



CBRNe4rail

MEDIA MONITORING

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CBRNe4rail

The EU co-funded project CBRNe4rail (CBRNe preparedness for passenger rail transport hubs) aims to enhance awareness and capabilities of railway stakeholders to effectively respond to Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and explosive (CBRNe) emergencies at railway stations by improving their security plans and training railway staff.

MEDIA MONITORING

As part of the CBRNe4rail dissemination strategy, a media monitoring is being carried out by the UIC Security Department on the topics of rail security and CBRNe.

Based on keyword searches performed on LinkedIn, Google news & AP News, the following pages summarize the relevant news items found.

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THEFT (NON-VIOLENT)

GENERAL THEFT

Police seek suspect of theft on train (UK)

On 13 February 2026, a woman's suitcase containing items worth more than £4,500 was stolen while travelling by train from London Paddington to Kemble (UK). CCTV shows the perpetrator and police are appealing for witnesses [1][2][3][4].

Freight train cargo theft reported (USA)

Between 16 February and 13 May 2026, multiple non-violent cargo theft incidents affected freight trains in the United States. These included the theft of \$250,000 worth of sex toys from a train travelling between California and Dallas [5][6][7], the arrest of eight suspects in Arizona linked to the theft of \$300,000 in Nike shoes [8][9][10][11][12], and later cases in California involving stolen cargo valued at \$280,000 [13][14][15] and \$1 million recovered from a warehouse [16][17][18]. On 13 May, four individuals were arrested in Arizona, suspected of belonging to an organised criminal group targeting rail freight [19].

BIKE THEFT

E-Bike stolen from station (UK)

A man used bolt cutters to steal a £3,500 electric bike from a cycle hub at Stafford station before boarding a train to Lichfield Trent Valley in February 2026. British Transport Police have released CCTV images and requested public assistance [20].



CABLE THEFT

SEVERAL COPPER AND RAILWAY PROPERTY THEFTS REPORTED (USA)

During the first half of 2026, multiple non-violent cable theft incidents involving railway infrastructure and materials were reported in the United States. In Denver, on 30 April 2026, repeated copper thefts on RTD commuter lines caused hours-long service disruptions, linked to record copper prices [21]. In California, on 12 May 2026, two suspects were caught stealing copper wiring near a high-speed rail overpass following aerial surveillance by law enforcement [22]. In South Carolina, a man was arrested after police recovered stolen railway items, including wiring and rail components, from a private property following reports by a rail operator [23].

CABLE THEFT AFFECTING RAIL OPERATIONS (MALAYSIA)

Between 23-26 March 2026, incidents related to cable theft were reported on Malaysia's rail network. Reports indicated a rise in coordinated cable thefts across the Klang Valley urban rail system, with multiple incidents disrupting services and targeting electrical and signalling infrastructure [24]. During the same period, Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) Auxiliary Police arrested a man attempting to steal signalling cables along a railway line, seizing tools used in the operation [25][26]. Further, on 26 May, the theft of approximately 100 metres of signalling cable in northern Malaysia caused delays to commuter and high-speed services, with KTMB reporting that the incident disrupted signalling systems [27].

RAIL SERVICE DISRUPTION LINKED TO CABLE THEFT (UK)

Between 22-29 April 2026, cable theft incidents affected rail operations in the United Kingdom. Data showed that thefts between Doncaster and Sheffield resulted in over 213 hours of delays over a 12-month period [28][29], while a separate incident involving signalling cable theft led to the closure of the Newcastle–Ashington line for one day, significantly disrupting services. Both cases involved the removal of railway infrastructure components, impacting service continuity without the use of violence [30].

METAL THEFT

INVESTIGATION OF THEFT FROM HERITAGE RAIL SITE (UK)

Officers are investigating the theft of lead valued at £10,000 from a heritage rail site (UK) in January 2026, taken after offenders climbed onto the building roof causing structural damage of approximately £20,000. Police are appealing for witnesses [31][32][33].

INFRASTRUCTURE THEFT SUSPECTED IN FREIGHT TRAIN DERAILMENT (MEXICO)

On 19 March 2026, a Ferromex freight train derailed in Aguascalientes (Mexico), killing one person and injuring five. Authorities indicated the derailment may be linked to the theft of railway sleepers, with investigations ongoing [34].

POLICE ARREST SUSPECTS FOR TRACK AND SLEEPER THEFT LINKED TO LARGE-SCALE VANDALISM (NIGERIA)

On 27 April 2026, Nigerian police intercepted a truck carrying around 60 tonnes of stolen railway tracks and sleepers, leading to arrests linked to an organised vandalism syndicate. Investigators reported that bribes were offered and refused, and assets valued at approximately N400 million were recovered [35].

TRAINING

First responders take part in a railway emergency response training session (USA)

100 firefighters, local police and hazmat officers took part in a hands-on three-day training designed to prepare Northeast Ohio (USA) crews for railway emergencies in April 2026. Cuyahoga County, where the training took place, is somewhat unique with four hazmat teams instead of the more typical one per county, reflecting the region's dense mix of industry, highways and rail lines. The training focused on scenarios such as hazardous material leaks and damaged tank cars. The program incorporated tools such as the AskRail mobile app, which allows responders to quickly identify what materials are inside a railcar by entering its identification number [36][37].



PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

AGAINST PASSENGERS

Teens charged after violent robbery on the platform (Canada)

Three masked teenagers were charged after assaulting and robbing two passengers on the Rouge Hill GO Train platform (Canada), leaving one victim with life-threatening injuries on 16 March. Police quickly identified and arrested all suspects, who now face aggravated assault and robbery charges. The incident prompted renewed calls for strengthened passenger security measures across the GO Transit network [38].

Man charged by court after corrosive substance attack in a rail station (UK)

On 22 April 2026, a man was brought to court in the UK, charged with Grievous Bodily Harm with Intent, Possession of a Corrosive Substance, following a corrosive substance attack in a railway station in March. At the time of the attack on 7 March, the victim had been taken to the hospital following potentially life-changing chemical burn injuries [39].

HOAX (FALSE ALERT)

RAILWAYS BOOST SECURITY AFTER THREAT TO TRAIN RECEIVED (INDIA)

On 3 February 2026, Indian Railway's South Central General Manager received an anonymous letter via post claiming a "jihad team" had planted explosives on tracks targeting the Vande Bharat Express in Secunderabad (India), aiming to kill 250 passengers. The note demanded ₹2 crore be sent to an advocate in Achampet, Nagarkurnool district, warning of detonation if unmet or if police were notified. Railway Protection Force, Government Railway Police, and local authorities immediately launched anti-sabotage checks using dog squads and no explosives were found. Police registered a case and are probing the hoax amid a pattern of recent rail threats in India, while officials urged passengers to report suspicious items via the toll-free 139 helpline and assured full situational control [40][41][42].

RAIL TRAFFIC SUSPENDED DUE TO BOMB TIP AHEAD OF PROTEST DAY (SERBIA)

Serbian Railway Infrastructure dispatchers received an overnight anonymous telephone report claiming explosive devices had been placed on all incoming trains and in depots, prompting authorities to suspend all railway traffic on 22 May 2026. The disruption occurred ahead of student and academic protests in Belgrade, reflecting a recurring pattern in Serbia where rail services are halted during large demonstrations due to repeated bomb threats [43].



BOMB HOAX IN RAILWAY STATION (BELGIUM)

On 27 May, Leuven station was evacuated in the afternoon, with train services suspended, after several reports were received claiming that a bomb was set to explode there. The police have launched an investigation to identify those responsible for the false reports. The hoax had a considerable impact on train services, with knock-on effects felt throughout the evening [44][45][46].

FRAUD

IDENTITY

Online ticketing accounts deleted in major anti-fraud operation (India)

In March 2026, Indian Railways deactivated 30 million suspicious user IDs in 2025 after Aadhaar-based verification and multi-layer cybersecurity checks exposed large-scale misuse of the e-ticketing system. The ministry also blocked 60.43 billion malicious bot requests and 12,819 suspicious email domains, aiming to curb ticket fraud and ensure fair Tatkal bookings. Officials said the clean-up improves system integrity and guarantees smoother access for genuine passengers [47][48][49][50].

ABANDONED LUGGAGE

Train Staff Return Forgotten Bag to Passenger (Nigeria)

In June 2026, Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) staff recovered a passenger's forgotten luggage aboard the AKTS service and successfully returned it the following day. The incident highlights strengthened integrity standards and improved "found property" procedures across stations, reinforcing trust in onboard operations and customer service [51].



VANDALISM

Railway vandalism on the rise (Nigeria)

On 29 March 2026, the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) arrested a 32-year-old man in Lagos for removing and stealing 15 rail track fasteners (pandrol clips) from the narrow-gauge line at Alagomeji [52][53][54][55]. The stolen components were recovered, and the suspect was remanded pending investigation. This incident occurred amid a broader rise in railway vandalism, highlighted by NRC in a warning published on 25 May 2026 about increasing and sometimes coordinated attacks, including stone-pelting [56][57][58][59].

GRAFFITI

GRAFFITI VANDALISM HITS RAIL CARRIAGES (IRELAND)

On 7 March 2026, three Northern Ireland Railways carriages were heavily defaced with graffiti at Athlone station in Ireland, causing significant damage estimated between €50,000 and €60,000, with authorities launching a witness appeal [60][61][62][63].

ÖBB REPORTS SHARP DROP IN GRAFFITI DAMAGE (AUSTRIA)

On 20 March 2026, Austria's ÖBB reported a notable decrease in graffiti-related damage costs for 2025, attributing the improvement to enhanced security measures, increased surveillance, faster cleaning, and closer police cooperation [64].

HERITAGE TRAIN TARGETED BY GRAFFITI (UK)

On 5 May 2026, a heritage railway in the United Kingdom was targeted in a graffiti attack affecting a locomotive and several coaches, though volunteers quickly removed the vandalism to limit long-term damage [65][66][67][68].



SABOTAGE

Rail sabotage hits Winter Olympics opening (Italy)

On 7 February 2026, the opening day of the Milano Cortina Winter Olympics (Italy), coordinated sabotage near Bologna disrupted Italy's rail network, affecting about 40,000 passengers. A fire damaged a track switch, cables were cut, and a makeshift explosive device was found, causing delays of up to 2.5 hours. Transport Minister Matteo Salvini condemned the acts as serious sabotage; an anarchist group later claimed responsibility, though no injuries were reported and services largely resumed the same day [69][70][71][72].

Investigation following derailment due to wood on tracks (France)

An investigation has been opened after a piece of wood was placed on tracks, leading to the derailment of a french regional passenger train on 24 May 2026. Initial findings support the idea of sabotage, although no suspect has been identified yet [73][74][75][76].

Spy camera found in train station (Germany)

A concealed camera was discovered at Minden train station, a major German rail hub, in September 2026, prompting an investigation into possible sabotage planning. Found by a railway employee, it was discreetly mounted on infrastructure overlooking a shunting area, used for Ukraine-bound military transports, and was equipped for remote operation and recording. No injuries or service disruptions have been linked to the camera. Authorities are currently investigating and a Lithuanian national is believed to have installed it [77].

Suspect arrested for removing lock bars leading to derailment (Sri Lanka)

On 16 May 2026, police have arrested a suspect accused of removing lock bars and plates from a railway, which is believed to have led to a train derailment that injured 12 passengers. The event caused major disruption on commuter lines to the capital [78][79].

Arson incidents target railway infrastructure (Latvia)

Latvia's State Security Service reported that two individuals were linked to a series of arson incidents which occurred in August 2025. The damage affected a train and relay cabinets used for train control, and the incidents were recorded on video. Authorities are continuing their investigation into the circumstances and motives behind the attacks [80][81][82].

Rail disruption near station following cable damage (Germany)

Rail services around Gelsenkirchen Central Station (Germany) were significantly disrupted after cables were deliberately cut, affecting parts of the Ruhr region in April 2026. Police indicated that intentional interference cannot be ruled out, and the incident is being handled by state security authorities as investigations continue [83].

CBRNE

NEW MOBILE AI-ENABLED CBRNE COMMAND CENTRE (MALAYSIA)

Malaysia's army plans to deploy a mobile, AI-enabled CBRNE command centre by 2027 to enhance threat detection and response. The specialised unit already operates dedicated reconnaissance vehicles and has ordered a new 4×4 mobile command centre to strengthen operational readiness [84].

ACID LEAK FROM WAGON IN A RAIL YARD (USA)

Emergency services responded to a report of a hydrochloric acid leak from a rail car at a rail yard in South Baltimore (Maryland, USA). The fire department and hazardous materials teams secured the scene and contained the leak within the yard. Authorities confirmed there was no risk to the surrounding community and no injuries were reported [85] [86][87][88].



KNIFE ATTACK

AGAINST PASSENGERS

Hostage threat case ends with two-year prison sentence (Austria)

A man was sentenced to two years in prison for threatening to take passengers hostage on an ÖBB Railjet service travelling from Vienna to Innsbruck in November 2025. After claiming he was wanted by authorities in Germany, he panicked, mimicked a firearm with his hand, and told two female passengers he would take them hostage if police boarded the train. Police intervened at Salzburg Hauptbahnhof, where the suspect resisted arrest before being detained [89].

Knife and machete attacks at major rail hubs (USA)

On 3 March 2026, an unprovoked knife attack occurred at Chicago's Union Station when a man approached a commuter, threatened them with a blade, and attempted to slash their throat before being restrained and arrested. No serious injuries were reported, though the incident caused alarm among passengers. On 11 April 2026, a separate random attack took place at New York City's Grand Central Station, where a man armed with a machete injured three bystanders before being fatally shot by police. Authorities confirmed the incidents were unrelated and are reviewing security measures at major transport hubs [90][91][92].

Knife attack in rail station leaves three injured (Switzerland)

On 28 May, a man armed with a bladed weapon assaulted several people in Winterthur's rail station (Switzerland). The police arrested the suspect and victims were sent to the hospital. The motive remains uncertain [93].





TERRORISM

BOMBING

EXPLOSION ON FREIGHT LINE CAUSES LIMITED DAMAGE (INDIA)

On 27 April 2026, a small explosion occurred on a dedicated freight corridor in Punjab, causing minor damage to the track. Initial findings indicate the device detonated prematurely while being planted, killing the suspected perpetrator at the scene. Investigators said the individual was part of a wider militant-linked network, with contacts traced to Malaysia and Pakistan. Four alleged accomplices connected to this network have since been arrested, and a militant organisation has claimed responsibility for the attempted attack [94][95].

SUICIDE BOMBING ON RAILWAY LINE KILLS 30 (PAKISTAN)

On 21 May, a deadly explosion targeting a train in Pakistan killed more than 30 people and injured around 70 others. Initial reports suggested that a car with explosives was rammed into a train carrying military employees. A local militant organisation claimed responsibility for the attack [96][97].

ARSON

Islamic State encourages individuals to target trains (India)

According to Indian security authorities, online content attributed to the Islamic State has circulated messages encouraging individuals to target trains and railway facilities in parts of southern India. Officials stated that such activity is being closely monitored and that preventive measures have helped disrupt most potential incidents before they occur [98].



SECURITY MEASURES

Nationwide rail security push to protect staff and passengers (Germany)

Between February and May 2026, Deutsche Bahn (DB) and German transport authorities rolled out a series of measures to enhance safety for passengers and staff amid rising incidents affecting rail personnel. On 13 February 2026, DB launched a national security action plan, including the rollout of bodycams for frontline staff, the recruitment of additional DB-Security personnel, expanded de-escalation training, improved protective equipment, and upgraded emergency alert systems, in close cooperation with the Federal Police [99][100]. On 4 March 2026, joint “SiBu” patrols involving local police, federal police, public order services, and DB Security began operating around Düsseldorf Central Station, strengthening coordinated presence in station surroundings [101][102]. On 6 March 2026, an immediate improvement programme was launched at 35 major stations nationwide, including Stuttgart Central Station [103], increasing security patrols, cleaning, and rapid maintenance to improve safety, security and service quality. Building on these initiatives, on 6 May 2026 German transport companies announced further joint actions to protect employees, including plans to add audio recording to bodycams, expand behavioural and de-escalation training, and pilot double staffing on selected services by Q3 2026 [104].

Dutch rail security personnel to pilot baton use (The Netherlands)

Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) will issue batons to 75 security personnel in a year-long trial across key cities, responding to 1,132 aggression incidents in 2025. Training will emphasize proportional use and de-escalation tactics [105].

New law introduces new rights and tools for rail security agents (France)

Starting 30 March, both French railway police and specialised security agents (for example SNCF's SUGE) gained new powers, including the right to body search, seize weapons, and patrol around rail and metro stations. They will also have the right to prevent “undesirable individuals” from accessing stations. The law also introduces bodycams for control agents, cameras in tramways and trial use of tasers [106][107][108][109].

Calls to strengthen rail passenger security screening (USA)

On 2 April 2026, renewed calls were made to strengthen passenger security screening on Amtrak services after it emerged that a suspect in a high-profile shooting incident had transported firearms by train from California to Washington, D.C. (USA). While certain restrictions are in place, unions and professional associations highlighted the absence of systematic detection or screening measures and urged a review of current security practices [110].

K9 Units deployed to deter cable theft (Indonesia)

In April 2026, authorities reported the use of dog sniffer units in several Indonesian cities to address cable theft affecting rail and metro infrastructure. The K9 teams are deployed to patrol larger areas, locate suspects hiding near cable ducts, and act as a deterrent against both trespassing and infrastructure theft [111].

Multi-agency rail emergency response exercise held (USA)

During April 2026, the Amtrak Police Department participated in an emergency response tabletop exercise with regional partners at New Haven Union Station, aimed at testing and improving emergency and security procedures, underscoring ongoing efforts to enhance preparedness and coordination across the rail network [112].

Railway stations' visit by India's Railway Protection Force Director (India)

The Director of the Indian Railway Protection Force conducted a security inspection at four railway stations, focusing on passenger holding areas, modernization of security infrastructure and personnel welfare. She assessed CCTV systems and command centre, baggage scanners, crowd management strategies and general security arrangements. She also emphasised the need to leverage technology and data-analytics to prevent organised crime [113][114].



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