

Indian Railways Provides Affordable Transportation to Over 720 Cr Passengers; Indian Railways' Fares Are Among the Lowest in the World, Even Compared to Neighboring Countries : Ashwini Vaishnaw

A Train for Every Need: Namo Bharat for Fast Regional Travel, Amrit Bharat for Affordable Journeys, and Vande Bharat for Safety, Better Travel experience

Indian Railways Boosts Cleanliness and Hygiene with 3.33 Lakh Zero-Discharge Bio-Toilets, Over 34 Times Rise Since 2004–14

Track & Signal Upgrades Drive Train Punctuality to 80% in 2025–26; 27 Divisions Achieve Over 90%

Indian Railways Maintains Food Quality with Only 0.003% Complaints from 16.5 Lakh Daily Meals, Says Ashwini Vaishnaw

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To provide better amenities, the Ministry of Railways has launched the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme for development of stations on a continuous basis with a long-term approach.

It involves preparation of master plans and their implementation in phases to improve the amenities at the stations. These include:

- Improvement of station access, circulating areas
- Improvement of station building
- Improvement of waiting halls, toilets

- Provision of lift/escalators
- Provision of platform surfacing and cover over platforms
- Provide better cleanliness
- Provision of kiosks for local products through schemes like 'One Station One Product'
- Multimodal integration
- Amenities for Divyangjans
- Better passenger information systems
- Provision for executive lounges, nominated spaces for business meetings, landscaping, etc. keeping in view the necessity at each station.

The scheme also envisages integrating the station with both sides of the city, sustainable and environment friendly solutions, provision of ballast less tracks, etc. as per necessity, phasing and feasibility and creation of city centre at the station in the long term.

So far, 1337 stations have been identified for development under this scheme. Till now, phase-I works of 105 stations have been completed under this scheme.

The Ministry of Railways is committed to provide safe and potable drinking water facilities free of cost at all stations over Indian Railways as one of the minimum essential amenities. Indian Railways ensure ample water supply at railway stations by assessing expected consumption, making alternative arrangements for shortfalls and collaboration with municipalities, local water tanker suppliers, and other sources as needed. To ensure the quality of drinking water being made available at the railway stations, periodical checking and required corrective action are taken. Regular inspection and maintenance of drinking water facilities is carried out and complaints are attended promptly.

Provision of Bio-toilets in coaches to improve cleanliness and hygiene

To further improve cleanliness and hygiene by eliminating direct discharge of human waste onto Railway Tracks, zero discharge Bio-toilet system has been adopted by Indian Railways for coaches. The work has been taken up in mission mode by Indian Railways.

At present, all passenger carrying mainline coaches equipped with toilets have been provisioned with Bio-toilets.

The details of provision of Bio-toilets (as on 30.06.2025) are as under:

Period	No. of Bio-Toilets fitted
2004-14	9,587 only
2014-25	3,33,191 (More than 34 times)

New Design Train sets:

Indian Railways is focused on providing affordable, good quality services to all sections of society. Railways has developed the following trains to provide good quality services

1. Vande Bharat service:

Indian Railways have introduced Vande Bharat services which are semi-high speed trains and are aimed to provide better travel experience and improved safety to the passengers. These services are equipped with enhanced safety features and modern passenger amenities like-

- KAVACH system
- Faster acceleration
- Fully Sealed Gangway
- Automatic Plug Doors
- Better Ride Comfort

- Mini Pantry with provision of Hot Case
- Bottle Cooler
- Deep freezer & Hot water Boiler
- Reclining Ergonomic Seats
- Comfortable Seating with revolving seats in executive class
- Mobile charging sockets for every seat
- Special lavatory for Divyangjan passengers in Driving Trailer Car(DTC),
- CCTVs etc.

As on 07th August 2025, 144 Vande Bharat train services are operational on the Broad Gauge (B.G.) electrified network of Indian Railways.

2. Amrit Bharat service:

To provide affordable means of transportation to the low and middle income families, Indian Railways have introduced Amrit Bharat services that are fully non-AC modern trains.

As on 07th August 2025, 14 services are already in operation. The present composition of Amrit Bharat consists of 11 General Class coaches, 8 Sleeper Class coaches, 01 Pantry car and 02 Luggage cum Divyangjan coaches.

High Speed and enhanced Safety standards are the hallmarks of these trains with following enhanced features and amenities:

- Better aesthetics of seat and berths with enhanced look & feel on the lines of Vande Bharat Sleeper.
- Jerk Free Semi-Automatic Couplers.
- Improved Crashworthiness in coaches by provision of crash tube.
- Provision of CCTV system in all coaches and Luggage room.
- Improved designs of toilets.
- Improved design of Ladder for ease of climbing on to the berth.
- Improved LED Light fitting & Charging Sockets.
- Provision of EP assisted braking system.
- Aerosol based fire suppression system in toilets and electrical cubicles.
- USB Type-A and Type-C mobile charging sockets.
- Emergency Talk Back system for two-way communication between Passenger and Guard/Train Manager.
- Non-AC pantry with enhanced heating capacity.
- Fully sealed gangways with quick release mechanism for easy attachment and detachment.

3. Namo Bharat Rapid Rail service

Indian Railways have introduced Namo Bharat Rapid Rail services. These services are aimed to enhance the travel experience to the suburban and regional commuters for short distance travel. At present, the following 4 Namo Bharat Rapid Rail services are in operation:

(i) 94801/02 Ahmedabad-Bhuj Namo Bharat Rapid Rail

(ii) 94803/04 Jaynagar-Patna Namo Bharat Rapid Rail

The prominent features of Namo Bharat Rapid Rail include-

- Centrally controlled Double Leaf Automatic Sliding Doors
- CCTVs for safety and passenger surveillance
- Mobile charging sockets, Fire Detection System
- Continuous LED lighting with Energy Efficient Lighting system
- Emergency Talk System
- Modular interior with Cushioned Seats and Sealed Flexible Gangway
- FRP Modular Toilets with vacuum evacuation and

- Fully Air-Conditioned trains with Driver cab AC.

Punctuality of trains:

Indian Railways makes all possible efforts to run trains on time. Based on assessments of factors affecting the punctual running of trains, remedial measures, both short term and long term, are taken which include capacity augmentation of rail network, up gradation of track and signalling system, removing operational bottlenecks, yard remodeling etc. Due to the above measures, the overall punctuality of trains during 2025-26 has been about 80% with 27 Divisions having punctuality more than 90%.

Catering Services:

It is continuous endeavor of Indian Railways to make available adequate catering facilities at Stations to cater to the demands of passengers. Provision of Catering services at the stations is made through static catering units, viz. Jan Ahaar, Refreshment Room, Food Plazas, Fast Food unit and Catering/Vending Stalls.

Affordable and economy meals are made available to passengers at stations through static units and dedicated service counters placed at platforms.

On an average, 16.5 lakh meals are served per day on the Indian Railways' network. The number of grievances related to quality of food served is on an average about 46 per day only, which is 0.003% of total meals served per day.

It is the endeavor of Indian Railways to ensure smooth and uninterrupted services of such a large volume of meals to passengers. Necessary measures are accordingly put in place from time to time to improve overall services.

A number of representations, suggestions, grievances, complaints etc. are received from stakeholders such as elected representatives, catering associations, individuals etc. These concerns are examined on merits and necessary action is taken accordingly. In 2024-25, Rs. 13.2 Cr of penalties was imposed on complaints received. Further, complaints are continuously monitored to provide better services.

Affordable Transportation provided by Indian Railways

Indian Railways provides affordable transportation service to more than 720 Cr passengers. The fare of Indian Railways is among the lowest in the world, even when compared with the neighboring countries.

The total amount of subsidy given in FY 2023-24 on passenger travel is provisionally estimated at Rs. 60,466 Cr.

This amounts to 45% subsidy on the cost of passenger travel. In other words, if the cost of providing service is Rs. 100, then the price of ticket is Rs. 55 only. This subsidy is continuing for all passengers. Further, concessions beyond this subsidy amount are continuing for many categories of persons with disabilities (Divyangjans), 11 categories of patients and 8 categories of students.

The subsidy was Rs 31,049 Cr in 2013-14. The amount of subsidy has almost doubled between 2013-14 and 2023-24.

Fares have been rationalized w.e.f. 01 July 2025 after a gap of more than 5 years. The increase in fares is very low, ranging from half paise per km to two paise per km for premium classes.

To maintain affordability for low and middle income families, the fares for MST and Suburban travel have not been revised. Further, the fare revision is likely to have an insignificant impact on the total amount of subsidy because the revision ranges from half paise to 2 paise only per kilometer of travel. It is estimated that less than half the trips will have a marginal increase in fare. For example, for a low-income traveler in General Coaches, there is no fare increase for 500 km travel.

The above measures have resulted in increased passenger satisfaction. With focus on operational efficiency, modernization and digitization Indian Railways aims to maintain affordable passenger fares while improving quality of services to rail users.

This information was provided by the Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a written reply to questions in Rajya

Sabha today.

Dharmendra Tewari/ Dr. Nayan Solanki/ Ritu Raj

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