India's first indigenous bullet train 'B-28' – co-designed by ICF and BEML; first body frame under testing: Ashwini Vaishnaw

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News

In his blog 'How India is building its first bullet train' (24–25 Oct 2026), Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the first body frame of the indigenous 'B-28' train – being designed for 280 km/h jointly by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, and BEML – is complete and under structural testing; track trials are expected by mid-2027. The next step is the 350 km/h 'B-35'. The Mumbai–Ahmedabad high-speed corridor (508 km) is designed for 350 km/h; the first service (Surat–Vapi) is planned for the last quarter of 2027. Note: no official statement says the design is fully 'ready' – the first frame is at the testing stage.

Key facts

Train	'B-28' – design speed 280 km/h; co-designed by ICF + BEML; BEML's 'Aditya' plant, Bengaluru (opened Apr 2026)
Contract	Oct 2024 – ICF awarded BEML ₹866.87 crore for 2 high-speed trainsets (₹27.86 crore per car)
Status	First body frame ready – structural testing; track trials mid-2027; next, the 350 km/h 'B-35'

MAHSR corridor	Mumbai – Ahmedabad, 508 km; 12 stations (only BKC underground); about 465 km on viaduct; 2×25 kV electrification; Japanese J-slab track
Implementer	National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL); Japan's Shinkansen technology, JICA loan
New corridors	Budget 2026–27: 7 high-speed corridors (about 4,000 km) – incl. Chennai–Bengaluru, Hyderabad–Chennai

Background

- Technology: high-speed trains run on standard gauge (1,435 mm), while Indian Railways' usual track is broad gauge (1,676 mm). Since a straight, dedicated alignment is needed, most of the line is on viaduct, built by the Full Span Launching Method that lifts 40 m, 970-tonne girders in one go.
- History: the world's first high-speed 'bullet' train – Japan's Tokaido Shinkansen, Tokyo – Osaka, 1 Oct 1964 (ahead of the Tokyo Olympics). The India–Japan MAHSR agreement was signed in Dec 2015; foundation stone 14 Sept 2017, Ahmedabad.
- BEML (Bharat Earth Movers Ltd) – a PSU under the Ministry of Defence, headquartered in Bengaluru; it makes metro and rail coaches, mining-construction equipment and defence vehicles.

Tamil Nadu link: the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Perambur, Chennai, co-designs the B-28 and awarded BEML its contract. Of the 7 high-speed corridors announced in Budget 2026–27, two – Chennai–Bengaluru and Hyderabad–Chennai – touch Tamil Nadu.

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