

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1824
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2026**

VANDE BHARAT SLEEPER TRAINS IN MAHARASHTRA

1824. SMT. SUPRIYA SULE:

SHRI MOHITE PATIL DHAIRYASHEEL RAJSINH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to introduce services connecting Maharashtra with major metropolitan, pilgrimage and industrial destinations in view of the emphasis on overnight rail services with reduced travel time and enhanced passenger comfort through such train high speed/Vande Bharat Sleeper trains and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) whether any feasibility study or route assessment has been undertaken for introducing Vande Bharat Sleeper services on high-demand corridors such as Mumbai–Nagpur, Mumbai– Nanded, Mumbai–Kolhapur, Mumbai–Jalna, Pune–Nagpur and Mumbai–Delhi via Maharashtra and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether the existing railway tracks, signaling systems and allied infrastructure on these routes are capable of supporting the planned high-speed operations and if not, the infrastructure upgrades proposed;**
- (d) the details of the expected reduction in journey time and enhancement in passenger capacity on the proposed routes; and**
- (e) the timeline fixed for introducing Vande Bharat Sleeper services in Maharashtra?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (e) As the railway network straddles across State boundaries, trains are introduced across such boundaries as per network requirement. As on 25.07.2026, 81 Pairs of Vande Bharat trains (Chair Car) are being operated

on the Indian Railways network. Of these 81 pairs of Vande Bharat Express Chair Car services, 12 pairs of Vande Bharat Express (Chair Car) are catering to the needs of various stations located in the State of Maharashtra. These 12 pairs of Vande Bharat Express trains are listed below:

SN	Train no. and Name
1	26101/26102 Pune-Ajni Vande Bharat Express
2	20101/20102 Nagpur-Secunderabad Vande Bharat Express
3	20669/20670 Hubballi-Pune Vande Bharat Express
4	20673/20674 SCSM(T) Kolhapur-Pune Vande Bharat Express
5	22961/22962 Mumbai Central-Ahmedabad Vande Bharat Express
6	20705/20706 H. S. Nanded-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj(T) Vande Bharat Express
7	22229/22230 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj(T)-Madgaon Vande Bharat Express
8	20911/20912 Indore-Nagpur Vande Bharat Express
9	22223/22224 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj(T)-Sainagar Shirdi Vande Bharat Express
10	22225/22226 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj(T)-Solapur Vande Bharat Express
11	20825/20826 Bilaspur-Nagpur Vande Bharat Express
12	20901/20902 Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar Capital Vande Bharat Express

Further, as on 25.07.2026, 36 pairs of Amrit Bharat Express services are being operated on the Indian Railways network, of which the following 08 pairs of Amrit Bharat services are catering to the needs of stations located in the State of Maharashtra. These are listed below:

SN	Train no. and Name
1	11015/11016 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Saharsa Amrit Bharat Express
2	11031/11032 Panvel-Alipurduar Amrit Bharat Express

3	11431/11432 Pune-Danapur Amrit Bharat Express
4	15293/15294 Muzaffarpur-Charlapalli Amrit Bharat Express
5	16601/16602 Erode-Jogbani Amrit Bharat Express
6	19021/19022 Udhna-Brahmapur Amrit Bharat Express
7	22111/22112 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Ayodhya Cantt. Amrit Bharat Express
8	22589/22590 Banaras-Hadapsar Amrit Bharat Express

Trains on the Mumbai - Nagpur, Mumbai - H. S. Nanded, Mumbai - Kolhapur, Mumbai - Jalna, Pune - Nagpur and Mumbai - Delhi sectors:

Presently, Mumbai - Nagpur sector is served by 19 pairs of trains, Mumbai - H. S. Nanded by 8 pairs of trains, Mumbai - Kolhapur by 3 pairs of trains, Mumbai - Jalna by 6 pairs of trains.

Similarly, Pune - Nagpur sector is served by 13 pairs of trains including 26101/26102 Pune-Ajni Vande Bharat Express while the Mumbai - Delhi sector is served by 32 pairs trains. The lists of trains are as under:

Trains serving Mumbai-Nagpur sector:

SN	Train No. and Name
1	11203/11204 Nagpur-Madgaon Express
2	12101/12102 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Shalimar Express
3	12105/12106 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Gondia Express
4	12139/12140 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Nagpur Express
5	12145/12146 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Puri Express
6	12151/12152 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Shalimar Express
7	12261/12262 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Howrah Duronto Express
8	12289/12290 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Nagpur Duronto Express
9	12809/12810 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Howrah Express

10	12811/12812 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Hatia Express
11	12859/12860 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Howrah Express
12	12869/12870 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Howrah Express
13	12879/12880 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Bhubaneswar Express
14	18029/18030 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Shalimar Express
15	20821/20822 Pune-Santragachi Express
16	22357/22358 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Gaya Express
17	22511/22512 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Kamakhya Express
18	22847/22848 Visakhapatnam-Lokmanya Tilak(T) Express
19	22865/22866 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Puri Express

Trains serving Mumbai-H.S. Nanded sector:

SN	Train No. and Name
1	20705/20706 Nanded-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T) Vande Bharat Express
2	11001/11002 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Balharshah Express
3	17057/17058 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Lingampalli Express
4	17611/17612 Nanded-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T) Express
5	17613/17614 Panvel-Nanded Express
6	17617/17618 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Nanded Express
7	17665/17666 Nanded- Lokmanya Tilak(T) Express
8	17667/17668 Nanded- Lokmanya Tilak(T) Express

Trains serving Mumbai-Kolhapur sector:

SN	Train No. and Name
1	11049/11050 Ahmedabad-SCSM(T) Kolhapur Express
2	11029/11030 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-SCSM(T) Kolhapur Express
3	17411/17412 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-SCSM(T) Kolhapur Express

Trains serving Mumbai-Jalna sector:

SN	Train No. and Name
1	20705/20706 Nanded-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T) Vande Bharat Express
2	11001/11002 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Balharshah Express
3	12071/12072 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Hingoli Deccan Jan Shatabdi Express
4	17057/17058 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Lingampalli Express
5	17611/17612 Nanded-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T) Express
6	17617/17618 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Nanded Express

Trains serving Pune-Nagpur sector:

SN	Train No. and Name
1	26101/26102 Pune-Ajni Vande Bharat Express
2	11039/11040 SCSM(T) Kolhapur-Gondia Express
3	12113/12114 Pune-Nagpur Garib Rath Express
4	12129/12130 Pune-Howrah Express
5	12135/12136 Pune-Nagpur Express
6	12221/12222 Pune-Howrah Duronto Express
7	12849/12850 Bilaspur-Pune Express
8	20151/20152 Hadapsar-Rewa Express
9	20821/20822 Pune-Santragachi Express
10	22123/22124 Pune-Ajni Express
11	22139/22140 Pune-Ajni Express
12	22141/22142 Pune-Nagpur Express
13	22845/22846 Pune-Hatia Express

Trains serving Mumbai-Delhi sector:

SN	Train No. and Name
1	12431/12432 Thiruvananthapuram Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express

2	22221/22222 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express
3	22413/22414 Madgaon-Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express
4	12951/12952 Mumbai Central-New Delhi Tejas Rajdhani Express
5	12953/12954 Mumbai Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin August Kranti Tejas Rajdhani Express
6	11057/11058 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Amritsar Express
7	12137/12138 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (T)-Firozpur Cantt. Express
8	12171/12172 Lokmanya Tilak(T)-Haridwar Express
9	12215/12216 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Bandra (T) Garib Rath Express
10	12217/12218 Thiruvananthapuram North-Chandigarh Express
11	12247/12248 Bandra (T)-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
12	12263/12264 Pune-Hazrat Nizamuddin Durgam Cheruvu Express
13	12283/12284 Ernakulam-Hazrat Nizamuddin Durgam Cheruvu Express
14	12449/12450 Madgaon-Chandigarh Express
15	12471/12472 Bandra (T)-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express
16	12483/12484 Thiruvananthapuram North-Amritsar Express
17	12493/12494 Miraj-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
18	12617/12618 Ernakulam-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
19	12903/12904 Bandra (T)-Amritsar Express
20	12907/12908 Bandra (T)-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
21	12909/12910 Bandra (T)-Hazrat Nizamuddin Garib Rath Express
22	12925/12926 Bandra (T)-Amritsar Express
23	19019/19020 Bandra (T)-Haridwar Express
24	22209/22210 Mumbai Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin Durgam Cheruvu Express
25	22451/22452 Bandra (T)-Chandigarh Express
26	22543/22544 Bandra (T)-Lalkua Express
27	22633/22634 Thiruvananthapuram Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
28	22653/22654 Thiruvananthapuram Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express

29	22655/22656 Ernakulam-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
30	22659/22660 Thiruvananthapuram North-Yog Nagari Rishikesh Express
31	22917/22918 Bandra (T)-Haridwar Express
32	22949/22950 Bandra (T)-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express

Vande Bharat Sleeper Train services:

For long distance travel the Sleeper variant of Vande Bharat Express has been indigenously designed and developed. Two such trains have already been manufactured. After extensive trials, these trains have been introduced on Indian Railways. To improve travel experience of the passengers and set new benchmarks in terms of safe and comfortable journey, these train sets have been provided with modern coaches having advanced safety features and passenger amenities like:

- **Jerk-Free Semi permanent couplers and Anti Climbers.**
- **Fitted with KAVACH.**
- **Higher acceleration with design/operating speed of 180/160 KMPH.**
- **Crashworthy Design of Car body complying with EN standards.**
- **Fire barrier doors at the end of each coach for compliance of Fire Safety standards.**
- **Aerosol based fire detection and suppression system in electrical cabinets and lavatories.**
- **Regenerative braking system for energy efficiency.**
- **Air conditioning units provided with indigenously developed UV-C lamp based disinfection system for deactivating 99% harmful bacteria from conditioned air to improve the hygiene standards inside the passenger area.**
- **Centrally controlled Automatic Plug Doors and Fully Sealed wider gangways.**
- **CCTVs in all coaches.**

- **Emergency talk-back unit for communication between Passenger and Train Manager/Loco Pilot in case of emergency.**
- **For Divyangjan passengers special lavatory in the driving coaches on each end.**
- **Centralized Coach Monitoring System for better condition monitoring of passenger amenities such as Air conditioning, Saloon Lighting etc.**
- **Ergonomically designed ladder for ease of climbing on to upper berths.**

The First Vande Bharat Sleeper service viz. 27575/27576 Howrah-Kamakhya Vande Bharat Sleeper Express has commenced regular operation w.e.f. 22.01.2026.

Besides, introduction of train services including Vande Bharat Express and its variants on any route/section, which is an on-going process, depends on various factors which include:

- **Capacity of that section**
- **Availability of path**
- **Availability of required rolling stock**
- **Availability of matching infrastructure for rolling stock**
- **Maintenance requirement of railway tracks and other assets**
- **Occupancy and the traffic requirement of the section**

Signalling infrastructure:

Strengthening, upgradation, modernisation and improvement of Signalling infrastructure is a continuous and ongoing process over Indian Railways. Indian Railways is continuously modernizing current infrastructure of its signalling system as under:

1. **Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation points and signals in place of old mechanical signalling have been**

provided at 6671 stations as on 30.06.2026, out of which Electronic Interlocking have been provided at 3954 stations.

- 2. Interlocking of Level Crossing Gates (LC) has been provided at 10395 Level Crossing Gates upto 30.06.2026 for enhancing safety at LC Gate.**
- 3. Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verification of track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6671 stations up to 30.06.2026.**
- 4. Axle counters for automatic clearance of Block Section, BPAC (Block Proving Axle Counter) are provided to ensure complete arrival of train without manual intervention before granting line clear to receive next train and to reduce human element. These systems have been provided on 6085 Block Sections up to 30.06.2026.**
- 5. Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) that enhances line capacity within existing track infrastructure has been provided at 7464 Route Km upto 30.06.2026.**

Kavach Implementation:

- 1. Kavach is an indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system. Kavach is a highly technology intensive system, which requires safety certification of highest order (SIL-4).**
- 2. Kavach aids the Loco Pilot in running of trains within specified speed limits by automatic application of brakes in case Loco Pilot fails to do so and also helps the trains to run safely during inclement weather.**
- 3. The first field trials on the passenger trains were started in February 2016. Based on the experience gained and Independent Safety Assessment of the system by Independent Safety Assessor (ISA),**

three firms were approved in 2018-19, for supply of Kavach Version 3.2.

- 4. Kavach was adopted as National ATP system in July, 2020.**
- 5. Implementation of Kavach System involves following Key Activities:**
 - a. Installation of Station Kavach at each and every station, block section.**
 - b. Installation of RFID Tags throughout the track length.**
 - c. Installation of telecom Towers throughout the section.**
 - d. Laying of Optical Fibre Cable along the track.**
 - e. Provision of Loco Kavach on each and every Locomotive running on Indian Railways.**
- 6. Based on deployment of Kavach version 3.2 on 1,465 RKm on South Central Railway and experience gained, further improvements were made. Finally, Kavach specification version 4.0 was approved by RDSO on 16.07.2024.**
- 7. Kavach version 4.0 covers all the major features required for the diverse railway network. This is a significant milestone in safety for Indian Railways. Within a short period, IR has developed, tested and started deploying Automatic Train Protection System.**
- 8. Major improvement in Version 4.0 includes increased Location Accuracy, Improved Information of Signal Aspects in bigger yards, Station to Station Kavach interface on OFC and Direct Interface to existing Electronic Interlocking System. With these improvements, Kavach Version 4.0. is planned for large scale deployment over Indian Railways.**
- 9. After extensive and elaborate trials, Kavach Version 4.0 has been successfully commissioned on 2,569 Route Kilometres as on**

20.07.26, covering the high density Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah routes including sections passing through Maharashtra as below:

SN	Section	Progress (Route Km)
(1)	Delhi-Mumbai route: 1,423 Rkm	
i	Tilak Bridge - Junction Cabin - Palwal - Mathura -Kota-Nagda -Ratlam-Vadodra-Virar section (passes through Maharashtra also)	1,327
ii	Vadodara - Ahmedabad section	96
(2)	Delhi - Howrah route: 1,146 Rkm	
i.	Chipyana - Tundla - Kanpur - Subedarganj section	563
ii.	Kanpur - Lucknow section	71
iii.	DDU(FOC)-Bhabua Road section	50
iv.	Sasaram - Pheser section	43
v.	Gaya -Sarmatarn- Nimiaghat section	159
vi.	Chota Ambana - Bardhaman - Howrah section	260

10. In addition, track side Kavach implementation work is being taken up on 21,858 Rkm covering all GQ,GD,HDN and identified sections of Indian Railways including sections passing through Maharashtra.

11. The total Progress of key items of Kavach on Indian Railway sections are as under:-

SN	Item	Progress
i	Laying of Optical Fibre Cable	11,253 Km
ii	Installation of Telecom Towers	1,668 Nos.
iii	Station Data Centre	988 station
iv	Installation of Track side equipment	7,726 Rkm
v	Provision of Kavach in Loco	6,153 Nos.

- 12. In addition, work for installation of Kavach in 7,327 Locomotives and 1,200 EMU/MEMU has been taken up.**
- 13. Specialized training programmes on Kavach are being conducted at centralized training institutes of Indian Railways to impart training to all concerned officials. By now more than 94,000 technicians, operators and engineers have been trained on Kavach technology. This includes about 57,000 Loco Pilots & Assistant Loco Pilots. Courses have been designed in collaboration with Indian Railways Institute of Signal Engineering and Telecommunications (IRISET).**

Track Infrastructure:

Strengthening, upgradation, modernisation and improvement of track infrastructure is a continuous and ongoing process over Indian Railways. The following measures are being taken by Indian Railways to upgrade railway tracks:

- I. Modern track structure consisting of 60kg, 90 Ultimate Tensile Strength (UTS) rails, Wider and heavier Pre-stressed Concrete Sleepers (PSC) with elastic fastening, fan-shaped layout turnout on PSC sleepers and H-beam Sleepers on girder bridges are being used while carrying out primary track renewals.**
- II. The Thick Web Switches and Weldable CMS Crossings are being used in turnout renewal works.**
- III. Supply of 260m long rail panels have been increased to avoid welding of joints, thereby improving safety and riding quality.**
- IV. Thick Web Switch Expansion Joints are being used in place of earlier Conventional/Improved SEJs.**
- V. Adoption of better welding technology for rails i.e. Flash Butt Welding.**

- VI. Adoption of mechanized system for track maintenance using high output plain tampers and points & crossing tampers for improved maintainability & reliability of track.**
- VII. Deployment of state-of-the-art modern machines including Rail Grinding Machines to further improve asset reliability.**
- VIII. Mechanisation of track laying activities through use of track machines like PQRS, TRT, T-28 etc.**
- IX. Interlocking of Level Crossing (LC) Gates for enhancing safety at LC gates.**
- X. Use of advanced Phased Array technology of testing of rail and welds.**
- XI. Deployment of Integrated Track Monitoring Systems (ITMS) and Oscillation Monitoring System (OMS) for comprehensive health assessment to ascertain optimal maintenance requirements.**
- XII. Adoption of portable Track Measuring Trolley for continuous recording of track parameters in yards.**
- XIII. Using web enabled Track Management System (TMS) for integration and data analytics of the track inspection records received through various sources to enable precise maintenance inputs.**

As a result of the above measures, there has been significant increase in speed potential of the tracks. The details of speed potential of railway tracks during 2014 vis-a-vis 2026 are as under:

Sectional Speed (kmph)	2014		2026	
	Track Km	%	Track Km	%
130 & above	5,036	6.3	24,173	22.5
110 - 130	26,409	33.3	62,482	58.1
< 110	47,897	60.4	20,897	19.4
Total	79,342	100	1,07,552	100
