

# Transport Services in India



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Transportation plays a key role in the growth of a country's economic system; in shaping overall productiveness, quality of life of people, access to commodity and services.

An effective and well-devised transportation system plays a significant role in the economic development of a nation. In a country like India, that is of a size of a continent, where economic resources and commercial markets are dotted across the length and breadth of the land, the projection and implementation of an efficient, affordable, dependable and safe transport facilities and services presumes additional importance.

The transport system in India comprises a number of distinct modes and services, notably railways, roads, road transport, ports, inland water transport, coastal shipping, and pipelines and so on. The transportation system in our country has registered a great run and a solid growth over the years in terms of network spread and transport system output. Various dedicated ministries, authorities, directorates and departments including Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, National Highways Authority of India, Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Civil Aviation are responsible for the establishment and execution of policies and programs for the development of system of transportation in the country.

### Traditional Transport System of India

The world we live today is a place that is driven by innovation and technology. Transportation is made easy with diverse means of transport options that come with a wide range of facilities and offer high-class services to people. For instance, even small sized cars in the market today come packed with a long list of interior and exterior feature which include power-assisted steering, power windows, airbags, tilt adjustable steering, GPS and navigation systems and so on. Keeping the luxury factory aside, most of the cutting-edge features introduced are primarily for the purpose of making the travel experience easier!

In ancient times, there were no automobiles and there were no roads either! But then, people those days had many modes of transport to move around! Not just many modes, people those days used transportation system that was absolutely non-motorized and 100% Eco-friendly. Well, the first transport form of Indians was Shanks pony (walking; your own legs for walking as a means of transport). Those days, people preferred walking as the most important mode of transport even for covering long distances.

The earliest mode of transportation has not lost its sheen that even today; walking is considered as one of the most common mode of transport in India. Then came a time where the luxury tag entered the transport system of India, for the first time, in the name of Palanquins. Popularly known as Palkis, Palanquins basically are wheel less conveyance consisting of a chair or bed carried on two poles by bearers. Today, the usage of Palanquins is limited to special occasions like wedding ceremonies.

Subsequently, people those days picked up the art of training and using the animals for the purpose of transport, sooner or later. Bullock carts and horse carriages came into existence in India. As a matter of fact, bullock carts were a huge hit and became the most leisurely mode of transportation in the rural parts of our country. The commencement of the British rule in the Indian subcontinent furthered the usage of horse carriages in the country. Today, bullock carts and horse carriages are mostly banned in the urban centers and are seen as a rare mode of transport, that children today are jaw dropping when spotting one!

The subsequent years witnessed the introduction of hand pulled rickshaws and cycle rickshaws which are operated even today in some parts of the country. Most of the urban centers in India banned the movement of hand pulled rickshaws and cycle rickshaws in city limits due to their slow moving nature which potentially create traffic congestion. However, both hand pulled rickshaws and cycle rickshaws are regarded as the most uncomplicated, non-motorized mode of transport in India.

## Road Transport in India

Transport in India roadways is favored while covering long and short distance. As of 2013, India has a whopping network of road of about 2,914,133 mi (4,689,842 km), which indicates the fact that road transport is the most predominant mode of transport in India. At 660 meters of roads per square kilometer of solid ground, the quantitative compactness of our country's network of road is much more eminent than that of People's Republic of China and Federative Republic of Brazil. The official records from the Government of India indicates that as of 2011, about 25,30,000 kilometers of roads were completed.

### Expressways

Total Length of Expressways in India: 942 km (585.33 mi)

### National Highways (NH)

Total Length of National Highways in India: 92,851 km (57,694.93 mi) Classification: Single, Intermediate, Double, Four, Six and Eight Lane Regulating Body: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India

### State Highways (SH)

Total Length of State Highways in India: 1,63,898 km (1,01,841.49 mi) Regulating Body: State Governments, especially Public Works Department of State Governments

### Rural Roads

Total Length of Rural Roads in India: 27,49,805 km (17,08,649.61 mi) Regulating Body: Municipalities, Panchayats and other Local Governing Bodies

Major and Other District Roads Total Length of Major and Other District Roads in India: 17,05,706 (10,59,876.57 mi)

Regulating Body: Municipalities, Panchayats and other Local Governing Bodies

## Bus Transport in India

Buses are considered as the most affordable and handy mode of transport for all economic classes of society in India.

## Rail Transport in India

## Indian Railways – Lifeline to the Nation

Introduced in 1853, rail transport services in India are one among the prominent and reliable mode of transport in the country. Transporting more than 23,000,000 passengers a day and 1050.18 million metric tons of goods annually, across the length and breadth of India, Indian Railways is nothing short of a crucial lifeline to the nation.

An Indian state owned enterprise, Indian Railways (shortly written as IR), controlled by the Government of India through the Ministry of Railways, run both suburban and long distance services on a network of broad gauge, meter gauge and narrow gauge lines

Besides, the massive railways operate passenger car production and locomotive engine production facilities across the country. The operations of Indian Railways address 29 Indian states and seven union territories (UTs) and offers international services to the Kingdom of Nepal, People's Republic of Bangladesh and Islamic Republic of Pakistan as well.

## Air Transport in India

### Air Transport in India – Sky is (not) the Limit!

Transport in India airways comprises of airplanes and helicopters. Planes can be categorized into domestic and international. There are also chartered planes to carry a limited number of people. Helicopters are used regularly to reach long-distance in a pretty short time. The Ministry of Civil Aviation of the Government of India is the principal governing body responsible for civil air transport in the country. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), a (civil air transport) regulatory body comes under the administrative ambit of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Civil Aviation in India also operates independent establishments like the Air India, Airports Authority of India (AAI), Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited.

## Water Transport in India

Transport in India waterways is the easiest and cheap mode of transport. Unlike rail and road transport we do not have to construct waterways because river and seas are given by nature. Water transport in India is administrated by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), a Government of India Public Sector Enterprise.

Headquartered in Mumbai, SCI oversees offshore and other maritime transport facilities and infrastructure in India. Rivers, canals, Creeks, Backwaters are some of the important inland waterways of India.

The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is the supreme agency that manages the waterways in India. Find below some of the national waterways of India:

### National Waterway 1 (NW1)

Allahabad–Haldia stretch of the Ganges–Bhagirathi–Hooghly river system Estd: October 1986 Length: 1,620 km Fixed Terminals: Haldia, BSN (Kolkata), Pakur, Farrakka and Patna. Floating Terminals: Haldia, Kolkata,

Diamond Harbour, Katwa, Tribeni, Baharampur, Jangipur, Bhagalpur, Semaria, Doriganj, Ballia, Ghazipur, Varanasi, Chunar and Allahabad

#### National Waterway 2 (NW-2)

Estd: September 1988 Length : 891 km

North End: Sadiya

South End: Bangladesh border

No. of Terminals: 11

Fixed Terminals: Pandu

Floating Terminals: Dhubri, Jogighopa, Tezpur, Silghat, Dibrugarh, Jamuguri, Bogibil, Saikhowa and Sadiya

#### National Waterway 3 (NW-3)

Kottapuram-Kollam stretch of the West Coast Canal, Champakara Canal and Udyogmandal Canal.

Estd: February 1993

Length: 205 km

Fixed Terminals: Aluva, Vaikom, Kayamkulam, Kottappuram, Maradu, Cherthala, Thrikkunnapuzha, Kollam and Alappuzha.

#### National Waterway 4 (NW-4)

Kakinada-Pondicherry stretch of canals and the Kaluvelly Tank, Bhadrachalam – Rajahmundry stretch of River Godavari and Wazirabad – Vijayawada stretch of River Krishna.

Estd: November 2008

Length: 1,095 km

#### National Waterway 5 (NW-5)

Talcher-Dhamra stretch of the Brahmani River, the Geonkhali – Charbatia stretch of the East Coast Canal, the Charbatia-Dhamra stretch of Matai river and the Mangalgadi – Paradip stretch of the Mahanadi River Delta.

Estd: November 2008

Length: 623 km

#### National Waterway 6 (NW-6)

In Assam, Lakhimpur to Bhanga of river Barak.

Estd: 2013

Length: 121 km

Local Transport in India

The number of buses operated across the Indian cities is negligible when compared to the options available for local transport in the country. Find below some of the popular options for local transport in India:

### Metro Rail

An integral part of rapid transit in India, metro rail services are first introduced in the 'city of joy' Kolkata, West Bengal. Today, metro rail services are operational across six locations and many other metro systems are under construction. Rapid metro rail Gurgaon, Kolkata metro, Bangalore metro, Delhi metro, Chennai mass rapid transit system, Mumbai metro are the metro systems presently operated in India.

### Taxis

Though different in color from state to state, taxis in India are an integral part of day to day local transport options. With the introduction of online booking and application based taxi services, the service providers are coming up with a wide range of new concepts and facilities to serve the travel needs and demands of the customers. Taxis operated across the nation have regulated metered fares.

### Auto Rickshaw

A tough competitor to the taxi cabs in India; auto rickshaws are handy and have regulated metered fares. They provide round the clock services in most of the urban centers.

### Monorail

The year 2014 witnessed the first operational monorail in India in the form of Mumbai monorail.

### Light Rail

Considered as a feeder system for the metro rail systems, light rail projects have been proposed in Thiruvananthapuram, Kolkata, Delhi and Kozhikode.

### Tram

Introduced during the 19th century by British people, the legendary Kolkata tram is the only public tram system operated in the country. The Kolkata tram offers an emission-free means of transportation in the city.

### Other Local Transport

The number of (private) two wheelers and cars (especially compact cars) operated in India are on a rise due to the fact that they are known for their fuel efficient nature and other advantages which include ease of use in busy roads, affordability and so on.

### Rural Transport in India

The Census of 2011 indicates that 72.2 % of Indian citizens live in 638,000 villages across the country. Some settlements have a population of less than 100 while others have a population of more than 25,000 people.

Most of the villages in India are connected through a variety of road transport with other villages, towns and cities. Nonetheless, the rural parts of India are hassled by bad roads and transport services that are not frequent.

On the other hand, a considerable share of villages in India gained various benefits due to the initiative, schemes and programs implemented by the central government like Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). Today, many Indian villages have good roads and are well connected to the other parts of the country.

Buses, minibuses, share autos, tractors and other vehicles are plying in the villages to meet the demands of the population. For instance, in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, a first-of-its-kind mini bus scheme was introduced (1999) to connect the villages of the state. At present, there are almost 4,000 mini uses are plying in Tamil Nadu serving the rural population of the state. On a whole we can say that today a well-knit and coordinated system of transportation in India is playing an important role in the sustained growth of our country.

Source:

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