

PRESS RELEASE

RAILWAY BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2014-15 IMMEDIATE REACTIONS OF SHRI SAJJAN BHAJANKA, PRESIDENT BHARAT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Reacting to the Railway Budget Proposals for 2014-15 presented in the Lok Sabha today, the 8th July, 2014 by **Shri D V Sadananda Gowda, Hon'ble Minister of Railways, Government of India, Shri Sajjan Bhajanka, President, Bharat Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata** has issued the following Statement to the Press:

“Presenting his maiden Railway Budget Proposals for 2014-15, the Hon'ble Union Minister of Railways, Shri D V Sadananda Gowda needs to be congratulated for his emphasis on liberalisation of railway PSUs, higher rate of private investment in railway infrastructure including a focus on higher inflow of Foreign Direct Investments and an increased Public-Private Participation (PPP) in upgrading railway services.

“The emphasis towards an increase in railway infrastructure with a foresight for a parallel industrial growth is worth appreciation. As the railways have always been the backbone of economic development of the Indian economy, an expansion in the infrastructure of the railways is expected to complement industrial development.

“The introduction of high-speed bullet trains and the sanction of the ‘Sagarmala Projects’ aiming to provide railway connection to the important ports of the country is highly appreciated. This would not only improve connectivity but would also boost Indian exports. The proposal of the Ministry to connect the length and breadth of the country through a ‘Diamond Quadrilateral’ in line with the ‘Golden Quadrilateral of roadways’ is a welcome step. Introduction of Wifi connectivity in A1 and A category stations, GIS mapping and digitalisation of Railway land, extension of logistical support to various e-Commerce Companies are worth appreciation.

“Priority on development of air-conditioned transportation of milk, fruits and vegetables is a step in the right direction.

“Higher allocations for strengthening Railway network in North-Eastern States are laudable.

“Inception of ‘Railway Universities’ to generate trained human resources to cater to the technical and managerial requirements of the wide network of the Indian railways is a long felt initiative.

“It is a happy augury that the Hon'ble Minister has proposed to boost tourism in India with special focus on eco-tourism and pilgrimage. In this regard, the Hon'ble Minister's initiative in introducing ‘pilgrim circuits’ in railway network and special trains during holidays and festivals would no doubt cater to the growth in railway traffic during the peak seasons but would also help boost the tourism sector in India.

“However, as emphasised, the Railwal Budget, 2014 lacks clarity on ways to facilitate the completion of already implemented and on-going projects. The Ministry should further emphasise on the ways in which such projects could be fast tracked. The Chamber hopes that due emphasis would be laid on growth of railway traffic and removal of corruption.

“Increase of stoppages of high-speed trains appears to be a retrograde step. Instead, fast link trains should be provided to connect high-speed trains.

“There is no overall developmental proposal for West Bengal, Shri Bhajanka felt”.

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**(Keka Sarma)
Secretary General**

Dated: 8th July, 2014.

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