

FICCI Comments on the Railway Budget 2016-17

New Delhi, 25 February 2016: Welcoming the Railway Budget 2016-17, **FICCI President Harshvardhan Neotia said** “it is an extremely pragmatic Rail Budget based on the three critical strategy-pillars, aimed at making railways the backbone of India’s overall development. We compliment Hon’ble Minister for his initiatives towards improving the quality of customer experience, overcoming challenges and making railways an engine of employment generation and economic growth”.

The rationalization of freight policy and review of PPP policy framework would help to attract private players for transforming rail transportation and increasing the revenue, Mr Neotia added. Initiatives towards developing an integrated railway network, greater emphasis on dedicated freight corridors, and improving port connectivity as well as north-east connectivity would go a long way in expanding the freight business. Also, commendable are the measures for improving quality of travel (both unreserved and reserved), cleanliness drive through additional 30,000 bio-toilets, stress on non-fare revenues through station redevelopment & monetizing land along tracks, greater participation of State Governments in implementation of railway projects through joint ventures, FICCI President observed.

“It is significant that to ensure 100% transparency in all its operations, all procurement including procurement of works has moved to e-platform, and the process of conducting recruitments online would be extended to all positions. Further, all facilities will be integrated into two mobile apps. All these initiatives are very important and in line with Prime Minister’s Digital India programme”, Shri Neotia pointed out.

This budget has laid down the roadmap for developing next generation railway infrastructure including high-end technology to improve safety, higher average speed of freight trains and high-speed passenger trains, FICCI stated in a release issued today.

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