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Launch of second version of Vande Bharat trains by August: Ashwini Vaishnaw

Pointing out that the two Vande Bharat trains launched in 2019 have travelled 14 lakh kilometres and "proven" themselves, Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Tuesday said the Indian Railways will launch an upgraded second version of the semi-high-speed trains in August 2022.

Interacting with media persons at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) at Gandhinagar, the minister said, "The plan for Vande Bharat trains were given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2017 and the first two trains started operating in 2019. So far, both the trains have travelled 14 lakh kilometres... Last year, 75 more trains have been approved that are under production." The Indian Rail-

ways operates Vande Bharat Express from New Delhi to Varanasi and from New Delhi to Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Katra. Adding that the second and third versions of Vande Bharat trains will use better technology, Vaishnaw said the Vande Bharat trains currently run at 160 kilometres per hour and the second version will touch 180 kilometres per hour and the third version of the train will travel at 220 kilometres per hour. "We will start the roll out of Vande Bharat-2 train or the second version of the trains in August 2022," he said adding that five-six trains will be rolled out every month after the launch. "The second version of Vande Bharat will have air springs (between the coach and the wheels) and will im-

prove the ride quality manifold," Vaishnaw added.

The minister said once the first batch of 75 Vande Bharat trains are launched, the Indian Railways will launch more. "Of the proposed 400 trains, about 250 will be the second version of Vande Bharat trains and then the third version will

introduced," he added.

The Railway minister who was at EDII for an interaction on start-ups said Vande Bharat trains will be operated on new routes and in some places, it will replace existing trains. "Bullet train takes 55 seconds to reach from 0-100 kilometers per hour.