

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway

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In news- Recently, there was a protest against the Centre's proposed monetisation of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railways (DHR).

About the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway

- The **Darjeeling Himalayan Railway** or the **Toy Train**, is a **2 ft (610 mm) gauge railway** that **runs between New Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling in the Indian state of West Bengal**.
- Built **between 1879 and 1881**, it is about **88 km long**.
- It climbs from about 100 m (328 ft) above sea level at New Jalpaiguri to about 2,200 m (7,218 ft) at Darjeeling, using six zig zags and five loops to gain altitude.
- **Six diesel locomotives handle most of the scheduled service**, with daily tourist trains from **Darjeeling to Ghum – India's highest railway station – and the steam-hauled Red Panda service** from Darjeeling to Kurseong.
- Both heritage steam locos built between 1889 and 1927 as well as modern diesel engines are used to pull the toy trains that are widely popular among foreign tourists and domestic travellers.
- The railway's **headquarters are at Kurseong**.
- In **1999** UNESCO declared the DHR a **World Heritage Site**.

New toy train safari on DHR route-

- Indian Railways in a bid to provide **boost to the covid-hit tourism sector** has decided to **launch a regular Jungle Tea Toy-Train Safari from Siliguri junction to Rongtong station in West Bengal**.
- **Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) zone** of Indian Railways, which **operates DHR** has announced the new service.

- Tourists can enjoy the breathtaking views of **Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary** and the hills from the toy train.
- It is a three-hour journey and after reaching Rongtong station they will come back to Siliguri junction again.
- NFR has started the regular basis up-down **jungle tea toy-train safari recently** with the heritage steam engine and Vistadome dining car facilities.
- Already, the toy train has been on the tracks between Darjeeling and Ghum since August 16.

Functional railway networks in mountain & hilly terrains in India-

- **The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway** located in the foothills of the Himalayas in **West Bengal**.
- **The Nilgiris Mountain Railways** located in the Nilgiri Hills of **Tamil Nadu**.
- **The Kalka Shimla Railway is located** in the Himalayan foothills of **Himachal Pradesh**.
- **The Matheran Railway** located in **Maharashtra**.