LocalCircles

"Improving Timeliness of Trains"

Collective inputs from over 140,000 Indian Citizens on

"Improving Railway Reservation System"

(Current state, Issues, Root Causes and Proposed Solutions)

September 11, 2015

Improving Timeliness of Trains

Executive Summary

Although Indian Railways is one of the most extensive rail networks in the world, the punctuality and on-time-performance of the trains are a big issue. Many trains are delayed daily due to unknown reasons, which make passengers suffer greatly.

The 140,000+ strong "Making Railways Better" online community has come together to collectively identify the key issues, root causes and solutions for Improving Timeliness of Trains in India and the community expects that Indian Railways will work towards implementing the identified solutions.

Issues and Root Causes Identified:

1. Many tracks are still single
2. There are insufficient platforms at many busy stations
3. Many trains start later from the originating station
4. Our network in unable to run in fog
5. Engine technology is old and breakdown frequently
6. Power outages also hamper the running of electric trains
7. Many political marches block railway tracks leading to train delays
8. Accidents on unmanned railway crossings
9. Premium trains like Rajdhani and Shatabdi are given preference over normal trains resulting in delay
10. People pull chains needlessly, delaying the train's running schedule
11. Poor/low visibility results in train delays
12. Many railway tracks are old and susceptible to wear and tear
13. Maintenance is lazy and sub-quality
14. Railways are not answerable to anyone for the delays
15. Un-necessary stoppages at non-important stations to appease local politicians
16. Lack of timely technological advancements in the sector
17. Many times, guards themselves delay the train for loading / unloading of parcels / goods.

Solutions Identified:

1. Busy routes should be converted to double tracks
2. More platforms should be built on busy stations to give docking space to trains
3. Technologically modern engines should be introduced in the railway system

4. Dedicated power sources should be set up to provide electricity to electric trains

5. More time and money should be invested in research and development activities

6. Needlessly pulling the chains to stop the train should attract a steep fine

7. Modern instruments should be procured, which could help the trains to run during low visibility fog time

8. The maintenance staff should be given a timeline and latest equipment to clean trains

9. People should be educated about keeping the trains clean from inside so that the staff could complete the cleaning in time and prevent delays

10. Sections where trains run late should be identified, thereby looking at options such as changing train timings, and finding alternative routes

11. Advanced operations research techniques used in airline industry must be deployed

12. Automatic signalling should be installed in all trunk routes

13. Identify alternative and comparatively less congested routes for movement of freight

14. Remodelling of stations should be done such that major line is through to go rather than to come to loop. This will save time for many superfast/express trains

15. A department should be created to which all the delays are reported, with a reason mentioned

16. Self-propagating trains such as DEMU MEMU EMU should be made as 12/15/18 coaches so it could carry more load, which also reduce frequency and can replace passenger conventional coaches

17. Track maintenance software should be used to monitor scheduled maintenance

18. Signalling system needs to be upgraded to current technology.

19. Unnecessary stops in intermediate stations should be removed

20. Train tracks can be illuminated with addition of Radan or equivalent chemical. Flickering solar lights can be buried between the tracks for visibility in fog

21. A law must be made to completely ban political march on railway property

22. Reasonable time must be given for loading/ unloading. If the consignment exceeds the practical limit it should not be allowed by station master

23. Stoppages at major stations should be shortened

24. Speed of the existing trains should be increased

25. Bye-pass for station like Durgapur where most of locomotive reversal occurs, should be done

26. Buffer zones should be made wherein once the train reaches station, it can stay maximum of 10 minutes and it need to be shunted to buffer place leaving the platform empty for other

27. During signalling preference must be given to the train which is running on time rather than to punish the disciplined

28. It should be ensured that terminated trains at a station are moved to the parking area without undue delay.

Improving Timeliness of Trains – a few citizen posts and comments:

1. Improve OTD of existing trains instead of introducing more trains. Remove discrimination practised by one zonal headquarters with trains of other zones. Report correct running status to railway HQ which is not the case currently. Also, take disciplinary action on laxity by railway officials as they are already taken care of quite well. If required, hire professional to handle train movement efficiently. Improve signalling system – *Shailendra Shukla*

2. I have observed that whenever any so called VIP i.e. politician or Govt. official has to board train, the train waits till his arrival. This practice should be completely stopped. This happens mostly on small stations – *Anjani Verma*

3. In spite of two track lines available, trains are stopped for the other train to cross it. Then what is the need for double lines. Is it only for name sake and to tell the world we have two-track system? If it is implemented properly, no train will be late – *Anantha Raman*

4. One simple thing that each division of the railways must do is, identify the tracks that need to be doubled. While connecting the junctions, the priority should be given to the one that is least distant. For example the distances between the junctions A to B and B to C are 100 km and 50 km respectively. In this case the preference should be given to the 50 km stretch between B and C. In this way the doubling of the track is reasonably faster and the connectivity is better – *Nagendra Singh*

5. Long route non-stop trains like Duronto and Rajdhani class trains should be diverted on high speed alternate routes to be parallel created along high pressure routes – *Rajdeep Anand*

6. At some stations trains stops for much more time than the scheduled, and at some stations almost all trains stops at signals before entering the station e.g. Agra Cantt station, here no train can enter station from both sides without stopping at signals. All Station Managers should be called for the explanation for stopping of trains at signals. Why at Agra Cantt station more than 90% trains stops at signals from both sides before entering station – *Karan Chahar*

7. The trains can run faster and many times made to halt at the outer signal for a much longer time period than the actual stoppage at station! If the trains are made to halt at the platform, at least the passengers would be able to buy foods and other items! Also, it seems the Indian Railways considers the time of passengers as a thing to waste at its will! The travel times can be shortened of almost 95 % of all the trains! - *Arvind Rathore*

8. All station masters should do more home-work before train arrival well in advance. Communication is so advanced they can very well pre-plan on priority basis where (which platform) to accommodate instead of keeping trains at longer period at outer. They simply say if any one ask flat form un available - *Narshiharao*