

Cabinet Gives Nod to 7 Multi-tracking Projects of Indian Railways

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The proposed projects, which will be fully funded by the Centre, will help increase the existing line capacity, smoothen train operations, reduce congestion and facilitate ease of travelling and transportation. (File photo/News18)

The projects covering 35 districts in nine states - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal - will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by 2,339 km and provide employment of an estimated 7.06 crore man-days to the people of the states

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday approved seven multi-tracking projects of Indian Railways at an estimated cost of around Rs 32,500 crore and these will bring down the travel time for passengers, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said.

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The projects covering 35 districts in nine states — Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal — will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by 2,339 km and provide employment of an estimated 7.06 crore man-days to the people of the states.

The projects include doubling of the existing Gorakhpur-Cantt-Valmiki Nagar line, the Son Nagar-Andal multi-tracking project, third line between Nergundi-Barang and Khurda Road-Vizianagaram and between Mudkhed-Medchal and Mahbubnagar-Dhone, doubling of existing line between Guntur-Bibinagar, doubling of existing line between Chopan-Chunar and the quadrupling between Samakhiali-Gandhidham.

Vaishnaw said these are essential routes for the transportation of varied baskets of commodities such as foodgrains, fertilizers, coal, cement, fly ash, iron and finished steel, clinkers, crude oil, limestone, edible oil etc.

The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of magnitude 200 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum).

The Railways being environment friendly and energy efficient mode of transportation, will help both in achieving climate goals and for reducing logistics cost of the country, the ministry said in a statement. The projects are result of PM-Gati Shakti National Master Plan for Multi-modal connectivity which have been possible through integrated planning and will provide seamless connectivity for the movement of people, goods and services.

"These projects would substantially reduce the journey time of passengers," Vaishnaw said.

Highlighting the strategic significance of these initiatives, he emphasised that the projects are intricately interconnected and should be viewed holistically, as they collectively contribute to the modernisation of Indian Railways.

The doubling of the existing Guntur-Bibinagar single line section of length 239 km is being executed at a cost of Rs 3238 crore. The line will benefit the cement industry in Andhra Pradesh. The distance between Chennai from Secunderabad will reduce by 76 km and Vijayawada to Secunderabad distance will reduce by 38 Km due to the project.

The doubling of the existing Chopan-Chunar single line section of 102 km at a cost of Rs 1,553 crore in Uttar Pradesh will benefit industry in the area and Singrauli mines workers will get faster connectivity to Varanasi, Lucknow and Delhi.

The doubling between the Mudkhed-Medchal and Mahbubnagar-Dhone section of length 418 km at a cost of Rs 5,655.4 crore will reduce travel time between Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat to South India by three to four hours.

The quadrupling between the Samakhiali and Gandhidham section of length 53 km at a cost of Rs 1,571 crore will benefit ports and industries. Running time of passengers will reduce and Matanamadh, Koteswar and Narayan Sarovar will become major pilgrim and tourism centres, according to the Railways.

The doubling of the existing Gorakhpur Cantt-Valmiki Nagar single line section of length 96 km at a cost of Rs 1,269.8 crore will be a major boost of industry in the northeast and connectivity boost will result in faster movement of food grains, fertilisers, cement, coal, Iron and stone chips to eastern and NE region. It will also reduce the running time for trains to Assam, Tripura, north Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh, and for passengers to and from Nepal by two to three hours.

The third line between Nergundi-Barang and Khurda Road-Vizianagaram section of length 385 km at a cost of Rs 5,618 crore will help bring domestic coal to south India through rail route from Talcher, coal from Paradeep and Gopalpur ports to steel plants, the raw material (clinker, pet coke etc) for cement plants from Paradeep port. It will also benefit the export of steel from various steel plants and lead to faster movement of iron ore from mines in the Keonjhar district to various ports in Andhra Pradesh.

The Son Nagar-Andal multi-tracking project of length 374.5 km and costing Rs 13,606 crore will help in increasing the number of trains operational in the section from the present 35 to over a hundred. It will also decongest the Delhi-Howrah route and thus boost the Delhi-Howrah industrial corridor. The section will also be instrumental in increasing Railway's modal share from 27 per cent to 40 per cent.