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Transport In India

The present transport system of the country comprises several modes of transport including rail, road, coastal shipping, air transport etc.

Road Transport

1. The share of road in total traffic has been growing from 13.8% of freight traffic and 15.4% of passenger traffic in 1950-51 to an estimated 61% of freight traffic and 85% of passenger traffic by the end of 2003-04.
2. The Tenth Plan (2002-07) outlay for the Central Sector Roads Programme Rs. 59,700 crore.
3. Indian road network of 41 lakh km. is the one of the largest in the world and consists of—

National Highways

1. They are constructed and maintained by the central government.
2. The National Highways has 71,772 km. length comprising only 2% of the total length of roads, carries about 40% of the total traffic of India.
3. The central government has taken up in a phased manner during 2005-2012 an expanded programme of 4/6 laning of 12,109 kms. of National Highways (NH) under the National Highways Development Programme (NHDP) On Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis y>- A 'Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for North-East (SARDPNE)' has been taken up. The two phased (Phase-A and Phase-B) programme includes improving 6418 km of roads (including 2319 km. of roads under Arunachal Package). The Phase-A is likely to be completed during 2010-17. Phase-B involves two-laning of 3723 km. of roads.

Some Important National Highways

1. According to the 2001 census, there are 219 National Highways in the country. Some of them are :
2. The longest National highway in India is NH-7; which has a length of 128 kms in Uttar Pradesh, 504 kms in Madhya Pradesh, 232 kms in Maharashtra, 753 kms in Andhra Pradesh, 125 kms in Karnataka, 627 kms in Tamil Nadu i.e. total 2369 kms.

State Highways

They are constructed and maintained by the state government. The length of roads in some states is :

1. Maharashtra has the maximum length of roads.
2. Maharashtra also has the maximum length of metalled roads.
3. Odisha/Orissa has the maximum length of unpaved roads.
4. West Bengal has the maximum road density.
5. Roads on the borders are constructed and maintained by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).
6. BRO was established in May 1960.
7. BRO is a premier construction agency roads airfields, bridges, buildings, hospitals and schools.
8. The BRO, through 'Project Dantak' is constructing and maintaining a large road infrastructure and executing other prestigious projects in Bhutan.
9. The BRO is doing highly commendable jobs of construction and maintenance in Myanmar and Afghanistan too.

Rail Transport

1. The Indian Railways have been a great integrating force for more than 160 years.
2. From a very modest beginning in 1853, Indian Railways have grown into a vast network of 7,031 stations spread over a route-length of 63,221 km. with a fleet of 7,817 locomotives, 5,321 passenger service vehicles 4,904 other coaching vehicles and 2,28,170 wagons as on 31 March, 2004.
3. Indian Railway network is the largest in Asia and second largest in the World.
4. The first rail in India started in 1853 between Mumbai and Thane (34 kms).
5. Indian Railway Board was established in March 1905.
6. Indian Railway was nationalised in 1950.
7. There are three types of rail lines in India :

(i) Broad Gauge

(ii) Meter Gauge and

(iii) Narrow Gauge.

8. The network runs multigauge operations extending over 63,974 route kilometres.

9. The management and governance of the Indian railways is in the hands of the Railway Board.

10. Railways have been divided into 17 zones.

11. Recently a new zone Kolkata Metro Zone (17th zone) has been established on 29 December, 2010.

Divisional Organization of the Zonal Railways

Air Transport

1. Airways in India started in 1911.

2. Indian National Airways Company was started in 1933.

3. All the airway companies were nationalised in 1953 and were put under two corporations namely — Indian Airlines and Air India.

4. Indian Airlines provides its services to the internal parts of India along with neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Maldives.

5. Air India provides its services to the foreign locations.

6. Vayudoot was established in 1981 for domestic services, but was later merged in Indian Airlines.

Merger of Air India and Indian Airlines

Indian Airlines operates to 54 domestic stations alongwith its subsidiary Airlines 'Alliance Air'. Besides it also operates to 18 international stations.

The Indian Airlines has a fleet of 75 aircraft. 41 aircraft were expected to be added in its fleet by April 2010.

On the 1st March, 2007 the Union Cabinet approved the proposal to merge Indian Airlines and Air India.

Accordingly, a new company, viz. National Aviation Company of India Limited (NACL) has been incorporated on 30th March, 2007 with its Headquarters at Mumbai.

The brand name of the new airlines will be Air India (or Indian) and its logo will be Maharaja.

Water Transport

1. The Central Water Tribunal was established in 1887.
2. Its headquarter is in Kolkata.
3. The waterways of the country have been divided into Internal waterways and Oceanic waterways.

Internal Waterway

1. This transport is through rivers, canals and lakes.
2. India has got about 14,544 km. of navigable waterways which comprise rivers, canals, backwaters, creeks etc.
3. About 44 million tonnes of Cargo is being moved annually by Inland Water Transport (IWT).
4. The waterway from Haldia to Allahabad was made a National Water way in 1986.
5. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) came into existence on 27 October, 1986 for development and regulation of inland waterways in the country.

Oceanic Waterway

1. The peninsular bank is very important for this purpose.
2. There are 13 large and 200 small ports on the major bank of 5600 kms.
3. Large ports are maintained by the central government whereas small ports are included in the concurrent list and are managed by the state government.
4. At the beginning of the Tenth Plan, the capacity of major ports was about 344 MT. It is proposed to be increased to 470 MT by the end of the Tenth Plan.

5. Largest port of India is Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai.
6. The largest natural port is in Vishakhapatnam.
7. Kandla in Gujarat is a tidal port. It has been made into a free trade zone.

