RAILWAY BUDGET 2015-16

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No hike in Railway Passenger Fares

Plan Outlay proposed Rs. 1,00,011 crore, increased by 52%

Allocation for passenger amenities up by 67%

Railways to become prime mover of Indian Economy, Five years action plan proposed

Rail Budget seeks resource mobilization for higher investment

Thrust on measurable and sustainable improvement in passenger experience and to make Rail a safer means of travel

Hot buttons, coin vending machines for railway tickets within 5 minutes, e-catering to select meals from an array of choices

200 more stations to come under Adarsh Station scheme; Wi - Fi to be provided at B category stations

24X7 helplines for attending passenger problems and security related complaints

For the safety of women passengers surveillance cameras in suburban coaches

More General class coaches will be added in identified trains.

The speed of nine railway corridors will be increased to 160 and 200 kmph

Train Protection Warning System and Train Collision Avoidance System to be installed on select routes

77 new projects covering 9,400 km of doubling/tripling/quadrupling works proposed

A new department for keeping stations and trains clean under Swachh Rail Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

New Delhi, February 26, 2015
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Railway Budget presented today in Parliament proposed measures to make Indian Railways prime mover of Indian Economy once again. It seeks resource mobilization for higher investment, decongestion of heavy haul routes and speeding of trains and project delivery, better passenger amenities and safety, and to make railways a preferred mode of transport for masses. Presenting the Budget in Parliament, Railway Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu said that all critical initiatives proposed will be pursued in mission mode.

The Budget proposals have set four goals to transform Indian Railways over next five years which are- a sustainable and measurable improvement in customer experience, make rail a safer means of travel, expansion of capacity substantially , modernization of infrastructure and finally to make railways financially self-sustainable. To achieve these goals the budget proposes five drivers which include adopting a medium-term perspective plan consisting of White Paper, a Vision-2030 document and a five year action plan. Building Partnerships with key stakeholders for long term financing and overseas technology, improving last mile connectivity, expanding fleet of rolling stock and modernization of station infrastructure are included in these drivers. Railways will also leverage additional resources; envisages investment of Rs. 8.5 lakh crore in next five years.

Revamping management practices, systems, processes, and re-tooling of human resources will be taken up by the Railways to achieve targeted operating ratio for 2015-16 at 88.5%. Fast decision making, tight accountability, improved management information systems and better training and development of human resource will also be part of the action plan to achieve the goals.

In order to make travel on Indian Railways a happy experience, the Budget has given thrust on Cleanliness and proposes a new department for keeping stations and trains clean under Swachh Rail Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. New toilets will be built at 650 additional stations; online booking of disposable bed rolls will be made available. 24X7 helpline number 138;toll-free number 182 for security related complaints have also been proposed in the budget.

In order to make ticketing more passenger friendly the Budget proposes “operation five minutes” for issuing unreserved tickets, hot buttons, coin vending machines, concessional e-tickets for differently abled travelers, for booking tickets a multi-lingual e-portal will be developed. Crediting of refunds through banks and unreserved tickets on Smart phones will be available. Proliferation of automatic ticket vending machines with smart cards and currency options, integrated ticketing system on the lines of rail-cum-road tickets, Defence Travel System developed for elimination of Warrants have also been proposed in the Budget.

The Budget has proposed e-catering to select meals from an array of choices. Ordering food through IRCTC website at the time of booking of tickets; integrating best food chains into this project; setting up of Base Kitchens in specified divisions to be run by reputed agencies for serving quality food and expansion of water vending machines will be taken up.

Hand-held terminals to Travelling Ticket Examiners (TTEs) for verification of passengers will now be provided for verification of passengers, possibility of extending facility of SMS on mobiles as a valid proof of travel for PRS tickets will be explored. A centrally managed Railway Display Network in over 2000 stations in next two years will be included besides “SMS Alert” service to inform passengers in advance of the updated arrival/departure time of trains at starting or destination stations.

For the safety of women passengers surveillance cameras will be provided on a pilot basis in selected mainline coaches and ladies’ compartments of suburban coaches.

The Railways will also take up a project for introducing on-board entertainment on select Shatabdi trains; Mobile phone charging facilities will be provided in general class coaches & will be increased in sleeper class coaches.

Now, 200 more stations to come under Adarsh Station scheme; Wi - Fi to be provided at B category stations; facility of self-operated lockers will be available at stations. Passenger capacity in identified trains will be augmented; more General class coaches will be added in identified trains. The Railways has also approached NID to design user friendly ladders for climbing upper berths. It has also proposed more quota of lower berths for senior citizens. TTEs will now be instructed to help senior citizens, pregnant women and differently-abled persons in obtaining lower berths; middle bay of coaches to be reserved for women and senior citizen. Provision of Rs. 120 crore has been made for Lifts and escalator; newly manufactured coaches will now be Braille enabled; building wider entrances for the ease of differently-abled passengers; allocation for passenger amenities up by 67%.

The Railways has proposed to revamp its station development policy completely and simplifies process for faster development by inviting open bids. It has proposed to develop 10 Satellite Railway terminals in major cities with twin purpose of decongesting the city and providing services to suburban passengers.

Seventy seven projects covering 9,400 km of doubling/tripling/quadrupling works along with electrification, covering almost all States, at a cost of Rs. 96,182 crore will be taken up. Traffic facility works a top priority with outlay of Rs. 2374 crore have been proposed. In order to accelerate the pace of Railway electrification, 6,608 route kilometres will be sanctioned for 2015-16, an increase of 1330% over the previous year.

As per the Budget proposal, the speed of 9 railway corridors will be increased from existing 110 and 130 kmph to 160 and 200 kmph respectively so that inter-metro journeys like Delhi-Kolkata and Delhi-Mumbai can be completed overnight. Average speed of freight trains in empty and loaded conditions, will be enhanced to 100 kmph for empty freight trains and 75 kmph for loaded trains.

Declaring safety of paramount importance for Railways, an action plan has been proposed for accident prone areas. The Budget also proposes 970 ROB/RUBs and other safety-related works to eliminate 3438 level crossings at a total expense of Rs. 6,581 crore, 2600% higher than the previous year. Train Protection Warning System and Train Collision Avoidance System will be installed on select routes at the earliest.

The Budget proposes constituting an innovation council called “Kayakalp” for business re-engineering and introducing a spirit of innovation in Railways besides setting up of Technology portal to invite innovative technological solutions. Four Railway Research Centers in select universities for fundamental research have also been proposed besides ‘Malaviya Chair’ for Railway Technology at IIT (BHU), Varanasi.

PPP cell of Railways will be revamped to make it result oriented, “Foreign Rail Technology Cooperation scheme” will be launched. Joint ventures will be set up with States for focused project development, resource mobilization, land acquisition, project implementation and monitoring of critical rail projects. In order to meet the requirements of new lines JVs will also be set up with major public sector customers.

Rail Budget has also proposed Coastal Connectivity Program in partnership with ports for Nargol, Chharra, Dighi, Rewas and Tuna. Besides this, projects worth Rs 2500 crore will be taken up through BOT/ Annuity route. These include Wardha- Nagpur 3rd line, Kazipet-Vijaywada 3rd line, Bhadrak –Nargundi 3rd line and Bhuj- Nalia Gauge Conversion.

In order to make Indian Railways more environment friendly, 100 DEMUs will be enabled for dual fuel – CNG and diesel. Locomotives running on LNG are also currently under development. Noise levels of locos to be at par with international norms; concerns related to wildlife to be addressed.

As a part of its social initiatives, now Rail stations and training centers will be made available for skill development. Incredible Rail for Incredible India will be launched and training of auto-rickshaw and taxi-operators as tourist-guides on the model of Konkan Railway will be taken up for tourism promotion. IRCTC will work on promoting the Gandhi circuit to attract tourists to mark the occasion of 100 years of the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa. Kisan Yatra, a special travel scheme for farmers for farming & marketing technique centres has also been proposed.

According to Budget Estimates, Plan Outlay for 2015-16 has been proposed to Rs 1,00,011 crore, an increase of 52% over RE 2014-15 plan size. Out of this 41.6% resources will come from Central Government support while 17.8 % will be generated from internal resources.

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