

2 June — *White Paper on Transportation* by Management and Coordination Agency showed number of road-accident deaths in 1997 decreased by 302 to 9640, falling below 10,000 for 2 consecutive years. Injuries increased to 958,925, and number of traffic accidents surged to 780,399, worst record in 5 consecutive years

3 June — German 12-car ICE bound for Hamburg from Munich derailed, killing 102 passengers. Federal report blamed accident on broken wheel of passenger car

3 June — JR East announced new discount rate for customers using Tohoku and Joetsu Shinkansen in early morning during summer holiday season between 21 July and 30 September (except 11–20 August)

7 June — Bomb exploded on express train running from Karachi to Peshawar, India, killing at least 23 and injuring 70

9 June — 1998 *White Paper on Tourism* reported 16.8 million Japanese tourists visited overseas in 1997. Highest figure in history, but growth slowed to 0.6% compared to 1996. Foreign tourists visiting Japan totalled 4.22 million, increase of 9.9%

11 June — Single-car train stopped due to equipment failure on Tosa Kuroshio Railway (Nishi Ogata–Kotsuka section of Nakamura Line), in Kochi Prefecture, Japan, hit by rescue train injuring 38 passengers and crew

11 June — JR Central and Railway Technical Research Institute successfully conducted running tests with two linear trains on experimental line in Yamanashi Prefecture. Two trains ran side-by-side and passed each other to examine effect of shock and electromagnetic waves on way-side and compartments

14 June — MD11 of Japan Airlines strayed off runway after landing at Manila International Airport, Philippines, injuring 24 passengers

17 June — Freight train collided with bus on crossing in Hunan, southern China, killing 16 and injuring 33

28 June — Sightseeing bus collided head-on with passenger car in Mikata, Fukui Prefecture, Japan, forcing bus over road embankment, injuring 37

30 June — Chiba Express Electric Railway of Chiba Prefecture dissolved by transferring railway division to major shareholder, Keisei Electric Railway. First case of failure of third-sector railway. Railway started operation in 1992 to serve Ichihara New Town, large-scale residential project developed by Housing and Urban Development Corp., but failed to attract sufficient riders

30 June — JR Central revealed plans to develop new track testing vehicle for Tokaido Shinkansen. Vehicle to be designed based on company's Series 700 railcars, and to enter service in spring

30 June — Tokyo Metropolitan Transit Authority and electronic ticket R&D consortium (TRAMET) launched 1-year experiment on IC card ticket for selected routes and users. IC card with embedded chip and antenna, serves as both commuter pass and prepaid card (up to 10,000 yen), and activated by passing card close to reader on automatic gates

30 June — Malaysia celebrated opening of new Kuala Lumpur International Airport located 50-km southwest of Kuala Lumpur. Able to handle 25 million passengers and 1 million tons of air cargo annually. Construction continuing in two more phases with final completion in 2020

3 July — Doubled-decked cable car opened between Shirakaba Daira (1305 m) in Gifu Prefecture, Japan and halfway up mountain (2156 m), taking about 7 minutes to cover 2.6-km ride

6 July — New Hong Kong International Airport started commercial operation with 3800-m runway built on reclaimed 1250-ha site. Another runway to open by year end, when airport able to handle 87 million passengers annually

7 July — Japan Airlines and SwissAir agreed on broad alliance centering on code sharing to start joint operation between Tokyo New International Airport (Narita) and Kansai International Airport and Zurich in late October

10 July — JR West and JR Central started joint operation of new sleeper *Sunrise Express* between Tokyo and Takamatsu (Shikoku)/ Izumoshi (Sea-of-Japan coast). Sleepers divided into private rooms, some with LCD TV and shower. 14-car train divided at Okayama into 7 cars for Takamatsu, and 7 cars for Izumoshi (photos p. 63)

13 July — Japan Auto-Camping Federation reported 13.75 million people (down 13.0% on previous year) used car camp grounds at least once in 1997. First major decline since survey started in 1987. Major factors include poor weather during summer holidays, decline in camping boom, and continuing recession

15 July — JR East announced 3-year, ¥80-billion plan to replace old cars and upgrade signalling systems to reduce equipment and signal failures in Tokyo Metropolitan Area

15 July — 1998 *White Paper on Maritime Transport* published by Japanese Ministry of Transport, reported slower growth in freight handled by Japanese ports than other Asian ports, including Hong Kong and Singapore. *White Paper* recommended revitalizing Japanese ports to meet users' needs

17 July — Japanese Ministry of Transport announced 193 out of 212 bus operators (with 30 or more buses) reported operating losses in 1997. In particular, all 32 public bus operators in red. Combined total loss reached 130.7 billion yen (9.7% increase over 1996)

18 July — Akita Prefecture celebrated inauguration of second airport in Odate/Noshiro. 2000-m runway handles three flights operated daily from and to Tokyo (Haneda), Osaka (Itami) and Sapporo (Shin Chitose)

20 July — Cruise Ship *Ecstasy* (2000 passengers and 960 crew) caught fire off coast of Miami. Fire-fighting tugs extinguished fire without serious damage

24 July — Thirty-four local residents in Setagaya, Tokyo, won damages totalling ¥9.65 million against Odakyu Electric Railway, for suffering caused by noise pollution that '... exceeds a generally acceptable level.' However, 68 residents remain dissatisfied with decision and filed lawsuit with

Tokyo District Court, demanding noise reduction measures including underground relocation of line and damages totalling ¥240 million. First case of damages awarded against railway for noise pollution (except for shinkansen) in Japan

28 July — New airport opened in Saga Prefecture, Kyushu, Japan. 2000-m runway handles five daily flights to and from Haneda, Nagoya, and Itami

28 July — Minibus service with female drivers started between Shibuya Station and Daikanyama, Tokyo. Tokyo Bus Company started service through wholly owned subsidiary, Tokyo Transe, to take advantage of deregulation

5 August — Korean Airlines B747 from Narita over-ran runway at Kimpo Airport injuring 26

6 August — The Association of Japanese Private Railways announced FY1997 operating results for 15 leading private railway companies. Total passengers declined 2.6% from previous year to 7470 million, marking sixth consecutive fall. Major reasons blamed on recession, proliferation of 5-day working week, and decrease in number of children. Operating revenues shrank 2.5% to ¥1305.4 billion, while expenditure increased slightly by 0.4% to ¥1083.7 billion. Operating profits fell 14.7% to ¥1305.4 billion with ordinary profits down 16.9% to ¥123.77 billion

6 August — Flooded R. Yangtze and other major rivers in China left more than 2000 people dead as of 3 August with total number of people affected by flooding reaching 240 million

8 August — Metropolitan Seoul suffered torrential downpours totalling 750 mm since 5 August, killing 143 and leaving 68 missing and disrupting rail services

9 August — Taiwan Railroad Management Bureau ran old CK101 steam locomotive in Taipei to commemorate 111th anniversary of start of railways in Taiwan. Loco manufactured in 1917 and operated until 1978

10 August — According to 1997 Air Transport Statistics announced by Japanese Ministry of Transport, number of domestic air passengers grew at healthy 4.2% to 85.55 million. Haneda-Sapporo route continued to boast highest share, exceeding 8 million. International air passengers remained flat with 0.9% increase and totalling 15.69 million. Domestic air freight tonnage grew by 1.8% to 848,068 tonnes, and international freight tonnage grew 7.6% to 970,186 tonnes

SUNRISE EXPRESS

(Photos: JR West)



JR West and JR Central offer hotel-quality comfort and sleeping accommodation in their Sunrise Express service.



The stylish compartments of the Sunrise Express are designed by interior specialists to express an affinity with nature.



Nobi nobi deluxe sleeper seats take full advantage of the available space while incorporating some of the feel of a Japanese tatami room.

11 August — Museum of Logistics opened in Minato-ku, Tokyo. More than 50,000 historical records cover all aspects of physical distribution, including express messenger service and maritime transport in Edo Era, and river transport and rail freight services during Meiji Era. Museum has total floor area of 825 m²

20 August — EF66 Electric locomotive hauling freight train of 24 container cars from Tokyo to Fukuoka derailed at Aboshi Station on JR Sanyo Line in Himeji, Hyogo Prefecture when coupling disconnected

27 August — Sagami Railways to inaugurate 3.1-km extension of Izumino Line between Izumi Chuo and Shonandai on 10 March 1999. New section under construction since February 1992, designed to connect with Shonandai Station on Enoshima Line of Odakyu Electric Railway, creating new transport network linking Yokohama and central Kanagawa Prefecture

28 August — *Sky Rail*, first suspended monorail in Japan, started operation over 1.3-km section between JR Sanyo Honsen Station, Hiroshima, and Midori Chuo Station, near large housing development

29 August — Cuban Tupolev 154 passenger plane carrying 90 crew and passengers failed on take off at Quito, Ecuador, killing at least 77 people including 9 on ground

Milestones

Yonehiko Ishihara

Former Managing Director of JNR and General Manager of Shinkansen Bureau, and former Vice Chairman of Teito Rapid Transit Authority, died on 1 August, aged 87. Graduated from Faculty of Engineering, Tokyo Imperial University and joined JNR. Served as Director-General of Operations Department; Managing Director of Western Region Headquarters and Kanto Region Headquarters (1961); and Director-General of Shinkansen Bureau. Became Director of Teito Rapid Transit Authority in 1964, and Executive Vice President from 1971 to 1975. Also served as President of Japan Railway Operators' Association, and Rolling Stock Maintenance Association

Pierre Laconte

After 15 years as Secretary General of UITP, stepped down on 18 June to become Advisor for External Affairs to UITP President, Mr Jean Paul Bailly. Succeeded from 19 June by Dr Hans Rat, former Vice President of UITP, member of the European Union Committee, and Chairman of UITP Commission on Transport Economics

Katsuji Doi

Appointed Vice-Minister for International Affairs on 23 June. Graduated from Faculty of Law, Tokyo University in 1967, and joined Ministry of Transport. Served as Director of Supervision Department, Civil Aviation Bureau; Deputy Director of Civil Aviation Bureau; and Director-General of Minister's Secretariat

Seichi Tanaka

Former President of Chubu Electric Power Company and former Chairman of JR Central, died on 24 June, aged 87. Graduated from Faculty of Law, Keio University, and joined Toho Electric Power Company (Chubu Electric Power Company) in 1934. Appointed President in 1977, Chairman in 1985, and Senior Adviser in 1991. During career, served as President of Chubu Economic Federation and Chairman of JR Central. Received Grand Cordon of the Order of the Sacred Treasure from Emperor in April 1985

Toshiyuki Umehara

Appointed President of JR Shikoku on 25 June. Graduated from Faculty of Engineering, Kyoto University, and joined former JNR in 1961. Became Director and General Manager of Kanazawa Branch of JR West, immediately after company foundation in 1987, followed by Director of Business Department, Managing Director, and Senior Managing Director. Became JR West Senior Managing Director in 1996

Isao Kaneko

Appointed President of JAL on 26 June. Graduated from Faculty of Law, Tokyo University and joined JAL in 1960. Served as Director (1991), Managing Director (1995), and Senior Managing Director

Hiroshi Otsuka

Appointed President of Keisei Electric Railways on 26 June. Graduated from Faculty of Law, Waseda University and joined Keisei Electric Railways in 1958. Served as General Manager of Transportation Department, Director (1988), Managing Director, Senior Managing Director, and Executive Vice President

Yukio Kusuki

Appointed Director-General of Maritime Safety Agency on 1 July. Graduated from Faculty of Law, Tokyo University and joined Ministry of Transport in 1968. After serving in various senior posts in the Railway Department, Minister's Secretariat appointed Director-General of Civil Aviation Bureau in July 1997

Jiro Kawasaki

Appointed Minister of Transport on 30 July. Graduated from Keio University and joined Matsushita Electric Industry Co., Ltd. in 1971. Elected to House of Representatives in June 1980 and subsequently re-elected five times. Served as Parliamentary Vice Minister for Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (1990)