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First privately operated freight trains takes off

BY [RAKHI MAZUMDAR](#), ET BUREAU | UPDATED: APR 19, 2017, 06.12 PM IST

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KOLKATA: Railway minister [Suresh Prabhu](#) digitally inaugurated the first steel coil-carrying [Special Freight Train Operations](#) (SFTO) rake of TM International Logistics Ltd (TMILL) from [Rail Bhawan](#) in New Delhi on Wednesday.

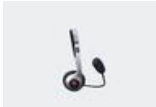
TMILL, a joint venture of [Tata Steel](#), NYK Holding (Europe) B.V. and IQ Martrade Holding GmbH of Germany, has commenced operations with three BFNSM1 rakes. The first rake carrying steel coils departed from Tata Steel's Jamshedpur plant for Chennai. These rakes will also be deployed for carrying finished steel products from Tata Steel's Kalinganagar plant in Odisha. TMILL has leased the rakes from GATX India Private Limited, a leading global railcar lessor, an official statement said.

SFTO is a policy initiative of [Indian Railways](#) to encourage private investment in rolling stock. Under this policy, TMILL has been granted a 20-year license as of September 2016 by Indian Railways to invest in/lease rakes for movement of finished steel products. The BFNSM1 Rakes (22.9 Ton axle load) can carry 2750 Tonnes of Steel Coils per rake and offer a competitive alternative to freight movement by road.

Besides a significant reduction in overall logistics cost, under the SFTO scheme private companies investing in wagons will get a 12% rebate on freight. The rakes have to run between two pre-determined origin and destination points with both having private siding / freight terminal.

Sudanshu Pathak, Vice President, Steel Manufacturing, Tata Steel, who ceremonially flagged off the rake from Tata Steel Jamshedpur, lauded the long-awaited initiative of Indian Railways, Tata Steel and TMILL resulting in an efficient and sustainable outbound logistics solution for Tata Steel's finished products.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Sunil Bhaskaran, Vice President, Corporate Services, Tata Steel said this is a step towards environment-friendly transportation as there is no wood usage in SFTO rake movement,.



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Sandipan Chakravorty, Chairman of TMILL, said: "With this, a new era has begun in efficient and cost-effective rail transportation of steel coils in India".

R N Murthy, Managing Director of TMILL, said: "This is an important strategic initiative for TMILL Group. We expect this business to grow exponentially in the coming years."

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