



Indian Railways Ensures Multi-Layered Fire Safety Measures Across Coaches to Prevent Fire Incidents

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

In Case of Emergency, Indian Railways' Initial Focus is on Saving Lives, Attending to the Injured and Providing Relief to Stranded Passengers: Sh. Ashwini Vaishnaw

177 Accident Relief Trains, 100 Breakdown Cranes and 170 Medical Relief Units Strengthen Railway Emergency Response

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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 some chance combination of factors, across all its Zones.

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

1. Railway stations are provided with portable fire extinguishers to be used in case of fires.
2. Railway stations are also provided with fire buckets with sand and water to be used in case of fires.
3. 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 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.
4. 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'.

5. 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.
6. Relay rooms and electronic interlocking rooms at larger railway stations are being provided with automatic fire alarms.
7. Railway stations are equipped with control phones for the stations masters to immediately disconnect power supply to the overhead equipment (OHE) in case of fires from OHE.
8. Public address systems at railway stations can be used to guide the public for evacuation in case of emergencies like fires.
9. Announcements are made regularly to sensitize the passengers/ public regarding the importance of not carrying inflammable items
10. At larger railway stations, passenger luggage is scanned.
11. Drives are conducted during sensitive periods to prevent carriage of inflammable materials by passengers
12. Electrical systems on stations are maintained regularly to prevent any chance of fire due to electrical short-circuit. Miniature Circuit Breakers and Moulded Case Circuit Breakers are used in electrical panels. Emergency Lights are provided at stations.
13. Exits are well-marked at stations to aid the public in evacuation during emergencies.
14. Adequate water storage is available at larger railway stations equipped with coach watering facilities for use during fire emergencies.
15. Flame based cooking is not allowed on railway station platforms.
16. Regular audit/safety drive 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 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:

1. Provision of Minimum two Fire Extinguishers in all coaches over Indian Railways.
2. Fire Detection & Suppression System has been provided in fire prone areas of Power cars and Pantry cars, as mentioned before.
3. Fire and smoke Detection system has been provided in coaches as per extant guidelines, as mentioned before.
4. Water mist type fire extinguishers are being provided on pantry cars and power cars in phased manner.
5. Provision of emergency windows in coaches for evacuation in case of fire.
6. Use of fire-retardant material as per global fire-retardant norms in coaches for seats/berths, panels, flooring, insulation, toilets etc for improved fire safety.
7. Use of fire-retardant E-beam cable in coaches.

8. Use of different levels of protection in the form of fuses, Miniature Circuit breaker (MCBs) and Motor protection Circuit Breakers (MPCBs) in the electrical circuits to prevent the damage from electrical faults/surges.
9. Provision of Aerosol based fire suppression system in electrical cabinets.
10. Further, up-gradation of material in line with global standards is regularly being carried out with fitment of new generation material in Amrit Bharat & Vande Bharat Sleeper trains.
11. Display of "Fire Notices" for widespread information in all coaches to inform and alert passengers regarding various "Do's" and "Don'ts" to prevent fire. These include messages regarding not to carry any inflammable material, explosives, prohibition of smoking inside the coaches and penalties etc., as mentioned before.
12. Prohibition of flame based cooking in coaches.
13. There is a provision of 4 Emergency Talk Back Units in every coach of Vande Bharat. This facilitates communications of passenger with Train Manager/Loco-pilots in case of exigencies. Passenger Emergency Alarm Buttons have been provided in the Vande Bharat Train. Each coach has been provisioned with 4 such push buttons for emergency usage.
14. There is an integrated help line 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 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 staffs 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, also coordinating with the state government and the district administration to start carrying out rescue and relief 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 placed at identified locations which cover the entire rail network. In addition, ARMEs Scale-II, Portable Medical Kits for accidents have also been provided at identified locations to render immediate medical support. ARMEs Scale-I are like hospital 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. Roles of every officer and staff in case of such emergencies are laid down and they are appropriately trained and empowered to discharge their duties.

At the same time, on the 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 coordinated response by both Railway as well as these other agencies.

Procedures and guidelines for addressing emergency situations, including cases like fires, have been laid down in Disaster Management Plans of Zones and Divisions, General and Subsidiary Rules, Accident Manuals and Operating Manuals. Railway stations maintain and display list 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.

Indian Railways has a well-developed system of conducting regular mock drills to ensure that its systems are fully prepared to handle any emergencies. Full-scale mock drills are conducted by divisions involving all rescue agencies from within Indian Railways as well as fire brigade, police, district authorities, medical systems and facilities, and disaster response forces. A total of 71 full scale mock drills were conducted during 2025-26 including four such drills in Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Rajkot and Bhavnagar Divisions.

This information was provided by the Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a reply to a question in the Lok Sabha today.

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