

New high-speed train to link Lisbon and Madrid in 3 hours

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka : A new high-speed rail link between Lisbon and Madrid is set to reshape transport across the Iberian Peninsula by 2030, ahead of the FIFA World Cup co-hosted by Spain and Portugal.

The line will cut travel times between the two capitals from over 10 hours to just three, offering a viable alternative to air travel and marking a major step toward the decarbonisation of regional transport.

Now approved by the European Commission, the project will re-establish direct train service between Lisbon and Madrid for the first time since Spain's Renfe discontinued its overnight route five years ago.

"We're working on a plan to strengthen high-speed connections between major European capitals - and Madrid-Lisbon is one of our top priorities," said Apostolos Tzitzikostas, the EU's Commissioner for

Transport.

What's more, a coastal line extension could bring a new way of reaching Vigo, Santiago and A Coruña in the northwestern region of Spain that is so remote it is sometimes referred to as "land's end" (Fisterra).

In addition, Madrid to Salamanca, via Porto will become an option. The opening up of convenient regional travel to more undiscovered areas could help to mitigate the overtourism that locals complain of in a range of Spanish and Portuguese destinations.

Though the high-speed rail development is being touted as part of the green transformation and the reduction of domestic European aviation, Portugal is also investing in a new international airport for its capital.

Situated in Alcochete, approximately 40 km from Lisbon centre, the new hub will replace the overrun Humberto Delgado as the country's main air gateway. It is expected to be complete and come online in 2034.

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