

Interesting Facts about Indian Railways: Notes for UPSC Exam

Transportation is a major part of the Indian economy. Indian Railways started its service on 16 April 1853. The first train was run over a stretch of 33 kilometres from Mumbai to Thane. The Indian transportation system is very important in the UPSC IAS Exam also. Here we are giving some interesting details about the Indian Railways.

Establishment of the Indian Railways

The first railway proposals for India were made in Madras in 1832. The country got its first train in the form of Red Hill Railway which was built with the sole purpose of transporting granite for road building.

In 1845, the Godavari Dam Construction Railway was built by Cotton at Dowleswaram in Rajahmundry, to supply stone for the construction of a dam over the Godavari River. In 1851, the Solani Aqueduct Railway was built by Proby Cautley in Roorkee to transport construction materials for an aqueduct over the Solani River.

India's first passenger train, operated by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and hauled by three steam locomotives - Sahib, Sindh and Sultan - ran for 34 kilometres with 400 people in 14 carriages on 1,676 mm broad gauge track between Bori Bunder (Mumbai) and Thane on 16 April 1853. The Thane viaducts, India's first railway bridges, were built over the Thane creek when the Mumbai-Thane line was extended to Kalyan in May 1854.

The Indian Railways have come far from its humble origins. Below we give you some brief facts about the Indian Railways.

Facts about Indian Railways

- The Fairy Queen is the oldest functioning steam engine in the world. It is plying between New Delhi and Alwar in Rajasthan.
- Four sites of Indian Railways have been declared as "World Heritage sites" by UNESCO. They are Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway, Nilgiri Mountain, Mumbai CST, and Kalka-Shimla Railways.
- Indian Railways was nationalized in 1951
- Toilets were introduced on Indian Railways in 1909.
- Indian Railways started computerized reservation in New Delhi in 1986.
- Indian Railways is the world's second-largest network operated under a single administration and the largest rail network in Asia.

- The railway runs more than 7,421 cargo trains carrying 3 million tons of freight daily.

Read more | [Economics strategy for Civil services Preliminary Examination](#)

- Indian Railway has gone into a select club of railways that includes China, Russia, and the USA in carrying more than one billion tons of cargo yearly.
- According to the Acworth Committee in 1920-21, the railway finances of India were separated from the general government finances in 1924.
- In 1994, the first live telecast of the railway budget took place.
- Recently Railway and General Budget have merged.
- India's fastest train has successfully completed a trial run at 160 km per hour on the route between Delhi and Agra in just 90 minutes.
- In 2000, Mamata Banerjee was the first woman to become Railway Minister.
- She holds the record of being the only woman who introduced the railway budget for two different governments in the Parliament (UPA and NDA).
- The Gatimaan Express (New Delhi- Agra) is currently the fastest train.
- The Mettupalayam-Ooty Nilgiri Passenger train is the slowest train which runs at an average speed of 10 kmph.
- The New Delhi Railway Station has the world's largest Route Relay Interlocking System.
- Indian Railways is the world's seventh-largest employer with over 1.4 million employees on its rolls.
- The renewed platform at Gorakhpur Railway Station in Uttar Pradesh has become the world's longest, measuring 1,366 meters.
- Indian Railways is building the world's highest railway bridge five times the height of Qutub Minar and 35 meters taller than Eiffel Tower.
- Indian Railways' longest tunnel is Pir Panjal that links Kashmir Valley with Banihal in Jammu.
- Station with the shortest name is Ib in Odisha.
- Venkatanarasimharajuvaripeta is the station with the longest name.

