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Pre-Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

Indian railways

**00.00–00.08** At the Victoria Terminus in Mumbai, India, it always seems to be rush hour.

**00.08–00.14** Every day, approximately two million passengers pass through this train station.

**00.14–00.28** The journey to Mumbai is often very stressful. But in this country of over a billion people, the best way to travel is by train.

**00.28–00.34** The British built the railways in India in the 19th century.

**00.34–01.00** The first steam train in India was in 1853. Now, the Indian Railways travel along 38,000 miles of track.

Many of the trains have impressive names like the Himalayan Queen and Grand Trunk Express. The Grand Trunk Express has travelled up and down the country since 1929.

**01.00–01.10** Most of India Railways’ four billion passengers a year live in big cities. But even rural villagers do not usually have to walk for more than a day to get to a station.

**01.11–01.30** With over one and a half million people on its staff, India’s railways are the world’s largest employer.

From the Indian Railways minister down to the key man who makes sure every inch of track is in good condition, the huge workforce keeps this enormous system running.

**01.30–01.33** The railway stations are often an amazing mix of people.

**01.33–01.42** There are people selling food, porters carrying bags, and sometimes performance artists.

**01.43–end** But the railway is more than just a way to travel. It is like a miniature India. In the second class carriages, there are people from all over the country, from different classes and cultural backgrounds.

They talk, play games and tell stories. For travellers, the Indian railways are their own adventure.

Life