



TRAIN LINE ONLINE. An Indian traveller uses free Wi-Fi service to browse the internet at the Mumbai Central Train Station in Mumbai, India. Google Inc. has begun offering free Wi-Fi to Mumbai train passengers in hopes of boosting its role in the Indian market, the first of 400 stations the company plans to eventually reach with the service. (AP Photo/Rajanish Kakade)

Mumbai travellers log on as Google starts train-station Wi-Fi

MUMBAI, India (AP) — Google Inc. has begun offering free Wi-Fi to Mumbai train passengers in hopes of boosting its role in the Indian market.

Giggling groups of students, bored commuters, and snack-shop vendors were all logged on at the Mumbai Central Train Station, the first of 400 stations the company plans to eventually reach with the service.

“If my train is leaving, and I need to search, don’t know where to go, then immediately I will get the answer,” student Divya Patel said excitedly while waiting for a train to her hometown of Ahmedabad in the western state of Gujarat. “This is very good, and good for everyone.”

Free Wi-Fi is rare across India. Most of the country’s 300 million internet users pay for personal access and often rely on slow-loading smartphone connectivity.

With a massive 1.25 billion population in India, including 6 million new internet users every month, Silicon Valley tech giants such as Google, Facebook, and

Microsoft have set sights on expanding in the Indian market. Online retailers Amazon and eBay have also launched services in the country.

India also has homegrown online commerce companies, but small businesses are still catching on. Fewer than five percent of the 50 million or so small businesses in India have a webpage.

With more than 23 million people riding Indian railways every day, Google said free internet in train stations will give high-speed access that many cannot afford. It also hopes to diversify India’s user base, given that less than a third of internet users in India are women, and has been upgrading its services in Hindi and other languages spoken across India.

“Most of India is still not online,” Google CEO Sundar Pichai told reporters in New Delhi. “We want to bring access to as many people as possible,” he said.

For the project, Google teamed up with Indian Railways as well as communications infrastructure provider RailTel.

Miss Universe winner says next dream is to be a Bond girl

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — The reigning Miss Universe has her eyes set on her next big dream: being a Bond girl.

Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach returned home to the Philippines for the first time since her crowning — and that awkward moment when host Steve Harvey mistakenly announced Miss Colombia as the winner instead of her. She said she’s using the intense attention she received after that controversy to focus on her causes like fighting HIV and AIDS.

“I’m using the attention to talk about my causes. Now, I have everybody’s attention,” she said.

She told a news conference that she plans to be tested for HIV publicly in New York to encourage other people to be tested, including in the Philippines, where HIV cases have risen alarmingly in recent years.

Miss Colombia Ariadna Gutierrez Arevalo was briefly crowned Miss Universe at the pageant in Las Vegas before Harvey returned to center stage to apologize and announced he misread the card, which had Miss Philippines as the winner and Colombia as the first runner-up.

Asked about her plans after her reign, Wurtzbach said she would consider possible job offers in the United States, adding: “I might be the next Bond



POST-PAGEANT PLANS. Newly crowned Miss Universe Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach shows her crown during a news conference in suburban Quezon City, northeast of Manila, the Philippines. Wurtzbach returned home to the Philippines for the first time since her crowning — and that awkward moment when host Steve Harvey mistakenly crowned Miss Colombia instead of her. Wurtzbach said her next dream is to become a Bond girl. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

girl, who knows? So, we’ll see, that’s the next dream.”

Many international actresses have been cast alongside actors playing British agent James Bond and are popularly known as “Bond girls.”

Wurtzbach, 26, has worked as an actress and model in the Philippines before winning the crown. The Miss Universe pageant is a big deal in the Philippines, where two other women have brought home the crown before her, with the last one winning in 1973.

Wurtzbach met President Benigno Aquino III, a bachelor who is rumored to have gone on a date with

her before. She’ll receive a citation from the senate for her victory then join a motorcade around Manila that will end with a fireworks show.

Wurtzbach told reporters she was so overwhelmed with her triumph that she constantly checked on her crown in the initial days and even took a nap beside it but decided not to do that again because she might break it.

“God forbid that would happen, the Filipinos are gonna kill me. I haven’t even done my homecoming yet,” she said, repeatedly touching the diamond-studded crown.

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