

# India on Track to Buy 18 Bullet Trains from Japan for ₹7,000cr

Deal includes tech transfer for local production; country's first train may start running between Mumbai and Ahmedabad by 2022-end; 508-km corridor being built with Japanese assistance

**New Delhi:** India will purchase 18 bullet train sets from Japan at a total cost of about ₹7,000 crore in a deal that includes a pledge to transfer technology for local production, an official said.

The country's first bullet train is likely to start running between Mumbai and Ahmedabad by the end of 2022. The 508-km, high-speed train corridor is being built with Japanese assistance.

"We'll be getting 18 Shinkansen train sets from Japan," said the official cited above. "Each train will have 10 coaches and would be able to cruise at the speed of 350 km per hour."

Japanese manufacturers will participate in a tender that will be floated soon to procure the high-speed trains. They will follow the Japan Railways design.

## Biting the Bullet

### LOCAL PRODUCTION

- 18 E5 series Shinkansen trains to be procured via tender offer
- Trains capable of running **325 kmph**
- Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed corridor to be ready by 2022



Separately, a train assembling plant will be set up in India for future needs

Kawasaki and Hitachi may set up facilities in the country

The official said Japanese bullet trains are among the safest in the world and those imported will have automatic protection systems to ensure safety.

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad route is expected to be used by 18,000 passengers with fares between the two cities likely to be less than ₹3,000 in economy class. The trains will also have a first

class with amenities similar to those in airlines.

In parallel, Indian Railways will start the process of setting up a bullet train assembling facility in India on a public private participation (PPP) basis that will cater to future needs. Japanese train technology companies such as Kawasaki and Hitachi may set up facilities in the count-

ry, the official said.

"We'll be inviting bids to set up an assembling plant here in India as well under the Make in India programme," the official added.

Construction on the bullet train project is likely to start in January next year with Indian Railways hopeful of meeting the December 2018 deadline for acquiring land.

The bullet train corridor will have sound baffles along the route that will have 12 stations, with about 350 km of it in Gujarat and 150 km in Maharashtra. The government has already started getting funds from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, which is providing a soft loan of ₹88,000 crore for the project over 50 years at an annual interest rate of 0.1%. Repayments will start after a moratorium of 15 years from the date the loan was released.