



# **Union Railway Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw Flags Off Bengaluru–Mumbai Express Train Strengthening Rail Connectivity Between Karnataka and Maharashtra**

## **Bengaluru–Mumbai Vande Bharat Sleeper Service to Start Soon: Ashwini Vaishnaw**

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The Union Railway Minister, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw virtually flagged off an express train between Bengaluru – Mumbai today, marking a major step in strengthening connectivity between Karnataka and Maharashtra.



🚂 New Express train between Bengaluru - Mumbai flagged off.

✅ Strengthening direct connectivity between Karnataka & Maharashtra [pic.twitter.com/yCJr4l4XT2](https://pic.twitter.com/yCJr4l4XT2)

— Ashwini Vaishnaw (@AshwiniVaishnaw) May 17, 2026

Sh. Vaishnaw stated that long-pending demands of South & North Karnataka are now being fulfilled. Further, he announced that the Vande Bharat Sleeper service between Bengaluru and Mumbai is expected to start soon.

Highlighting infrastructure growth, he noted a significant increase in railway funding in recent years, accelerating project execution across Karnataka.

Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 61 stations are being redeveloped at a cost of ₹2,160 crore, with 9 already completed. Bengaluru Cantonment station is being redeveloped at ₹485 crore and Yeshwantpur at ₹367 crore.



Since 2014, about 1,750 km of new railway lines have been constructed in Karnataka, and complex electrification works in the Hassan–Mangaluru section have been completed and testing is going on.

On the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project, he stated that work is progressing across all four corridors. For the Baiyappanahalli–Chikkabanavara and Heelalige–Rajanukunte corridors, land acquisition has been completed and station works are currently under progress. The KSR Bengaluru–Devanahalli alignment has been jointly approved by the State Government and the Railways, and the geotechnical survey has been completed. The Kengeri–Whitefield alignment was recently approved, and survey work will commence shortly. And he said that the suburban rail network will integrate key hubs, including the airport, Electronic City, Marathahalli, and Hebbal.





The Railway Minister further stated that Karnataka currently operates 12 pairs of Vande Bharat trains. Testing on the Bengaluru–Mangaluru route is underway and will soon improve coastal connectivity up to Madgaon.

Bullet train corridors connecting Bengaluru with Hyderabad and Chennai have also been approved, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw highlighted. He further noted that, with a long-term vision to connect Mumbai, Bengaluru, and other major cities, the network is expected to expand to 7,000 km.

The Union Minister of State for Railways, Shri V. Somanna while addressing the gathering during the flagging off of Train No. 16553/54 SMVT Bengaluru – Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express, expressed his gratitude to Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw for sanctioning the new Bengaluru–Mumbai train, stating that it will greatly benefit passengers on one of the busiest routes and further boost Karnataka's development.

He highlighted that Karnataka currently operates 12 pairs of Vande Bharat trains covering 14 districts. He noted that a Vande Bharat Sleeper maintenance depot will be established at Thanisandra at a cost of ₹270 crore, along with a chair car maintenance facility at SMVT Bengaluru costing ₹52.73 crore. Doubling of Baiyappanahalli–Hosur (₹1,116 crore), Bettahalasuru–Rajanukunte (₹248 crore), and quadrupling works around Bengaluru (₹1,347 crore) are being undertaken to enhance capacity.

Shri Somanna informed that automatic signalling works are being implemented across key sections, including Yesvantpur, KSR Bengaluru, Lottegollahalli, Baiyappanahalli, Penukonda, Mysuru, and Jolarpettai, at a total cost of ₹6,396 crore. Highlighting overall growth, he stated that Karnataka has

received a record railway budget allocation of ₹7748 crore. Since 2014, about 3,840 km of railway lines have been developed and 3,742 km electrified, taking the state close to 100% electrification. He added that the number of ROBs/RUBs has increased from about 150 before 2014 to 707 now, with 146 more to be completed within the next one year, and all level crossings targeted for elimination in the next three years.

Dignitaries present on the occasion included Shri P. C. Mohan, Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Bengaluru Central; Shri Lehar Singh Siroya, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha; and Shri Tejasvi Surya, Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Bengaluru South, who joined the event through video conference, along with senior Railway officials.

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**Dharmendra Tewari/ Dr. Nayan Solanki/ Ritu Raj/ Manik Sharma**

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