



AIR Discussions (December 3rd Week)

ALL INDIA RADIO SUMMARY (16 DECEMBER TO 22 DECEMBER 2020)

SPOTLIGHT

NATIONAL RAIL PLAN

Why in news?

- In order to address the **inadequacies of capacity constraints** and **improve its modal share in total freight ecosystem** of the country, Indian Railways issued draft **National Rail Plan**.

Draft National Rail Plan

- It is a **long-term strategic plan**, that has been developed to **plan infrastructural capacity enhancement** along with strategies to increase modal share of the Railways.
- It will be a **common platform for all future infrastructural, business and financial planning of the Railways**.
- This plan is being circulated among various Ministries for their views now. Railways aim to finalise the final plan by January 2021.

The objectives of the plan are:

- To create **capacity ahead of demand by 2030**, which in turn would cater to growth in demand right up to 2050 and also increase the modal share of Railways from 27% currently to 45% in freight by 2030.
- As part of a national commitment to reduce carbon emission and to continue to sustain it. **Net zero carbon emission by 2030**.
- Forecast growth of traffic in both freight and passenger** year on year up to 2030 and on a decadal basis up to 2050.
- Formulate strategies based on both operational capacities and commercial policy initiatives** to increase modal share of the Railways in freight to 45% by 2030.
- Reduce transit time of freight** substantially by **increasing average speed of freight trains** from present 22 Kmph to 50 Kmph.
- Reduce overall cost of Rail transportation by nearly 30%** and pass on the benefits to the customers.
- Map the growth in demand** on the Indian Railway route map and simulate the capacity behaviour of the network in future.
- Based on above simulation **identify infrastructural bottlenecks** that would arise in future with growth in demand
- Select projects along with appropriate technology in both track work, signalling and rolling stock to mitigate these bottlenecks well in advance.



- Future projects for implementation beyond 2024 in both track and signalling have been identified with clear cut timelines for implementation.
- **Three Dedicated Freight Corridors**, namely East Coast, East-West & North-South identified along with timelines. PETS survey already underway.
- Several new High Speed Rail Corridors have also been identified. Survey on Delhi-Varanasi High Speed Rail already under way.
- **Assess rolling stock requirement** for passenger traffic as well as wagon requirement for freight.
- **Assess Locomotive requirement** to meet twin objectives of 100% electrification (Green Energy) by December 2023 and also the increasing traffic right up to 2030 and beyond up to 2050.
- Assess the total investment in capital that would be required along with a periodical break up.
- **Identify new streams of finance and models for financing** including those based on PPP.
- For successful implementation of the National Rail Plan Railways will be looking to engage with Private Sector, PSUs, State Governments and Original Equipment Manufacturers(OEM)/Industries.
- **Sustained involvement of the Private Sector** in areas like operations and ownership of rolling stock, development of freight and passenger terminals, development/operations of track infrastructure etc.
- In effect the National Rail Plan envisages an **initial surge in capital investment right up to 2030** to create capacity ahead of demand and increase the modal share of the Railways in freight by 45%.
- Post 2030 , the revenue surplus generated would be adequate to finance future capital investment and also take the burden of debt service ratio of the capital already invested. Exchequer funding of Rail projects would not be required.

Vision 2024

- As part of the National Rail Plan, **Vision 2024 has been launched** for accelerated implementation of certain critical projects by 2024 such as
 - 100% electrification
 - multitracking of congested routes
 - upgradation of speed to 160 kmph on Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Mumbai routes
 - upgradation of speed to 130 kmph on all other Golden Quadrilateral-Golden Diagonal (GQ/GD) routes and
 - elimination of all Level Crossings on all GQ/GD route.

Background of Indian railways

- The first railway proposals for India were made in **Madras in 1832**.
- The country's first train, **Red Hill Railway (built by Arthur Cotton to transport granite for road-building)**, ran from Red Hills to the Chintadripet bridge in Madras in **1837**.
- India's first passenger train, operated by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway between Bori Bunder (Mumbai) and Thane on 16 April 1853.
- The Railway Budget was usually presented two days before the Union budget every year till 2016. The central government approved merger of the Rail and General budgets from next year, ending a 92-year-old practice of a separate budget for the nation's largest transporter.



- Indian Railways (IR) is a governmental entity under the Ministry of Railways that operates India's national railway system.
- It is run by the government as a public good and manages the third-largest railway network in the world by size, with a route length of 68,155 km (42,350 mi) as of March 2019.
- 64% of all the broad-gauge routes are electrified with 25 kV 50 Hz AC electric traction as of August 2020.
- The government has committed to electrifying India's entire rail network by 2023–24, and become a **"net-zero (carbon emissions) railway" by 2030.**

Conclusion:

- Indian Railways plans to generate enough revenue surplus 2030 to fund its capex beyond 2030 besides taking on the burden of servicing debt that has already been raised. In sum, IR expects that exchequer funding of rail projects would not be required post-2030.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/indian-railways-issues-draft-national-rail-plan-to-create-capacity-by-2030-11608290915196.html>

<https://www.railpost.in/indian-railways-finalizes-draft-of-national-rail-plan-2030-releases-for-discussion/>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/railway-plan-2030-30-cut-in-freight-rates-help-for-subsidie-7110712/>

OTHER NEWS

GPS-based technology toll collection

Context: Road Transport and Highways Minister has said that the Government has finalised GPS-based technology toll collection to **ensure seamless movement of vehicles across the country.**

- This will **ensure India becomes 'toll booth free'** in the next two years.
- The toll amount will be deducted directly from the bank account based on the movement of vehicles.
- Now all commercial vehicles are coming with vehicle tracking systems, the Government will come up with some plan to install GPS technology in old vehicles.
- By using GPS technology for toll collection, the toll income in next five years will be Rs 1 lakh 34 thousand crore.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Govt.-finalises-GPS-based-technology-toll-collection-to-ensure-seamless-movement-of-vehicles-across-country&id=406266>



World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

Context: India strengthens its commitment to Clean Sport, **contributes USD 1 million to WADA for scientific research**, which will allow WADA to develop innovative anti-doping testing and detection methods.

- The money will also be used to further strengthen WADA's independent Investigations and Intelligence Department.
- India's contribution of USD 1 million is the **highest among contributions made by other world governments**, including China, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.
- The total contribution of all member nations will be matched by an equal sum by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to create a corpus of USD 10 million.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

- The World Anti-Doping Agency is a **foundation initiated by the International Olympic Committee** based in **Canada to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against drugs in sports**.
- The agency's key activities include **scientific research, education, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code**, whose provisions are enforced by the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport.
- The **aims** of the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention and the United States Anti-Doping Agency are also closely aligned with those of WADA.
- The statutes of WADA and the World Anti-Doping Code mandate the **Court of Arbitration for Sport's ultimate jurisdiction in deciding doping-related cases**.
- The **2021 World Anti-Doping Code** is set to come into force on **1 January 2021**

<http://ddnews.gov.in/sports/india-strengthens-its-commitment-clean-sport-contributes-usd-1-million-wada-scientific>

National Hydrology Project (NHP)

- National Hydrology Project (NHP) was started in the year 2016 as a **Central Sector Scheme** with **100% grant to Implementing agencies** on pan India basis with a budget outlay of Rs 3680 Crore to be spent over a period of 8 years.
- The project aims at improving the extent, reliability and accessibility of water resources information and to strengthen the capacity of targeted water resource management institutions in India.
- Thus NHP is facilitating acquisition of reliable information efficiently, which would pave the way for an **effective water resource development and management**.
- The Project, has made significant progress in the fields of



- Water resource monitoring system,
 - water resource information system (WRIS),
 - water resource operation and planning systems and
 - institutional capacity enhancement.
- Under the NHP, a nationwide repository of water resources data - NWIC has been established.
 - NHP is focusing on establishment of **real time data acquisition system (RTDAS)** on pan India basis.
 - The Real time data acquisition system, the near real time data acquisition system and the manual data acquisition stations would complement each other and would lay a strong foundation for informed decision making for better water resources management.
 - All such data would be available through web enabled India WRIS which is being upscale under the NHP.
 - NHP is a project of **National importance** since it establishes a **Nationwide 'Nodal' 'one point' platform for all states to collaborate and share data pertaining to water resources.**

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=406222>

New Development Bank

Context: The Government of India and New Development Bank signed a loan agreement for **one thousand million dollar to provide support to Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan through MGNREG Scheme.**

- The programme will support Government in **mitigating the adverse economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic and enable economic recovery in the rural areas** through **Natural Resource Management (NRM) works.**
- This will **facilitate economic activity and employment generation** to stimulate rural demand, to combat the decline in economic activity due to outbreak of COVID-19.
- The programme proposes **creation of durable rural infrastructure assets** relating to NRM and generation of employment opportunities for rural poor, especially migrant workers who have returned from urban areas and have lost their livelihoods due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

New Development Bank

- Formerly referred to as the **BRICS Development Bank**, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).



- NDB support **public or private projects** through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments."
- It cooperate with international organizations and other financial entities and provide technical assistance for projects to be supported by the Bank.
- The Agreement on the NDB specifies that **"every member will have one vote, No one would have any veto powers"**.
- NDB is currently headquartered in BRICS Tower in Shanghai, China.
- According to the NDB's General Strategy, **sustainable infrastructure development** is at the core of the Bank's operational strategy for 2017-2021.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=India-signs-one-billion-dollar-loan-agreement-with-NDB-for-Aatma-Nirbhar-Bharat-Abhiyan&id=406204>

Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union

Context: Information and Broadcasting Minister has congratulated Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Sekhar Vempati on being elected as Vice President of Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union.

Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)

- It is one of the largest broadcasting associations in the world.
- Mr Vempati has been elected to the office of the Vice President, ABU for three years with immediate effect.
- Almost all of the Public Broadcasters of the member countries in the Asia Pacific region strongly supported the candidature of India's Public Broadcaster which was forwarded by Japan.
- The Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union was **formed in 1964** as a **professional association of broadcasting organisations** with over 286 members in 57 countries and regions, reaching the potential population of about three billion people.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=MIB-Prakash-Javadekar-congratulates-Prasar-Bharati-CEO-Shashi-Sekhar-Vempati&id=406203>



Advanced Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility

Context: Defence minister inaugurated the advanced **Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility** in Hyderabad.

- The state-of-the-art facility is pressure vacuum driven enclosed free jet facility with nozzle exit of one-meter diameter.
- This will simulate **Mach 5 to 12**, making India the third country after the US and Russia to have such a facility.
 - Mach represents the **multiplication factor to the speed of sound**.
- The project is an **indigenous development** and an outcome of synergistic partnership with Indian industries.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Defence-minister-Rajnath-Singh-inaugurates-the-advanced-Hypersonic-Wind-Tunnel-test-facility-in-Hyderabad&id=406385>

CMS-01

Context: The Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO, has successfully launched the country's new communication satellite CMS-01 in the intended orbit in space.

- The workhorse rocket **PSLV-C50** carrying the satellite lifted off from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- In just about 21 minutes, the launch mission was accomplished and the satellite was injected into the geo-synchronous transfer orbit.
- The new satellite CMS-01 will take over the mantle from the ageing telecommunication satellite **GSAT-12** that has outlived its planned operational period by rendering seamless service for 11 years.
- The CMS-01's intended operational life is seven years.



ISRO'S PSLV-C50 LIFTS OFF WITH CMS-01 SATELLITE

PSLV-C50 successfully placed country's CMS-01 satellite into geosynchronous transfer orbit

- CMS-01 is India's 42nd communication satellite
- Will replace GSAT-12 satellite, launched in 2011
- Will provide telecom services in the Extended-C Band of the frequency spectrum
- Extended-C Band coverage will include Indian mainland, Andaman-Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands
- Mission life: 7 years

PSLV-C50

- 52nd flight of PSLV
- 22nd flight of PSLV 'XL' variant

77th launch vehicle mission from Sriharikota spaceport

Source: ISRO

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<http://newsonair.com/News?title=ISRO-launches-new-communication-satellite-CMS-01-successfully&id=406216>