

Passenger Services of Indian Railways: The Lost Rights of Consumers

by
Avneesh Kumar

Assistant Professor of Commerce
Mahatma Gandhi Central University
Motihari, Bihar

Introduction

- The first passenger train steamed out of Howrah station destined for Hooghly, a distance of 24 miles, on 15th August, 1854.
- Service tax on transportation of passengers by rail was first imposed on 1 Oct, 2012.
- In 1992, the two railways then carried almost exactly the same volume of passenger km (pkm, 314 vs 315 billion), while China Railways (CR) managed to carry 1,157 billion ton km (tkm) of freight – or 4½ times that of Indian Railways.
- Railways are ideal to transport high volumes of bulk commodities or passengers.



INDIAN RAILWAYS IN NUMBERS

Pradeep Gaur/Mint



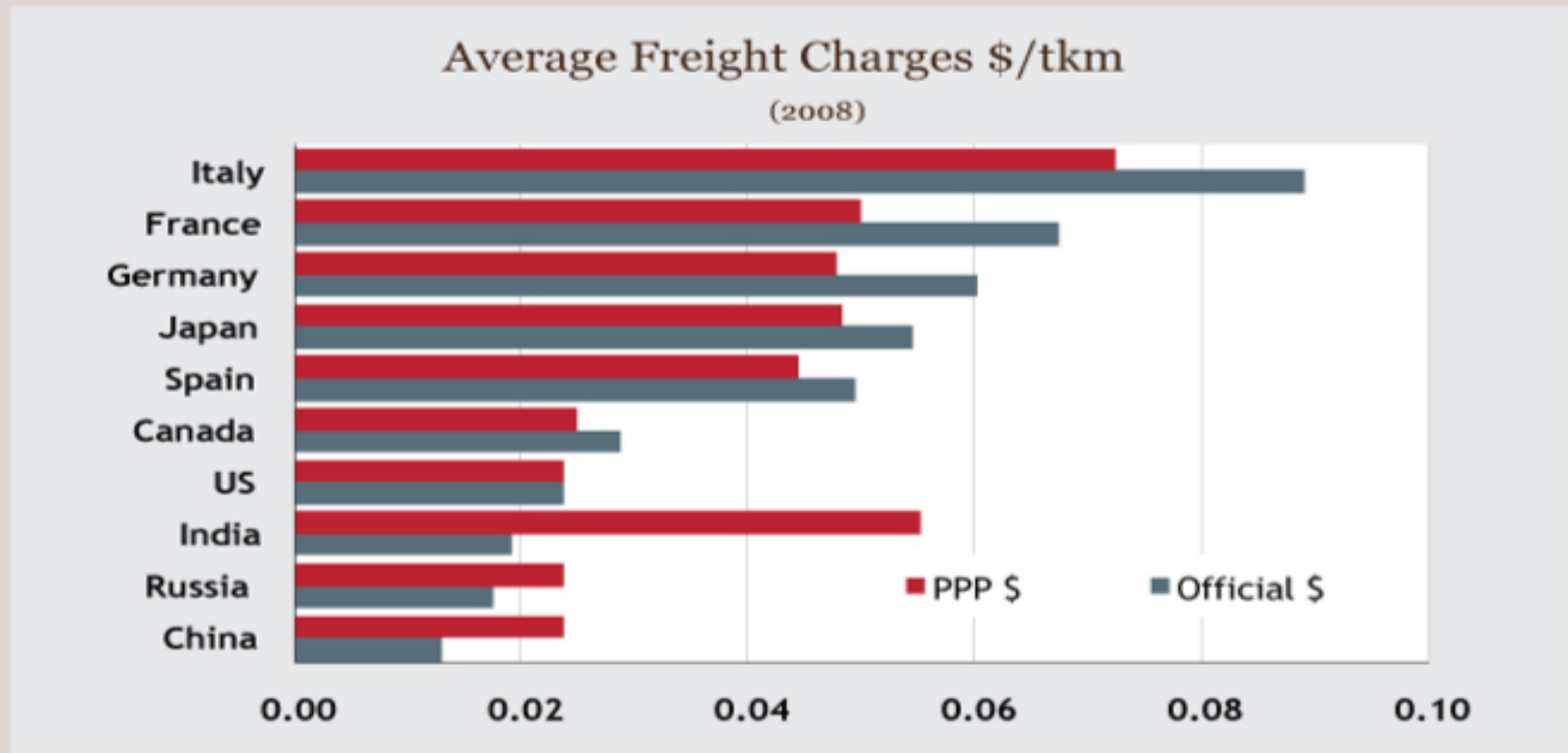
- Number of passengers carried in a day
23 million (approx)
- Total length of rail network
65,000 km (approx)
- Regular employees
1,326,437
- Number of trains operated in a day
19,000
- Number of passenger trains operated in a day
12,000
- Number of freight trains operated in a day
7,000
- Number of stations
8,000 (approx)
- Capacity of freight carried in a day
3 million tonnes
- Number of passengers carried in 2014-15
8,224 million
- Passenger earnings in 2014-15
42,189.61 crore

Source: 2014-15 annual report of the Ministry of Railways

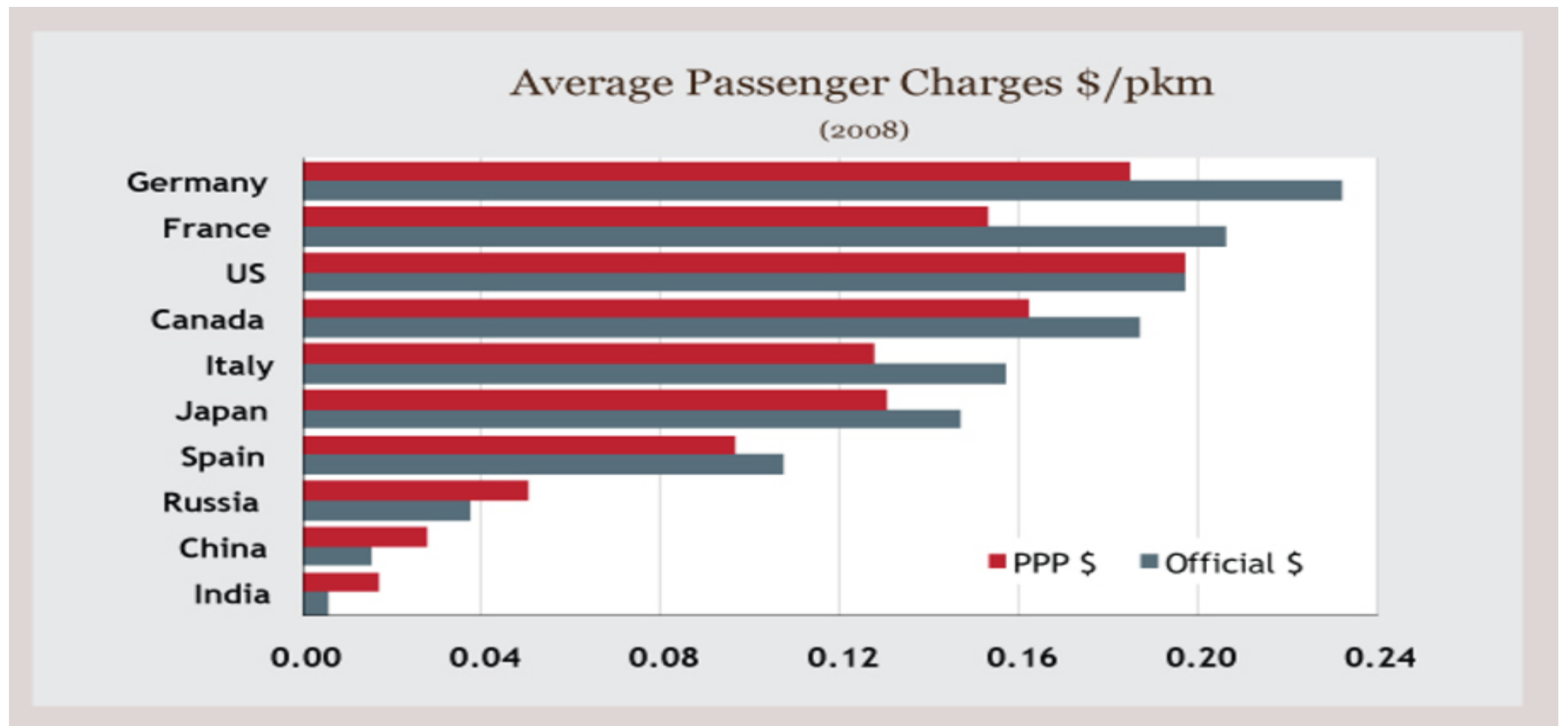
Contemporary Relevance

- Modern railways are a green transport alternative when their infrastructure and trains are heavily utilized. In general, they are **more energy efficient**, have substantially **lower environmental impacts** on water and air, and are less expensive to build than other transport modes. Modern and well run railways often offer significant environmental, land-use, and **capital investment benefits**.
- Railways generally also have a **much smaller land requirement** for right-of-way than highway transport.
- High-speed trains with low load factors can be less efficient than even automobiles or airplanes.
- Is privatisation the panacea for all problems of Indian Railways?

Figure 1.1 Railway Prices in Selected Countries



Figures based on 2008 World Bank data.



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The Lost Rights of Consumers

- Train delays (no compensation, superfast charges)
- Deduction on account of automatically cancelled waitlisted tickets
- Misreporting of train position
- Unavailability of good quality eatables
- Extortion by eunuchs
- Life threatening incidences

The Lost Rights of Consumers

- Moralising and cursing beggars
- Safety of luggage/personal belongings
- Dirty blankets/bedsheets/ pillow covers
- Unauthorised passengers with/without connivance of TTE
- Unclean toilets, berth and coaches.
- Allotment of Upper berth to physically disabled/old passengers
- Unauthorised vendors and bills not given by authorised vendors.

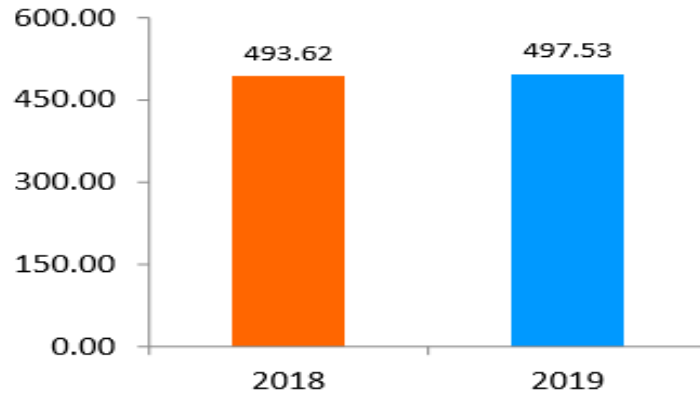
In-built Delays in Passenger Train Running Schedules

Running Status of: SAPT KRANTI EXP (12558)						
◀ Previous Day		Start Date: 12-10-2019 From Station:ANVT			Next Day ▶	
🔔 Train has reached destination MUZAFFARPUR JN (MFP) at 13:00 13-Oct.						
No.	Station Name	PF	Arrival Departure	Scheduled Time	Actual/Expected Time	Km's to go...
1	ANAND VIHAR TERMINAL	1	Arrival	Source	Source	-1059
			Departure	14:50, 12 Oct 2019	15:00, 12 Oct 2019 (-10m)	
2	MORADABAD	1	Arrival	17:37, 12 Oct 2019	17:47, 12 Oct 2019 (ETA)	-905
			Departure	17:45, 12 Oct 2019	18:10, 12 Oct 2019 (-25m)	
3	LUCKNOW	4	Arrival	22:45, 12 Oct 2019	00:15, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:30h)	-580
			Departure	22:55, 12 Oct 2019	00:25, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:30h)	
4	GORAKHPUR	5	Arrival	03:55, 13 Oct 2019	05:18, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:23h)	-309
			Departure	04:05, 13 Oct 2019	05:40, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:35h)	
5	KAPTANGANJ JN	1	Arrival	04:43, 13 Oct 2019	06:20, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:37h)	-270
			Departure	04:45, 13 Oct 2019	06:23, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:38h)	
6	SISWA BAZAR	1	Arrival	05:04, 13 Oct 2019	06:42, 13 Oct 2019 (ETA)	-244
			Departure	05:06, 13 Oct 2019	06:44, 13 Oct 2019 (ETD)	
7	BAGAHA	1	Arrival	05:59, 13 Oct 2019	08:00, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:01h)	-201
			Departure	06:02, 13 Oct 2019	08:09, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:07h)	
8	HARINAGAR	1	Arrival	06:23, 13 Oct 2019	08:30, 13 Oct 2019 (ETA)	-175
			Departure	06:25, 13 Oct 2019	08:49, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:24h)	
9	NARKATIAGANJ JN	2	Arrival	06:43, 13 Oct 2019	09:15, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:32h)	-159
			Departure	06:48, 13 Oct 2019	09:20, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:32h)	
10	BETTIAH	1	Arrival	07:13, 13 Oct 2019	09:45, 13 Oct 2019 (ETA)	-123
			Departure	07:16, 13 Oct 2019	10:10, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:54h)	
11	SAGALI JN	1	Arrival	07:36, 13 Oct 2019	10:39, 13 Oct 2019 (-3:03h)	-101
			Departure	07:38, 13 Oct 2019	10:43, 13 Oct 2019 (-3:05h)	
12	BAPUDM MOTIHARI	1	Arrival	08:07, 13 Oct 2019	11:08, 13 Oct 2019 (-3:01h)	-80
			Departure	08:12, 13 Oct 2019	11:10, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:58h)	
13	CHAKIA	1	Arrival	08:58, 13 Oct 2019	11:40, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:42h)	-48
			Departure	09:00, 13 Oct 2019	11:42, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:42h)	
14	MEHSI	1	Arrival	09:18, 13 Oct 2019	12:00, 13 Oct 2019 (ETA)	-40
			Departure	09:20, 13 Oct 2019	11:52, 13 Oct 2019 (-2:32h)	
15	MOTIPUR	1	Arrival	10:15, 13 Oct 2019	12:08, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:53h)	-26
			Departure	10:17, 13 Oct 2019	12:12, 13 Oct 2019 (-1:55h)	
16	MUZAFFARPUR JN	4	Arrival	12:15, 13 Oct 2019	13:00, 13 Oct 2019 (-45m)	0
			Departure	Destination	Destination	

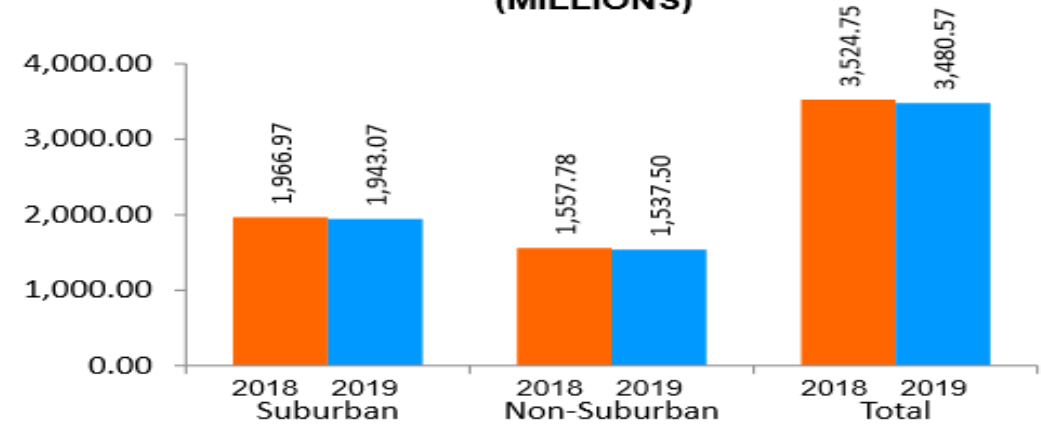
Performance of Indian Railways

HIGHLIGHTS UPTO MONTH OF AUGUST 2019 (CUMULATIVE)

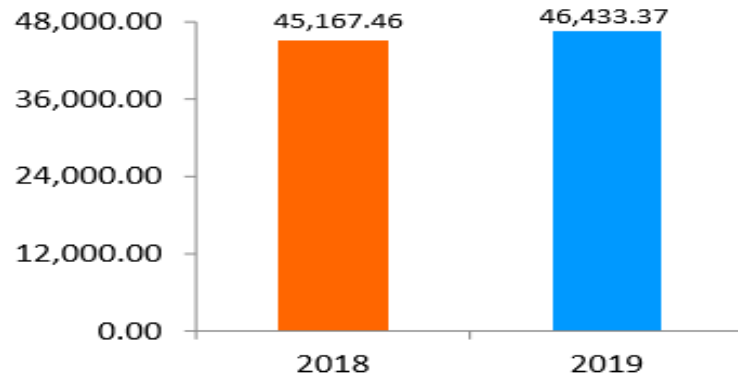
**LOADING (Excl. KRCL)
(MILLION TONNES)**



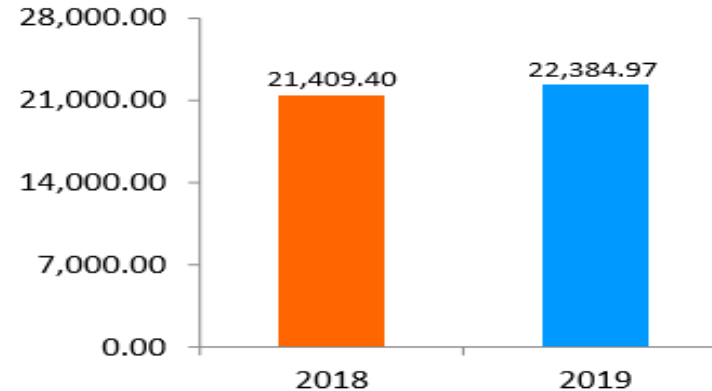
**NO. OF PASSENGER BOOKED
(MILLIONS)**



**FREIGHT EARNINGS
(Rs. IN CRORE)**



**COACHING EARNINGS
(Rs. IN CRORE)**



Excerpts from Union Budget Speech 2019

- It is estimated that Railway Infrastructure would need an investment of **50 lakh crores between 2018-2030**. Given that the capital expenditure outlays of Railways are around **1.5 to 1.6 lakh crores per annum**, completing even all sanctioned projects would take decades. It is therefore proposed to use **Public-Private Partnership** to unleash faster development and completion of **tracks, rolling stock manufacturing and delivery of passenger freight services**.
- To make railway travel a **pleasant and satisfying experience for the common citizen**, we will launch a massive programme of railway station modernization this year.

Factors Behind Poor Passenger Services

- The investment in the government owned railways during the decade 1992-2002 in China and India was US\$ 85 billion and US\$ 17.3 billion, respectively.
- Culture of Babudom.
- Political interference.
- Lack of transparency, professionalism, accountability and public disclosure of information.
- Indian Railways has been a slow adopter of new technology (though it adopted Computerised Reservation System as early as 1986).
- Delayed response to fulfill demand.
- Inappropriate grievance redressal system.

Improving Consumers Experience- How

- Railway reform is any significant change in government policy, investment strategy, or management structure that seeks to improve railway performance.
- The most critical step in railway reform is when the responsible authorities agree that something must be done and they take the first step to begin the process.
- Popularising Mobile App based Grievance Registration and Redressal System.
- Installation of CCTV in train coaches and sensitizing RPF personnel about it.
- Better management of expenses, revenue and investment.
- Fixing accountability.

Reducing Train Delays

Eye in the Sky

A locomotive is fitted with a device called the Realtime Train Information System



The device has two units – one inside and the other on top of the locomotive

It uses GAGAN geo-positioning system of the Indian Space Research Organisation to feed data

Loco pilots can send emergency messages to the control room with the push of a button

Data Relayed

Location of train
every 30 seconds

Speed updates
every 30 seconds

Arrival, departure and run through at stations

Unscheduled stoppage



The control room at New Delhi railway station receives updates on train movements

Advantages of Real-Time Updates

Passengers and freight customers get more **accurate information on train status**

Unscheduled stoppage between stations can be identified and problems rectified faster

Low speed can be detected and intervention made to improve punctuality

Controller has more time to plan the movement of trains as there is no need to manually feed data

Loco pilots can send emergency messages to the control room with the push of a button

References

- *Harral, Clel; Sondhi, Jit; Guang Zhe Chen. 2006. Highway and Railway Development in India and China, 1992-2002. Transport Notes Series; No. TRN 32. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/11774> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.*
- *Lawrence, Martha; Ollivier, Gerald. 2015. Keys to Attracting Private Capital for Railway Development. Transport and ICT connections, no. 3;. World Bank Group, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/22309> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.*



आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः
Let noble thoughts come to us from every side.