Indian Railways new time-table: 500 trains may be discontinued, faster passenger trains & more – top points

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Indian Railways to completely revamp its trains time-table! With the introduction of a new timetable for Indian Railways' train operations, around 500 regular trains will be discontinued and 10,000 stops will be erased, according to an IE report. The new timetable will be adopted once the COVID-19 pandemic is over and passenger train services return to normal. With "zero-based timetable", the national transporter expects to increase its annual earnings by more than Rs 1,500 crore, the report said. As per

internal projections of the Railway Ministry, this estimated extra earning will come without increasing the fares or other charges. It will be the timetable's byproduct and will happen as a result of operational policy tweaks.

With the implementation of the new timetable, there will be room to run 15% more freight trains at higher speeds on exclusive corridors. Also, it is projected that the average speed of passenger train services will increase by around 10% across the Indian Railways network. Developed by Indian Railways along with experts from IIT-Bombay, the new zero-based timetable seeks to re-imagine operations from scratch. According to the report, the zero-based timetable works on the premise that the existence of every train, as well as station halt, must be justified on the basis of organizational goals of providing transportation with efficient as well as optimum use of the resources that are available. According to the sources quoted in the report, the following are some of the broad principles of the timetable:

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- Trains with below 50% occupancy on average in a year will not run. If required, such train services will be merged with other trains, more popular ones.
- There will be no stops for long-distance trains within 200 km of each other unless there is a major city enroute. As many as 10,000 stops have been identified to be scratched. However, according to officials, the removal will take place only in respect of certain trains, and there will some other train to serve these stations.
- All passenger train services will be operated on a "hub-and-spoke model". The cities with a million or more population, where all long-distance trains will terminate, will be hubs. While as per the timetable, smaller places will be linked to the hubs through connecting trains.
- With the introduction of the new timetable, suburban networks like the Mumbai local trains, will not be affected.
- The new timetable will rationalize the utilization of the rolling stock available with the national transporter. The train sets will either have 22 LHB coaches or 24 ICF coaches. Additionally, the new timetable also envisages the use of overnight trains with 18 coaches.

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