

Prime Minister to flag off Tejas Express

B ANBUSELVAN @ Chennai

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will flag off the Tejas Express, a premier super-fast day train between Chennai and Madurai, before January 26. Speaking to Express on the sidelines of an event, RK Kulshrestha, general manager of Southern Railway, said the exact dates of launch is yet to be finalised.

He added that tracks were being strengthened in the Chennai-Madurai stretch to reduce the travel time of Tejas Express to less than 7 hours. "The travel time, in the future, may come down to about 6.5 hours," said Kulshrestha. Railway Board proposed the introduction of Tejas Express on December 2. Subsequently, Southern Railway proposed to operate the train on all days but Thursday.

The train is proposed to

leave Egmore at 6am and reach Madurai by 1pm. On return, the train will start at 2.30pm and reach Chennai by 9.35pm. The train will run at an average speed of 70 kmph, fastest on the stretch. It will have seven chair car coaches and one executive coach. Proposed stops are at Villupuram and Tiruchy.

According to official sources, ticket fare for the chair car is likely to range between ₹1,140 and ₹1,200, The cost for executive class may go up to ₹2,100 per ticket. The fully air-conditioned

coaches of Tejas come equipped with several features, including automatic plug-type doors, personalised infotainment system and GPS enabled LED displays.

"The coaches will have electronic reservation chart bio vacuum toilets and automatic cabin entrance doors," added railway sources.

