

Transport, Communication and Trade in India

Lesson No.	Title	Activity
25	Transport, Communication and Trade in India	Prepare a report on the transportation facility available in your area.

Meaning

Transport, communication and trade are important services. They facilitate agriculture and industry to grow to their fullest potential. Transport carries the people and goods from one place to another. Communication is the process of receiving and sending messages between two persons or agencies located at different places. Radio, Television, Telephone and telegraph are the means of communication. Their contribution in promoting business and trade is incalculable. Trade involves exchange of goods among people living in different regions or countries of the world.

Infrastructure: Definition & its Role in Area of Development

- According to World Book Dictionary the term “infrastructure” denote the essential elements forming the basis of a system or a structure.
- Infrastructure covers the resources, which strengthen the basis of the economy of a country including transportation, communication and electricity transmission and distribution.

Importance of Transport

- India is a vast country with long distances. Efficient network of transport is essential.
- The rail transport is highly useful for carrying heavy goods over long distances at affordable costs for long distance passengers.
- The road transport is very handy and convenient to carry goods and passenger over relatively short distances.
- Water transport for passengers is now no more attractive; but it is an ideal means of transport to carry heavy and bulky goods.
- Air transport has become tremendously popular for people who are called upon to visit urgently various parts of the world at a very short notice.

Rail Transport

- Indian railway network is the fourth largest in the world after Russia, the U.S.A. and Canada.
- It employs the largest number of persons among the Central Government departments.
- The first train steamed off in the country in 1853 from Mumbai to Thana, covering a distance of 34 km.
- The total route length has increased very slightly. However, nearly 28% of its route length has been

electrified.

- Total Route length is 632 thousand km.
- The number of steam or coal engines had come down to mere 45 by 2003-04 from 8120 in 1950-51.
- Now there are 4769 diesel engines as compared to mere 17 in 1950-51.
- Similarly electric locomotives have increased from 72 to 3003 by 2003-04.
- Indian railways have taken several measures to improve their efficiency and usefulness to the public:
 - considerable increase in railway running track.
 - increase in electrification of busy trunk routes.
 - conversion of metre gauge railway lines into broad gauge.
 - introducing several types of fast and superfast passenger trains
 - running fast goods and special foodgrain trains.
 - Provide better facilities for reservation and other customer care services, introducing reservation through internet.
- The Indian railways have the regions of dense, moderate and sparse railway networks.

The Role of Railways

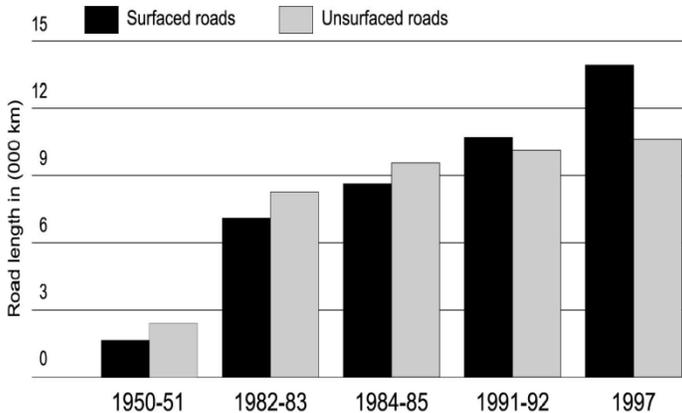
- Coal is the most dominating commodity transported by the railways. Railways promoted industrial growth of the coal starved areas.
- Railways help to increase industrial production by carrying raw materials to industrial centres.
- Railways also help in distribution of semi-finished and finished products like pig-iron and steel which in turn promote secondary industries.
- Railways also help in promoting exports of commodities like iron-ore, cement and food grains to

earn foreign exchange.

- Railways promote building activity all over the country by carrying cement over long distances.
- Railways help in boosting agricultural production by carrying huge amounts of fertilisers from one region to another.
- Railways carry mineral oil, an industrial input, from port cities and refineries to the interior parts of the country.

Road Transport

- It plays a significant role in carrying goods and people in all parts of the country. Particularly, the rural economy depends upon the road transport.
- Roads can negotiate higher gradient of slopes and can traverse the mountainous regions. Construction of railway lines is difficult and expensive in hilly regions.
- Road transport is flexible, reliable and quick,
- It is more suitable for carrying perishable goods like milk, fruit and vegetables.
- Its cost of construction and maintenance is far less than that of the railway.
- For short distance journey, roads are more suitable. They supplement the railways by linking the interior areas with railway heads. Roads are ideal for the promotion of tourism in the country.



Surfaced and Unsurfaced Roads

- Surfaced roads are the metalled roads and are made up of cement, concrete or bitumen. These are all weather roads.
- The total route length till march 1997 was 13,94,067 km.
- Unsurfaced roads are 'Kucha' roads made up of earth.
- The total length of these roads was 10,71,816 km. till march 1997.

Development of Road Transport

- Route length of surfaced roads has increased from 1.571 lakh km. (1950-51) to 13.94 lakh km. in 1997.
- The length of unsurfaced roads during the same period has increased from 2.42 lakh km. to over 10.71 lakh km.

Geographical Distribution of Roads



Recent Development of Roads under National Highway Development Project (NHDP)

In order to boost economic development in the country the Government of India initiated a programme called National Highway Development Programme (NHDP).

- Golden Quadrilateral (GQ) comprising National Highway connecting four metro cities viz, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. Total length of the Golden Quadrilateral is 5846 km.
- The second major task was the construction of North-South and East-West corridors comprising the national highways connecting Srinagar to Kanyakumari including Kochi-Salempur and Silchar to Porbandur. The total length of the corridors is about 7300 km.
- The third significant task was four laning of about 356 km. of highways to provide connectivity to 12 major ports and 777 km. on other highways.

Pipe line transport

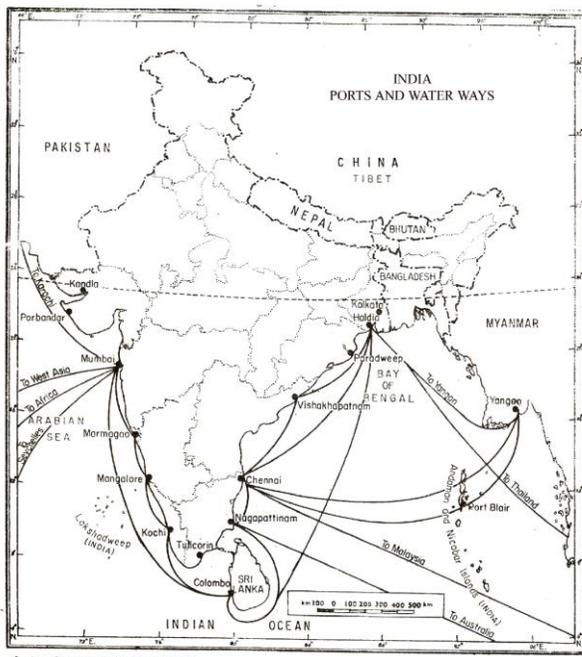
- It is the most convenient mode of transport for mineral oil, petroleum products and natural gas.
- Pipe lines connect oil and natural gas fields with refineries and the main market centres. Now solids are also being transported through pipe lines after converting them into slurry.
- Advantages-
 - Pipe line can be laid through difficult terrain as well as under water.
 - Initial cost of laying pipeline is high but subsequent cost for maintenance and operation is low.
 - It ensures steady supply and minimises

transshipment losses and delays.

- Pipe line operation involves very low consumption of energy.

Water Transport

- The Indian mainland together with its island groups has a long coastline of over 6100 km. This long coastline is dotted with 12 major and 186 minor ports.
- The 12 major ports handle 90% of international water borne trade containing 384 million tonnes of sea imports and exports.
- The major ports are Kandla, Mumbai, Jawahar Lal Nehru Port (at Nhava Sheva on the opposite side of Mumbai harbour), Marmugao, New Mangalore and Kochi, Tuticorin, Ennore, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Paradeep (Paradwip) and the Joint port of Kolkata - Haldia.



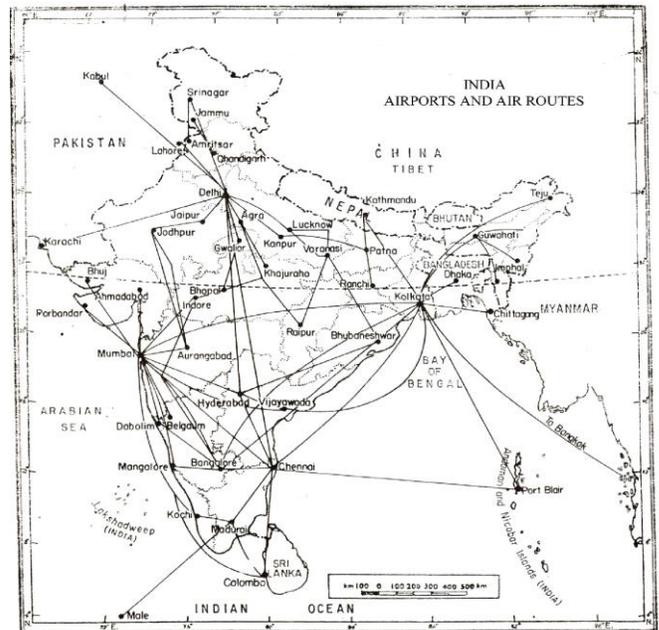
Inland Water Ways

- The position of inland water ways in India is very poor. The total length of navigable water ways is only 14,500 km which can be used by mechanised boats and steamers. We are actually utilizing only about 2700 km long water ways.
- The factors affecting the inland water ways in India:
 - Diversion of water of rivers for irrigation.
 - Silting of river beds reduces the depth of river water.
 - Seasonal fluctuations in the water level of the rivers.
 - Presence of bridges, water falls and cataracts in the course of rivers.
 - An unequal competition with railways and road ways.

Air Transport

- In the public sector, there are Air India Indian Airlines, Air India Charters Limited (Air India Express) and

Alliance Air. In the private sector, there are scheduled airlines (passenger), namely, Jet Airways, Sahara Airlines, Deccan Aviation, Spice Jet, Go Airways, Kingfisher Airlines, Paramount Airways and Indigo etc.



Communication

Postal Services

It is the most commonly used mode of communication in India covering 99% of the villages.

At present about 1.55 lakh post offices are providing postal services.

Postal Index Number (PIN) has facilitated the prompt delivery of mail.

Speed post service has been introduced for fast and quick delivery of post.

Telecommunication

It is the modern device for the communication at individual and mass level. Telegraph, Telephone; Talex and Fax are the main means of tele communication.

Mass - Communication

Radio and television are the electronic media of mass communication. They play an important role in individual and social life.

Trade

- The services which involve the activities of buying and selling of goods are termed as trade.
- International trade involves selling and buying various commodities at the international level.
- During the year 2004-05 the value reached at Rs. 8,37,133 crores. Though, India has trade relations with all the major trading blocks and all the geographical regions of the world, the major trade partners are the USA, Russia, countries of West

Europe, Japan and Oceania.

Balance of Trade

- Difference between value of exports and imports is termed as balance of trade.
- When the value of exports and imports of a country is equal it is a situation of balanced foreign trade.
- If exports exceed the imports, It is favourable; and on the other hand when imports are more than exports, it is unfavourable trade.

Evaluate Yourself

1. Explain the role of railways in development of India.
2. Why inland waterways could not be developed as an effective means of transportation?