

1 November — Light aircraft belonging to Transportes Aereos Profesionales crashed in dense forest near airport at Flores, in northern Guatemala killing 14 including 2 crew members

7 November — Japanese Ministry of Transport established study group in effort to revive trams to control automobile exhaust gas and reduce road congestion in major cities

7 November — Nigerian Boeing 727 flying from Port Harcourt to Lagos crashed, killing all 141 on board

11 November — Approximately 100 Japanese tourists fell ill after eating airline meals on several Qantas aircraft flying from Cairns to Japan in previous week

11 November — Tobu Railway chooses centenary logo with slogan "Move Tobu" expressing Tobu Railway's strength and concern for people

12 November — New domestic airline Skymark Airlines Co. launched by discount air ticket seller HIS and other investors to challenge domestic aviation market dominated by three major airlines in Japan

12 November — Saudi Airways Boeing 747 carrying 312 passengers and crew taking off from Indira Ghandi International Airport bound for Jiddah collided with Kazakh Airways freight/passenger Ilyushin IL-76 carrying 39, killing all 351

15 November — Japan Freight Railway Co. severely in red due to intensified trucking competition. By 1994, truck distribution share increased to 90.1% while freight trains dropped to 1.2%

17 November — JR East completed relocation of Chuo Line viaduct to make space for new shinkansen platform at Tokyo Central Station. Eleven girders each up to 39-m long, 11-m wide and weighing approximately 840 tonnes slid at speed of approximately 6 cm/minute over city road during night

18 November — Fire on *Le Shuttle* train in Channel Tunnel injured 8 people and lead to partial shutdown of passenger and freight services

19 November — Groundbreaking ceremony held at Hualampong Station for Bangkok Subway. Track to extend approximately 20 km and planned to open in 2002. Japan providing technical assistance and yen credits of approximately ¥26.6 billion

19 November — All Nippon Airways 24-hour strike cancelled 357 flights affecting 60,000 passengers. Last ANA strike 6.5 years ago in April 1990

19 November — Two light aircraft collided on runway at Baldwin Field Airport, Illinois, killing all 13 on board



Chuo Line viaduct near Tokyo Central before relocation (top) and after

(JR East)



Engineers repairing Channel Tunnel after fire

(AP)

21 November — Osaka Loop Railroad formed to electrify JR Freight Joto Line in east Osaka and lay double track. Project to cost approximately ¥120 billion with 25% received from national and prefectural governments. Thirteen passenger stations planned

23 November — Ethiopian Airlines B767 carrying 175 passengers and crew from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to Abidjan, Ivory Coast, hijacked over Kenya and crashed in Indian Ocean near Comoros Islands. Fifty-two rescued and 70 bodies recovered, with no hopes for missing

24 November — *Frontier* stern paddle steamer started operation on Lake Ashinoko, Japan. Ship built by Hakone Sightseeing Ships and Odakyu Group

25 November — JR Freight commenced work on company headquarters to be completed in 1998 at Iida-cho Freight Station in Tokyo. Twenty-three stories above ground and two underground totalling 47,400 m² of floor space

26 November — Work started on Okinawa Urban Monorail linking Naha Airport and Naha City, Okinawa, Japan. Straddle-type monorail to cover 12.9 km and cost ¥108.1 billion borne by national, prefectural and city governments

3 December — Terrorist bomb at Paris Port Royal underground station killed and injured 87

4 December — JR Freight train derailed on Onuma-Miyama section of Hakodate Main Line with no injuries

6 December — 1996 Economic Annual Report on Transport (White Paper) released by Japanese Ministry of Transport praised improvement of JRs but emphasized need for radical solution for former JNR long-term debt. Report noted JR Hokkaido, JR Kyushu, JR Shikoku and JR Freight require stronger business bases

12 December — Two Air Self-Defence Force F4 Phantom fighters involved in near miss with Air Nippon (ANK) Boeing 737 carrying 54 passengers at Naha Airport, Okinawa, used by both civilian and military traffic

13 December — 7th Airport Infrastructure 5-Year Plan (1996-2000) approved by Cabinet. Total investment ¥3.6 trillion with priority to completion of New Tokyo International Airport (Narita) parallel runway (scheduled for 2000), early completion of offshore development for Tokyo International Airport (Haneda), and preparation of parallel runway for Kansai International Airport

13 December — Ceremony held in Morioka City, Japan, to mark completion of Akita Shinkansen track. Operations started 22 March 1997 linking Akita and Tokyo in 3 hours and 49 minutes saving 48 minutes

14 December — Streamlined 500-series shinkansen developed by JR West started trial runs on Tokyo-Osaka section of Tokaido-Sanyo line linking Tokyo with Fukuoka

14 December — *Brightfield*, large grain-freighter lost steering and crashed into shopping center on Mississippi River in New Orleans, Louisiana, injuring 116

15 December — Boeing and McDonnell-Douglas announced merger creating largest aerospace and transport corporation in world with annual turnover of \$48 billion (1997 estimate) and 200,000 employees

18 December — Special tax measures extended for 5 years for JR Hokkaido, JR Kyushu, JR Shikoku and JR Freight facing difficult business climate in transition to complete privatization

19 December — London & Continental Railways (LCR), operator of *Eurostar* trains between London, Paris and Brussels, won government approval to build 68-mile high-speed link between St Pancras and Folkestone

30 December — Terrorist bomb explosion on train near Kokrajhar, Assam in eastern India killed 48 and injured some 80 people

30 December — Two commuter trains collided head on near Brescia, 100 km east of Milan, killing two crew members and injuring 17 people

2 January — Russian tanker (*Nakhodka*, 13,157 tonnes) broke up in Sea of Japan off coast of Shimane Prefecture leaking 19,000 tonnes of oil on coast

4 January — Japan's National Police Agency announced 1996 road death toll of 9942 dropped below 10,000 for first time in 9 years

9 January — Light passenger aircraft crashed near Detroit, Michigan, killing all 29 passengers and crew



Volunteers cleaning up oil spill from Russian tanker Nakhodka

(Kyodo Photo Service)

12 January — Sightseeing helicopter crashed in swimming area in front of hotel in Saipan killing one passenger and pilot and injuring swimmers

12 January — Italian high-speed *Pendolino* train from Milan bound for Rome derailed near Piacenza Station, approximately 50 km south of Milan killing 8 and injuring 29

13 January — Japanese Self-Defence Force helicopter crashed near Utsunomiya City during training after clipping high-tension wires killing instructor and two trainees

17 January — Unmanned Delta 2 rocket carrying new US Army satellite exploded immediately after launching

20 January — All Nippon Airways Boeing 777 carrying 192 passengers and crew from Osaka to Fukuoka hijacked by man with knife. Hijacker debarked with other passengers at Fukuoka Airport but arrested on spot for violating Sword and Firearms Law

24 January — Medium-sized Aerospatiale AS 365-N2 helicopter belonging to Toyota Motor Corp. crashed in mountains in Okazaki City, Aichi Prefecture, killing all 8 on board

27 January — Massive pileup of about 80 vehicles caused by thick fog killing three and injuring 30 at busy road link between Milan and Genoa

30 January — Japan's Railway Technical Research Institute to conduct joint tests with China Academy of Railway Science for digital automatic train control (ATC) technology to help China build high-speed line between Beijing and Shanghai

30 January — New Tokyo International Airport Authority announced passengers using Narita Airport during 1996 increased 5% to 25,410,000 setting new record for fifth consecutive year

31 January — International Tourism Promotion Association announced 16.7 million Japanese departed Japan during 1996, increase of 9.2% over previous year and setting new record for fifth consecutive year

1 February — Express train collided with dump truck at level crossing with no barriers between Kusu-cho and Bungomori on JR Kyudai Line injuring 17

1 February — Air Senegal charter flight crashed immediately after takeoff at Tambacounda Airport in Senegal, West Africa killing 23 passengers and crew and injuring 29

1 February — Light aircraft crashed in New Zealand approximately 15 km north of Dunedin after clipping barn in mist. Two Japanese passengers suffered burns

2 February — Last carriage of *Raicho 34* nine-car express train from Niigata bound for Osaka derailed in 1319-m loop tunnel near Tsuruga City, Fukui, on JR Hokuriku Line

4 February — Israeli Army helicopters collided in mid-air in Lebanon, killing 73 soldiers and crew

5 February — Derailed wagons from freight train plunged onto workshops under viaduct near Bexley, Kent, UK, injuring four workers

9 February — Express train and light truck collided on level crossing with warning device and barrier near Mobara City, Chiba on JR Sotobo Line. Truck driver killed but none of 150 passengers on train injured

9 February — Hornet FA-18D attack fighter from Iwakuni US Naval Base, Japan, crashed in Yellow Sea leaving two crew missing

10 February — Train headed from Santiago to Havana, Cuba, crashed into locomotive killing at least 13 people and seriously injuring 65

14 February — Remains of US Douglas C-53 air transport that crashed during WWII discovered buried in ice and snow in mountains at altitude of 3325 m in China's Yunnan Province

21 February — JR East announced plans to extend Yamagata Shinkansen to Shinjo by 2000. Standard track to be laid on 61.5-km Yamagata-Shinjo section, raising maximum speed from 90 to 130 km/h and linking Tokyo and Shinjo in 3 hours and 7 minutes. Project to cost ¥35 billion