INDIAN RAILWAYS
SEPTEMBER 2026 | PRICE ₹20

Mumbai Locals

The Century-Old Lifeline is Undergoing a Transformation

238 New AC EMUs for Daily Commuters



- Budget Grant: ₹2,93,030 crore
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10 gm - 24 Ct Gold Coin



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   b. Personal Accident Coverage Scheme d. Education Award
2. Any benefit, under any of the "WELFARE SCHEMES" of the Society, will be granted, if only, the CMTD and loan EMI's are fully and continuously received, by the Society, without any default.
3. Any loss of life / Organs, on account of Suicide / Accidents / Incidents, occurring on account of Consumption of Alcohol / Drugs / Intoxicants and loss of life on account of Pre Existing or Chronic Life threatening illness are not covered, under any of the Welfare Schemes of the Society.
4. All Welfare Schemes are subject to the Rules and Regulations applicable for each such Scheme/s, Bye Laws of the Society, as per MSCS Act 2002 and its rules and other relevant laws.
5. Conditions as per the Bye-Law, rules and regulations framed by the Board of Directors, as existing and as may be amended from time to time, shall apply. All disputes / issues are covered only under the provisions of MSCS Act & Rules 2002, Bye-Laws of the Society and are strictly under Chennai Jurisdiction only.
6. Each member of the Society shall have a Personal Accident Coverage of Rs. TEN Lakhs, which shall come into effect only, from the date of receipt of One CMTD, by the Society, from a newly joined member.
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9. Out of the total premium payable to the Insurance Service Provider, 75% of the premium will be borne by the Society and the members will have to pay the balance of 25% only.
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Under the above 4 Welfare Schemes, as on 31.03.2026

Rs. 192.54 Crores

have been paid to 21,053 Members, Member's Families and Sureties

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Chief Executive

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Mumbai Local Train

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Editorial

Bigger Networks, Better Journeys: Building The Railways India Needs Next

For generations, Indian Railways has been part of India's journey. Today, it is entering a new phase, with infrastructure expanding through new lines and multi-tracking, technology advancing modern signalling, safety systems growing stronger and passenger services evolving with a changing India.

For 2026-27, Indian Railways has a budget grant of ₹2,93,030 crore, of which ₹1,14,973 crore, or around 39 per cent, had been utilised by July 2026. As of April 1, 2026, 514 infrastructure projects worth around ₹8.31 lakh crore had been sanctioned, covering nearly 40,000 km across 169 new lines, 29 gauge conversion and 316 doubling projects.

The busiest routes are receiving special attention. Seven high-density corridors covering nearly 11,000 km carry around 41 per cent of India's rail traffic, despite accounting for only about 16 per cent of the network. The Delhi–Howrah, Howrah–Chennai, Chennai–Mumbai, Mumbai–Delhi, Delhi–Chennai, Mumbai–Howrah and Delhi–Guwahati routes are being expanded to four tracks, creating room for more passenger and freight services.

Mumbai is also set to receive 238 new AC EMU rakes. ICF Chennai, RCF Kapurthala and MCF Rae Bareli have been entrusted with their production. The first rakes are expected from 2027, with the complete fleet targeted by 2030. The initiative will bring modern rolling stock to Mumbai's suburban network, offering commuters a more comfortable travel experience.

The Railways' role extends beyond infrastructure and technology. Its response in emergencies shows how timely coordination can save lives. A human heart was recently transported from Surat to Ahmedabad by Vande Bharat Express, while railway personnel arranged an oxygen cylinder for a critically ill passenger on the Howrah–CSMT Mail by coordinating with control rooms and medical teams.

Together, these initiatives reflect a railway system evolving on multiple fronts—from stronger infrastructure and modern trains to technology-driven safety and responsive passenger services. The objective is not only to make rail travel more reliable, comfortable and secure, but also to build the capacity India will need for the future.

Do share your feedback on this issue with us!

TABLE OF CONTENT

Railway Minister Leads Tiranga Rally As Railways Celebrate 'Har Ghar Tiranga'	7
MR Inaugurates 56-km Kailaras-Birpur Rail Section	8
Nepalganj Road–Nanpara– Bahraich Broad Gauge Rail Section inaugurated	10



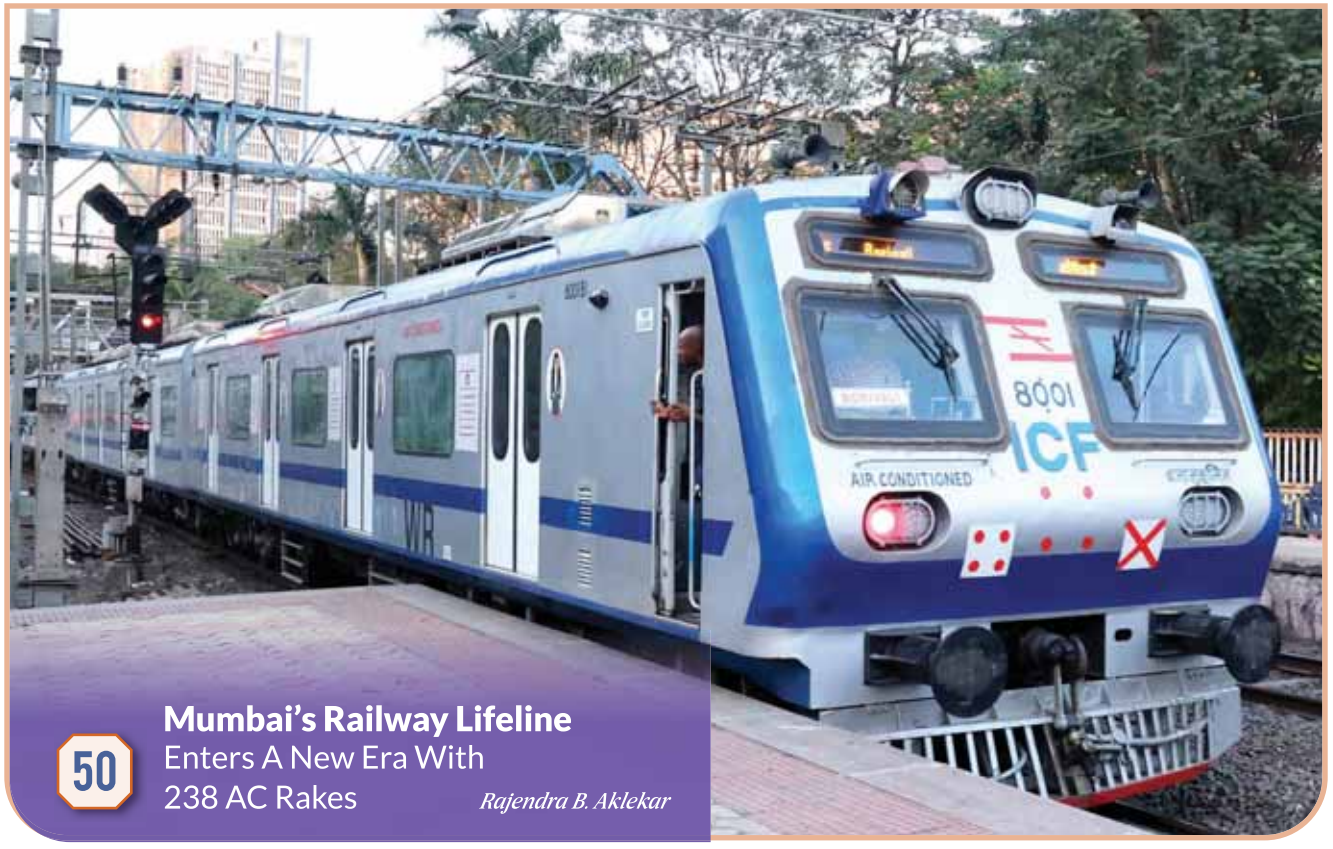
11 **MR Walks Union Ministers Through** Railways' AI-Powered 'War Room'

MR Reviews Yatri Suvidha Kendra Projects	12
Mumbai Suburban Rail Gets A Major Boost	13
11,000 km High-Density Network Gets A Four-Laning Push Across Key Routes: RM	14
₹9,450-Cr Multi-Tracking Projects in 4 States	15
Indian Railways Gives Nod To Several Key Projects	16
USBRL Transforms Connectivity To Kashmir	18
Capacity Enhancement and Infrastructure Augmentation by IR	24
1670 MT Freight Loading	25
Container Train Operations Simplified With Single Licence	27
Vande Bharat Transports Live Donor Heart	29
President Honours 16 RPF/RPSF Personnel For Distinguished And Meritorious Service	29
RCF Kapurthala Achieves Milestone With First 19-Coach LHB Rake For Bangladesh Railway	30



31 **Railways Begins Nationwide** Drive To Clean and Disinfect Drinking-Water Infrastructure

Indian Railways Steps Up Action Against Food Quality Violations	32
Railway Board Chairman Reviews Functioning of IRCTC War Room	33
RailOne App Records 10 Lakh Daily Ticket Bookings	34
Indian Railways Strengthens Fire Response With 177 Relief Trains And 71 Mock Drills	35
19,700 km Of Railway Tracks Secured With Safety Fencing	37
Indian Railways Adds New Services and Extends Existing Links	40
Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train Electrification Works Set New High-Speed Rail Benchmark	42
Indian Railways Joined the Celebrations of Independence Day	44
Amrit Station	46
Dharwad Railway Station: A Cultural Landmark On The Rail Map *Naveen N Navalgund*	53
Where History Finds A New Voice: Inside the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya's Digital World *Garud Rahul Deelip*	55
Southern Railway's Homegrown Solutions For A Safer And Smarter Railway *R. N. Singh*	58
Year - 2027 Gazetted and Restricted Holidays	63
Test Your Knowledge	64



50 **Mumbai's Railway Lifeline** Enters A New Era With 238 AC Rakes *Rajendra B. Aklekar*



"Railway electrification work began in 1925, but even after 90 years, only 30 per cent of the rail network had been electrified. In the last decade, we have completed almost 100 per cent of the work. This has helped save diesel and also protect the environment.

The fourth pillar of Saptadhara (seven-point strategic framework) is Gati Shakti. We must focus on seamless, fast connectivity within the country. We need to connect cities through high-speed rail.

India has entered a new fuel technology. The country has started its first hydrogen-powered train and has made its mark in the field of hydrogen trains worldwide.

In the last 12 years, defence production has grown nearly four times. Khadi and village industries production has grown nearly five times. Electronics production has grown nearly seven times. Modern railway coach production has grown 21 times.

In 2014, there were around 9,000 unmanned railway crossings. Over the last 10 years, we have removed all these unmanned crossings in mission mode.

Before 2014, around 12,000 bio-toilets had been installed in trains. After 2014, more than 3.6 lakh bio-toilets have been installed. This means that more than 97% of the bio-toilets were installed in the last 12 years.

Electronic interlocking has been provided at more than 6,500 railway stations. In addition, more than 10,000 level crossing gates have also been connected with interlocking systems."

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Key points from Hon'ble Prime Minister 15th August address from the Red Fort and his speeches at other programmes.

Railway Minister Leads Tiranga Rally As Railways Celebrate 'Har Ghar Tiranga'

Union Minister for Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw, led a Tiranga Rally within the premises of Rail Bhawan, New Delhi, on the eve of Independence Day. Chairman and CEO, Railway Board, Satish Kumar, Board Members, DGs and other senior officials participated in the rally, reaffirming the collective spirit of patriotism and national unity.



Indian Railways actively participated in the nationwide 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, celebrating the spirit of patriotism, national pride and unity across the railway organisation. The campaign was organised in conjunction with the third phase of the commemoration of 150 years of 'Vande Mataram', with a series of programmes organised at Rail Bhawan to highlight the historical, cultural and national significance of the iconic national song.

As part of the celebrations, a quiz competition on '150 Years of the Journey of Vande Mataram' was also organised on 10th August, 2026, at Rail Bhawan, New Delhi. The programme provided an opportunity for officials to engage with the rich history and enduring legacy of the national song.

A special cultural programme on 'Patriotic Songs' was organised on 11th August, 2026, at Rail Bhawan. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation and celebrated the spirit of patriotism through musical performances.

As part of the celebrations on 14th August, 2026, a mass singing of 'Vande Mataram' was also organised at Rail Bhawan.

Celebrating Patriotism, Unity and National Pride

Through these programmes, Indian Railways is reinforcing the spirit of patriotism, national pride and unity among its officials and employees while commemorating the historic legacy of 'Vande Mataram'. The celebrations under the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign reflect the collective participation of Indian Railways in celebrating the nation's heritage and its aspirations for a modern and progressive India.■

MR Inaugurates 56-km Kailaras-Birpur Rail Section, Strengthens Gwalior-Chambal Connectivity

New rail connectivity to benefit more than 100 villages, providing easier access to education, healthcare and employment

Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw, along with Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister for Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region, and Dr. Mohan Yadav, Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh, virtually inaugurated the gauge-converted Kailaras-Sabalgarh-Birpur rail section in Madhya Pradesh on 18th August, 2026. They also flagged off the extension of the Gwalior-Kailaras train service up to Birpur through video conferencing.

The extension of the Gwalior-Kailaras train service up to Birpur will provide direct rail connectivity to Birpur, Vijaypur and Sabalgarh with Gwalior, offering more affordable and convenient travel options for passengers from rural and tribal areas. It will improve access to Gwalior for education, healthcare and employment opportunities, while also giving a boost to local trade and regional economic activities in the area.

- Work on Birpur-Seroni Road and Seroni Road-Sheopur Kalan Sections Almost Complete
- Indian Railways Recruits Over 5.54 Lakh Personnel Since 2014
- Railway Budget for Madhya Pradesh Rises Nearly 24-Fold from ₹632 Crore (2009-14) to ₹15,188 Crore in 26-27



Ashwini Vaishnaw
Minister of Railways

In his address, the Railway Minister said that the inauguration of the gauge-converted 56-km Kailaras-Birpur section is a significant milestone for the Gwalior-Chambal region. MR added that



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Communications and Development of North Eastern Region Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, and Madhya Pradesh CM Dr. Mohan Yadav virtually inaugurating various railway projects in the Gwalior-Chambal region.

residents of more than 100 villages in Bamor, Joura, Kailaras, and Sabalgarh tehsils of Morena district, and Birpur, Sheopur, and Karahal tehsils of Sheopur district, will benefit from this gauge conversion.

The connectivity would be further extended to Sheopur Kalan and ultimately to Kota, which would connect the region with major educational and industrial centres. He said the project had been accorded priority and that work on the 117-km Birlanagar-Birpur section had progressed rapidly in recent years. He outlined the commissioning of successive sections of the region.

Section	Length	Opened for Passenger Traffic
Birlanagar - Rayaru	11 Km	May 2023
Rayaru - Sumaoli	22 Km	Aug 2023
Sumaoli - Joura	14 Km	Nov 2023
Joura - Kailaras	14 Km	Feb 2024
Kailaras - Sabalgarh	29 Km	2025
Sabalgarh - Birpur	27 Km	2026

MR mentioned that the work on the next section from Birpur to Seroni Road (37 km) and from Seroni Road to Sheopur Kalan (33 km) is almost complete. the entire Gwalior-Sheopur Kalan railway line would be completed and made available to the people within the next few months. The project would provide connectivity to several important stations and contribute to the development of rail infrastructure in Madhya Pradesh.

Highlighting the scale of railway development in Madhya Pradesh, MR said that the railway budget for the State had increased significantly from ₹632 crore (2009-14) to ₹15,188 crore in 2026-27, an increase of about 24 times. He said that railway projects worth around ₹1.55 lakh crore are currently underway in Madhya Pradesh. He also highlighted that 80 stations are being redeveloped in the state, the operation of five Vande Bharat trains connecting the state, and the introduction of seven Amrit Bharat trains.

MR said several major new projects had also been taken up in Madhya Pradesh, including the Manmad-Indore new line and multiple third and fourth-line projects across the State. He said projects connected with Madhya Pradesh approved during the third term of the incumbent government amounted to around ₹64,512 crore.

Jyotiraditya Scindia said that it was a historic day for the Gwalior-Chambal region and described the extension of the railway line from Kailaras to Birpur as a new beginning for the region. He said that the journey, which had earlier reached Gwalior, Bamore, Sumaoli, Joura and Kailaras, has now been extended to Birpur and would further reach Sheopur and, ultimately, Kota.

Dr. Mohan Yadav mentioned that the expansion of the railway network in Madhya Pradesh, including the Indore-Manmad new line, would open new routes and strengthen connectivity between the Gwalior-Chambal region and Malwa.■

Nishatpura Station Gets Enhanced Rail Connectivity

Nishatpura Railway Station in Bhopal witnessed a significant milestone on 28th July, 2026, with the commencement of regular stoppages of two important express trains (Dr. Ambedkar Nagar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Malwa Express and Jabalpur-Veraval Express) in a grand ceremony.

The event was graced by the CM of Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Mohan Yadav, as the Chief Guest. He was accompanied by the Member of Parliament from Bhopal, local MLAs, the Mayor, along with a large number of public representatives and citizens.■



Nepalganj Road–Nanpara–Bahraich Broad Gauge Rail Section inaugurated

Also, Railway Minister and UP CM Pay Tribute To Those Lost In Nepal Floods



UP CM Yogi Adityanath and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurating the gauge conversion and electrification of the Nepalganj Road-Nanpara-Bahraich rail section

Marking a significant milestone in the transformation of rail connectivity in the border region, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, along with Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw; Jagdambika Pal, Member of Parliament from Domariyaganj; Dr Anand Kumar Gond, MP from Bahraich; and other dignitaries, inaugurated the gauge conversion and electrification of the Nepalganj Road-Nanpara-Bahraich rail section on 31st August, 2026. The 56.15-km-long section has been converted to Broad Gauge and electrified at a cost of approximately ₹730 crore. Four existing train services were also extended up to Nepalganj Road. The programme began with a tribute to the victims of the recent floods in Nepal, with all those attending the programme observing two minutes of silence.

Expressing concern over the situation in neighbouring Nepal, the Railway Minister said that India and Nepal share strong cultural ties. He expressed condolences to the families affected by the natural disaster in Nepal and said the Government of India is making every possible effort to provide assistance. MR said the Railways had also been making arrangements for passengers rescued from affected areas and reaching India. He said the Railways had arranged special coaches and other necessary facilities to help them reach their destinations.

The Nepalganj Road-Nanpara-Bahraich metre-gauge rail section was originally constructed in 1886. With the completion of gauge conversion and electrification, providing improved connectivity to Bahraich, Risiya, Matera, Nanpara, Babaganj and Nepalganj Road stations.

Speaking about the railway section being inaugurated, MR said that the conversion of the Nepalganj Road-Nanpara-Bahraich section has now connected it to the wider railway network of the country. MR said the Broad Gauge conversion programme is nearing completion across the country.

The Ministry of Railways has approved the extension of 14213/14 Varanasi–Bahraich Express, 15132/31 Varanasi City–Gorakhpur Express and two pairs of 75109/10 and

75111/12 Gonda–Bahraich train services up to Nepalganj Road.

Chief Minister, UP said the inauguration of the rail section and launch of four new train services marked the realisation of a decades-old dream for the people of the region.

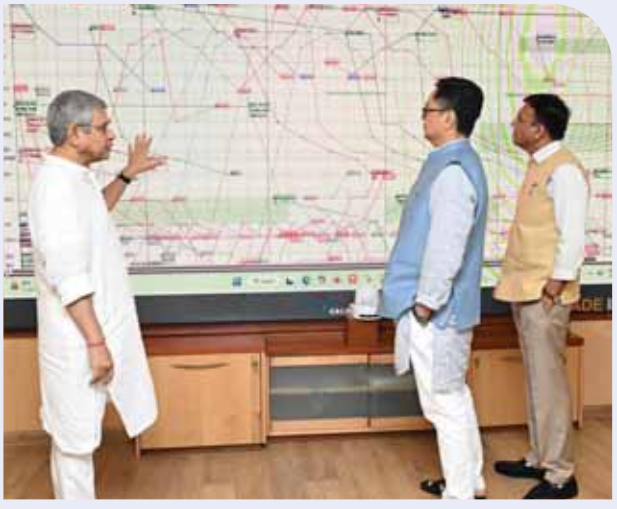
The completion of the gauge conversion project in the border area of aspirational district Bahraich is expected to give a major impetus to the region's socio-economic development. The direct Broad Gauge connection will also provide better access to wider markets for local products and strengthen economic linkages between the border areas and major cities of Uttar Pradesh and beyond.

The Railway Minister said that seven major railway networks are being strengthened through the addition of third and fourth lines wherever double lines already exist. He highlighted the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Moradabad-Sitapur-Burhwal-Gonda-Gorakhpur network serving Purvanchal and said that the Delhi to Gonda section has already been approved.

MR said that a major transformation in the state's rail connectivity would come with the development of high-speed rail connectivity. Referring to the proposed High Speed Rail connectivity, MR said travel times would be significantly reduced. He said the Delhi-Agra journey would take 58 minutes, Delhi-Kanpur 1 hour 45 minutes, Delhi-Lucknow 2 hours 12 minutes and Delhi-Prayagraj around three hours. He added that Delhi-Varanasi would take about three and a half hours.

Railway Minister further highlighted that the proposed connectivity would eventually extend towards Patna. He said the 1,170-km journey between Delhi and Patna could be completed in around four and a half hours.■

MR Walks Union Ministers Through Railways' AI-Powered 'War Room'



In a demonstration of Indian Railways' growing use of AI and real-time data, Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw walked Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju and Union Minister for Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya through the functioning of the Railways' 'War Room' at Rail Bhawan in New Delhi on 13th August 2026. During the visit, MR showed how the War Room uses live railway station feeds, AI-based systems, and operational data to monitor railway activities and support timely action.

Key Highlights

- The War Room provides live feeds of railway stations, including platforms, foot-over bridges, and areas outside the station.
- Live feeds from stations such as New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin can be monitored from a central location.
- Officials can also zoom into individual camera feeds to examine a particular location in greater detail.
- The system can respond to prompts and provide information about what happened at a particular location, helping officials understand incidents more quickly.
- During rush periods, festivals, and high-footfall occasions, the War Room can be used to monitor activity across stations.
- The system also tracks train movement and delays, helping officials identify which trains are delayed and understand the reason.
- This information can help railway teams assess the situation and determine what action is required to prevent further delays.■

MR Reviews Yatri Suvidha Kendra

Projects at Anand Vihar and Udhna Station Ahead of Festive Rush

Taking another step towards better-organised passenger facilities at major stations, Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw reviewed the progress of passenger holding area projects at Anand Vihar Terminal and Udhna Railway Station from Rail Bhawan, New Delhi, on 14th August, 2026. Union Minister of State for Railways, V. Somanna, was also present at the meeting. The review focused on expediting ongoing works, addressing site-related challenges, and ensuring the timely completion of the facilities. It also covered civil works, removal of obstructions, utility shifting, structural works, passenger amenities and other associated facilities. The Yatri Suvidha Kendra is to be completed before the forthcoming major festival rush to provide safer, more organised and passenger-centric arrangements.



Proposed Anand Vihar Terminal Railway

The Yatri Suvidha Kendras (Passenger Holding Areas) are being developed to provide dedicated space for unticketed and waiting passengers, helping decongest station platforms, circulating areas and station approaches during peak passenger movement. The facilities are designed to ensure orderly passenger circulation and provide a comfortable waiting environment before passengers enter the station/platform area.

The Kendras will provide spacious covered waiting and seating areas, dedicated ticketing facilities, toilets and washroom facilities for men and women, drinking water and other essential passenger amenities. Public Address and passenger information systems, CCTV surveillance and security arrangements, adequate lighting, electrical and S&T facilities, display boards, signage, organised passenger circulation and furniture are also being provided.

Anand Vihar Terminal

At Anand Vihar Terminal, the Yatri Suvidha Kendra is being developed in two phases. Phase-I will provide organised space for approximately 4,000 passengers, with work on foundations, plinth beams, structural steel fabrication and other associated activities progressing at a fast pace.

Phase-II will further strengthen the facility's passenger-handling capacity, enabling it to accommodate around 7,000 passengers on completion.

Udhna Railway Station

At Udhna Railway Station, the Yatri Suvidha Kendra is planned to accommodate around 15,000 passengers at a time. Significant progress has already been achieved at the site. After completion, the Udhna station will provide improved connectivity between the holding area and the platforms, supporting the orderly movement of passengers and better management of passenger flows within the station premises.

The Yatri Suvidha Kendras at Anand Vihar Terminal and Udhna Railway Station will strengthen Indian Railways' capacity to handle large passenger gatherings in a safe, comfortable and organised manner, while reducing congestion and improving passenger movement during peak travel periods.

The initiatives reflect Indian Railways' continued focus on upgrading passenger infrastructure at major stations through improved facilities, technology and organised passenger management, ensuring a more seamless travel experience for the millions of passengers who rely on the railway network every day.■

Mumbai Suburban Rail Gets A Major Boost

Prioritises Manufacturing of 238 AC EMU Rakes

In a major boost to Mumbai's suburban rail capacity, Union Minister for Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw, on 20th August 2026, informed that the Ministry of Railways has prioritised the manufacturing of 238 AC EMU rakes through its Production Units, the ICF, Chennai, RCF Kapurthala, and MCF, Raebareli. The step has been taken to ensure the timely availability of rolling stock in line with the commissioning of infrastructure under the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP).

An indicative production programme provides for 120 AC EMU rakes through ICF, 71 rakes through RCF, and 47 rakes through MCF, taking the total to 238 rakes. Indian Railways' Production Units have proven their capability to manufacture modern passenger rolling stock, including Air-Conditioned EMUs, Vande Bharat trainsets, and Vande Metro trainsets.

The Railway Board has approved the procurement of the sanctioned AC EMU rakes based on existing and proven RDSO/ICF specifications, facilitating expeditious manufacturing and supply of the rolling stock.



The supply is planned to commence from 2027, with the entire sanctioned quantity scheduled for completion by 2030. The availability of the first trainsets during 2027, followed by completion of the entire requirement by 2030, will help bridge the gap between infrastructure commissioning and rolling stock induction, and enable optimum utilisation of the infrastructure.

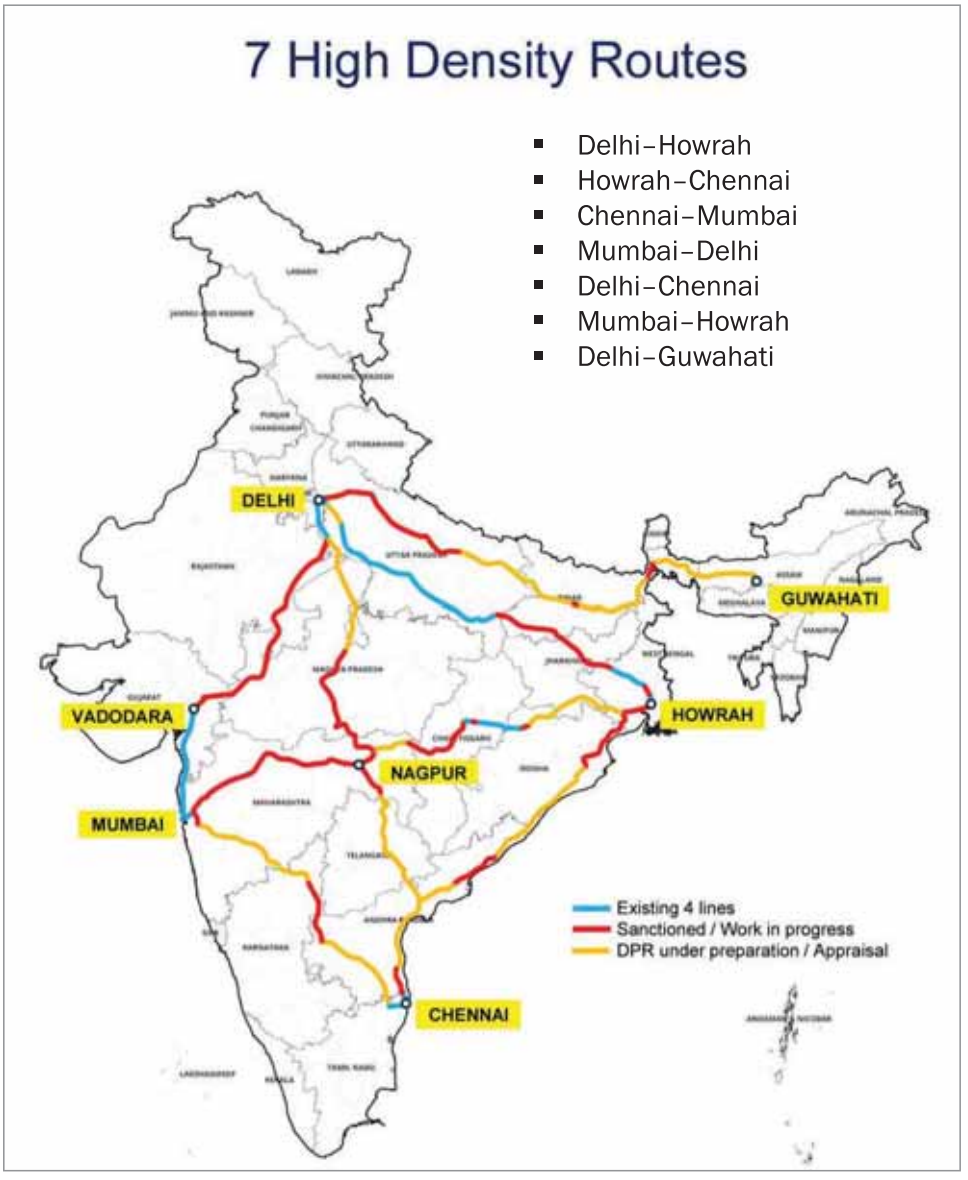
At present, 3,234 EMU local services, including AC EMU services, are operated by Western Railway and Central Railway. Western Railway operates 1,414 services, including 133 AC services, while Central Railway operates 1,820 services, including 94 AC services.■



11,000 km High-Density Network

Gets A Four-Laning Push Across Key Routes: RM

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw outlined the scale and significance of the seven high-density railway routes that carry a major share of Bharat's total rail traffic. On 26th August 2026, he highlighted that these routes, spread across nearly 11,000 km, account for around 41% of total railway traffic while covering just 16% of the railway network.



Under the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian Railways is moving towards four-laning the entire high-density network to increase capacity and support the growing movement of passengers and freight across the country.

The seven high-density routes connect some of Bharat's biggest cities and regions, including:

- Delhi–Howrah
- Howrah–Chennai
- Chennai–Mumbai
- Mumbai–Delhi
- Delhi–Chennai
- Mumbai–Howrah
- Delhi–Guwahati

The ongoing expansion work is aimed at creating four railway lines across the high-density network, helping increase capacity on some of the busiest routes in the country.

The Minister also underlined the environmental and economic advantages of rail transport.

The expansion of these high-density routes is significant as it will help create more capacity across the railway network and support the future growth of passenger and freight traffic. Under the leadership of Prime Minister, the four-laning of these key routes is part of a larger effort to build a railway network with greater capacity, lower transport costs and cleaner mobility.■

₹9,450-Cr Multi-Tracking Projects in 4 States

Gets Cabinet Approval, Adding 410 km To Rail Network

In a significant push to expand and strengthen the country's railway network, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on 19th August, 2026, approved four projects of the Ministry of Railways with a total cost of approximately ₹9,450 crore. These projects include:

- **Kharagpur – Bhadrak (Ranital) 4th Line – 173 km (West Bengal and Odisha)**
- **Bhadrak – Haridaspur 4th Line – 75 km (Odisha)**
- **Gummidipundi – Gudur 3rd and 4th Line – 90 km (Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu)**
- **Cuttack – Paradeep (Badabandha) 3rd and 4th Line - 72 km (Odisha)**

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

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

The four projects covering eight districts across the states of West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 410 km. The proposed multi-tracking projects will enhance connectivity to approximately 6,448 villages, which have a population of about 60 lakhs.

The proposed capacity enhancement will improve rail connectivity to several prominent tourist



destinations across the country, including Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhitarkanika National Park, Maa Bhadrakali temple, Maa Dhamarai temple, Panchalingeswar temple, Talsari–Udaypur and Chandipur beaches, Pulicat lake, Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary, Lord Veeraraghava Perumal temple, Gada Kujanga Jagannath temple, Sarala temple, Dhabaleswar temple, Lalitgiri (a Buddhist site), etc.

The proposed projects are essential routes for the transportation of commodities such as coal, iron ore, cement, iron and steel, containers, automobiles, food grains, etc. The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of 76 MTPA (million tonnes per annum). As Railways is an environment-friendly and energy efficient mode of transportation, these projects will help in achieving climate goals and minimizing the logistics cost of the country, reduce oil imports by approximately 13 crore litres, and lower CO2 emissions by approximately 65 crore kg, which is equivalent to the plantation of 2.60 crore trees.

IR Gives Nod To Several Key Projects

Visakhapatnam Coaching Yard Set for Upgradation



In a major boost to passenger infrastructure and operational efficiency, Indian Railways has approved the remodelling of the Visakhapatnam Coaching Yard of South Coast Railway at a cost of ₹299 crore. Visakhapatnam Railway Station is a major coaching terminal, handling nearly 80,000 passengers every day, with an average of 113 trains daily. Owing to the existing yard layout, terminating and through trains are required to negotiate surface crossings, leading to detention at approach signals, reduced platform availability and operational constraints.

The scope of work includes:

- Dismantling of line loop lines and reorganising the point zones.
- Widening of the existing six platforms.
- Construction of six additional platforms equipped with modern passenger amenities.
- Construction of six additional railway lines.
- Development of passenger utilities, including ramps, lifts and escalators on the widened platforms to improve accessibility and passenger convenience.
- Creation of a new entrance on the eastern side of the station along with relocation of the Passenger Reservation System (PRS).
- Installation of Electronic Interlocking (EI) in the Visakhapatnam station yard along with development of surface parking facilities and an efficient circulating area plan.
- Improved Operational Efficiency and Passenger Convenience

The remodelling project will significantly improve operational efficiency by reducing congestion within the coaching yard, increasing platform availability, and facilitating smoother movement of trains. The additional infrastructure will enable Visakhapatnam station to handle growing passenger demand while improving punctuality and reducing detention of trains.■

Wadi-Raichur Electric Traction Upgrade Project Cleared

In a significant step towards strengthening railway infrastructure and enhancing capacity on high-density routes, Indian Railways approved a ₹220 crore project for the upgradation of the Electric Traction System from 1×25 kV to 2×25 kV on the Wadi-Raichur section of South Central Railway on 30th July, 2026. The project covers a 102 Route Kilometre (204 Track Kilometre) double-line section and forms part of Indian Railways' ongoing efforts to modernise traction infrastructure on key rail corridors.

The upgraded traction system will strengthen traction infrastructure and support higher traffic requirements on one of the important sections of the railway network. The Wadi-Raichur section is part of the High Density Network (HDN) Route-7 connecting Mumbai-Pune-Wadi-Raichur-Guntakal-Kadapa-Renigunta-Chennai.

The adoption of the 2×25 kV Electric Traction System will strengthen the existing electric traction infrastructure and improve the capability of the section to handle increasing passenger and freight traffic.■

Multitracking Project Cleared For Danapur-Fatuha Section

In a major boost to rail capacity in Bihar, Indian Railways approved the multitracking of the 29 km Danapur to Fatuha section of ECR at a cost of ₹976 crore on 1st August, 2026. The project will decongest one of the busiest stretches on the Patna rail corridor and create room for a large increase in both passenger and freight services.

The sanctioned work covers three components. The third and fourth lines will be laid between Danapur and Patna. A third line will be laid between Rajendra Nagar and Patna Saheb. The third and fourth lines will be laid between Patna Saheb and Fatuha. The additional lines will ease congestion, minimise delays, and improve punctuality across the Patna region. In the first year of operation, the project will allow 22 additional passenger trains and 18 additional freight trains every day. It will also enable the handling of an additional 5.2 million tonnes per annum of freight traffic.

The project forms part of the quadrupling initiative on the Delhi, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction, Patna, Kiul, Bhagalpur, Khanna and Howrah route. The strengthened section is also vital for the upcoming 2120 MW thermal power plant at Chausa in Buxar district, which will depend on the rail movement of bulk inputs.■

Kavach 4.0 Approved For 660 Route Km In Izzatnagar Division

In a major boost to railway safety, Indian Railways approved the deployment of Kavach Version 4.0 across 660 Route Km of the Izzatnagar Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) at an estimated cost of ₹ 295 crore on 12th August, 2026.

The work has been approved under the umbrella work, “Provision of Kavach with a communication backbone of Long-Term Evolution (LTE) on balance sections of Indian Railways.”

Kavach is India's indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system designed to prevent Signal Passed at Danger (SPAD) incidents and train collisions through continuous monitoring of train movements. The system automatically applies brakes whenever required, enables trains to safely operate at maximum permissible speeds,



improves operational reliability, and supports safe train operations even during adverse weather conditions such as dense fog.

The approved work covers the balance sections of the Izzatnagar Division of North Eastern Railway. The provision of Kavach Version 4.0 will further strengthen the safety infrastructure on the identified railway sections.■

4-Lane ROB at Geratpur-Ahmedabad Section

In a major step towards safer and smoother movement of road traffic in Gujarat, Indian Railways approved the construction of a 4-lane Road Over Bridge (ROB) at Level Crossing No. 305 on the Geratpur-Ahmedabad section of Western Railway on 12th August, 2026. The work has been sanctioned at a cost of ₹153 crore.

The project has been sanctioned under Western Railway's ongoing umbrella work for the construction of road over and under bridges, foot over bridges, drainage improvement, and rebuilding of road over and under bridges.

The crossing lies in a densely populated urban area, which calls for longer approaches and a larger structure. The railway bridge portion will have a total length of 106 metres. It will comprise two composite girders of 53 metres each. A viaduct of 150 metres will follow. The railway approach will extend to 595 metres.■

USBRL Transforms Connectivity To Kashmir

Opens New Markets For Farmers And MSMEs: Railway Minister

From the mountains of Jammu to the heart of Kashmir, the commissioning of the 272-km USBRL has created a historic rail link between the Valley and the rest of India. The USBRL project covers the districts of Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban, Srinagar, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam and Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir.

The USBRL project is one of the most difficult new railway line projects undertaken in the country since independence. The terrain passes through the young Himalayas, which are full of geological surprises and numerous challenges. In this project, the Railway has constructed the world's highest Railway Bridge over the Chenab River in the Reasi district of Jammu & Kashmir. The iconic Chenab Bridge is 1,315 m long, with an arch span of 467 m and a height of 359 m above the river bed. Indian Railways' first cable-stayed bridge has been constructed across the Anji Khad in this project. It is a 473 m-long asymmetrical cable-stayed bridge with a single 193-m-high pylon in an inverted "Y" shape.

Apart from providing rail connectivity, about 215 km of roads (including a tunnel and 320 bridges) have also been constructed, which are used by the local population.

Kashmir's apples, dry fruits, Pashmina and handicrafts get wider market access; GCT commissioned in Samba, with new GCTs planned in Kathua, Anantnag, Jammu; FLS sanctioned for 190-km Jammu/Reasi-Poonch new line

The entire rail project is electrified using an overhead conductor system in tunnels and on open stretches. With all-weather, reliable and comfortable rail connectivity between the Valley and the rest of the Indian Railway network, tourism will get a big boost. After the commissioning of the project, the travel time between Katra and Srinagar has been reduced to just about three hours.

The USBRL project has made substantial socio-economic contributions to the region. The integration of the USBRL project with the Railway network has facilitated the transportation of raw materials and finished goods, supporting the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. Farmers and local businesses are now able to sell their signature Kashmir products,





such as apples, dry fruits, pashmina shawls and handicrafts, beyond the region, providing access to larger markets and promoting economic diversity.

To improve rail connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir, the following Final Location Surveys (FLS) have been sanctioned:

Name of Project	Status
Jalandhar Cantt. – Jammu Tawi (216 Km) 3rd line	Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared
Jammu - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Additional Line (78 Km)	FLS sanctioned for preparation of DPR. Field survey has been taken up.
Jammu/Reasi – Poonch New Line (190 Km)	FLS sanctioned for preparation of DPR. Field survey has been taken up.

After the preparation of the DPR, the project requires consultation with various stakeholders, including the State Governments, and necessary approvals, including appraisal by NITI Aayog, the Ministry of Finance, etc. As consultation with stakeholders is a continuous and dynamic process, exact timelines cannot be fixed.■

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme: 1,340 Stations Identified For Development

So far, 1,340 stations have been identified for development under this scheme, out of which four stations are located in Jammu and Kashmir.

State/UT	No. of Stations	Name of Stations
UT of Jammu and Kashmir	04	Budgam, Jammu Tawi, Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra

Progress of the stations:

- **Budgam station:** The works for the improvement of the circulating area, parking and approach road have been completed. The works for a 12-m-wide foot overbridge, improvement of the station building, and a new waiting hall and executive lounge with booking counters have been taken up.
- **Jammu Tawi station:** The works for the new station building at the second entry, development of the circulating area, parking, new platforms, platform shelter, electrical sub-station and entrance ramp have been completed.
- **Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan station:** The works for the improvement of the station building, circulating area, parking, approach road, toilets, waiting rooms, entrance porch and signage have been completed.
- **Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra** station is under the master planning stage.

Development of stations, including those under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, is generally funded under Plan Head-53, 'Customer Amenities'. The details of allocation and expenditure under Plan Head-53 are maintained zone-wise by Zonal Railways and not station-wise or state-wise. Jammu and Kashmir is covered under the jurisdiction of one railway zone, namely Northern Railway. For this zone, an allocation of ₹7,944 crore has been made for the last five financial years and the current financial year, out of which an expenditure (up to June 2026) of ₹5,622 crore has been incurred so far.■

4,993 ROB/RUB Works Sanctioned At a Cost of Approx. ₹1,17,492 Cr

Sanctioning of works for Road Over Bridges (ROBs)/Road Under Bridges (RUBs) in lieu of Level Crossings (LCs) is a continuous and dynamic process of Indian Railways. Such works are prioritised and taken up on the basis of their impact on the safety of train operations, mobility of trains, impact on road users and feasibility, etc.

The number of ROBs/RUBs constructed on Indian Railways during the period 2004-14 vis-à-vis 2014-26 (up to May 2026) is as under:

Period	ROBs/ RUBs constructed
2004-14	4,148 Nos.
2014-26 (Upto May'26)	14,451 Nos. (16 Nos. in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir)

As on 01.06.2026, 4,993 ROB/RUB works are sanctioned at a cost of approx. ₹1,17,492 crore on Indian Railways which are at various stages of planning and execution.

As on date, 195 ROBs/RUBs exist in the Union Territory of J&K. Further, two ROB works have been sanctioned at a cost of approx. ₹87 crore in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir which are at various stages of planning and execution.

Further, the Railways have taken the following measures to expedite the progress of work:

- Joint survey with the concerned State Govt./ Road Owning Authority is done before finalizing the General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) to ensure smooth execution.
- Periodic meetings of Railway and State Government officials are held to resolve various issues related to ROB/RUB works.
- Standardization of superstructure and substructure drawings for various combinations of span, skewness and width of road on the Railway portion has been done to avoid delays during design approval. This has been issued in the form of a compendium, which can be directly adopted for ROBs across Railway lines for expeditious planning.

The details of Revised Estimates and expenditure for ROB/RUB works under Plan Head (PH)-30 are maintained zone-wise by Zonal Railways and not state-wise/district-wise. Jammu & Kashmir is covered under the jurisdiction of Northern Railway. This zone has been allocated a total of ₹763 crore under PH-30 for the FY 2026-27. The expenditure incurred under PH-30 by this zone during the year 2026-27 (up to May 2026) is ₹229 crore.■

Electrification



Electrification of the railway network on Indian Railways has been taken up in mission mode.

So far, about 99.6% of the Broad Gauge (BG) network has been electrified. The electrification of the remaining network has been taken up. Electrification carried out during 2014-26 and before 2014 is as under:

Period	Route Kilometre
Before 2014 (about 60 years)	21,801
2014-26	48,072

In Jammu & Kashmir, the entire existing Broad Gauge network has been electrified. Further, all new line/multi-tracking projects are being sanctioned and constructed with electrification.■

GCT Cargo Terminal Policy

"In order to encourage the setting up of cargo terminals through private investment, the 'Gati Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal (GCT)' policy has been launched. The location of GCTs is decided on the basis of demand from the industry, the potential for cargo traffic, availability of railway infrastructure and the overall logistics potential of the area.



So far, 142 Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals (GCTs) have been commissioned, including one GCT in the Samba district of Jammu & Kashmir. The 142 commissioned GCTs have an estimated freight handling capacity of 224 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). The policy has mobilized private investment of approximately ₹10,000 crore through these GCTs. Freight handled at these GCTs during 2025–26 was 146 MT.

In addition, In-Principle Approvals (IPAs) have been granted for the development of GCTs at 310 more locations, including three locations in Jammu & Kashmir i.e. in Kathua, Anantnag and Jammu districts.■

Signalling System Strengthened

Indian Railways is continuously modernizing its current signalling infrastructure as under:

Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation of points and signals in place of old mechanical signalling have been provided at 6,671 stations as on 30.06.2026, out of which Electronic Interlocking has been provided at 3,954 stations over Indian Railways, including 11 stations with Electronic Interlocking in five districts (Samba-1, Reasi-4, Ramban-3, Kathua-1, and Jammu-2) of Jammu & Kashmir during the last 5 years.

Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verifying track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6,671 stations up to 30.06.2026 over Indian Railways, including 11 stations in five districts (Samba-1, Reasi-4, Ramban-3, Kathua-1, and Jammu-2) of Jammu & Kashmir during the last 5 years.

Axle counters for automatic clearance of Block Section, including BPAC (Block Proving Axle Counter), are provided to ensure the complete arrival of a train without manual intervention before granting line clear to receive the next train and to reduce the human element. These systems have been provided on 6,085 Block Sections up to 30.06.2026 over Indian Railways, including 11 stations in five districts (Samba-1, Reasi-4, Ramban-3, Kathua-1, and Jammu-2) of Jammu & Kashmir during the last 5 years.

Kavach Works Okayed for 401 RKm

Kavach works have been sanctioned for about 401 RKm on the following sections passing through Jammu & Kashmir:

- Kathua–Jammu Tawi (76 RKm),
- Jammu Tawi–Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra (78 RKm),
- Katra - Banihal (112Rkm),
- Banihal–Baramulla (135 RKm).■

Train Services Introduced in Jammu & Kashmir

As the railway network straddles the boundaries of States/Union Territories, trains are introduced across such boundaries as per network requirements. However, Indian Railways (IR) constantly endeavours to improve connectivity for travelling passengers.

IR has introduced the following four pairs of Vande Bharat Express trains, which are catering to the needs of passengers at important stations like Jammu Tawi, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra and Badgam located within the jurisdiction of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir:

Train No. & Name
26405/26406 Amritsar-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express
26401/26402 Jammu Tawi-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express
26403/26404 Jammu Tawi-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express
22477/22478 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express

Further, it has been decided to introduce a train service between Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra and Badgam viz. 14687/14688 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-Badgam Express.

Apart from these, IR has also undertaken to extend the following services to MCTM Udhampur:

Train No. & Name
Extension of 12549/12550 Durg-Jammu Tawi Express up to Udhampur
Extension of 22941/22942 Indore-Jammu Tawi Express up to Udhampur
Extension of 18215/18216 Durg-Jammu Tawi Express up to Udhampur

*Accordingly, Jammu Tawi station is presently served by **114** train services while MCTM Udhampur station is served by **58** train services.Similarly, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra station is served by **46** train services, Srinagar is served by **16** train services and Budgam is served by **19** train services.*



Indian Railways' Expenditure Reaches ₹1.14 Lakh Crore By July, 39% of Annual Budget Grant

Indian Railways has spent ₹1,14,973 crore, or about 39% of its ₹2,93,030 crore budget grant for 2026-27, up to July 2026.

Safety is accorded the highest priority on Indian Railways. As a consequence of various safety



measures taken over the years, there has been a steep decline in the number of accidents.

On Indian Railways, the expenditure on safety-related activities has increased over the years as under:-

Year	Expenditure/Budget on Safety related activities (Rs. in Cr.)
2013-14	39,200
2022-23	87,336
2023-24	1,01,662
2024-25	1,14,022
2025-26	1,17,693
2026-27	1,20,389

Indian Railways' Lease Payments To IRFC and MoF Rise To ₹6,538 Crore In 2025-26



Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) is the dedicated market borrowing arm of the Indian Railways (IR). Its primary business is the financing of Rolling Stock Assets and Railway Infrastructure Projects and leasing them to IR. Moreover, IRFC has the mandate to lend to other entities which have forward and backward linkages with the Railways, such as power generation and transmission, mining, fuel, coal, warehousing, telecom, hotels and catering, etc.

However, during recent years, the Government of India has given adequate support to Indian Railways through Gross Budgetary Support, which has been utilized for infrastructure projects and Rolling Stock that were previously financed through Extra Budgetary Resources.

The details of principal repayment and interest payment of lease charges paid to IRFC and MoF by IR during the last 5 years are as under:

F.Y.	Principal Repayment	Interest Payment	Total (Rs. in Cr.)
2021-22	14,192	14,510	28,702
2022-23	16,922	17,267	34,189
2023-24	20,084	17,946	38,030
2024-25	23,938	21,630	45,568
2025-26	24,853	21,685	46,538

Debt servicing has stabilized over the last few years despite the shock of Covid.■

Capacity Enhancement and Infrastructure Augmentation by Indian Railways

514 Railway infrastructure projects of a total length of 40,000 km, Worth ₹8.31 lakh crore sanctioned

Capacity enhancement of the railway network has been taken up by Indian Railways on a large scale during the last 12 years. The details of commissioning/laying of new track across Indian Railways are given below:-

Period	New track Commissioned	Average commissioning of new tracks
2009-14	7,599 Km	4.2 Km/day
2014-26	36,429 Km	8.32 Km/day (nearly 2 times)

As on 01.04.2026, across Indian Railways, 514 Railway infrastructure projects (169 New Lines, 29 Gauge Conversion and 316 Doubling) of a total length of 40,000 km, costing approx. ₹8.31 lakh crore, are sanctioned. The summary is as under:-

Category	No. of Projects	Total Length NL/GC/DL (km)	Length Commissioned till Mar'26 (Km)	Total Expenditure upto Mar'26 (₹in Crore)
New lines	169	16,634	3,361	1,57,572
Gauge conversion	29	3987	3,045	24,227
Doubling	316	19,379	6,177	1,23,454
TOTAL	514	40,000	12,583	3,05,253

Increasing Speed Potential

Speeding up of trains is a constant endeavor and a continuous process, which is dependent upon the upgradation of tracks, Signalling systems, OHE, high powered locos, modern coaches etc.

Upgradation and improvement of railway tracks on Indian Railways to increase the speed potential have been carried out on a large scale during the last 12 years. The measures for track upgradation include the use of 60 kg rails, wider base concrete sleepers, thick web switches, weldable CMS crossings, longer rail panels, H Beam sleepers, modern track renewal and maintenance machines etc.



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

Sectional Speed (kmph)	2014		2026	
	Track Km	%	Track Km	%
130 & above	5,036	6.3	24,173	22.5
110 - 130	26,409	33.3	62,482	58.1
< 110	47,897	60.4	20,897	19.4
Total	79,342	100	1,07,552	100

It may be seen that about 81% of the railway tracks on Indian Railways have been upgraded to 110 Kmph and above.

Further, two major routes i.e New Delhi–Mumbai and New Delhi–Howrah of the Golden Quadrilateral have been taken up for enhancing the speed potential up to 160 Kmph under Mission Raftaar.■

1670 MT Freight Loading Takes IR To A New High

142 GCTs and 36,429 km of New Tracks To Improve Capacity And Connectivity

For strengthening freight logistics, regional connectivity and increasing the freight movement share of Railways, Indian Railways has implemented a multi-pronged strategy to enhance freight efficiency, ensure seamless regional connectivity, and provide robust first-and-last-mile solutions. The key initiatives are categorized below –



Terminal Development: To improve the efficiency of rail freight handling at the terminals, Indian Railways has adopted a two-pronged approach: encouraging the development of modern rail freight terminals under the Gati Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal (GCT) policy and upgrading the infrastructure at railway owned goods sheds.

For encouraging the setting up of cargo terminals through private investment, the GCT policy has been launched. The location of the GCTs is decided on the basis of demand from industry, potential for cargo traffic, availability of railway infrastructure, and overall logistics potential of the area.

So far, 142 GCTs have been commissioned with an estimated freight handling capacity of 224 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). The policy has mobilized private investment of approximately ₹10,000 crore through these GCTs. Freight handled at these GCTs during 2025-26 was 146 MT.

Wagon Investment Schemes: Indian Railways has already implemented various schemes enabling the private sector to invest in wagons including commodity-focused specialized wagons such as wagons for cement, oil, steel, fly-ash etc. So far, around 275 rakes of special purpose wagons and 397 rakes of general-purpose wagons are operational, which are expected to improve the modal share in commodities like bulk cement, fly-ash, steel products, iron ore and coal etc. Besides, there is a separate scheme for the transportation of automobiles under which around 54 rakes owned by industry are operational.

Joint Parcel Product-Rapid Cargo Service (JPP-RCS) scheme: This scheme offers tailor–made logistics to meet the specific needs of customers and provide door-to-door parcel services. Under the scheme, provision has been made for online booking of parcel space in these services through aggregators (in addition to India Post) on the 'Virtual Aggregation Platform (VAP)'.

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

Dedicated Freight Corridors: The Ministry of Railways has taken up the construction of two Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) viz., the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) from Ludhiana to Sonnagar (1337 km) and Western Dedicated

Freight Corridor (WDFC) from Dadri to Jawaharlal Nehru Port Terminal (JNPT) (1506 km). Both the DFCs i.e. Eastern DFC (1337 km) and Western DFC (1506 km) have been commissioned.

On an average, about 443 trains are operated per day on DFCs. They have demonstrated robust operational performance. Freight volumes have steadily increased, with higher average speeds, faster turnarounds, and enhanced reliability. The DFC has contributed to creating additional paths on the conventional network by diverting freight traffic to EDFC and WDFC. As a result, Railways has been able to run additional goods and coaching services over its network.

A new DFC connecting Dankuni in the east to Surat in the west has been announced in the Union Budget 2026. The work of preparation/ updation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for this corridor has been taken up.

Freight Loading since 2014:

Year	Freight loading (in MT)
2014-15	1098
2015-16	1104
2016-17	1109
2017-18	1162
2018-19	1223
2019-20	1210
2020-21	1233
2021-22	1418
2022-23	1512
2023-24	1591
2024-25	1617
2025-26	1670

The freight loading of Indian Railways has increased to 1,670 MT in 2025-26, and thus Indian Railways has become the second-largest freight-carrying railway in the world.■

Rail Freight Loading Grows 9% in July to 141.3 MT, Revenue Rises ₹1,137 Crore

Indian Railways continued its strong operational performance during July 2026, registering healthy growth across both freight and passenger segments. Higher freight loading, increased passenger traffic, improved revenue generation, and enhanced movement of key commodities underscore Indian Railways' pivotal role in supporting economic growth, strengthening logistics, and providing reliable mobility across the country.

Indian Railways loaded 141.3 million tonnes of freight during July 2026, compared to 129.7 million tonnes during the corresponding month of the previous year, registering a 9 per cent growth.

Several major commodity groups recorded healthy year-on-year growth during July 2026. Iron ore loading increased by 22.2 per cent, coal by 11.5 per cent, food grains by 11.5 per cent, fertilizers by 12 per cent, and Balance Other Goods by 12.1 per cent, reflecting strong demand from the infrastructure, manufacturing, and agricultural sectors. With the increase in coal demand at thermal power plants, Indian Railways stepped up domestic coal supply to power plants by 20% in July compared to the corresponding month last year.



The increase in freight movement resulted in additional freight revenue of ₹1,137 crore over July 2025, registering an 8 per cent growth. Among the Zonal Railways, East Central Railway (33%), Eastern Railway (33%), West Central Railway (23%), and South Eastern Railway (10.33%) recorded notable growth in freight revenue.

Indian Railways carried 63.35 crore passengers during July 2026, compared to 62.19 crore during the corresponding month last year. Passenger traffic continued to grow across both suburban and non-suburban segments, reflecting the growing preference for rail travel across the country.■

Container Train Operations Simplified

With Single Licence and Uniform ₹25 Crore Fee

Framework to improve Ease of Doing Business and reduce transportation costs



In a major step towards simplifying and streamlining container rail freight operations, Indian Railways, on 5th August, 2026, approved modifications to the Model Concession Agreement (MCA) governing permission for operators to run container trains on the Indian Railways network. Under the approved changes, Container Train Operators (CTOs) will be permitted to run container trains on all routes across the network under a single All India Licence, with a uniform registration fee of ₹25 crore, doing away with the earlier system of separate permissions and fees for different route categories. The changes will be notified through a Gazette Notification.

Single License for All Routes

As part of the approved modifications, the existing route-wise categorisation of licences will be discontinued. Subject to approval by the Ministry of Railways, Container Train Operators will be granted a Single All India Licence, enabling them to operate container trains across all routes on the Indian Railways network.

Uniform Registration Fee

The earlier system of charging different registration fees for different route categories has been done away with. Every applicant will now deposit a non-refundable uniform registration fee of ₹25 crore to operate on all routes on the Indian Railways network.

No Fee on Extension

The approved amendments provide that the permission granted to a Container Train Operator may be extended for a further period of 20 years

after its expiry. This will be done by the Competent Authority for the same operator on application, subject to satisfactory performance. No extension fee will be charged for this extension or for any future extensions to the same operator.

Relief for Existing Operators

Operators already holding Category I licences may continue under their existing category until their concession period ends. On renewal or extension under the new licence, no fee will be charged to them.

Operators in Categories II, III, and IV may also continue in their existing categories until their concession period ends. For renewal or extension under the new licence, they will pay ₹15 crore. This is the difference between the new fee of ₹25 crore and the ₹10 crore already paid. This amount is non-refundable.

These operators may also choose to migrate early to the new licence before completing their 20-year concession period. They will pay the same amount of ₹15 crore for early migration.

Benefits for Industry

The uniform registration fee and removal of extension fees are expected to reduce regulatory and compliance costs for operators while simplifying the approval process.

The simplified licensing regime is expected to encourage greater private participation and expansion of container train operations, leading to improved rail-based freight movement across the country. Greater use of rail for container transportation is expected to reduce logistics costs for industry, particularly MSMEs, by providing a more efficient and cost-effective freight transport option.

An increased modal shift of container traffic from road to rail is also expected to ease congestion on highways, reduce fuel consumption, and lower carbon emissions, contributing to more sustainable freight transportation.

Towards a Uniform Licensing Regime

The approved amendments are aimed at establishing a simplified and uniform licensing framework for Container Train Operators across the Indian Railways network.

The reforms are expected to facilitate a streamlined approval mechanism while providing a common regulatory framework for container train operations under the Model Concession Agreement.■

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Vande Bharat Transports Live Donor Heart From Surat To Ahmedabad



Indian Railways achieved a historic milestone in the field of healthcare by successfully transporting a live donor heart by train for the first time in India on 31st July, 2026. The life-saving organ was transported from Surat to Ahmedabad aboard Train No. 20901 Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar Capital Vande Bharat Express, ensuring its safe and timely arrival for transplantation at the U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology & Research Centre, Ahmedabad.

Given the highly time-sensitive nature of organ transplantation, the operation required meticulous planning and seamless coordination among Indian Railways, the RPF, Gujarat State Police and medical teams. Every stage of the transportation was carefully synchronised to ensure that the donor heart reached the recipient hospital within the prescribed viability window.

A dedicated Green Corridor was created from Platform No. 1 of Ahmedabad Railway Station to the U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology & Research Centre by the Railway Protection Force and Gujarat State Police, enabling uninterrupted movement of the donor heart and ensuring that the transplant procedure could commence without delay.

Ved Prakash, Divisional Railway Manager, Ahmedabad, said, "This is a moment of immense pride and satisfaction for IR. The successful transportation of a live donor heart from Surat to Ahmedabad through Vande Bharat Express demonstrates our commitment to serving society beyond conventional passenger and freight transportation. In such life-saving missions, every minute is crucial.■

President Honours 16 RPF/RPSF Personnel For Distinguished And Meritorious Service

Recognising exemplary dedication and distinguished service to railway security, President of India, Droupadi Murmu, awarded the President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM) and Medal for Meritorious Service (MSM) to officers and staff of the RPF/RPSF on the occasion of Independence Day 2026.

President's Medal for Distinguished Service



Rajesh Lal
Assistant Security Commissioner
Railway Board

Medal for Meritorious Service

- Satya Prakash, Principal Chief Security Commissioner, NER
- C. S. Chengappa, Assistant Security Commissioner, Southern Railway
- Krishna Kumar Mishra, Assistant Security Commissioner, North Eastern Railway
- Vivek Verma, Assistant Security Commissioner, North Central Railway
- Moni Taro, Inspector, RPSF
- Barun Prasad Laheri, Inspector, RPSF
- H. K. Doddaiah, SI, SWR
- Kailash Prasad, Sub Inspector, NER
- Naresh Kumar, Sub Inspector, Northern Railway
- Guru Prasad Nagarikanti, Sub Inspector, South Central Railway
- Ram Prasad Meena, Assistant Sub Inspector (MT), Railway Protection Special Force
- E Arun Moli, Assistant Sub Inspector, Southern Railway
- Vikas Kumar, ASI, North Central Railway
- Niraj Ahlawat, Assistant Sub Inspector, Northern Railway
- Shankar Shivswami Edle, Head Constable, Central Railway

RCF Kapurthala Achieves Milestone

With First 19-Coach LHB Rake For Bangladesh Railway



Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala, achieved a major milestone in customised railway manufacturing with the rollout of its first rake of 19 LHB broad-gauge passenger coaches for Bangladesh Railway on 12 August 2026.

The first rake comprises 03 AC Sleeper Cars, 03 AC Chair Cars, 11 Non-AC Chair Cars and 02 Power Cars. These coaches incorporate several unique design features and modifications, many of which have been developed for the first time in LHB-type coaches.

The coaches have been specially customised to meet the operational and passenger requirements of Bangladesh Railway. The seating arrangement incorporates specially designed reclining chairs with stainless steel armrests and stainless steel footrests, offering multiple reclining positions for enhanced passenger comfort. The coaches are equipped with a number of passenger-centric features, including fans in AC coaches, an integrated CCTV surveillance system, a passenger alarm system, partially openable windows, a Baby Care Room and a Prayer Room. Considering the specific operating conditions, the roof structure has been strengthened to withstand additional loading arising from passengers travelling on the roof during peak traffic periods.

A major technological feature is the incorporation of crashworthy design provisions complying with the European Standard EN 15227. This required a comprehensive redesign of the car body shell to enhance collision performance and passenger safety. The electrical system of these coaches has also been specially designed for 415 V operation, as against the conventional 750 V system used in Indian Railways coaches.



The association between RCF and Bangladesh Railway began with the successful supply of 120 LHB broad gauge passenger coaches during 2015-16. Building upon this successful partnership, Bangladesh Railway once again entrusted RCF, through RITES, with a prestigious order in 2024 for the manufacture and supply of 200 broad gauge passenger coaches in seven variants.■

Railways Begins Nationwide Drive

To Clean and Disinfect Drinking-Water Infrastructure

In a major step towards ensuring safer and cleaner drinking water for passengers, IR has launched a special cleanliness drive across its network, focusing on the cleaning and disinfection of drinking-water tanks and filtration systems at railway stations from 24th August 2026.

The initiative is part of a broader action plan for strengthening drinking-water quality management across Indian Railways. The action plan emphasises frequent inspection and maintenance of the entire drinking-water system, along with water-quality testing at the source as well as at the point of consumption, rather than relying solely on end-of-pipe water testing.

During the drive, Zonal Railways will undertake a comprehensive inspection of water sources, treatment and filtration plants, underground and overhead tanks, PVC tanks, water booths, taps, and water dispensing points. All drinking-water tanks will be drained, desludged, scrubbed, and disinfected. Measures will also be taken to ensure tight covers and appropriate protection of vents and overflow points from birds, animals, and algae.

Strengthening Water Quality Management

As part of the broader action plan, the Railway Board has advised Zonal Railways to undertake a comprehensive inspection of water coolers and water purification systems. Water tanks in coolers will be thoroughly cleaned, leakages in coolers, pipelines, and taps will be addressed promptly, and 100 per cent hygiene around water-cooler dispensing areas will be ensured.

UV/RO purification systems for water coolers will be checked for proper functioning and provided wherever required. Scheduled maintenance, servicing, overhauling, and timely replacement of filter candles and other components will be undertaken wherever due. New UV/RO systems, based on their condition and requirement, are also to be taken up in mission mode. The prescribed measures for cleaning, purification, and quality monitoring will also be applicable to Water Vending Machines to ensure that drinking water dispensed through such facilities meets the required safety and hygiene standards.



The officials will undertake physical, chemical, and bacteriological testing of water samples from identified locations, including sources, post-treatment outlets, tanks, coolers, vending machines, and representative taps or booths, wherever feasible. Daily residual-chlorine monitoring will also be undertaken, with immediate re-chlorination or other corrective action wherever required.

Monitoring of Infrastructure & Corrective Action

The Railway Board has directed Zonal Railways to monitor and expedite works already sanctioned for the replacement and construction of new overhead and underground tanks. A summary of these sanctioned works will also be prepared, and fresh sanctions, wherever required, will be processed. Suitable filtration and purification systems for different situations, including at-source and at-tap filtration, are also being worked out to identify and prevent contamination at various stages of the drinking-water supply chain.

Through these coordinated measures, Indian Railways is strengthening preventive inspection, infrastructure maintenance, cleaning and disinfection, water-quality testing, and corrective-action mechanisms across the drinking-water supply system.■

Indian Railways Steps Up Action Against Food Quality Violations, Imposes ₹5.13 Crore Fine in 3 Years

Railways serves around 58 crore meals annually, backed by a stringent system of inspections, monitoring and enforcement to safeguard food quality and hygiene. Food-quality-related complaints account for only about 0.0008% of meals served. Over the last three years, IRCTC has acted firmly on complaints, imposing ₹5.13 crore in fines, issuing 54 show-cause notices, terminating six contracts and debarring licensees for food quality and hygiene violations. The list of debarred licensees is published on the IRCTC's website.

Regular and surprise inspections are conducted by Railway/IRCTC officials, including Food Safety Officers, to ensure quality, hygiene, safety and regulatory compliance.

Indian Railways continuously endeavours to provide good quality and hygienic food items to travelling passengers as per the prescribed norms. Necessary steps are accordingly taken by Indian Railways from time to time to ensure the same. The following measures have been taken to improve quality, hygiene and food safety:

- Supply of meals from designated Base Kitchens and commissioning of modern Base Kitchens at identified locations.
- Installation of CCTV cameras in Base Kitchens.
- Shortlisting and use of popular and branded raw materials for food production.
- Deployment of Food Safety Supervisors at Base Kitchens.
- Deployment of on-board IRCTC supervisors.
- Introduction of QR codes on meal packets supplied in trains to enhance food safety, transparency and passenger awareness. The QR code provides details regarding the date of packing, name of the licensee and FSSAI license number, for the information of passengers.
- Regular deep cleaning and periodical pest control in Base Kitchens and Pantry Cars.
- Mandatory Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) certification to ensure compliance with Food Safety Norms.
- Regular training is conducted by IRCTC to enhance the skills of catering staff, focusing on customer service areas, i.e., communication, courteous behaviour, service standards, personal grooming, and hygiene.
- Third-Party Audit is done to examine the hygiene and quality of food in Pantry Cars and Base Kitchens. A customer satisfaction survey is also conducted.
- Regular and surprise inspections by Railway/ IRCTC officials, including Food Safety Officers.



Railway Board Chairman Reviews Functioning of IRCTC War Room



Chairman and CEO, Railway Board, Satish Kumar reviewed the functioning of the IRCTC War Room at the IRCTC office on 23rd August, 2026. He directed that systems for passenger feedback, kitchen monitoring, inspections, and prompt resolution of complaints be further strengthened to improve the quality and hygiene of catering services.

During the review, he interacted with the team responsible for monitoring and feedback activities and emphasised making the existing processes more accountable, technology-driven, and outcome-oriented. He directed that the 'Rail Madad' interface be made more automated, enabling passengers to register their complaints conveniently with a single click.

To strengthen real-time monitoring of kitchens, directions were issued to expand the existing camera-based surveillance system. Additional cameras and a PTZ (Pan-Tilt-Zoom) camera are to be installed in raw-material storage areas. During the review, deficiencies were identified in a kitchen at Anantapur, South Central Railway, based on inspection and video surveillance, and corrective action was directed. Special attention was also given to reviewing the entire process of preparing rotis and parathas to identify shortcomings and ensure consistency in quality.

The accountability of third-party inspection agencies was also reviewed. Agencies found to be consistently underperforming should face appropriate action, including removal from the approved list, wherever necessary. The Chairman further directed that AI-based systems for detecting issues such as rats and cockroaches should be linked with timely warnings and corrective action.■



Safe drinking water remains a key passenger amenity, with Indian Railways meeting the demand for Packaged Drinking Water (PDW), 'Rail Neer', in important trains and at stations through its operational plants across the country. Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been entrusted with the task of setting up Rail Neer plants at identified locations based on the requirement and demand for Rail Neer across Indian Railways. The tentative cost of setting up a Rail Neer Plant (PPP Model) is about ₹10 crore for a plant capacity of 1,00,000 bottles per day. The costs include the construction of a Pre-engineered Building (PEB) Shed and the installation of Plant & Machinery, excluding the cost of land.

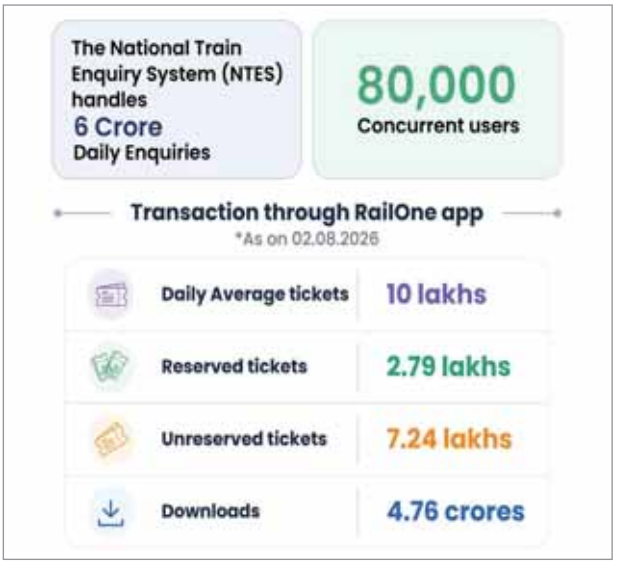
The details of the 19 operational Rail Neer plants :

Plant	State
Nangloi	Delhi
Danapur	Bihar
Ambernath	Maharashtra
Palur	Tamil Nadu
Maneri	Madhya Pradesh
Amethi	Uttar Pradesh
Nagpur	Maharashtra
Una	Himachal Pradesh
Hapur	Uttar Pradesh
Jagiroad	Assam
Sankrail	West Bengal
Kota	Rajasthan
Mandideep	Madhya Pradesh
Sanand	Gujarat
Bhusawal	Maharashtra
Bhubaneswar	Odisha
Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh
Simhadri	Andhra Pradesh
Vijayawada	Andhra Pradesh

RailOne App

Records 10 Lakh Daily Ticket Bookings

With a view to expanding the digital mode of procurement of reserved as well as unreserved tickets, Railways launched the RailOne App on 1st July, 2025. This App enables passengers to book reserved as well as unreserved tickets on their mobile phones. This App combines all the public-facing services of Indian Railways, like reserved ticketing, unreserved ticketing and platform ticketing, train enquiry, PNR enquiry, RailMadad, etc. into a single platform. This, in effect, brings the passenger reservation system facility to the passenger's palm. The App facilitates users in accessing multiple services through a Single-Sign-On (SSO) facility, eliminating the necessity of downloading multiple Railways applications and remembering several passwords.



National Train Enquiry System (NTES)



The NTES, implemented in 2000, provides passengers with near real-time train running information, including arrival/departure status and train schedules through multiple interfaces such as enquiry counters, the NTES website, mobile applications (Android & iOS) and the nationwide Rail Enquiry Number 139. Its key features include Spot Your Train, Live Station, Train Schedule, and Trains between Stations, enabling passengers to access authentic and reliable information conveniently.

The NTES mobile application, launched in October 2014 (Android) and October 2015 (iOS), has recorded more than 4.5 crore downloads on Android and 16 lakh downloads on iOS as on 1st August, 2026. At present, NTES handles about 80,000 concurrent users and processes over 6 crore enquiries daily. It has been generally appreciated by passengers.

The deployment of the NTES, which provides passengers with easy access to authentic and near real-time train running information through multiple digital platforms, including the website, mobile applications and Rail Enquiry Number 139, has significantly reduced the need for passengers to visit railway enquiry counters.

In cases of train cancellation, the online e-ticketing system NGeT (Next Generation E-ticketing) automatically initiates the process of refunding immediately after the scheduled time of departure of the train, and the applicable refund is credited to the passenger's bank account. Automatic refunds linked to train cancellation are presently available only for e-Tickets booked online and are not available for counter tickets, in which case the passenger holding a counter ticket is required to visit the nearest PRS counter.

Presently, approximately 89% of the reserved tickets are booked online, as compared to about 49% in 2013-14. Unreserved tickets booked through various non-counter modes have increased to nearly 39%.

Indian Railways Strengthens Fire Response With 177 Relief Trains And 71 Mock Drills

In Emergency, Initial Focus is on Saving Lives, Attending to the Injured: MR



- **Minimum Two Fire Extinguishers in Each Coach, Water Mist Fire Extinguishers on Pantry Cars and Passenger Emergency Communication Facilities Strengthen Coach Safety**
- **Integrated Rail Madad Helpline 139 Enables Quick Access to Emergency Assistance for Passengers**
- **177 Accident Relief Trains, 100 Breakdown Cranes and 170 Medical Relief Units Strengthen Railway Emergency Response**

Indian Railways is continuously engaged in mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery for all foreseeable hazards, including fire incidents that might occur at railway stations and in trains due to a chance combination of factors, across all its Zones.

The important fire safety measures taken by Indian Railways at its railway stations are as follows:

- Railway stations are provided with portable fire extinguishers to be used in case of fires.
- Railway stations are also provided with fire buckets with sand and water to be used in case of fires.
- Indian Railways ensures that its frontline staff is always prepared to address emergencies by giving them training on fire fighting, first aid skills and disaster management, which have been integrated into the training modules for frontline staff such as Station Managers, Train Manager (Guards), Commercial-cum-Ticket Clerks, Loco Pilots, Assistant Loco Pilots etc.
- Indian Railways Institute of Disaster Management (IRIDM), a Specialized Training Institute, conducts regular courses in fire fighting, first aid, trauma management, etc. to train first responders i.e. Train crew and on-board staff, such as Train Ticket Examiners, AC Coach Staff, and Escorting staff, who play a vital role in the 'Golden Hour'.
- Proper communication protocols have been laid down for officials at railway stations and control rooms to contact the nearest fire brigade, police, medical facilities, ambulances, district administration, National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, etc. Their contact numbers have been made available to all concerned railway authorities.
- Relay rooms and electronic interlocking rooms at larger railway stations are being provided with automatic fire alarms.
- Railway stations are equipped with control phones for the Stations Masters to immediately disconnect the power supply to the overhead equipment (OHE) in case of fires from OHE.
- Public address systems at railway stations can be used to guide the public during evacuation in case of emergencies like fires.
- Announcements are made regularly to sensitize the public/passengers regarding the importance of not carrying inflammable items.
- At larger railway stations, passenger luggage is scanned.
- Drives are conducted during sensitive periods to prevent carriage of inflammable materials by passengers.
- Electrical systems at stations are maintained regularly to prevent any chance of fire due to

an electrical short-circuit. Miniature Circuit Breakers and Moulded Case Circuit Breakers are used in electrical panels. Emergency lights are provided at stations.

- Exits are well-marked at stations to aid the public in evacuation during emergencies.
- Adequate water storage is available at larger railway stations equipped with coach watering facilities for use during fire emergencies.
- Flame-based cooking is not allowed on railway station platforms.
- Regular audits/safety drives of all electrical installations in and around railway stations and office buildings are being conducted.

Fire safety in trains of Indian Railways encompasses all phases of the design, manufacturing, maintenance and operation of trains in Indian Railways. To ensure that incidents of fire do not occur on trains of Indian Railways, a large number of steps have been taken, the more important of which are as follows:

- Provision of a minimum of two fire extinguishers in all coaches over Indian Railways.
- Fire detection and suppression systems have been provided in fire-prone areas of Power cars and Pantry cars, as mentioned before.
- Fire and smoke detection systems have been provided in coaches as per extant guidelines, as mentioned before.
- Water mist-type fire extinguishers are being provided on Pantry cars and Power cars in a phased manner.
- Provision of Emergency windows in coaches for evacuation in case of fire.
- Use of fire-retardant materials as per global fire-retardant norms in coaches for seats/ berths, panels, flooring, insulation, toilets etc for improved fire safety.



- Use of fire-retardant E-beam cables in coaches.
- Use of different levels of protection in the form of fuses, Miniature Circuit Breakers (MCBs) and Motor Protection Circuit Breakers (MPCBs) in the electrical circuits to prevent damage from electrical faults/surges.
- Provision of an Aerosol-based fire suppression system in electrical cabinets.
- Further, upgradation of material in line with global standards is regularly being carried out, with new-generation materials being fitted in Amrit Bharat and Vande Bharat Sleeper trains.
- Display of "Fire Notices" for widespread information in all coaches to inform and alert passengers regarding various "Dos" and "Don'ts" to prevent fire. These include messages regarding not carrying any inflammable material or explosives, the prohibition of smoking inside the coaches, and penalties etc., as mentioned before.
- Prohibition of flame-based cooking in coaches.
- There are four Emergency Talk Back Units in every coach of Vande Bharat. This facilitates communication between passengers and the Train Manager/Loco Pilots in case of exigencies. Passenger Emergency Alarm Buttons have been provided in Vande Bharat trains. Each coach has been provisioned with four such push buttons for emergency use.
- There is an integrated helpline called Rail Madad, which can be accessed by users through the number 139 for seeking help during emergencies.

While the above measures have helped Indian Railways to prevent the occurrence of fire incidents in the first place, Indian Railways is always prepared to effectively address emergencies like fires that can possibly be caused by a chance combination of factors.

Indian Railways is always prepared to respond in a quick and effective manner in case of any unusual incident, including fire. In case of such an emergency, the first responders are the railway staff who are trained in handling such emergencies effectively. Immediately on receipt of information regarding such emergencies, Indian Railways responds immediately, utilizing its own setup, equipment, doctors, and staff, while also coordinating with the state government and the

district administration to start rescue and relief operations immediately.

The initial focus is on saving lives, attending to the injured and providing succour to stranded passengers.

Indian Railways has a network of 177 Accident Relief Trains (ARTs), 100 high capacity 140T breakdown diesel-hydraulic cranes, and 170 Accident Relief Medical Equipment (ARME) Scale-I units placed at identified locations, which cover the entire rail network. In addition, ARMEs Scale-II units and portable medical kits for accidents have also been provided at identified locations to render immediate medical support. ARMEs Scale-I units are like hospitals on wheels that are rushed to the site, fully equipped with medical equipment, supplies and personnel.

Additional equipment like road vehicles, earthmovers, ambulances etc are also requisitioned for attending to such accidents. The roles of every officer and staff member in case of such emergencies are laid down, and they are appropriately trained and empowered to discharge their duties.

At the same time, upon a report of any major unusual incident, including fire, Indian Railways immediately informs the local civil administration, including district authorities, fire brigade, medical facilities, the police forces, etc. as required, to assist in addressing the situation immediately and effectively. Systems and protocols have been put in place all over Indian Railways for a coordinated response by both the Railway and these other agencies.

Procedures and guidelines for addressing emergency situations, including cases like fires, have been laid down in the Disaster Management Plans of Zones and Divisions, General and Subsidiary Rules, Accident Manuals and Operating Manuals. Railway stations maintain and display lists of nearest fire stations along with their telephone numbers as well as all Railway and non-Railway medical institutions, private practitioners and first-aiders available in the neighbourhood for immediate emergency response.

A total of 71 full-scale mock drills were conducted during 2025-26 including four such drills in Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Rajkot and Bhavnagar divisions.■

19,700 km Of Railway Tracks Secured With Safety Fencing

Indian Railways takes strict legal action against offenders involved in stone pelting under the relevant provisions of law. Alongside enforcement, the Railways has, as of 12th August 2026, strengthened preventive measures to safeguard passengers, protect railway property and curb incidents of stone pelting:

- Regular drives are conducted against anti-social elements like drunkards, mischievous elements, etc. in the affected sections/black spots, and the apprehended persons are prosecuted under the legal provisions of law.
- The train escorting parties have been sensitized to remain more vigilant in the vulnerable sections/spots, where incidents of vandalism on trains are frequently reported.
- Various awareness programmes, including OPERATION SATHI, are conducted regularly in inhabited areas adjacent to railway tracks to sensitize people to the menace of stone pelting and its consequences.
- Detailed guidelines have been issued regarding the action to be taken to control incidents of stone pelting on moving trains. Analysis of these incidents, followed by substantive action, is taken to curb these incidents.
- Regular coordination with GRP/Local Police is maintained by RPF, with critical information being sharing to control the menace of stone pelting on trains.
- State Level Security Committees of Railways (SLSCR) have been constituted for all States/Union Territories under the Chairmanship of the respective Directors General of Police/Commissioners of Police of the States/Union Territories for regular monitoring and review of security arrangements of the Railways.

The safety of train operations is accorded top priority on Indian Railways. To date, about 19,700 km of fencing has been provided along the railway tracks across Indian Railways, which includes sections situated in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.■





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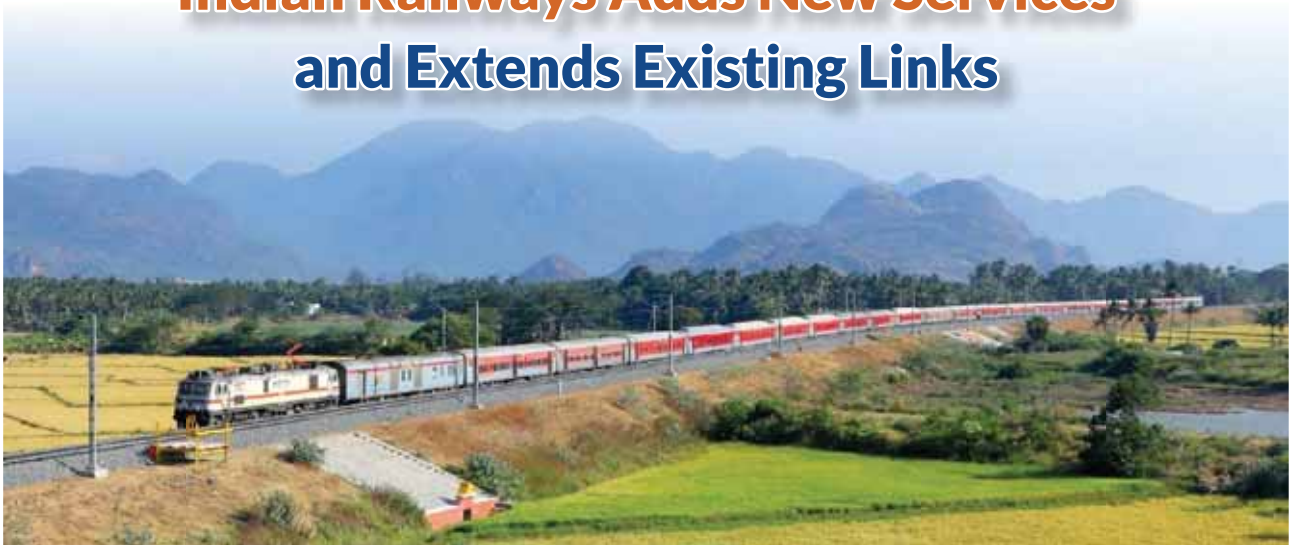
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Indian Railways Adds New Services and Extends Existing Links



Two Express Trains Merged To Create Direct Chitrakoot-Pratapgarh Rail Link

Indian Railways, on 8th August, 2026, approved the merger of Train Nos. 14109/10 Chitrakutdham Karwi-Kanpur Central Express and 14123/24 Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh-Kanpur Central Express as Train Nos. 14123/24 Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh-Chitrakutdham Karwi Express. The merger will improve direct connectivity between Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh and Chitrakutdham Karwi, while strengthening connectivity between important destinations, including Kanpur Central, the Lucknow region, and Chitrakoot.

24-Coach Train to Provide Additional Passenger Capacity: As part of the operational benefits of the merger, the combined service will have enhanced passenger carrying capacity, with the existing 12-coach composition being increased to 24 coaches.

The merged service will improve direct rail connectivity between Chitrakoot and the Lucknow-Pratapgarh region, providing passengers with a more convenient travel option without the need for changing trains at Kanpur Central.

The merged service will continue to serve important stations including Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh, Chilbila, Maa Chandrika Devi Dham Antu, Amethi, Gauriganj, Kashimpur, Jais, Fursatganj, Rae Bareli, Harchandpur, Bachhrawan, Nigohan, Lucknow, Manak Nagar, Unnao, Kanpur Central, Bhimsen, Kathara Road, Patara, Ghatampur, Hamirpur Road, Yamuna South Bank, Bharwa Sumerpur, Ragaul, Banda, Atarra and Chitrakutdham Karwi.■

New Daily Train To Link Mumbai and Sawantwadi Road (510-km Konkan Route)

Indian Railways approved the introduction of a new daily Express train service between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (Mumbai) and Sawantwadi Road on 1st August, 2026. The new service will provide direct, convenient, and reliable rail connectivity across the 510-km route, benefiting thousands of passengers travelling for tourism, education, employment, business, and social purposes.

The proposed train will operate daily as Train No. 15087 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus-Sawantwadi Road Express and Train No. 15088 Sawantwadi Road-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Express.

The new daily Express service will provide commercial stoppages at:

Dadar, Thane, Panvel, Pen, Roha, Mangaon, Veer, Khed, Chiplun, Savarda, Aravali Road, Sangameshwar Road, Ratnagiri, Adavali, Valivade, Rajapur Road, Vaibhavwadi Road, Nandgaon Road, Kankavli, Sindhudurg, Kudal, Sawantwadi Road

Boost to Tourism, Economy and Passenger Convenience

The introduction of this new service will

strengthen rail connectivity between Mumbai and southern Konkan, making travel easier for tourists visiting the region's beaches, forts, temples, and eco-tourism destinations. The service will also benefit daily commuters, students, traders, small businesses, and residents by providing an additional direct rail option between Mumbai and the Konkan region.■

Itarsi-Madan Mahal Daily Passenger Service Strengthens Jabalpur-Narmadapuram Rail Link

Indian Railways has approved the introduction of the daily Train No. 51673/74 Itarsi-Madan Mahal Passenger with effect from 8th August 2026, The new passenger service will improve connectivity between Itarsi and Jabalpur (Madan Mahal), while offering more convenient and affordable travel options for passengers at key intermediate stations.

The daily passenger service will cover a distance of 242 km in approximately 5 hours and 5 minutes. The train will have commercial stoppages at Bagra Tawa, Sohagpur, Pipariya, Bankhedi, Salichauka Road, Gadarwara, Kareli, Narsinghpur and Sridham, providing improved rail access to passengers travelling from these stations.■

Ludhiana-Jakhal Passenger Extended to Jind

Indian Railways has approved the extension of Train No. 54053/54 Ludhiana-Jakhal Daily Passenger up to Jind station under Northern Railway. The decision will provide direct rail connectivity between Ludhiana and Jind, benefiting daily commuters, students, office-goers, traders, and passengers travelling between Punjab and Haryana.



With the approved extension, Train No. 54054 will now operate from Ludhiana to Jind, while Train No. 54053 will run from Jind to Ludhiana, replacing the earlier Ludhiana-Jakhal operation.

The train's journey distance will increase from 128 km to 200 km, providing uninterrupted passenger connectivity between the two important cities.

The extended portion of the service will include commercial stoppages at all stations between Jakhal and Jind, ensuring improved accessibility for passengers residing in towns and villages along the route.

The extension is expected to strengthen regional mobility by providing better rail connectivity to intermediate stations while improving access to employment, education, healthcare, and commercial centres.

The extended service will improve travel convenience by eliminating the need for passengers to change trains at Jakhal for onward journeys to Jind.■

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

Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train

Electrification Works Set New High-Speed Rail Benchmark



As the 508 km Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train corridor takes shape, advanced electrification works are paving the way for high-speed trains capable of running at up to 320 km/hr.

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND High-Speed Railway Electrification in India

The MAHSR corridor is being equipped with an advanced 2×25 kV Overhead Traction System, one of the most sophisticated railway electrification technologies used worldwide for high-speed rail. This technology is being introduced in India for the very first time and is specifically designed to provide a stable and uninterrupted power supply required for trains operating at very high speeds of up to 320 km/hr.

Electricity will flow from the National Power Grid to specially designed Grid Substations and then to 14 Traction Substations strategically located along the corridor. Five Traction Substations are located in Maharashtra (Mumbai, Thane, Virar, Boisar and Thane Depot), while the remaining nine are located in Gujarat (Vapi, Bilimora, Surat, Bharuch, Vadodara, Anand, Mahemdabad, Ahmedabad and Sabarmati Depot).

These substations will feed power to different sections of the route, ensuring that as the Bullet Train moves from one section to another, the transition in power supply takes place seamlessly, without passengers even noticing it.

The corridor will also have 31 Switching Posts to ensure an uninterrupted power supply and enable rapid isolation of faults whenever required. Apart from powering the Bullet Trains, 16 Distribution Substations are being constructed to provide electricity for stations, signalling systems, maintenance facilities and other operational infrastructure.

Precisely Engineered Network

The trains will run on a precisely engineered network of overhead electrical wires, supported by nearly 22,000 steel masts and over 25,700 cantilever assemblies, spread across 1,125 Tkm (including depots). Standing between 10.5 and 14.5 metres high—roughly the height of a three- to four-storey building—these masts support an advanced compound catenary system, a technology being deployed in India for the first time.

To achieve the speeds of up to 320 km/hr, every wire in this system is installed under precisely calculated mechanical tension, enabling the train's pantograph to collect electricity smoothly and continuously, without sparks, interruptions, or power fluctuations.

A Strong Push for 'Make in India'

One of the biggest achievements of this project is the extensive indigenisation of critical electrical infrastructure. Several major components of the high-speed electrification system are now being manufactured in India. These include all major transformers, cross arms mounted on OHE masts, as well as the Ground Wire, Protection Wire and Feeder Wire, which form the top electrical network of the overhead system.

In addition, a large number of components related to the Traction Power Supply System, other equipment of the Distribution Power System and Electro-Mechanical (E&M) works are also being produced domestically. This represents a significant transfer of advanced High-Speed Railway technology to Indian industry. Manufacturing these precision-engineered components within the country is strengthening India's industrial capabilities, creating specialised jobs, reducing dependence on imports, and building a robust domestic ecosystem for future high-speed rail projects.

The Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project is therefore not just bringing world-class technology to India—it is also enabling India to manufacture that technology at home.

Early Earthquake Detection: Designed for Safety

Each of the 14 Traction Substations will be equipped with Early Earthquake Detection Seismometers, capable of detecting seismic activity and initiating protective actions within seconds to stop the trains immediately in case of an earthquake. In total, 28 seismometers are being installed—22 along the High-Speed Corridor at Traction Substations and Switching Posts, and six additional inland seismometers in earthquake-prone regions of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

Of the 28 seismometers, 12 will be installed in Maharashtra near Mumbai, Thane, Virar, Boisar, Kheda, Ratnagiri, Latur and Pangri, while 16 will be installed in Gujarat near Vapi, Bilimora, Surat, Bharuch, Vadodara, Anand, Mahemdabad, Ahmedabad, Adesar and Old Bhuj.

A Smart, Continuously Monitored Network

The entire electrical network will remain under real-time supervision from a centralised control centre. Automated protection systems will respond within fractions of a second to ensure safe and reliable operation of the High-Speed trains.■

Vadodara Bullet Train Station

The Vadodara Bullet Train Station is being constructed above Platform No. 7 of the Indian Railways station, providing seamless connectivity between the Bullet Train and the Indian Railways network. The station will also be connected to the Western Railway station and the city's bus depot.



The station's design is inspired by Vadodara's iconic banyan trees. Passenger amenities will include waiting areas, baby-care facilities, toilets, retail spaces, parking, and dedicated pick-up and drop-off areas.

Construction Progress: Slabs at the concourse, track and platform levels have been completed, while installation of structural steel is currently underway.■

INDIAN RAILWAYS Joined the CELEBRATIONS of INDEPENDENCE DAY with Fervour and Gaiety

Indian Railways joined the celebrations of 80th Independence Day with fervour and gaiety. All prominent Railway stations and Railway offices were decorated and illuminated with tricolour lightings. Iconic Railway bridges were also illuminated with tricolour lighting.

Mass participation was observed by Railway employees in the '***Har Ghar Tiranga***' programme.



Railway Board, New Delhi



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Mumbai



Kanpur Central Railway Station, Uttar Pradesh



Agartala Railway Station, Tripura



Barpeta Road Railway Station, Assam


Anji Rail Bridge


Haridwar Railway Station, Uttarakhand


Mendipathar Railway Station, Meghalaya



Naharlagun Railway Station, Arunachal Pradesh



Jaisalmer Railway Station, Rajasthan

AMRIT STATIONS



Gotan Railway Station, Rajasthan

- Grand station building showcasing the region's heritage
- Large circulating area and parking space
- Foot Over Bridge for easy movement
- Comfortable waiting area



Haldibari Railway Station, West Bengal

- Well-lit station building
- Spacious circulating and parking areas
- Separate entry and exit
- Foot Over Bridge & Lifts
- Divyangjan-friendly facilities



Dausa Railway Station, Rajasthan

- Modern station building
- Large circulating and parking area
- Facilities for Passengers With Disabilities
- Foot Over Bridge
- Comfortable waiting area



Harrawala Railway Station, Uttarakhand

- New station building
- Extended platform shelters and comfortable waiting area
- Signage for easy movement
- Large circulating and parking area



Ferok Railway Station, Kerala

- Expanded parking & circulating area for improved commuter convenience
- Vibrant murals celebrating regional character
- Foot Over Bridge enhancing accessibility
- Upgraded front facade with a modern design
- Executive lounge facility



Paramakkudi Railway station, Tamil Nadu

- Revamped station building
- Foot Over Bridge
- Enhanced parking & circulating area
- Lifts for seamless accessibility
- Divyangjan-friendly facilities



Kesinga Railway Station, Odisha

- Contemporary station building
- Well-organised circulating & parking areas
- Comfortable waiting areas designed for ease
- Artistic interiors reflecting local scenic heritage



Redeveloped Tirur Railway Station, Kerala

- Modernised station building & facade
- Foot Over Bridge & Escalators
- Comfortable waiting halls
- Improved parking & circulating area
- Extended platforms with improved surfacing

Mumbai's Railway Lifeline

Enters A New Era With 238 AC Rakes, ₹22,000 Crore Works And 11,000 km Of Network Expansion

Rajendra B. Aklekar

For a city whose daily rhythm is inseparable from its railways, Mumbai is poised for a significant capacity upgrade, with the Central Government pushing two complementary developments that could reshape its rail network — 238 new air-conditioned suburban rakes and a nationwide plan to four-track the 11,000-km high-density railway network. Three of these critical corridors connect directly with Mumbai, bringing together an expansion of the city's suburban fleet and a wider national capacity-building effort to strengthen passenger and freight connectivity with the country's major economic centres.

The two announcements, coming within days of each other, point to a broader railway strategy: to increase capacity on the suburban system that carries Mumbai's daily commuters while simultaneously expanding capacity on the long-distance corridors that connect the metropolis with the country's major economic centres.

At the heart of the immediate Mumbai push is the decision to fast-track the manufacture of 238 AC suburban rakes. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has said that the trains will now be manufactured simultaneously at three existing Railway production units — Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai; Rail Coach Factory (RCF), Kapurthala; and Modern Coach Factory (MCF), Rae Bareli — rather than waiting for a delayed tender-led manufacturing programme. The first new rake is targeted for 2027, with the entire fleet expected by 2030.

"Mumbai local is the lifeline of Mumbai," MR said while announcing the change in strategy. He said the earlier procurement process was facing several issues and the timeline was unacceptable, prompting the decision to use the three Railway production units to accelerate manufacturing.

Three Factories, One Mumbai Target

The 238 rakes will be divided between the three factories, with ICF producing 120, RCF 71 and MCF 47. The Railway Board has approved production based on existing RDSO/ICF specifications, allowing the factories to use established designs rather than start a new technology-development programme. The three facilities already have experience in manufacturing modern passenger rolling stock.

The significance goes beyond air-conditioning. Mumbai's suburban railway has been undergoing a parallel expansion of its physical infrastructure, with new corridors, additional lines, platform extensions for longer trains and yard remodelling forming part of the Mumbai Urban Transport Project programme. Around ₹22,000 crore is being





invested in these capacity-enhancement works, according to reports on the AC-rake programme.

The new manufacturing strategy is therefore designed to solve an old railway problem: Building the infrastructure first and then waiting for trains to use it. The intention now is to synchronise the two. And then comes the bigger national network push.

High Density Corridors

The second development puts Mumbai's rail expansion into an even larger perspective. Indian Railways is moving towards four-tracking nearly 11,000 km of its seven high-density routes, which together account for around 41 per cent of the country's total railway traffic despite constituting only about 16 per cent of the railway network. MR outlined the plan, saying the expansion would increase passenger and freight capacity and support future growth. And Mumbai sits at a crucial intersection of this network.

Of the seven identified high-density routes, three directly involve Mumbai:

- Chennai–Mumbai
- Mumbai–Delhi
- Mumbai–Howrah

The other four are Delhi–Howrah, Howrah–Chennai, Delhi–Chennai and Delhi–Guwahati.

Four-tracking these high-density corridors is significant because the same railway infrastructure has to handle increasingly intensive passenger and freight movements.

Additional tracks can allow more trains to operate, reduce conflicts between passenger and freight services and provide greater operational flexibility on some of India's most heavily used routes.

From Suburban Trains To National Corridors

Taken together, the two announcements represent a substantially bigger railway story for Mumbai than the arrival of AC locals alone. At the city level, 238 new AC rakes can dramatically expand the availability of air-conditioned suburban services and provide a modern fleet to operate alongside the physical expansion of the Mumbai suburban network.

At the national level, the proposed four-tracking of the high-density network strengthens Mumbai's links with Delhi, Chennai and Howrah — three of India's most important railway and economic corridors.

It is effectively a two-layer capacity expansion: more trains within Mumbai and more railway capacity connecting Mumbai to the rest of India.

Mumbai Lifeline Becomes AC

The AC local programme is particularly important because Mumbai's experience with air-conditioned suburban trains has so far been one of gradual expansion. The first AC local services began in 2017, but the fleet remains small compared with the enormous conventional

suburban train operation. The addition of 238 new rakes would change the scale of AC suburban travel substantially.

The announcement also highlights an important lesson in infrastructure planning.

A railway corridor is only as useful as the trains and operating capacity available on it. Conversely, additional trains cannot deliver their full benefit if the network lacks the tracks, platforms, yards and maintenance facilities needed to accommodate them.

Mumbai's current railway expansion is therefore increasingly about capacity as a system, rather than individual projects.

New tracks, upgraded yards, longer platforms and additional corridors need trains. The 238 AC rakes provide part of that rolling-stock requirement. At the same time, the four-tracking of the high-density national network addresses the larger capacity crunch affecting Mumbai's long-distance passenger and freight connections. For a city whose economy and daily life remain inseparable from its railways, this could prove to be one of the most consequential railway capacity pushes in years. Mumbai's railway upgrade is no longer just about getting a few more trains on the tracks. It is increasingly about building the tracks, trains and network capacity together — from the local platform to the national corridor.

Mumbai Railway Capacity Boost

Key infrastructure and rolling-stock highlights

Upgrade	Key details	What it means for Mumbai
238 new AC suburban rakes	First rake targeted for 2027; entire fleet by 2030	Major expansion of AC local services
ICF, Chennai	120 rakes	Largest production share
RCF, Kapurthala	71 rakes	Accelerates fleet production
MCF, Rae Bareli	47 rakes	Adds manufacturing capacity
Existing specifications	Based on RDSO/ICF specifications	Avoids a new technology-development programme
Suburban infrastructure	Around ₹22,000 crore in capacity-enhancement works	Tracks, platforms, yards and corridors upgraded alongside trains
First AC local services	Began in 2017	238 new rakes would substantially increase the scale of AC travel

Seven High-Density Railway Routes

Route	Mumbai connection?	Role in the plan
Delhi–Howrah	—	Four-tracking proposed
Howrah–Chennai	—	Four-tracking proposed
Chennai–Mumbai	YES	Direct Mumbai corridor
Mumbai–Delhi	YES	Direct Mumbai corridor
Mumbai–Howrah	YES	Direct Mumbai corridor
Delhi–Chennai	—	Four-tracking proposed
Delhi–Guwahati	—	Four-tracking proposed

National Scale: Nearly 11,000 km of high-density routes; the seven routes carry around 41% of India's railway traffic while representing about 16% of the network.

Two-layer capacity expansion

Level	Investment / intervention	Expected effect
Mumbai suburban	238 new AC rakes + physical capacity upgrades	More modern and higher-capacity local services
National corridors	Four-tracking of high-density routes	Greater passenger and freight capacity
Integrated system	Tracks + trains + yards + platforms	Better alignment between infrastructure and train capacity

Dharwad Railway Station
A Cultural Landmark On The Rail Map

Naveen N Navalgund
PI, Hubballi Division/SWR



An attractive portrait of poets at the railway station

Step onto any railway station in India and a familiar symphony greets you. There are the rhythmic announcements, the distant rumble of locomotives, the clatter of luggage carts, porters calling out "Samaalo" and vendors making their rounds with "Chai... Coffee...". Passengers check display boards, wait for their trains or hurry towards the exits—a scene that has become an inseparable part of travelling by rail in India.

Yet, Dharwad Railway Station stands apart, inspiring writers to pen stories, encouraging readers to pick up books, and honoring the literary heritage of the nation.

Karnataka holds a unique distinction, being home to eight Jnanpith Award winners, with Dharwad being the proud residence of stalwarts like D.R. Bendre, V.K. Gokak, Dr. Chandrashekhar Kambara and Girish Karnad. Their remarkable contributions to Indian literature are celebrated on the walls of Dharwad Railway Station through grand portraits that immediately catch the eye of passengers, compelling them to pause and admire.



Picture of the sculptures in front of the station

Often referred to as the literary capital of Karnataka, Dharwad boasts a rich heritage. This undivided district was home to Adikavi Pampa, the first Kannada poet. In 1968, Jnanpith laureate D.R. Bendre brought glory to Kannada literature, followed by V.K. Gokak in 1990, Girish Karnad in 1998, and Dr. Chandrashekhar Kambara in 2011 for the year 2010. The close association of these literary icons with Dharwad is deeply intertwined with the identity of the railway station. By immortalizing them through vibrant artwork, the Railways have added a cultural dimension to the station's atmosphere.

Additionally, the station honors the memory of Rabindranath Tagore, who once visited Dharwad. A portrait of the Nobel laureate adorns the station, paying tribute to his immense contribution to Indian literature and art.

The station goes beyond literature, showcasing Indian cultural heritage through installations of hastamudras – traditional hand gestures that hold significance in Indian art and science. These mudras are known for enhancing memory, relieving stress, and fostering mental peace. The artistic display of these mudras has also become a popular selfie spot, drawing travelers to capture memorable moments.

A railway station is more than just a hub for boarding and alighting trains. It should be a testament to the art, culture, literature, and



Entrance gate of Dharwad Railway Station

ideals of the land it represents. Dharwad Railway Station epitomizes this vision, serving as a bridge between Karnataka's glorious literary heritage and its everyday passengers.

This station is not merely a transit point; it is a cultural landmark that proudly celebrates the essence of India's rich artistic and literary traditions.

When Tagore's Journey Took Him To Dharwad...



A memorial commemorating the visit of poet Rabindranath Tagore

In 1922, a brief five-minute halt turned Dharwad Railway Station into the setting for a memorable literary encounter with Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore was travelling to Sri Lanka via Pune and Bengaluru, accompanied by C. S. Endro Jadra. Dharwad, renowned as the cultural capital of Karnataka and popularly known as Vidyakashi (Educational Capital), was already home to a strong literary tradition.

The news of Tagore's scheduled halt brought great joy and excitement to the city's literary community. Renowned poet and Jnanpith Awardee Dr. D.R. Bendre, along with members of his literary circle, met Tagore at the station during the brief stop.

To keep alive the memory of this historic visit, the Railway Department constructed a memorial at Dharwad Railway Station on August 8, 1989. Named "Gurudev Smarak" (Memorial to Gurudev), the memorial stands as a lasting tribute to Shri Rabindranath Tagore's visit and his enduring contribution to Indian literature and culture. ■

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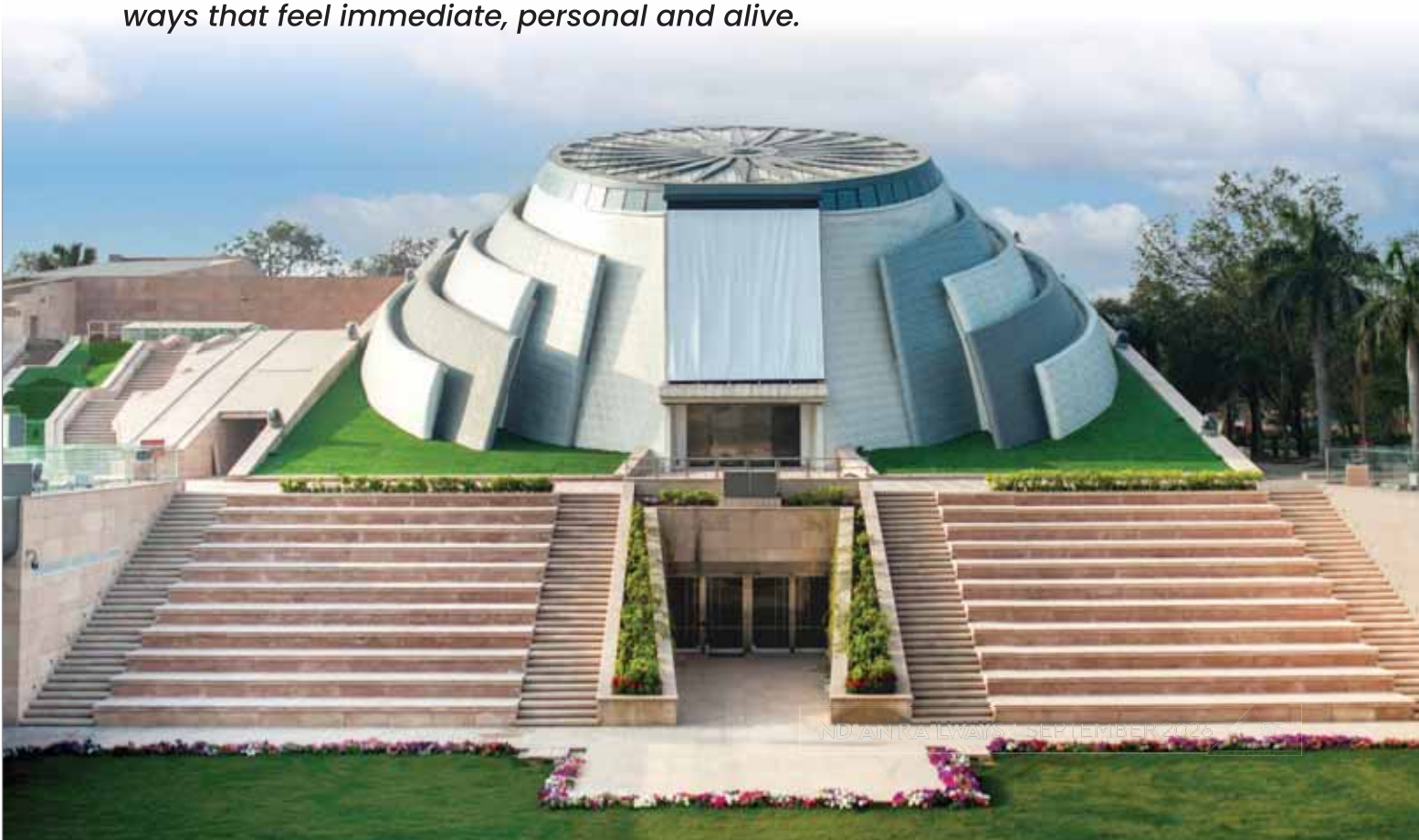
Where History Finds A New Voice:

Inside the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya's Digital World

Garud Rahul Deelip
ICAS, Financial Controller, PMML

Step into a quiet, dimly lit gallery at Teen Murti Estate in New Delhi, and history suddenly feels less distant. A life-size figure stands inside a glass-like enclosure, breathing, blinking, waiting. You ask a question. And Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel — the Iron Man of India, gone from this world for over seven decades — answers, in his own cadence, drawing on his own words.

The experience unfolds at the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya (PMS), the Prime Ministers' Museum, an institution unlike any museum India has built before. Inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14th April, 2022, at the historic Teen Murti campus — once the residence of India's first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru — the museum took on an ambitious mission: to tell the story of every Prime Minister India has had, across political ideologies and eras, as part of one larger narrative of the country's journey. What makes that history particularly engaging, however, is the extraordinary range of technology woven into the museum, bringing eight decades of political history closer to visitors in ways that feel immediate, personal and alive.



A Museum Built for the Digital Age

Spread across two blocks and dozens of galleries within the Teen Murti campus, the Sangrahalaya weaves together historical scholarship with contemporary museum practice. Block I traces the formative years of independent India — the making of the Constitution, a dedicated gallery on Nehru, and the Toshakhana, which displays gifts received by successive Prime Ministers from world leaders and dignitaries. Block II carries the narrative forward chronologically, from Lal Bahadur Shastri to the present day, tracing the initiatives, challenges, and nation-building contributions of each Prime Minister who has held office.

What distinguishes the Sangrahalaya from a conventional museum is its curatorial toolkit. Across its galleries, curators have layered in holograms, virtual and augmented reality, multi-touch and multimedia displays, interactive kiosks, computerised kinetic sculptures, robotic installations, and smartphone-linked experiences — technologies more commonly associated with entertainment and gaming than with a public history museum. The effect is deliberate: content that would once have sat behind glass, static and distant, is instead something visitors can walk through, trigger, and in several cases, converse with.

The AI Holobox: History That Talks Back

The single most talked-about innovation at the Sangrahalaya is the AI Holobox — a series of life-size, hyper-realistic 3D holographic avatars of India's most consequential leaders, housed in the museum's dedicated Anubhuti ("experience") Zone. Unlike a screen or a video loop, the Holobox projects a three-dimensional figure that appears to stand within a transparent enclosure, animated and responsive rather than pre-recorded.

The technology works by combining a life-size holographic projection with voice recognition and generative artificial intelligence. Visitors ask a question aloud; the system processes the query and responds in real time, drawing on a curated knowledge base built from the leader's own speeches, writings, interviews, and verified historical records. No two conversations play out quite the same way.

The Sangrahalaya unveiled its first Holobox — featuring Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Home Minister. It was followed by a Holobox of Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and subsequently by a third, of Mahatma Gandhi, described by the museum as a “hyper-realistic” avatar allowing visitors to hold a life-like conversation with the Father of the Nation about his philosophy and public life. Most recently, on Kargil Vijay Diwas in July 2026, the museum inaugurated a fourth Holobox — of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee — installed in the Anubhuti Zone and unveiled in the presence of members of the Vajpayee family. Visitors can now ask the avatar about his leadership, his poetry, his foreign policy, and the events of his tenure, including the 1999 Kargil War, and receive responses grounded in his own recorded legacy.





The Anubhuti Zone: Where Visitors Become Participants

The Holobox is the headline act within a wider experiential wing of the museum — the Anubhuti Zone — where augmented reality, virtual reality, and robotics converge to let visitors step inside historical moments rather than simply observe them. A Virtual Reality helicopter ride carries visitors over a simulated landscape of India's infrastructure and development projects, offering a bird's-eye view of a modernising nation. Elsewhere, a robotic arm reproduces the handwritten letters of Prime Ministers stroke by stroke, and installations such as "Walk with the Prime Minister" and "Selfie with PM" use augmented reality to place visitors, quite literally, alongside the leaders whose decisions shaped the country.

The Anubhuti Zone also recreates specific historical episodes with striking immediacy. An immersive nuclear-testing station lets visitors relive the Pokhran tests, while other stations reconstruct pivotal moments such as the Green Revolution and the economic reforms of the early 1990s. A National Security experience offers visitors a simulated encounter with the decision-making pressures of safeguarding the nation. Taken together, these installations are designed less as static exhibits and more as short, guided experiences — compact, technology-driven encounters with turning points in India's modern history.

Light, Sound, and the Journey Ahead

Beyond the galleries, the Sangrahalaya extends its use of technology into large-format storytelling. Its Light and Sound Show, 'Navya ki Udaan', traces India's space journey, while another production, 'Veeranganaon ki Mahagatha', showcases the valour and contributions of India's women warriors through the ages.

What ties all of this together is a simple institutional conviction: that public memory endures best when it is made accessible, and that accessibility, in the twenty-first century, increasingly means meeting visitors on the terrain of technology they already inhabit. A teenager who has grown up with voice assistants and virtual reality headsets is far more likely to remember a conversation with a Holobox of Mahatma Gandhi than a caption beneath a photograph — and far more likely, having had that conversation, to go looking for the real speeches and writings behind it.

For visitors, the takeaway is straightforward: this is not a museum to be walked through passively. It is one to be questioned, entered, and — quite literally, in the case of its holographic leaders — spoken to.■

Southern Railway's Homegrown Solutions For A Safer And Smarter Railway

R. N. Singh
General Manager, Southern Railway

The complexity of modern railway operations calls for a new approach to safety. With increasing traffic density, higher operating speeds and rising passenger expectations, traditional practices and human intervention alone are no longer enough. Digital technologies, predictive analytics, automation and human-centric innovation are increasingly becoming essential to building a safer, more reliable and efficient railway system.

Southern Railway has been developing a range of indigenous innovations to tackle operational and safety challenges while improving safety, reliability, productivity, and employee welfare. These initiatives demonstrate how practical, field-driven solutions, developed largely through in-house expertise, can deliver significant improvements without requiring substantial investment.

Electronic Train Signal Register (e-TSR): Automated Record Keeping of Station Operations

For over a century, Station Masters have been required to maintain Train Signal Registers (TSRs) manually, which involves extensive paperwork and is susceptible to omissions and transcription errors.

Southern Railway has developed the Electronic Train Signal Register (e-TSR), a software-based system that automatically captures train movement information from signalling data loggers. The system also displays a real-time visualization of yard occupancy, train movements, block section status, and operational events on the Station Master's desktop.



Manual Train Signal Register showing extensive handwritten entries and dependence on manual recording.



Live e-TSR dashboard displaying train movement recording and real-time occupancy status. (coloured bars show occupied block section / yard)

The system eliminates nearly 70% of the paperwork required by Station Masters, improves data authenticity, prevents unsafe line-clear operations during traffic or power blocks, and generates management information reports instantly.

Railway Block Management System (RBMS): Paperless Approvals and Availing of Blocks from Site

Maintenance blocks are critical for asset upkeep but require close coordination among operating, engineering, electrical, and signalling departments.

The RBMS App has transformed this process through end-to-end digitalization of block



RBMS Home Screen showing menu options for approval, availing at site and MIS reports

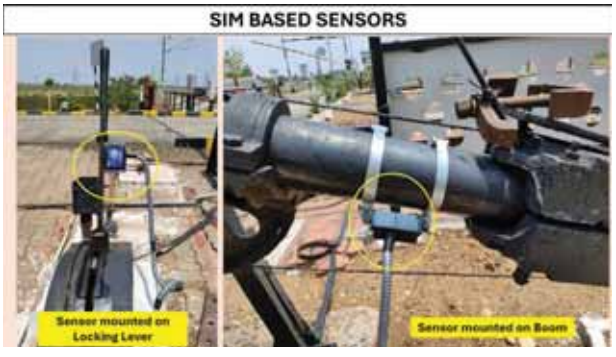
approval, execution/availing at site, monitoring and MIS reporting.



Supervisor Dashboards (Mobile and Desktop) providing real-time visibility of sanctioned, ongoing, and completed blocks.

The system provides user-friendly, customised dashboards for different users, namely field supervisors, Traffic Controller and Stations Masters, and enables automated allocation of maintenance slots, Composite Blocks, Shadow Blocks and comprehensive analytics/ Management Information System (MIS) reports.

Enhancing Non-Interlocked Level Crossing Safety Through Electronic Verification of Gate Closure



Gyro-sensors installed on gate boom and locking lever for electronic verification of gate closure.



Real-time gate status display available to Station Master and Gatekeeper.

Safety at Non-Interlocked Level Crossings (NILCs) traditionally depends heavily on verbal communication between Station Masters and Gatekeepers.

To eliminate this vulnerability, Southern Railway has developed and fully implemented a sensor-based verification system for gate closure using gyroscopic sensors mounted on gate booms and locking levers.

The innovation ensures that private numbers are generated only after physical gate closure and locking are confirmed electronically, thereby introducing an independent layer of safety assurance.

DOST (Delivering Occupational Safety on Tracks): Advance Warning System for Approaching Trains

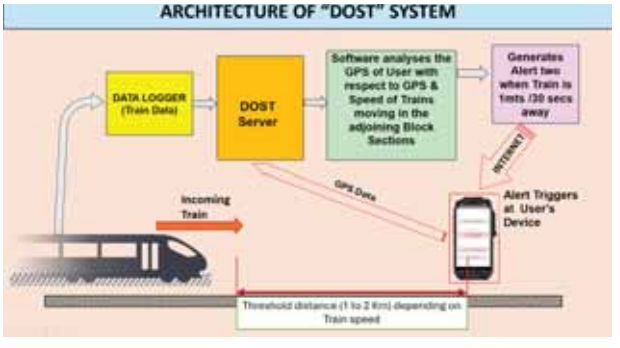
Track workers remain among the most vulnerable categories of railway employees worldwide. Traditional warning systems often rely on manual alerts or Rakshak-type alert systems, which are too cumbersome (requiring heavy equipments at each station) and generate alerts too early or with insufficient precision.

Southern Railway has developed DOST, a GPS-enabled advance warning system that alerts workers on the track.

The system generates location-specific alerts approximately one-minute-and-a-half minutes before train arrival, substantially improving worker safety.

Advanced Fog Safe Device: Intelligent Driver Assistance

Operating the trains safely under poor visibility conditions remains a significant challenge.



DOST system architecture showing integration of GPS & train data

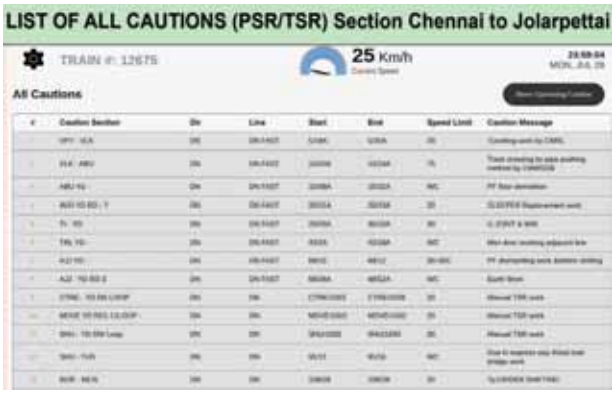


Smartphone alert interface for warning track workers

Southern Railway has developed an internet-enabled, tablet-based electronic Fog Safe Device (e-FSD) that automatically retrieves caution orders, speed restrictions, upcoming signal distance and route data.



Tablet-based Advanced FSD provided in locomotives



Display showing speed restrictions/ caution orders

The system significantly improves situational awareness for train crews and enables the monitoring of train speeds while crossing “double yellow” and “yellow” aspects of signals, as well as while entering/existing loops.

Point Switch Detection Device: Additional Layer of verifying Route Interlocking

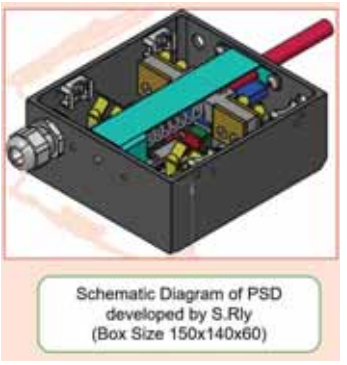


Figure 6.1 Schematic diagram of the Point Switch Detection Device.

Following concerns regarding switch tampering and abnormal switch conditions, Southern Railway has designed and developed an indigenous Point Switch Detection (PSD) Device to double-check the position of the switch (N or R or Gaping).



Version-4 PSD installed in service conditions.

The device independently verifies switch position (Normal/Reverse) and also detects abnormal conditions such as gaping switches, thereby strengthening interlocking integrity.

Hot Axle and Flat Tyre Detection through HABD+

Modern railway safety increasingly depends on



HABD+ sensor arrangement showing infrared sensors, proximity sensors and strain gauges.



Monitoring dashboard displaying hot axle and flat tyre analytics.

predictive maintenance rather than periodic inspection alone.

Southern Railway has developed the Hot Axle Box Detector Plus Flat Tyre Detection (HABD+) system using infrared sensors, strain gauges, and cloud-based analytics.

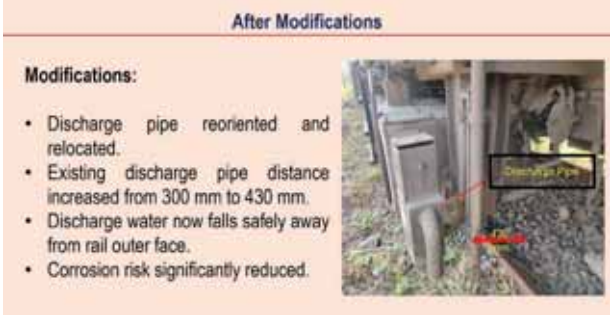
The system enables early detection of rolling stock defects, reducing the risk of in-service failures.



Existing discharge arrangement causing track corrosion concerns.

Bio-Toilet Discharge Chute Modification: Simple Engineering, Big Impact

Not all innovations require sophisticated technology. Sometimes substantial benefits arise from practical engineering improvements.



Modified discharge pipe arrangement directing effluent away from track infrastructure.

The modification eliminates corrosion of track components, signalling assets, bridges, and rolling stock underframes caused by bio-toilet discharge.



AOMS equipment installed inside the Vande Bharat train cab.



Sample dashboard and SMS alert generated by AOMS.

Automated Oscillation Monitoring System (AOMS)

Southern Railway has pioneered the deployment of Automated Oscillation Monitoring Systems on Vande Bharat trains.

The system continuously monitors track quality during normal train operations, enabling predictive maintenance interventions.

Crew Link Optimisation Through Analytics

Human resource utilisation significantly influences both safety and efficiency.

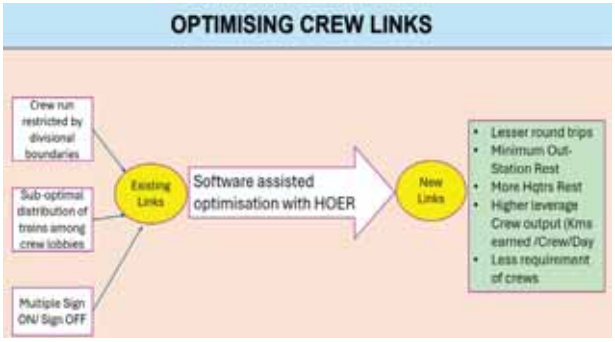
Southern Railway collaborated with IIIT Bangalore to develop software-based crew link optimisation tools.

The initiative reduced crew requirements, improved duty-hour utilisation, increased headquarters rest, and enhanced productivity.

Telemedicine: Extending Specialist Healthcare Across the Railway Network

Employee well-being remains an essential component of railway safety.

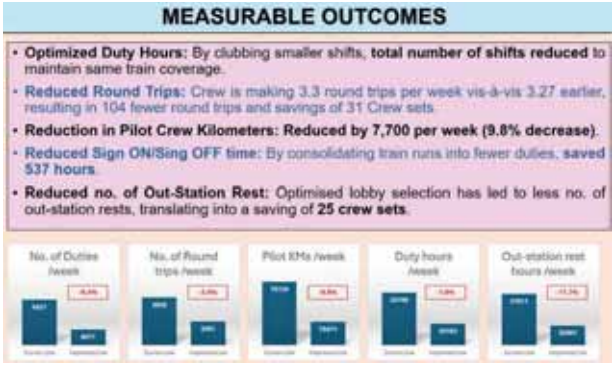
Southern Railway has established a telemedicine



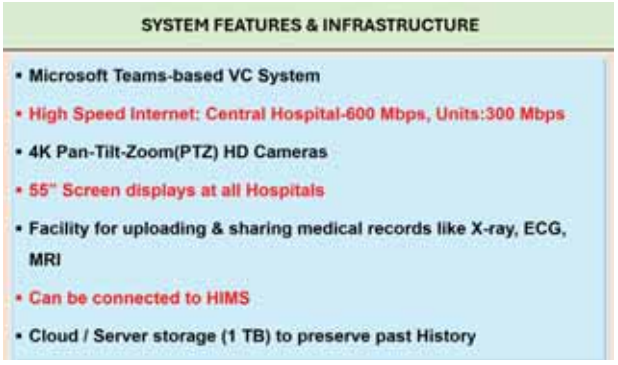
Existing versus Optimised Crew Link architecture.



Tele-consultation between specialist doctor and patient at a remote Health Unit



Measured productivity gains achieved through optimisation.



Telemedicine architecture and digital healthcare infrastructure.

network connecting the Central Hospital, Divisional Hospitals, and Health Units across the zone.

The initiative provides access to specialist and super-specialist healthcare services for over 2.3 lakh beneficiaries while reducing travel time and improving workforce availability.

Conclusion

Southern Railway's innovation programme demonstrates that transformational improvements in railway safety and efficiency need not always depend on expensive imported technologies. By combining operational experience with indigenous engineering, digital technologies, and data-driven decision-making, Southern Railway has created a portfolio of scalable solutions addressing operational safety, workforce protection, asset reliability and employee welfare.

Collectively, these innovations represent a transition from reactive safety management to a predictive, digitally enabled, and continuously improving railway ecosystem. They provide a replicable, scalable model not only for Indian Railways but also for railway administrations worldwide seeking practical, cost-effective pathways to safer and more efficient operations. ■



Year – 2027

Gazetted and Restricted Holidays

Gazetted Holidays

Holiday	Date	Day
Republic Day	January 26	Tuesday
Id-ul-Fitr	March 10	Wednesday
Holi	March 23	Tuesday
Good Friday	March 26	Friday
Ram Navami	April 15	Thursday
Mahavir Jayanti	April 19	Monday
Id-ul-Zuha (Bakrid)	May 17	Monday
Budha Purnima	May 20	Thursday
Muharram	June 16	Wednesday
Independence Day	August 15	Sunday

Holiday	Date	Day
Milad-un-Nabi or Id-e-Milad (Prophet Mohammad's Birthday)	August 15	Sunday
Janmashtami (Vaishnav)	August 25	Wednesday
Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday	October 02	Saturday
Dussehra (Vijaya Dashmi)	October 09	Saturday
Diwali (Deepavali)	October 29	Friday
Guru Nanak's Birthday	November 14	Sunday
Christmas Day	December 25	Saturday

Restricted Holidays

Holiday	Date	Day
New Year's Day	January 01	Friday
Makar Sankranti Bihu/Magha	January 14	Thursday
Pongal, Guru Singh's Birthday Gobind	January 15	Friday
Sri Panchami, Panchami Basant	February 11	Thursday
Shiva Ji Jayanti	February 19	Friday
Guru Ravi Das's Birthday	February 20	Saturday
Swami Dayananda Saraswati's Birthday	March 02	Tuesday
Jamat-Ul-Vida	March 05	Friday
Maha Shivratri	March 06	Saturday
Holika Dahan, Dolyatra	March 22	Monday
Easter Sunday	March 28	Sunday
Chaitra Sukladi/Gudi Padava/Ugadi/Cheti Chand/1st Navratra	April 07	Wednesday
Vaisakhi/Vishu/ Meshadi (Tamil New Year's Day)	April 14	Wednesday
Vaisakhadi (Bengal)/ Bahag Bihu (Assam)	April 15	Thursday
Guru Rabindranath Tagore's Birthday	May 09	Sunday

Holiday	Date	Day
Rath Yatra	July 05	Monday
Parsi New day/avroz Year's	August 15	Sunday
Raksha Bandhan	August 17	Tuesday
Ganesh Chaturthi/ Vinayak Chaturthi	September 04	Saturday
Onam or Thiru Onam Day	September 12	Sunday
Dusshera (Saptami)	October 06	Wednesday
Dussehra (Mahashtami)	October 07	Tuesday
Dussehra (Mahanavmi)	October 08	Friday
Maharishi Birthday Valmiki's	October 15	Friday
Karaka Chaturthi Chouth) (Karwa	October 18	Monday
Naraka Chaturdasi	October 28	Thursday
Govardhan Puja	October 30	Saturday
Bhai Duj	October 31	Sunday
Pratihar Shashthi or Surya Shashthi (Chhath Puja)	November 04	Thursday
Guru Teg Bahadur's Martyrdom Day	November 24	Wednesday
Hazarat Ali's Birthday	December 12	Sunday
Christmas Eve	December 24	Friday

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. How many new AC EMU rakes are planned for Mumbai under the Railway Minister's recent announcement?

(a) 235 (b) 237

(c) 236 (d) 238

2. Which Railway production unit manufactured and dispatched a rake of coaches for Bangladesh Railway?

(a) RCF (b) ICF

(c) MCF (d) RWF

3. Which train was recently used for the successful transportation of a human heart between Surat and Ahmedabad?

(a) Vande Bharat Express (b) Namo Bharat Express

(c) Amrit Bharat Express (d) Tejas Express

4. How many RPF/RPSF personnel have been awarded the President's Medal for meritorious service?

(a) 13 (b) 14

(c) 15 (d) 16

5. What percentage of the budget for FY 2026–27 had been utilised by July 2026?

(a) 37% (b) 39%

(c) 35% (d) 36%

6. How many kilometres of railway track have been provided with safety fencing for safer train operations?

(a) 19,600 km (b) 19,500 km

(c) 19,400 km (d) 19,700 km



7. How many stations in Jammu & Kashmir have been included under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme?

(a) 4 (b) 5

(c) 6 (d) 3

8. How many Accident Relief Trains (ARTs) does Indian Railways have?

(a) 177 (b) 176

(c) 175 (d) 174

9. How many Rail Neer plants are operational at locations across the country?

(a) 18 (b) 19

(c) 20 (d) 16

10. Which app provides near real-time information on train movements?

(a) NTES (b) Rail Madad

(c) Railone (d) HRMS

Answers

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



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