Geostrategic motives of MAHSR

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What is the issue?

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The High Speed Rail cooperation between India and Japan will revitalise the stagnant Japanese economy.

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What are the issues with HSR globally?

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- Before signing on India, Taiwan had been Japan’s only successful sale, but itshigh-speed line has suffered heavy losses.
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- Profitability is a notoriously hard for high-speed train networks, most lines across Europe are in loss.
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- In Japan only some routes are profitable, but to achieve this requires high volumes of passengers and highly priced tickets.
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- These conditions are not easy to replicate across the globe and other high-speed lines in Japan have struggled.
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How this deal is geostrategic to Japan?

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- The latest challenge to Japan’s ambitions is the emergence of China as the new emperor of the superfast train.
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- Chinese technology is also cheaper, making it an attractive proposition for

the cost-conscious developing and middle-income countries of Asia.
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- In 2015, China grabbed Japan’s HSR deal with Indonesia in last minute, it also won Thailand’s HSR deal which Japan was planning earlier.
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- The battle to export bullet trains is clearly reflective of the broader rivalry between China and Japan for influence in Asia.
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- The India deal is not only a business coup for Japan but also a geostrategic one.
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What are the concerns of India?

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- In India, concerns related to costs, safety and misplaced priorities persist.
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- There are climatic differences, the possibility of electrical blackouts, as well as dust and other environmental conditions in India.
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- Japan clarified these issues will be addressed, stating that when it developed its first Shinkansen lines in the 1960s, it was a poor country as well that had required loans from the World Bank.
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Source: The Hindu

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