

India in talks to buy first bullet trains: report

3 October 2012

India is in talks to buy its first bullet trains for the nation's creaking and accident-prone network, but the new fleet will run at only a fraction of its top speed, a report said on Wednesday.

The government is speaking to Japanese, French and German manufacturers to purchase six new trains, which are capable of running at speeds of up to 325 kilometres (202 miles) per hour, the Hindustan Times newspaper reported.

"Such projects have a long gestation period, but one has to start somewhere," the newspaper quoted an anonymous official as saying in its report headlined: "Soon: Bullet trains for tortoise tracks".

India's fastest train, the Bhopal Shatabdi, which carries passengers between the capital Delhi and the central Indian city of Bhopal, runs at a [maximum speed](#) of 150 kilometres (93 miles) per hour.

The dilapidated [railways](#), still the main form of long-distance travel in India despite fierce competition from airlines, run thousands of passenger and freight trains and carry millions of people daily.

India's train system has a notoriously bad accident record, with a recent official report revealing that almost 15,000 people are killed each year while crossing rail tracks—a figure the government described as a "massacre".

Derailments, collisions and other [accidents](#) are also common.

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