technologies such as transforming Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) into Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), European aerospace company Airbus on 4th February, 2026 inaugurated a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for aerospace studies at the Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV), India's unique industry-driven central university for the transportation and logistics sector, based in Vadodara, Gujarat.

A key focus area of the Centre of Excellence (CoE) would be R&D into Sustainable Aviation Fuel and supporting student-led innovations in future aerospace technologies. The Centre marks a significant milestone in the long-term collaboration between Airbus and GSV to strengthen India's aerospace ecosystem through organic research, innovation and talent development.



Announced in 2024, the CoE was inaugurated by Jürgen Westermeier, President and Managing Director of Airbus India and South Asia, in the presence of Rajmata of Baroda Shubhanginiraje Gaekwad, Member of the Court of GSV and Prof. (Dr.) Manoj Choudhary, Vice Chancellor, GSV.

Successful Operation of Indian Railways' First LNG Train



In a move that underlines its push towards cleaner and more efficient operations, Indian Railways recently introduced the country's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)–diesel based dual-fuel Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) train. The initiative reflects a broader effort within the railways to explore alternative fuels and gradually reduce dependence on conventional diesel. The train was also inspected by the Divisional Railway Manager, Ahmedabad, Ved Prakash, at the Integrated Coaching Depot, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad under Western Railway. Sharing details of the project during an interaction with the media, he said the initiative marks an important step towards promoting cleaner energy use in railway operations while also improving fuel efficiency and reducing overall operating costs.

Under this project, two 1400 HP DEMU DPCs have been converted into a diesel-LNG dual-fuel system, wherein up to approximately 40% of diesel is being replaced with LNG. More than 2000 kilometers of successful field trials have been completed on both converted DPCs and they are currently operating in regular passenger service without any issues.

As per the approved design, an LNG tank with a capacity of approximately 2200 liters (about 950–1000 kg of usable LNG) has been installed in the DPC. A single full tank is sufficient for the daily operation of 222 kilometers, thereby reducing the need for frequent refueling.

After emission testing and final approvals by the RDSO, this technology will be further expanded. In the next phase, eight more DEMU DPCs are planned to be converted to the dual-fuel system, further strengthening Indian Railways' commitment to clean energy, lower carbon emissions and cost-effective operations.

BLW's 10th Indigenous 3300 HP Locomotive Dispatched to Mozambique

Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) has once again hoisted India's flag on the international stage in the field of locomotive manufacturing. The tenth unit of the indigenously manufactured 3300 horsepower AC–AC diesel-electric locomotive built by BLW was successfully dispatched to Mozambique on 21st February, 2026. This marks a significant milestone, as BLW had received an export order for a total of 10 units of 3300 HP AC–AC diesel-electric locomotives for Mozambique.

The supply of these locomotives has been carried out through RITES Limited under a contract for the manufacture and export of 10 locomotives. The first two locomotives were dispatched in June 2025, followed by the third in September, the fourth in October and the fifth on 12th December, 2025. Subsequently, the sixth locomotive was dispatched on 15th December, 2025, the seventh on 8th January, 2026, the eighth on 23rd January and the ninth on 17th February, 2026. This export reflects India's growing capabilities in locomotive manufacturing at the global level.



These state-of-the-art 3300 horsepower Cape gauge (1067 mm) locomotives manufactured by BLW are capable of operating at speeds of up to 100 km/h. They are equipped with internationally benchmarked, driver-friendly features such as a refrigerator, hot plate, mobile holder and a modern cabin design, enhancing both operator comfort and operational efficiency.

BLW is strengthening India's presence in the global railway market. Since 2014, BLW has exported locomotives to countries such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Mozambique, contributing to the development of their railway systems.

ICF Achieves Historic Milestone with the Rollout of its 80,000th Coach



Integral Coach Factory (ICF), the world's largest coach-producing factory and the premier production unit of Indian Railways, has achieved a historic milestone by rolling out its 80,000th coach since its inception in 1955. Over the past seven decades, ICF has been a cornerstone of India's rolling stock programme, consistently setting benchmarks in design, technology and production excellence.

The milestone coach, part of the prestigious Amrit Bharat Coach series, marks a significant achievement in ICF's journey of innovation and growth. ICF has also established a global footprint by exporting coaches to several countries across Asia and Africa.

From manufacturing conventional passenger coaches, ICF has evolved into a centre of excellence for advanced rolling stock, including EMU and DEMU trains, Air-Conditioned EMUs, High-Speed Accident Relief Trains, luxury tourist coaches such as the Maharaja's Express and Golden Chariot, Vistadome coaches and metro coaches for Kolkata Metro. Building on this legacy, ICF is spearheading the production of Vande Bharat trainsets and developing new variants such as Amrit Bharat Coaches, Namo Bharat Rapid Rail and Vande Bharat sleeper trainsets.

On this occasion, U. Subba Rao, GM/ICF, congratulated all employees since the inception, praising their dedication and stating that the milestone reflects ICF's enduring spirit of innovation and its vital role in shaping the future of Indian Railways.

Kavach 4.0 Commissioned over Virar–Surat–Vadodara Section

Dadar–Bhuj Sayajinagri Express becomes the first KAVACH equipped train

Western Railway has commissioned KAVACH Version 4.0, the indigenously developed train protection system, for passenger services over the 344 km Virar–Surat–Vadodara section. On 30th January, 2026 a historic milestone was achieved with Dadar–Bhuj Sayajinagri Express, becoming the first KAVACH equipped train to run from Mumbai. This marks a significant step in the deployment of advanced safety technology over the Western Railway network.

The KAVACH technology has been commissioned over 344 km of the Virar–Surat–Vadodara section. Over this corridor, KAVACH has been implemented covering 49 stations, supported by 57 radio communication towers and about 700 km of optical fibre cable.

The sections already commissioned, KAVACH works is progressing rapidly on several other sections of WR covering 2667 Rkm, at an approximate cost of ₹1435 crore. Apart from this, further works on 2476 Rkm have been proposed for sanction, highlighting the scale and momentum of the programme. With phased execution underway, WR is steadily moving towards extending KAVACH across its entire Broad Gauge network, reaffirming its long-term commitment to comprehensive rail safety enhancement.■



WR Commissions 6th Line Between Kandivali and Borivali



The Commissioner of Railway Safety (Western Circle), E. Srinivas conducted a detailed inspection of the newly constructed 6th Line between Kandivali and Borivali in the Mumbai suburban section, followed by speed trials, after which the section was authorised for regular train operations on 18th January, 2026.

The Kandivali–Borivali section forms the concluding segment of Phase-I of the project between Bandra Terminus and Borivali. The earlier sections between Khar Road–Goregaon and Goregaon–Kandivali were commissioned in November 2023 and October 2024, respectively. The final stretch was completed within a tightly planned 30-day execution window from 18th December 2025 to 17th January, 2026, reflecting meticulous planning, round-the-clock execution and seamless coordination across various departments of Western Railway.

This capacity augmentation enables more effective segregation of suburban and long-distance train movements, thereby reducing operational conflicts, easing congestion and improving punctuality. The additional line also enhances operational resilience during maintenance blocks and peak traffic periods, improving service reliability and passenger convenience across the Mumbai suburban network.■

India's Green Revolution on Rails

The Dawn of Hydrogen Trains

G.V. Venkatesan
Sr. PRO/ICF (Retd.)

The Green Quest

The world is currently engaged in a massive "Green Quest" to save our planet from carbon emissions and pollution. As the number of vehicles on our roads increases due to better affordability, the transport sector has become a primary focus for environmental reform. While electric vehicles (EVs) are a step in the right direction, they have a "darker side" viz. the electricity used to charge them is still being produced by burning coal or gas in thermal power plants, which adds to pollution.

The Indian Scenario

Furthermore, while India is moving fast towards 100% electrification of its massive rail network, there are still remote areas and heritage hill routes where installing heavy overhead wires is either too expensive or environmentally damaging. Enter the "Hydrail"—a cutting-edge solution where trains generate their own clean power on board using hydrogen. This initiative, part of the "National Green Hydrogen Mission," aims to help IR reach Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2030.

The project is being executed under the "Hydrogen for Heritage" initiative, with significant implications for suburban and regional connectivity. As a first step towards this goal, India's first hydrogen train has been turned out by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, a premier production unit of Indian Railways. The pilot project involves building the Indian Hydrail based on the existing Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) platform. The DPC of the DEMU has been redesigned to fit the hydrogen fuel cell system, upgrading a diesel powered vehicle into a green one, with strategic key partnerships with private players who are responsible for the technical integration of the propulsion system, the hydrogen fuel cell modules and conducting third-party safety audits to ensure global safety standards.

The project is estimated at approx. ₹80 crores per train. While green hydrogen is currently more expensive than diesel, costs are expected to decrease as production scales up in the long run.

What is a Hydrogen Train?

To a common passenger, a hydrogen train looks much like the modern suburban trains we see today. However, the technology inside is revolutionary. Unlike traditional diesel engines that roar and emit thick smoke, hydrogen trains are essentially mobile power plants.



The heart of the train is a Hydrogen Fuel Cell. Inside this cell, hydrogen gas stored in tanks on the train combines with oxygen taken directly from the outside air. This chemical reaction produces electricity, which then powers the motors that turn the wheels.

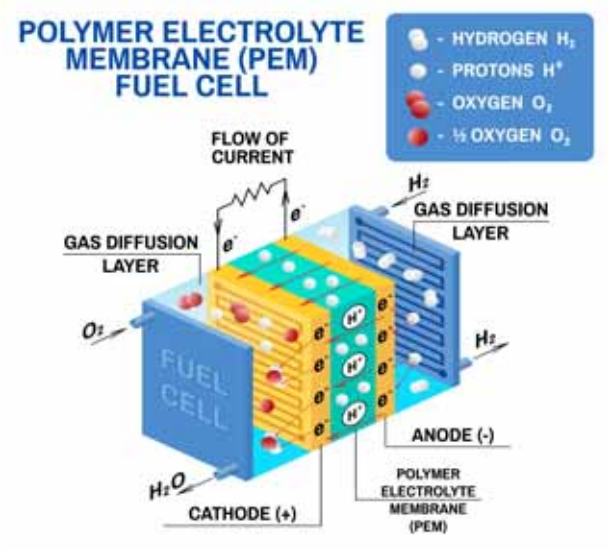
The most magical part of this process is the "exhaust." While a diesel engine releases carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides, the only by-product of a hydrogen train is pure water vapour and heat. You could stand near the exhaust and feel only a mist of clean steam. So soothing to know. Right?

In Brief

- **The Fuel:** Compressed hydrogen gas is stored in tanks, usually mounted on the roof of the train.
- **The Reaction:** Inside the fuel cell, hydrogen from the tanks mixes with oxygen taken from the outside air.
- **The Result:** This chemical reaction produces electricity.
- **The Propulsion:** The electricity powers the traction motors that turn the wheels. Any excess energy is stored in Lithium-ion batteries to be used during acceleration or when the train needs a power boost.
- **The Emission:** The only by-product is H_2O (Water/Steam).

The Indian Approach: Smart Innovation

While countries like Germany and China have built brand-new hydrogen trains from scratch, India has taken a more practical and cost-effective path. Engineers at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai have developed a design based on the DEMU (Diesel Electric Multiple Unit) platform.



Instead of building an entirely new train at an astronomical cost, IR is taking existing, reliable train designs and "swapping" their internal organs.

- **Out with the Old:** The heavy 1600 HP diesel engine, the main alternator and the large underslung diesel fuel tanks are removed.
- **In with the New:** In their place, silent PEM fuel cell stacks and high-pressure storage tanks made of carbon-fibre reinforced cylinders are installed.
- **The Battery Boost:** These trains are actually "hybrids". They carry high-voltage Lithium-ion batteries that provide an extra burst of power when the train starts moving and store energy captured during braking.

Why Choose Hydrogen?

- **The Silence:** These trains are roughly 60% quieter than diesel trains, offering a peaceful journey for passengers.
- **The Range:** A modern hydrogen train can travel over 1000 kilometres on a single tank, comparable to diesel performance.
- **Quick Refuelling:** A hydrogen train can be refilled in less than 20 minutes, keeping operations efficient.
- **Preserving Beauty:** On heritage routes, overhead electric wires would ruin scenic views. Hydrogen trains offer the "green" benefits of electricity without the need for massive capital investment in wires.

However, there are a few challenges that exist to be faced:

Engineering and Integration Challenges

- **Space and Weight:** Fitting large hydrogen tanks and fuel cell stacks into existing DMU bodies, which were designed for diesel engines, requires significant space and adds weight, impacting train balance.
- **Power and Performance:** Ensuring the fuel cell system provides sufficient power for acceleration and maintaining speeds, especially on demanding routes, compared to diesel power.
- **System Compatibility:** Integrating new hydrogen

Feature	Diesel Train	Electric Train (Overhead)	Hydrogen Train
Emissions	High (CO_2, Smoke)	Zero (at track)	Zero (Water Vapor)
Infrastructure	Minimal (Tracks only)	High (Cables & Substations)	Moderate (H_2 Fuel Stations)
Noise Level	High	Low	Low
Range	High (1000+ km)	Unlimited (while connected)	High (1000+ km)
Initial Cost	Low	High (Infrastructure cost)	High (New Technology)
Best Use Case	Remote/Freight lines	High-traffic mainlines	Regional non-electrified lines

systems (fuel cell, battery buffer, power electronics, thermal management) with the existing electrical and braking systems of the DMU.

Infrastructure and Logistics

- **Refuelling Network:** Lack of widespread hydrogen fuelling stations and the need to build new, complex refuelling depots with compressors and storage.
- **Hydrogen Supply:** Ensuring a consistent, affordable supply of green hydrogen, requiring dedicated electrolyzers powered by renewable energy.

Safety and Certification

- **Fire Hazard:** Hydrogen's high flammability (colourless, odourless) demands advanced leak detection, ventilation and fire suppression systems.
- **Standardization:** Absence of specific Indian codes for hydrogen trains, requiring adherence to international standards and third-party auditors (like TÜV SÜD).

Cost and Scalability

- **High Capital Costs:** Fuel cells, high-pressure storage tanks and infrastructure are expensive, leading to high initial project costs (e.g., ₹80 crore per train + infrastructure).
- **Operational Costs:** Assessing and managing the higher running costs compared to diesel, although expected to decrease with scale.

Operational and Lifecycle

- **Fuel Cell Durability:** Ensuring fuel cell life under harsh Indian operating conditions, with degradation concerns like catalyst loss.
- **Thermal Management:** Efficiently managing heat generated by fuel cells and power electronics

The importance of "Green" Hydrogen

You may wonder while Hydrogen fuel itself is considered, what could be the meaning of the adjective "Green" prefixing it. Yes. There is a deep meaning to it.

While hydrogen trains offer a clean and innovative alternative to diesel, their true environmental benefit depends on the source of hydrogen used. Only "green hydrogen"—produced using renewable energy such as solar or wind—ensures that the entire process remains sustainable and low-carbon. If hydrogen is generated from fossil fuels ("grey" or "blue" hydrogen), the overall carbon footprint may still be significant. Therefore, the success of hydrogen trains as a green solution is closely tied to the availability and use of genuinely green hydrogen.

However, with its technical partners, well-coordinated by ICF, these challenges a few of them have already been addressed and the remaining are being addressed by Indian Railways and are being taken care of.

Global Context: How India Stacks Up

India is now part of an elite group of nations experimenting with this technology.

- **Germany (The Pioneer):** Launched the first commercial hydrogen fleet in 2022, focusing on lower-density regional transit.
- **China (The Speed King):** Focuses on high-speed urban trains reaching 160–200 km/h.
- **India (The Workhorse):** Indian trains are "Wide Body" designs meant to carry massive "crush loads" of up to 2600 passengers. Our hydrogen engines are tuned for high torque (1200 HP) to handle these heavy loads.

Implementation and Roadmap

In a ground-breaking move towards sustainable and green transportation, the first Indian hydrogen train is set to make its debut on the Jind–Sonipat route in Haryana. This 90 km stretch is currently non-electrified and handles high suburban traffic,

Feature	India (ICF Hydrogen Train)	Germany (Alstom Coradia iLint)	China (CRRC CINOVA H2)	Switzerland/USA (Stadler FLIRT H2)
Status	Prototype / Pilot (Trials in late 2025)	Commercial Service (Since 2018)	Operational / Launch (2024)	Operational / Testing (Guinness Record Holder)
Top Speed	110 - 140 km/h	140 km/h	160 - 200 km/h	130 km/h
Range	~1,000 km	~1,000 km	~1,200 km	~460 km (Operational) / 2,803 km (Record)
Capacity	High (~2,600+ pax) (Optimized for standing)	Low (~150-300 seated) (Regional transit focus)	Medium (~1,000 pax) (Intercity focus)	Low (~116 seated) (Commuter focus)
Power Output	~1,200 HP (High torque for heavy loads)	~500-600 HP	Variable (High speed focus)	~700 kW
Tech Approach	Retrofit (Diesel train converted to H2)	New Build (Designed as H2 from scratch)		

making it the perfect testing ground. Jind Railway Station recently conducted the final load check trial for the hydrogen-powered train. Once the final approval is received, regular operations are expected to begin. The train promises to be a symbol of India's commitment to environmental conservation and innovation in transportation.

Following successful trials, the "Hydrogen for Heritage" plan will roll out these trains to India's most famous tourist routes:

- Kalka – Shimla Railway
- Darjeeling Himalayan Railway
- Nilgiris Mountain Railway
- Matheran Hill Railway

Conclusion

Hydrogen trains are not intended to replace all trains. High-speed, high frequency mainlines will likely remain electric (overhead wires). However, for the vast network of regional and rural lines that currently rely on dirty diesel engines, Hydrail offers a clean, silent and futuristic alternative that is becoming a reality today.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. How many reforms did the Railway Minister announce would be implemented in 52 weeks?

(a) 104 (b) 30

(c) 75 (d) 52

2. How many stations' work has been completed under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme so far?

(a) 172 (b) 50

(c) 101 (d) 103

3. In how many states/Union Territories has 100% railway electrification been achieved?

(a) 12 (b) 22

(c) 25 (d) 29

4. How many crore passengers does Indian Railways serve annually through its affordable services?

(a) 100 crore (b) 240 crore

(c) 220 crore (d) More than 720 crore

5. What is the average percentage discount offered by Indian Railways to its passengers?

(a) 45% (b) 55%

(c) 30% (d) 0%

6. What is the total route length of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor?

(a) 1506 km (b) 2020 km

(c) 1100 km (d) 1337 km



7. Approximately how many coaches in Indian Railways are equipped with CCTV?

(a) 12,300 (b) 20,500

(c) 13,340 (d) 1,900

8. How many Amrit Bharat trains are currently in operation?

(a) 54 (b) 42

(c) 62 (d) 90

9. How many Namo Bharat Rapid Rail services are being operated by Indian Railways at present?

(a) 8 (b) 2

(c) 6 (d) 4

10. Approximately what percentage of Indian Railways coaches are non-AC?

(a) 70% (b) 95%

(c) 100% (d) 55%

Right Answers

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



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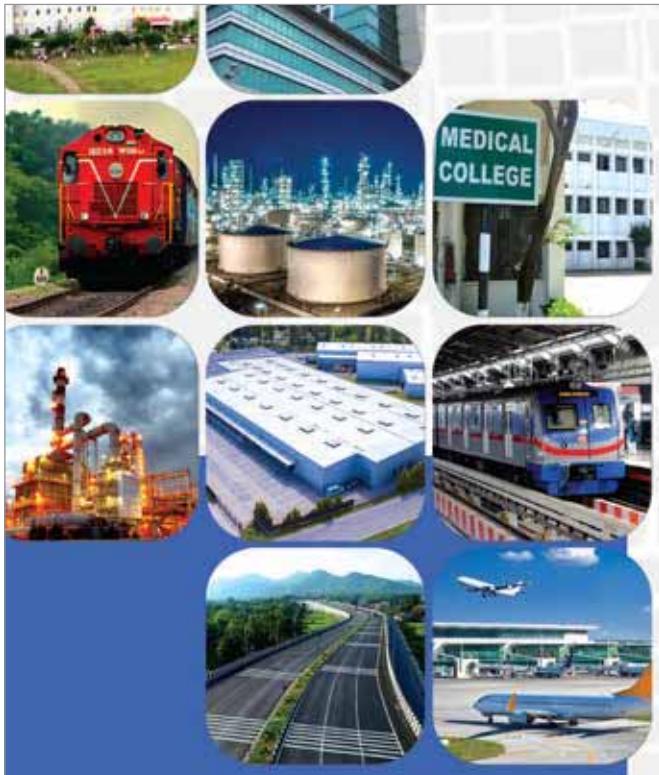
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