

## Listening script

### Unit 4

#### 08

Good morning, I'm going to talk to you today about the importance of infrastructure developments such as railway systems in helping solve some of society's problems ... and I'll also highlight some social and economic opportunities these have provided.

First of all, I'd like to give a brief overview of the history of the railway system and its effect on the world. The timeline given here shows the most significant events in the expansion of the railways in the UK in the early 19th century. Let's start with probably the most important year on the timeline, the year 1831, which saw the opening of the successful Liverpool to Manchester railway. This was powered by the locomotive, *The Rocket*, which was created by the engineer, Robert Stephenson. This is generally thought of as the first modern railway, because both goods and passenger traffic were carried on trains according to a scheduled timetable.

The success of the railway would not have been possible without previous developments to which Stephenson is indebted. As you see in 1803, the first horse-drawn railway was opened in south London by an engineer called William Jessop. The first railway steam locomotive was built in 1804 by an English engineer Richard Trevithick and in the year 1812, the first commercially successful steam locomotive, the *Salamanca* appeared on the scene at Middleton in Yorkshire in the north-east of England. After the success of the Stockton to Darlington railway in 1825 with the engine *Locomotion*, money flooded into the north-west of England as the region went through a period of rapid industrialisation, with the railway linking the rich town of Manchester and the thriving port of Liverpool.

And the social and economic effect of the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester railway on the commercial world? It was quite dramatic. By 1834, the number of passengers using the railway had risen to nearly half a million. Also more merchandise, including coal and cotton, was transported between the two cities using the railway. The age of the railway as a means of carrying people from one place to another had arrived.

The increase in rail passenger numbers and in the movement of goods led to a drop in other costs such as those for road and canal use.

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Just as the inventions of these earlier pioneers opened up travel between towns and cities in the UK, railways around the world are still creating trade links within countries and across borders, bringing communities and nations together.

Railway systems worldwide are responsible for improving people's living standards by bringing jobs to people and people to jobs. In India, for example, millions have access to work through the railways. The country comes top as regards the number of passenger-kilometres yearly, a staggering one billion passenger kilometres a year accounting for about one third of the total number of passenger-kilometres travelled globally in 2006. But the Swiss are the top rail travellers individually with about 2,500 kilometres each year according to the Switzerland Office for Statistics.

There are now many examples of modern high-speed links around the world, which provide business and tourist opportunities generating jobs and trade links. We have the Eurostar with passenger statistics showing the increasing popularity of the line, and the Sapsan, the high-speed link between Moscow and St Petersburg in Russia, and also the Bullet train in Japan and the high-speed rail link in China.

Now let's look at some of the business opportunities created in India in greater detail.