

# Topics

(October 1995-  
January 1996)

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| <p>1 October • Earthquake hits southwest Turkey, killing at least 68 and injuring 240</p> <p>3 October • Accord signed between French National Railways, German Railway and Italian State Railways to coordinate common introduction of planned European Railway Traffic Management System</p> <p>4 October • Total International Union of Railways (UIC) membership now 104 organizations in 78 countries as new applications ratified during annual meeting. Applications came from national railways of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Botswana, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda along with European Passenger Services and Finnish Rail Administration RHK</p> <p>9 October • Terrorism blamed for train derailment causing 100 casualties in Arizona. Amtrak train derailed and overturned in Arizona, killing one and injuring 99, either seriously or slightly. Rail spike found pulled out and memo believed written by right wing group claiming responsibility discovered. Federal FBI investigating incident as indiscriminate terrorist attack</p> <p>• More than 30 killed by earthquake in western Mexico. Earthquake measuring 7.5 on Richter scale occurred on Pacific coast of Mexico. Hotels, churches and school buildings flattened in states of</p> | <p>13 October • Sightseeing bus collision in China leaves one dead and eight injured</p> <p>14 October • Bus carrying 29 people including Korean tourists hijacked near Red Square in Moscow. Suspect took passengers hostage at gun point and demanded \$10 million ransom. Russian security officials shot hijacker dead in surprise attack</p> <p>17 October • French government awarded Shuichiro Yamanouchi, Vice Chairman of East Japan Railway Co., "l'Order National du Merite" for long contribution through railway business to stronger bilateral ties between Japan and France. Ceremony took place at official residence of French Ambassador to Japan</p> <p>• Bomb exploded under seat on regional subway train near Orsay Museum, Paris during morning rush hour, injuring 25 people</p> <p>18 October • US fighter crashed about 100 km off coast of Naha, Okinawa. Single crew member ejected and rescued by helicopter of Japanese Self Defense Forces</p> <p>• Export-Import Bank of Japan to extend ¥12 billion in untied loans to national railway of Czech Republic, by teaming up with Fuji Bank, Sakura Bank, Industrial Bank of Japan and Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan. Loans allocated for building Czech portion (445 km) of trunk line railway facilities connecting Germany and Austria</p> <p>19 October • Hot air balloon crashes in New Zealand, killing 3. Two of seven Japanese aboard killed</p> <p>24 October • Up to 17 people killed and 100 injured in Indonesia when overnight passenger train left rails travelling from Bandung to Central Java</p> <p>25 October • Rear-end collision involving large truck, overnight bus and</p> | <p>Colima and Jalisco</p> <p>• Small biplane crashed into Tokachigawa river bed, Hokkaido, leaving one dead and one seriously injured</p> <p>26 October • One of world's fastest ferries launched by Ishikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries Co., at Tokyo Shipyard. 17,900-tonne ferry, Suisen, to service route between Tsuruga and Otaru from June 1996. Accommodates up to 515 people, 122 trucks and 80 passenger cars</p> <p>28 October • Subway disaster in Baku, Azerbaijan kills 288 people when fire swept subway train. Malfunction of subway's outdated electrical system sent sparks from high-voltage cables as train left station</p> <p>29 October • Japan's longest junction completed for Hokuriku Shinkansen in Takasaki city, Gunma Prefecture. Point measures 135-m long, almost double length of conventional points, and designed to enable trains to pass at speeds as high as 160 kph</p> <p>1 November • Eurotunnel loses £2.6 million claim. Arbitrator International Chamber of Commerce dismissed call by Eurotunnel for complete revision of 1987 contract with SNCF and British Rail finding both railways had met contract obligations. Eurotunnel claimed for costs of delays in starting services, inadequate infrastructure and poor marketing</p> <p>3 November • Typhoon caused 344 deaths in Philippines and leveled about 38,000 homes. Damage estimated at cost 1.2 billion pesos</p> <p>7 November • British government agreed to sell three leasing companies owning state railway's 11,000 passenger cars for nearly £1.8 billion. Sale marks major step in selling separate track, train and route operating companies to private sector</p> <p>10 November • Bad weather sinks ferry carrying 180 people including foreign tourists in Gulf of Thailand. Ferry sailing for Samui Island located 600 km south of Bangkok, and popular tourist destination</p> <p>five other vehicles on Tomei Expressway in Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan, leaves two dead and 44 people injured</p> |
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- 11 November • Nigerian plane carrying 130 people crashed on landing in northern Nigeria, killing 77 passengers
- 28 November • New head office of Hokkaido Railway Co., under construction since May 1994, completed in front of Soen station of Hakodate Line in Sapporo. Modern intelligent building has nine stories above ground and one in basement, with total floor space of about 17,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- 30 November • Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) held 10th Japan Congress of International Travel and Travel Show in Osaka between 30 November and 3 December entitled, "Navigating toward New Era in Tourism". Four-day congress attracted over 1,500 participants from 78 different countries
- 1 December • JR East revised timetable, and launched new train, *Nasuno*, dedicated to short distances of up to 100 km on Tohoku Shinkansen. Also increased number of carriages of Yamagata Shinkansen Tsubasa from six to seven
- 2 December • China and Vietnam reached agreement to restore railway links interrupted since 1979 when two countries clashed
- 3 December • More than 60 dead in passenger plane crash into mangrove in Cameroon
- 5 December • Tupolev 134 Azerbaijan Airlines crashed after take-off at Nakhichevan airport killing 49 passengers and crew members and injuring 33 others
- 8 December • Macao, Europe's oldest colony in Asia, formally opened new international airport corresponding with start of direct flights to Taiwan and China. Represents Macao's first major competition with Hong Kong, signing air service agreements with 24 countries
- 12 December • Japanese Transport Ministry called for reinforcement "within 3 to 5 years" of tracks of Shinkansen network and other major railway lines to protect passengers from possible effects of major earthquake. Also called for improvements to structure of elevated bridges and railway tunnels constructed in future to withstand shock of earthquake with intensity comparable to Great Hanshin Earthquake
- 13 December • Rumanian Antonov 24 plane crashed in snow just after takeoff at Villafranca, northern Italy. Second major accident involving Romanian carrier this year. In March, Tarom Airlines Airbus A310 crashed near Bucharest, killing all 60 passengers and crew.
- 18 December • French railway returned slowly to normal after 22-day public transport strike. French government eventually forced to withdraw SNCF restructuring plan
- Passenger plane crashed in Angola, killing 139 with five miraculously uninjured.
- 20 December • Tower Airlines B747 plane carrying 467 people bound for Miami slipped on runway taking off at Kennedy airport in New York. Heavy snow since previous day blamed for incident, which injured 28 passengers slightly. Airport closed for nearly 4 hours
- Four out of 164 aboard American Airlines Boeing 757 en route from Miami survived after plane slammed into mountain in Colombia and burst into flames. Accident most deadly involving US carrier since 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland
- 21 December • More than 130 injured in train collision 20 km south of Cairo, Egypt. At least 66 people dead, and more than 65 others injured, making it one of worst railway accidents in Egypt
- 22 December • JR Hokkaido, JR Shikoku and JR Kyushu, obtained approval for fare increase from Ministry of Transport in response to recommendation made by transport advisory panel. Increase to take effect from 10 January 1996, and first such increase since privatization in April 1987
- Japanese domestic airlines allowed to offer up to 25% discounts on fares at own discretion with so-called standard costs used as ceiling
- 1 January • Bus plunged into ravine outside Zairean capital, killing 72 people on way back home from New Year's celebration. Worst road accident in country's history.
- 8 January • 297 people killed and 160 injured when Russian-built Antonov An-32 slammed into ground seconds after lifting off from Kinshasa's Ndolo Airport. Plane skidded across busy street and thundered through crowded open-air market
- New Eurostar train station opened in southeast English town of Ashford, saving hour of travel time for passengers bound for Paris or Brussels. Ashford-Paris and Ashford-Brussels routes take 2.25 hours each, 1 hour less than trains leaving from London. New station offers 9 round-trip trains daily, five serving Paris and four Brussels
- 10 January • Eurotunnel claimed first place as leading cross-Channel operator in 1995 on Calais-Dover route. 8 million people and 391,000 trucks took tunnel route last year, while more than 5,300 freight trains belonging to various railway companies also used tunnel. Strikes severely affected freight trains with only 88 running in December compared to 464 in previous month
- 21 January • Concorde celebrated 20th birthday at Heathrow Airport. Since inaugural service from Heathrow to Bahrain in 1976, seven Concorde made 42,000 flights, clocking up over 120,000 hours of flying time and travelling 125 million miles
- 22 January • 130 people missing and 54 dead after overloaded ferry sank off Sumatra in northern Indonesia with 210 passengers, including 11 foreigners, and 16 crew. Ship hit coral reef in storm

# Yurikamome Unmanned Guided Transport System

November 1, 1995 saw the opening of *Yurikamome* (Seagull) a new unmanned, computer-controlled guided transport system between central Tokyo and the Tokyo waterfront area. It runs on an elevated concrete guideway using rubber tyres and operations are fully automated and monitored from a central control room. The first similar system started operation in Kobe in 1981 and there are now 9 routes elsewhere in the metropolitan Tokyo, Osaka and Hiroshima areas. The construction and operation costs are much lower than conventional rail systems, although the transport capacity is limited. It is hoped that *Yurikamome* will help solve urban transport problems such as congestion, pollution and noise. ■



■ Telecom Center Station and office buildings

(Transportation News)



■ The central control room, for monitoring train operations and platforms.

(Transportation News)



■ Train interphone allowing direct conversation with the central control room in emergency.

(Transportation News)



■ A well-lit platform surrounded by glass gives passengers a good view and protection against bad weather

(Transportation News)



■ *Yurikamome*, arriving at Ariake station. The building on the right side is the exhibition hall

(Transportation News)



■ The Rainbow Bridge, seen from the front carriage

(Transportation News)

