

3 March — Five cars of 17-car train overturned due to brake failure in eastern Punjab, Pakistan, killing 125 and injuring 175

5 March — Two persons died when Air Command II-R532 gyroplane crashed during practice at Yamaga Airport in Wakamatsu, Kita-Kyushu, Japan

8 March — JR West Tozai Line (12.5 km from Kyobashi to Amagasaki in Osaka) opened with 200,000 passengers per day expected

10 March — Far Eastern Air Transport B757 with 158 passengers and crew on board, headed for Taipei from Kao-hsiung, Taiwan, hijacked and landed at Xiamen Airport in Fujian Province, China. Hijacker requested asylum

11 March — Explosion at nuclear fuel re-processing plant in Tokaimura, Japan, exposed 37 workers to radiation

12 March — JR West and JR Central hold International High-Speed Railway Conference 1997 at Okayama City to commemorate 25th anniversary of opening of Sanyo Shinkansen

14 March — Furious passengers took over train of South West Trains in UK when behind-schedule Exeter-bound train stopped short in Salisbury and they were told to divert 100 miles to catch another service to Exeter. South West Trains finally yielded and continued train. Company facing fine and threat of franchise removal for poor service

14 March — Bus plunged from 36-m cliff in Shaanxi Province, China, killing 25 and injuring 27

18 March — Stavropol Airlines Antonov 24 aircraft en route from Stavropol, Russia to Trabzon in Turkey, crashed near Cherkessk killing all 50 on board

18 March — Japan Telecom and ITJ agree to merger under Japan Telecom name from 1 October. Merger ratio set at 1 Japan Telecom share to 12 ITJ shares. Two corporations' joint earnings of ¥383.9 billion in March 1996 quarter ranked third after NTT (¥6,235 billion) and DDI (¥400 billion)

19 March — Twenty drivers of Great Eastern told to drive over body on Shenfield-Southend Line, UK, after woman committed suicide. Decision made jointly by Great Eastern, Railtrack and police to prevent train delays

22 March — JR companies revised spring timetables with start of Akita Shinkansen (Morioka–Akita) connecting with Tohoku Shinkansen, linking Tokyo and Akita (663 km) in minimum 3 hours 49 minutes

22 March — JR West applied to British Guinness Book of Records for 500-series *Nozomi* for maximum average speed between two stops (Hiroshima and Ogura) of 261.8 km/h. Application also made for average speed of 242.5 km/h over journey start-to-finish

25 March — Train smashed into packed city bus at railway crossing in Nammwon, South Korea, killing 14 and injuring 20

30 March — British Airways Jumbo flew from New York to London with one passenger monopolizing services of 17 cabin crew, usually responsible for 426 passengers

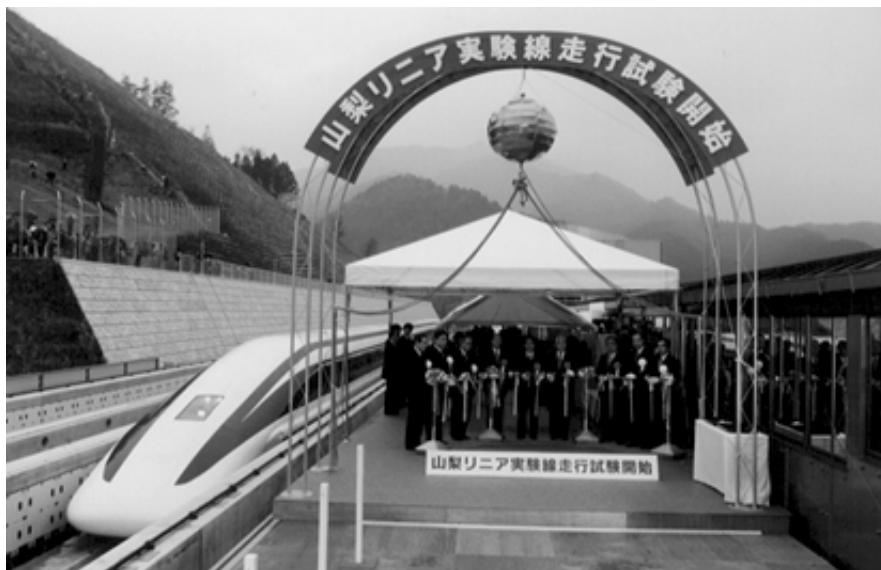
31 March — Fifty years of state ownership of UK railways ended when Scotrail, last of 25 BR franchises, passed into private sector

31 March — Passenger train carrying approximately 250 people derailed at Huarte Araquil in northern Spain killing at least 21, and injuring 86

1 April — Shimabara Railway Co. reopened entire line after 4-year hiatus for repair work on Gaiko–Fukae section due to eruption of Mt Unzen

1 April — US Air Force C-130 transport crashed near Tegucigalpa International Airport, Honduras, killing three of 10 on board

3 April — Practical running tests commenced on superconductive levitating linear motor car (MAGLEV) on test line in Yamanashi Prefecture (Tsuru City–Otsuki), Japan, with aim of stable travel at 500 km/h



Inauguration of MAGLEV test runs at Yamanashi

(Transportation News)

4 April — Nine-car *Azusa* 70 express bound for Tokyo from Matsumoto broke down in tunnel between Yanagawa and Shiotsu on JR Chuo Line in Otsuki City, Yamanashi Prefecture

7 April — Four-car east-bound local train carrying 60 passengers ran into landslide, between Taura and Anjuzuka Kanagawa Prefecture on Keihin Kyuko Line derailing three carriages

7 April — Two young children (aged 5 and 3) and grandmother rescued safely 6 days after light aircraft crashed in dense forest in western Colombia, South America. Pilot and children's mother killed

11 April — JR Central made provisional application for listing on Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Kyoto stock markets in early October. Third JR group company to go public, following JR East in 1993, and JR West in 1996. JR Central expects ¥1.125 trillion of business in 1997 March quarter and current profits of ¥64.7 billion

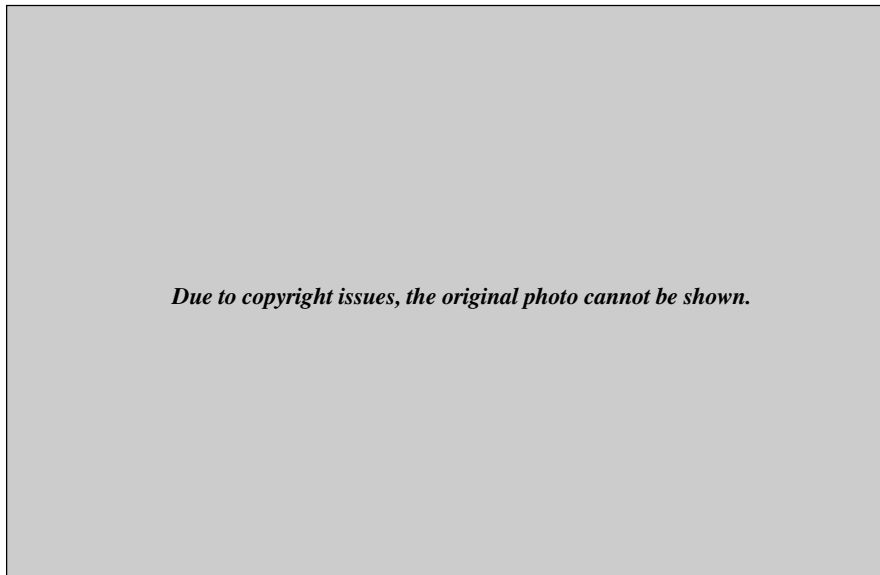
14 April — JR East announced operations on Takasaki–Nagano section (115.8 km) of Hokuriku Shinkansen to start 1 October. 8-car *Asama* to make 24 round trips each day between Tokyo–Nagano (220.8 km) with journey time of approximately 80 minutes

15 April — Tent fire killed 217 pilgrims visiting Mecca, Saudi Arabia

18 April — China Transnational Railway resumed twice-weekly passenger and freight services between Lao Cai, Vietnam, and Hekou, China linking two cities in approximately 32 hours

19 April — State-operated Merpati Nusantara Airlines turboprop airliner carrying 53 people crashed on Belitung Island south of Sumatra, Indonesia, killing 18 and severely injuring 31

21 April — JR Group Health Insurance Union held first board meeting. Mr Mutsutake Otsuka, Managing Director of JR East, elected as Chairman of Union insuring approximately 200,000 people



The first direct train from Beijing cuts the ribbon at Hong Kong's Hung Hom Railway Station on 19 May 1997 after a 2000-km journey.

23 April — ANA announced new medium-term 5-year plan assuming parallel runway at Narita Airport to be completed in 2000, and progress in US-Japan aviation talks. Plan aims to increase ANA share on domestic routes to 50%, and increase business turnover by 30% to ¥1.15 trillion

26 April — JR East launched aggressive campaign for newly-opened Tokyo-Akita *Komachi* mini-shinkansen to lure passengers from airlines. ANA suffered 10% decrease, and JAL 4%, compared to previous year

29 April — Express train from Kunming bound for Zhengzhou crashed into stationary passenger train at Rongjiawan Station in Yueyang, Hunan Province, killing 58 and injuring approximately 300 people

7 May — Four cars of passenger train derailed, smashing into parked freight train, killing 12 and injuring 30 in Szczecin, north-western Poland

9 May — Boeing 737 crash-landed in rain-storm at Shenzhen Airport, killing 35 passengers

9 May — Travel Fair '97, opened at Osaka's South Port, and attended by 180,000 people

10 May — Strong earthquake of 7.1 magnitude struck Khorasan Province in Eastern Iran with death toll reaching 1568

10 May — Amtrak's century-old *Desert Wind* passenger train linking LA, Las Vegas and Salt Lake City halted due to decline in federal rail subsidies and air competition

12 May — Figures for total business volume in FY 1996 for 50 major travel firms collated by Ministry of Transport totalled ¥6.282 trillion (4.5% increase over previous year), but earnings from overseas visitors dropped 4.4% to ¥29.5 billion

17 May — Four paragliders crashed at rally at Takayama, Nagano Prefecture, Japan, killing one and severely injuring two

18 May — Direct train service began on alternate days between Hong Kong and Beijing on 2400-km Beijing–Kowloon Railway with journey time of 29 hours and 40 minutes

20 May — JR West gives 50 carriages and engines free-of-charge to State Railway of Thailand. JR East previously donated 50 engines to Sakhalin

21 May — JR East announced construction of permanent JR East Art Centre at Hamamatsu-cho, Tokyo, in cooperation with Four Seasons Theatre Company. JR East to build theatre on approximately 9400 m² of vacant company land. Theatre expected to open in October 1998, functioning as cultural focus for JR East

21 May — Aerospatiale SA 315B Alouette III load-lifting helicopter crashed on western slope of Mt Akadake in Yatsugatake Range of Nagano and Yamanashi Prefectures, Japan, killing pilot

23 May — Seven JR companies closed accounts, with JR Central and JR West recording best ever results, while three main-island JRs including JR East recorded increased profits for second consecutive year. JR Hokkaido, JR Kyushu and JR Shikoku, showed increased revenue after fare increases last January, reducing current deficits. JR Freight, showed deficit for fourth consecutive quarter, increasing to ¥10 billion

26 May — Ground-breaking ceremony held for Shinagawa Station to be constructed by JR Central to increase transport capacity of Tokaido Shinkansen. Two double platforms to be constructed at total cost of ¥95 billion. New station scheduled for completion in 2003, permitting up to 15 (currently 11) combined departures per hour from new station and Tokyo Central Station

Milestones

Eiji Tabira

Mr Eiji Tabira became President of Kintetsu International (Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd.) on 28 March. Graduated from Faculty of Law, University of Japan in 1957

Shojiro Nanya

Mr Shojiro Nanya became President of JR West on 1 April. After graduating from Economics Department of Tokyo University, joined former JNR in 1964. Served as Chief of Employees Bureau Labor Section, and became Director and Head of Personnel Division of JR West at privatization

Hiroumi Soejima

Mr Hiroumi Soejima appointed Director of JR Technical Research Institute on 1 April. Joined former JNR in 1959 after graduating from Engineering Department of Tokyo University. Appointed President of JR Central in 1996

Akira Nakamura

Appointed President of Hokkaido International Airport on May 14. Joined JAL in 1952 after graduating from Economics Department of Keio University. Left airline in 1973 after serving in LA and European offices. President of Japan branch of Virgin Atlantic Airways from 1988 until 1994

Takashi Akashi

Mr Takashi Akashi died May 29. Entered Ministry of Railways in 1938 after graduating from Engineering Department of Tokyo Imperial University. Retired in 1968 after serving as JNR board member and Tohoku Regional General Manager. Joined Kintetsu International and served as President in 1978. Retired to serve as Counselor in 1987

Financial Results of JR Companies

(¥ billion)

Company Name	Fiscal Year	Operating Income	Operating Expenses	Operating P & L	Non-operating P & L	Ordinary P & L	Extra-ordinary P & L	Pre-tax Profit	P & L after Tax
JR East	1995-96	1,957.4	1,573.6	383.8	-281.6	102.1	2.9	105.0	57.4
	1996-97	1,967.9	1,584.5	383.5	-279.4	104.1	1.5	105.6	57.8
JR Central	1995-96	1,112.7	734.1	378.7	-316.1	62.5	-4.3	58.3	25.2
	1996-97	1,146.2	765.6	380.6	-314.3	66.3	1.0	67.3	34.0
JR West	1995-96	936.3	795.9	140.3	-84.7	55.6	0.4	56.0	26.0
	1996-97	956.1	825.9	130.1	-74.1	56.0	2.7	58.7	33.5
JR Hokkaido	1995-96	101.9	142.5	-40.7	39.3	-1.4	-0.8	-2.2	-2.4
	1996-97	104.7	142.9	-39.2	34.6	-3.6	2.4	-1.1	-1.3
JR Shikoku	1995-96	48.4	60.2	-11.8	11.0	-0.8	0.4	-0.4	-0.5
	1996-97	50.9	59.3	-8.3	9.3	1.0	0.2	1.1	1.0
JR Kyushu	1995-96	176.6	199.8	-23.1	26.2	0.8	0.6	1.3	0.4
	1996-97	176.7	194.5	-17.7	21.4	1.9	0.8	2.7	1.0
JR Freight	1995-96	196.3	199.3	-3.0	-6.0	-9.0	10.7	1.7	0.7
	1996-97	190.9	195.9	-5.0	-5.7	-10.7	12.8	2.2	1.9