

Authored by Davinder Sandhu, Co-founder & Chairman, Primus Partners

Published in ABP News  
29 Jan 2025 | 02:58 PM (IST)

## Budget 2025: Facilities For Passengers, Sustainability, And Push For Manufacturing, The Needs Of Indian Railways Today

*For a fresh start, the Railways must be unshackled from its insulated approach of remaining confined to its own track and mandated to start thinking like a full-service logistics services provider.*



High-speed rail projects like the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor must be complemented by initiatives to enhance regional connectivity and decongest critical routes, boosting efficiency for passengers and freight alike.

Source : [ABPLIVE AI](#) 

**Read on:** <https://news.abplive.com/business/budget/budget-2025-railway-expectations-jobs-manufacturing-technology-infrastructure-indian-railways-modern-interconnected-transport-make-in-india-1746934>

### Article Content:

Transforming Indian Railways is essential to India's economic and social aspirations, and the Union Budget provides a golden opportunity to revitalise this lifeline of the nation, ensuring it keeps pace with the country's ambitions.

For a revolutionary start, Indian Railways must be unshackled from its insulated approach of remaining confined to its own track and mandated to start thinking like a full-service logistics services provider. To fully harness its potential, Indian Railways must adopt a truly multi-modal approach and collaborate with other transport modes.

## **Railways And Other Transport Modes**

As per the Railways Act, Indian Railways is empowered as a multi-modal common carrier, capable of integrating with other transport modes to provide comprehensive logistics solutions. This legal mandate, is provided in the very definition of "railway" in the Act, which extends to "*all vehicles which are used on any road for the purposes of traffic of a railway..... all ferries, ships, boats and rafts*". This mandate underscores the need for coordinated policies and investments to enhance inter-modal connectivity and optimise resource utilisation.

Seamless integration with roadways, waterways, and airways can streamline freight logistics and provide complete solutions for both passenger and freight traffic. Policies promoting multi-modal logistics parks and unified ticketing systems will enhance efficiency and reduce costs, positioning Indian Railways as the backbone of an interconnected transport ecosystem. The upcoming budget can unlock this potential by focusing on infrastructure that supports seamless transitions between rail, road, and water transport systems, enabling Indian Railways to lead the charge in building a unified national transport network.

## **Enhance Safety**

Indian Railways caters to over 8 billion passengers annually and transports around 1.5 billion tons of freight. On this vast network spanning more than 68,000 route kilometers, average passenger train speeds linger at 50 km/h, and freight trains average about 25 km/h, and safety concerns persist. The budget must address these challenges by investing in modernisation, including electrification, track upgrades, and advanced signaling systems. High-speed rail projects like the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor must be complemented by initiatives to enhance regional connectivity and decongest critical routes, boosting efficiency for passengers and freight alike.

## **Sustainable Approach**

Indian Railways, which consumes around 20 billion kWh of electricity annually, has pledged to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030. This transformation requires substantial budgetary support for renewable energy projects, such as solar installations and wind farms. Electrification, already covering 80 per cent of the network, needs to expand, while research into hydrogen-powered trains and other green technologies can position India as a leader in sustainable rail transport. The next big step should see the Railways leveraging small and modular nuclear reactors as captive base-load electricity generation for round the clock renewable power.

## **Better Services For Passengers**

Passenger amenities also need urgent attention. With over 5 billion passenger journeys recorded in 2022-23, station facilities and onboard services remain inadequate. Investments in modernising stations, upgrading train facilities, and improving sanitation can make train travel more appealing. Programs like 'One Station-One Product,' which

promote local artisans and vendors, should be expanded to enrich passenger experiences while supporting local economies. Equity and inclusivity should remain central to the budget's vision. Enhanced connectivity to rural and remote areas, coupled with affordable travel options for underprivileged groups, can ensure that the benefits of railway development reach the last mile. Expanding regional rail networks can also promote balanced economic growth across states.

### **Push For Manufacturing**

Launching financial incentives for developing technology for railway rolling stock and investing in manufacturing facilities can catalyse economic growth on multiple fronts. Such initiatives will attract global and domestic manufacturers, creating jobs and boosting industrial output. Modern rolling stock, developed with state-of-the-art technology, can improve energy efficiency, lower maintenance costs, and elevate passenger experiences, making rail travel more competitive.

Furthermore, a robust manufacturing ecosystem will enable Indian Railways to scale up production of freight wagons and passenger coaches, meeting domestic demand while positioning the country as an exporter of railway equipment. Incentives can also drive innovation, fostering partnerships between academia, research institutions, and industry to develop cutting-edge solutions tailored to India's unique needs. This approach aligns with the government's vision of 'Make in India' and sustainable economic progress.

Indian Railways is not merely a mode of transport; it is a vehicle for national integration and economic progress. The upcoming budget must act decisively to continue the development of this colossal and strategic national asset as a modern and efficient system, continuing to propel India toward a sustainable and prosperous future.

*(The author is the Co-Founder & Chairperson, Primus Partners)*

***Disclaimer: The opinions, beliefs, and views expressed by the various authors and forum participants on this website are personal and do not reflect the opinions, beliefs, and views of ABP Network Pvt. Ltd.***