

**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India  
Ministry of Railways**

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**Indian Railways is working 24/7 for the supply of essential commodities across the country**

**Operation of freight trains is continuing while passenger train services are suspended in wake of corona virus (COVID-19) Commodities like Food grains, Salt, Sugar, milk, edible oil, onions, fruits & vegetables, Petroleum products, Coal, Fertilizers etc. are being loaded at Railway terminals**

Due to the pandemic of corona virus, Indian Railways has suspended the operations of passenger train services across the country till 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

Currently, Indian Railways is operating only freight trains across the country. Indian Railways is making all efforts to ensure availability of essential commodities through its uninterrupted freight services.

During the situation of lockdown in various States, Indian Railways Staff deployed at various good sheds, stations and control offices is working on 24/7 basis to ensure that the supply of essential items for the nation does not gets affected.

On 23rd March 2020, total 474 rakes were loaded for essential commodities like food grains, salt, edible oil, sugar, milk, fruits & vegetables, onion, Coal and Petroleum products. During the day, total 891 rakes were loaded by Indian Railways which also includes other important commodities like 121 rakes of Iron ore, 48 rakes of steel, 25 rakes of cement, 28 rakes of fertilizer, 106 rakes of container etc.

Close coordination is being maintained with the State Governments so that rakes of essential commodities are handled smoothly without any delay, amidst various restriction imposed in the wake of Covid-19.

Indian Railways has slashed the demurrage and wharfage rates for goods and parcel at half of the prescribed rates till 31.03.2020.

Validity of the rate policies pertaining to goods/container traffic has also been extended by one month i.e. up to 30.04.2020.

No haulage charge shall be levied for movement of empty containers/empty flat wagons from 24.03.2020 to 30.04.2020.

Free time for loading/unloading of wagons and free time for removal of consignment from railway premises has been increased to double of the prescribed free time till 31.03.20.

To monitor the uninterrupted movement of essential commodities over Indian Railway system, an Emergency freight control is working in the Ministry of Railways. Freight movement is being closely monitored by officials at very senior level.

Indian Railways staff deployed in control rooms for operation of freight trains, line staff, maintenance staff, security personnel and medical staff in Railway hospitals is working continuously 24/7.

Indian Railways understands its crucial role during this difficult time and requests all the stakeholders to fully support in ensuring faster loading and unloading of essential supplies.

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