

SPECIAL EDITION: ISSUES ASIA

Newsweek

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSWEEK

July-September 2001

A Chinese Century?

The Coming Age of Rail

Rebels and Mavericks

The Colonization Of California

Bollywood's New Wave

EAST MEETS WEST

Asia Teams Up With The Rest Of the World

Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan cross cultures in the movie 'Rush Hour 2'



9 770163 706002

28

Australia A\$5.50
(GST incl.)
Bangladesh Taka80.00
Brunei B\$6.50
China RMB35.00

Guam US\$3.50
Hong Kong HK\$38.00
India Rs65.00
Indonesia Rp10,000
(PPN incl.)

Japan ¥800
Korea Won4,700
Malaysia RM7.00
Maldives Rf.42.00
Myanmar K150

Nepal NRs.70.00
Pakistan Rs.60.00
P. New Guinea K5.50
Philippines P75.00
Singapore S\$6.50
(GST incl.)

Sri Lanka Rs.90.00
(GST incl.)
Taiwan NT\$130.00
Thailand B110.00
U.S. Forces US\$3.50



THE ORIENT EXPRESS

They'll move faster and travel farther, crossing mountains, deserts, jungles—even oceans.
Asia's path to the future is railroads. All aboard.

By George Wehrfritz

IT WAS PURE FRONTIER MELODrama. Last September, on a rostrum festooned with banners, South Korean President Kim Dae Jung pledged "to heal the wounds of a divided people," then pushed a remote detonator, blasting a small crater to begin a new railroad line that will link the South and North. As VIPs cheered, fireworks hissed skyward and burst overhead. But for an occasional chirping mobile phone and the North Korean watchtowers visible on distant hilltops, the scene might have passed for a 19th-century groundbreaking in the golden age of rail.

What was really being inaugurated was the birth of a new rail age, not just on the Korean Peninsula but across Eurasia. So far the revolution remains largely in the minds of efficiency experts yearning to cut the cost of shipping freight and civil engineers pining to build futuristic tunnels, bridges and trains. But concrete plans, if not tracks, are already being laid. During a May visit to Thailand, Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji offered \$4 billion to fund a rail link between Bangkok and Kunming. The Malaysian government has commissioned a gargantuan feasibility study that maps out a rail network that would link nearly all of Southeast Asia to China. By 2010 it might be possible to

board a passenger coach in Singapore bound for Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Hanoi, Beijing, Ulan Bator, Moscow, Paris and finally London. Travel agents anticipate scheduled passenger service from the port of Pusan in South Korea to Berlin by 2004—which also means Korean exports could be delivered overland to Europe.

A diverse—and powerful—cast of characters shares these dreams. Boosters include

South Korea's Kim Dae Jung, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, Russian President Vladimir Putin and all of China's senior leaders. When a European Union delegation called on North Korea's "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang recently, it urged him to open rail transit between Korea and Eurasia, arguing, as Finnish diplomat Markku Heiskanen put it, "that the Trans-Siberian and other Eur-

asian railway networks offer a competitive option to sea routes via the Suez Canal."

Something elemental is happening, grounded in the passing of the cold war and globalization's seductive lure. Borders across Asia are open and trade is exploding. At the same time the shine has come off autos and trucks. For the past half century cars were king and roadwork dominated government development agendas. Bei-

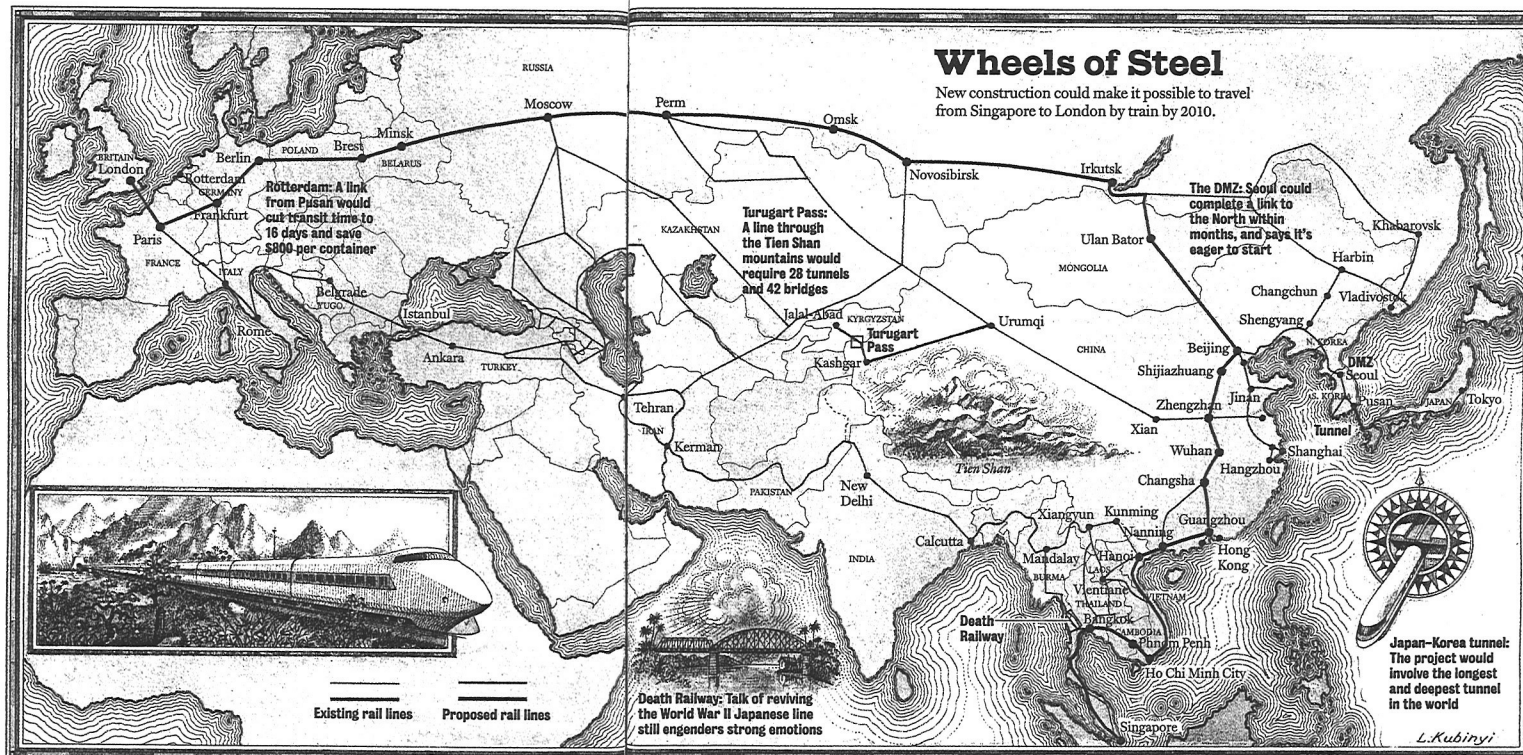
jing's notorious bad-air days are an eloquent rebuke to that strategy. Asian governments are coming to realize that "future increases in road traffic may no longer be addressed by matching increases in road infrastructure," says Pierre Chartier, chief railway advocate at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). That means railroads may move to the fast track.

At one time railways in Asia were something of an unwelcome imposition, with links to the imperialist past. They hauled tin and timber in British Malaya, sugar in Dutch Indonesia and rubber from French plantations in Vietnam. Kazakhs, who saw their first railways under the Bolsheviks in the 1920s, called them *Shaitan-arba*—devil carts.

Trains were the currency of power.

Wheels of Steel

New construction could make it possible to travel from Singapore to London by train by 2010.



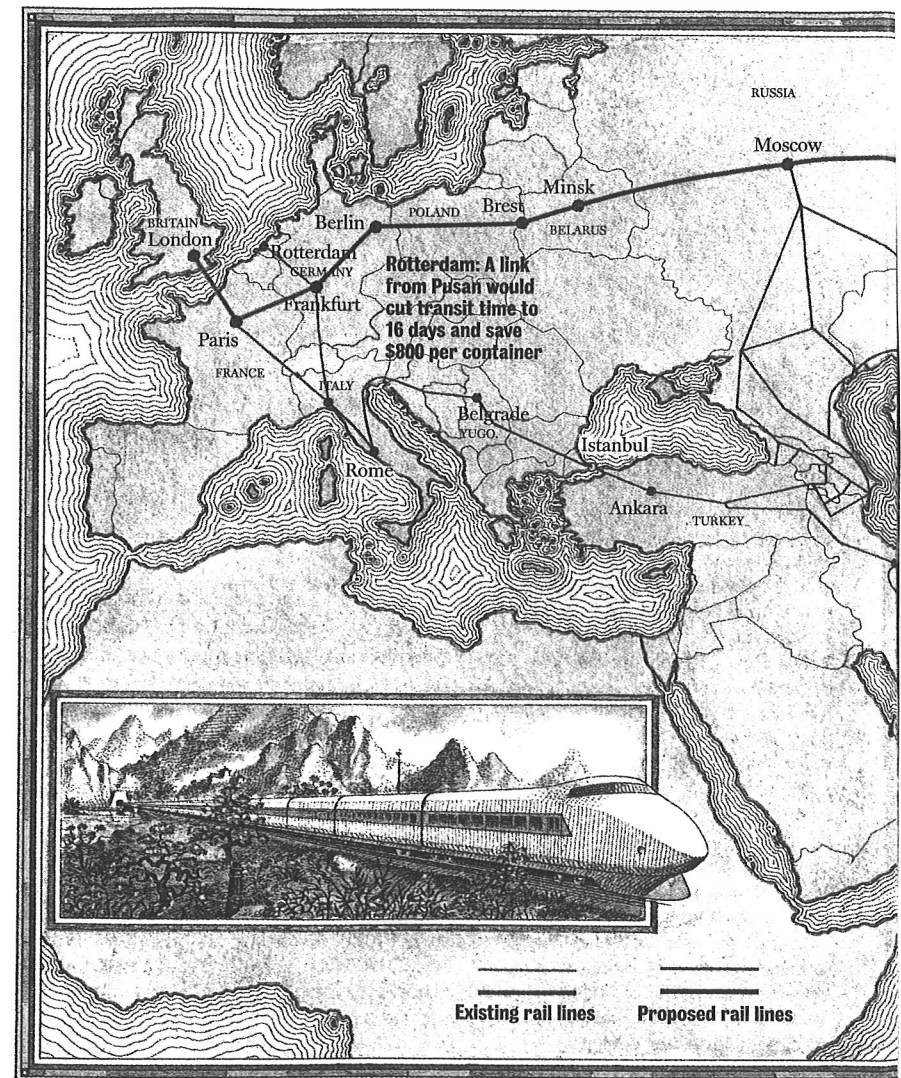
POLITICS & BUSINESS



THE ORIENT EXPR

IT WAS PURE FRONTIER MELO-drama. Last September, on a rostrum festooned with banners, South Korean President Kim Dae Jung pledged “to heal the wounds of a divided people,” then pushed a remote detonator, blasting a small crater to begin a new railroad line that will link the South and North. As VIPs cheered, fireworks hissed skyward and burst overhead. But for an occasional chirping mobile phone and the North Korean watchtowers visible on distant hilltops, the scene might have passed for a 19th-century groundbreaking in the golden age of rail.

What was really being inaugurated was the birth of a new rail age, not just on the Korean Peninsula but across Eurasia. So far the revolution remains largely in the minds of efficiency experts yearning to cut the cost of shipping freight and civil engineers pining to build futuristic tunnels, bridges and trains. But concrete plans, if not tracks, are already being laid. During a May visit to Thailand, Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji offered \$4 billion to fund a rail link between Bangkok and Kunming. The Malaysian government has commissioned a gargantuan feasibility study that maps out a rail network that would link nearly all of Southeast Asia to China. By 2010 it might be possible to



board a passenger coach in Singapore bound for Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Hanoi, Beijing, Ulan Bator, Moscow, Paris and finally London. Travel agents anticipate scheduled passenger service from the port of Pusan in South Korea to Berlin by 2004—which also means Korean exports could be delivered overland to Europe.

A diverse—and powerful—cast of characters shares these dreams. Boosters include

South Korea's Kim Dae Jung, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, Russian President Vladimir Putin and all of China's senior leaders. When a European Union delegation called on North Korea's “Dear Leader” Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang recently, it urged him to open rail transit between Korea and Eurasia, arguing, as Finnish diplomat Markku Heiskanen put it, “that the Trans-Siberian and other Eur-

ESS

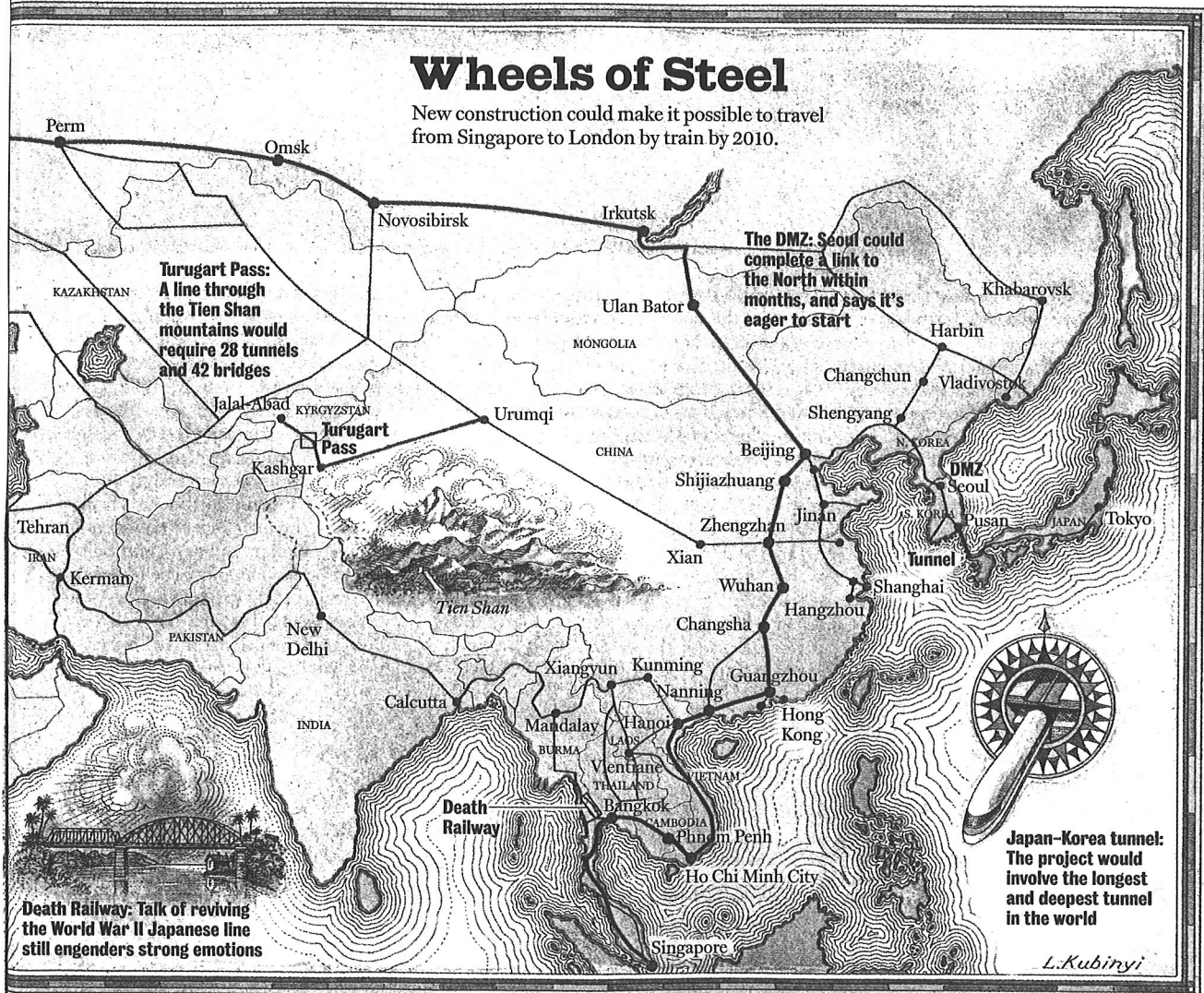
They'll move faster and travel farther, crossing mountains, deserts, jungles—even oceans.

Asia's path to the future is railroads. All aboard.

By George Wehrfritz

Wheels of Steel

New construction could make it possible to travel from Singapore to London by train by 2010.



Asian railway networks offer a competitive option to sea routes via the Suez Canal."

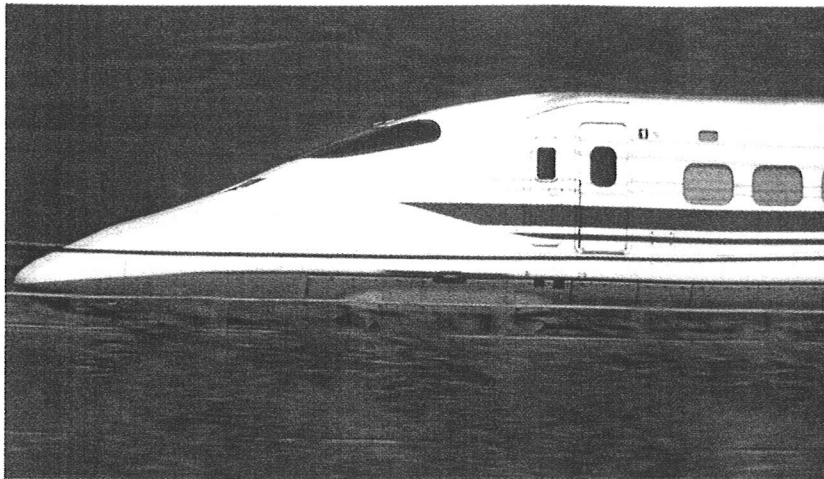
Something elemental is happening, grounded in the passing of the cold war and globalization's seductive lure. Borders across Asia are open and trade is exploding. At the same time the shine has come off autos and trucks. For the past half century cars were king and roadwork dominated government development agendas. Bei-

jing's notorious bad-air days are an eloquent rebuke to that strategy. Asian governments are coming to realize that "future increases in road traffic may no longer be addressed by matching increases in road infrastructure," says Pierre Chartier, chief railway advocate at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). That means railroads may move to the fast track.

At one time railways in Asia were something of an unwelcome imposition, with links to the imperialist past. They hauled tin and timber in British Malaya, sugar in Dutch Indonesia and rubber from French plantations in Vietnam. Kazakhs, who saw their first railways under the Bolsheviks in the 1920s, called them *Shaitan-arba*—devil carts.

Trains were the currency of power.

POLITICS & BUSINESS


VISION OF THE FUTURE: Japan's bullet trains could one day travel by tunnel to Korea

Japan, the region's first modern imperialist state, used railroads to subjugate Korea and Manchuria. The "fire cars" pulling out of China's treaty ports made ancient trade routes like the Grand Canal obsolete. Imperial Russia's most ambitious public work, the 8,591-kilometer Trans-Siberian Railway from Moscow to Vladivostok, gave Moscow a toehold in Asia that remains firm to this day. By the 1930s it was possible to travel by train from Europe to the southern tip of Korea, a route used by hundreds of Jews escaping Nazi Germany.

World War II and its aftermath ended

down by the British—has grown by 150 percent over the same period, compared with just 3 percent for railways.

ON THE NORTH BANK OF THE IMJIN River, South Korean engineering battalions have cleared a 40-meter-wide corridor four kilometers to the demilitarized zone. Rails and concrete slippers (ties) stand ready on pallets, and a station with customs and immigration facilities is rising in an area that used to be carved up by earthworks, cabbage patches and minefields. The rail link to the North, which has been delayed by Pyongyang's refusal to agree on a route through the DMZ, could be finished in a matter of months, and the South

A hard link from Pusan to Rotterdam, she estimates, would cut shipping time from 26 to 16 days and save \$800 per container. Already Seoul, Beijing and Moscow have pledged more than \$1 billion to revamp North Korea's decrepit railways, where top speeds are now just 30km/hr. Son Hak Rae, South Korea's top railway official, says planning is underway to raise speeds along the main north-south trunk line to 100km/hr for efficient connection to the Trans-Siberian Railway. Pointing to a map in his sprawling office, he forecasts a major realignment in Northeast Asia. "We've always been caught between two superpowers. Japan and China," he says. "But now we can take advantage of our geopolitical location."

Moscow holds a similar view. Since coming to power, President Putin has emphasized railways in his dealings with Asia, promoting the Trans-Siberian as a low-cost shipping route to Europe for Japanese, Chinese and Korean exports.

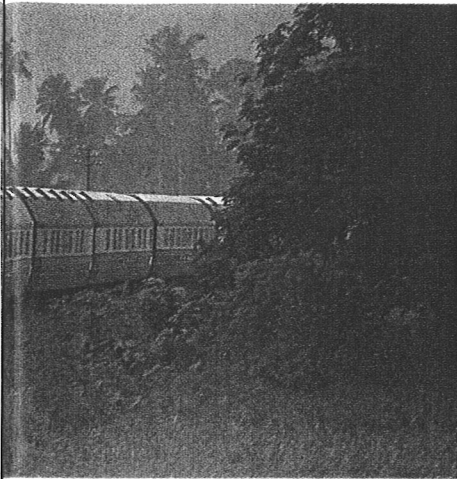
Russia lowered tariffs in the mid-1990s, resulting in double-digit growth in freight volume in 1999 and 2000. "The most important thing is that Russia serves as a transit corridor," says Mikhail Deliagin, director of the Institute for Problems of Globalization in Moscow. "If we don't become this bridge, the country will simply fall away from Europe and Asia."

For China, currently the world's most prolific railway builder, the problems are different but equally urgent. Beijing lays between 600 and 1,000 kilometers of new track every year, a construction rate faster

"Whenever an idea is first presented, people say, 'Oh, you're crazy, that's impossible.' But once the idea starts to materialize, you get enthusiasts."

Asia's first rail age. The cold war divided the continent into ideologically opposed camps. Sea lanes grew in prominence as Asia's "tiger economies" exported their way to prosperity. A middle class rose, ushering in the automobile age and making the passenger car a symbol every bit as potent as locomotives had once been. The result: an imbalance between road and rail construction. China's road network has expanded three times faster than its railways since 1980, and India's road grid—in much worse shape than the rail network laid

is eager to get started. For President Kim, the new line would provide much-needed proof that his "sunshine policy" of engagement with the North is achieving concrete progress. But Seoul's ambitions are driven as much by economics as by politics. "Practically speaking, we're an island," says Choi Yeon-Hye, a professor of marketing and management, at the Korea National Railroad College who has researched Europe's railway revival. "But through the Trans-Siberian Railway we can connect directly to Europe."



than America's at the height of its rail boom in the 19th century. At that pace, the country should vault past Russia and India to boast the world's second largest rail network, after the United States, by 2005. The frenzy is spurred by political worries: Beijing is hoping that the new lines will help its impoverished western provinces tap foreign markets and promote economic growth, without

which these restive provinces might eventually break away.

Balanced growth, the core ideal in Beijing's "Go West" development strategy, is pushing industry ever farther from seaports. By raising output in the interior, the plan creates demand for land links with Southeast Asia, Russia and the Central Asian republics. Trade with Kazakhstan

POWER TRIP: Southeast Asia is served by the posh Eastern & Oriental line (center and right)

grew from \$400,000 in 1992 to \$1.5 billion last year, and a single rail link opened in 1999 "can no longer support all of China's oil needs from the region," says Liu Qingjian, a Central Asia specialist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in Bei-

COMING SOON, A TRAIN THAT FLIES

Asia is leading the way in building not just rail lines but trains themselves. Engineers at the Railway Technical Research Institute outside Tokyo have created a train that runs without an onboard engine and at high speed doesn't even touch the ground. Called the Superconducting Maglev, the train gets its juice from huge superconducting magnets that interact with electromagnets embedded in the track. These sleek, duck-billed creatures, nestled deep in what looks like a bobsled run, can reach speeds of up to 550km/hr—fast enough to get from Tokyo to Osaka in only 70 minutes. Commercial service is set to begin after 2005.

Under power, the maglev literally flies down the track as magnetic repulsion supports the train. The ride is smooth once the wheels are retracted at 160km/hr; but buffeting wind and blurred side views suggest travel aboard a rocket sled, not a commuter train. Maglevs are 50 percent faster than bullet trains and cost just 20 percent more to build.



"They compete with the speed of airliners and offer better service," says Takaaki Nagaosa, an engineer on the project. Japan is considering a new trunk line linking its three largest cities, a route with the huge daily volume necessary to make the system profitable.

Another place such speed demons make sense is China. With its huge coastal cities, rising middle class and clogged airports, China's eastern seaboard is the world's most important market for next-generation trains. Last year

Beijing asked the institute's parent company, the Central Japan Railway, to bid on a maglev line between Beijing and Shanghai. Japan turned down the offer on the ground that its newest train remains in development. "What China needs is a *shinkansen* [bullet train]," says institute director Hitoshi Tsuruga. Instead, Beijing turned to Japan's primary competitor in maglev technology, Germany's ThyssenKrupp and its partner, Siemens; the Chinese ordered a maglev to run the 33km route from central Shanghai to the new airport in Pudong. Not only passengers are in a rush.

POLITICS & BUSINESS



NEXT DOOR: China (train, right) wants to help upgrade Cambodia's rickety system (left)

jing. Trade with Southeast Asia has blossomed even faster. But China's target markets—Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia—sit beyond a barrier of socialist states with poor rail networks and have seaports that are clogged almost to capacity. Some neighbors fear China may have ulterior

or motives for extending its transport network south. But Beijing denies that it is projecting anything but its products. "China's top motivation for improving transportation in Southeast Asia is money," says Han Feng, another CASS expert.

IF ALL THE GRAND PLANS AND FUTURISTIC scenarios come to fruition, all of Asia will be connected by rail. Last November the Association of Southeast Asian Nations settled upon a \$2.5 billion plan that would string together existing railways between Singapore and Kunming, traversing Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam—with spur lines to Laos and Burma. "They've chosen the route so that no one feels left out," says Romesh Srinivasan, the Malaysian railways expert who mapped out the proposed Trans-Asian Railway.

But a vast range of obstacles remains to be conquered. For one thing, existing rail lines and roadbeds are often too decrepit to be of much use in a modern freight network. The ASEAN plan, for example, calls for a 48km link between Poipet and Sisophon, two gritty towns in western Cambodia. In Poipet—a muddy hole on the border with Thailand enlivened

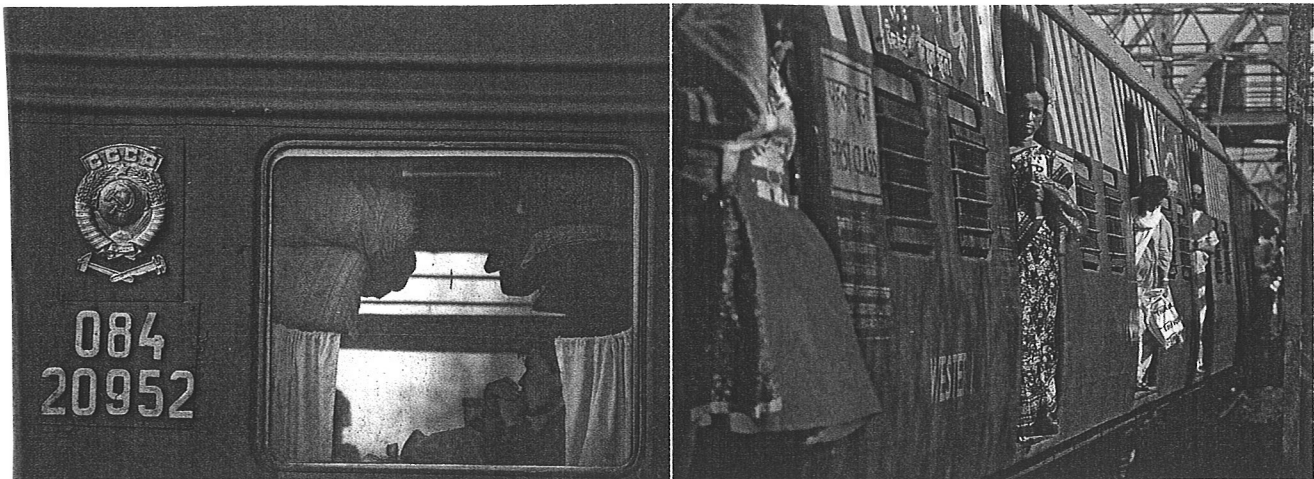
only by casinos built to cater to Thai businessmen—a poor Cambodian family shares the former train station with their chickens and ducks. It hasn't been used since Thailand and Cambodia cut their colonial-era rail link in 1962 after a border row over a Buddhist temple. The old rail bed leading eastward was long ago liberated of its gravel, ties and steel rails. Those bridges not bombed during Cambodia's civil war are too creaky to use. "Massive upgrading will be required," says Peter Hodgkinson, a railway consultant for ESCAP.

In many of these countries, too, political geography continues to present a potential stumbling block. The ASEAN plan calls for a second phase of construction, which includes an alpine line from the Burmese mountain town of Lashio to China's railway terminus in Yunnan province that could cost nearly \$5 billion. Given Burma's penchant for using forced labor, it's unlikely that much international aid for the project will be forthcoming. Another 450km spur, linking Thailand and Burma, will follow the infamous Death Railway built by the Japanese as part of their planned assault on India during World War II. Although later dismantled, the line, which was completed in 1943 by some 61,000 British, Dutch, Australian and American POWs—and immortalized in the 1957 film "The Bridge on the River Kwai"—continues to raise heated emotions among ex-POWs and veterans' groups whenever talk of reviving it comes up.

As part of its "Look East" policy of engagement with ASEAN, New Delhi is itself contemplating fresh rail routes through Burma to the Southeast Asian market. In February India's railway minister told Parliament his ministry would play "a pivotal role" in the es-



ROOF WITH A VIEW: Taking the air on a Bangladeshi train



establishment of a railway "which would span China, Myanmar [Burma], Bangladesh, India" and extend onward to Europe.

Even more problematic than political barriers are physical ones. Kyrgyzstan, for instance, is hoping to link its rail lines to the ancient market town of Kashgar in far western China. That will take some doing. On a dirt track overlooking a vivid turquoise lake at the foot of the Tien Shan mountains, Kyrgyzstan's deputy transport minister, Kubanichbek Mamayev, points toward the highlands. "The railway!" he booms, gesticulating toward a towering granite ridge. "We just need to dynamite that and build some tunnels and cuttings."

What he's talking about is the 3,752-meter Turugart Pass. According to a basic engineering study completed by Mamayev's ministry, such a rail line would require 28 tunnels and 42 bridges and cost \$2.9 billion. Brittle granite and frequent earthquakes make the crossing doubly dangerous.

"These mountains," says Chingiz Musuliyev, director of road construction in the area, "have a habit of ruining your plans."

And the greatest problem, as usual, is money. The Asian Development Bank says it is considering a loan to finance the Kyrgyz project by 2004. "It's very simple," says a foreign diplomat in Central Asia. "If they come up with a real business plan with numbers that make sense, then the money will come. If not, it won't."

So far that's proved difficult. A Chinese rail link to Kazakhstan, opened in 1999, is something of a bust. Changing from the

narrow Chinese to the wide Russian gauge takes 40 minutes a wagon, or about a day to convert an average-size freight train, so the traffic from China remains small. The hype about a grand new railway linking Europe and Asia obscures another important fact: a Eurasian railway bypassing Russia could very easily be made feasible by refurbishing existing branch lines to take heavy traffic. They run from Urumqi in China to Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, then through Iran to Istanbul.

THE MOST AMBITIOUS RAIL PROJECT IN Asia faces all of these challenges. It sounds like a wild fantasy (perhaps fittingly, since

CLICKETY-CLACK: From Kazakhstan (left) to India (right), train travel is once again on the rise

could be finished in 10 years." The projected cost: more than \$25 billion.

However far off, projects like the Japan-Korea tunnel have at least begun appearing on serious agendas. The Russians have toyed with the idea of digging to Sakhalin Island and onward to Japan. At a recent conference in Hong Kong, Japanese transportation expert Norio Yamamoto gave a presentation that included a tunnel project even more ambitious than Mochida's. Entitled "Railway Across the Roof of the World," it showed a link between Siberia

China lays between 600km and 1,000km of new track every year, a construction rate faster than America's at the height of its rail boom

the Rev. Sun Myung Moon is one of the backers); to dig a tunnel between Japan and Korea. The plan calls for three undersea tunnels linked by two small islands. The final leg would be both the longest (more than 70km) and the deepest (140 meters) ever attempted. In the 1980s a major Japanese construction firm proposed spanning the gap with a submarine bridge suspended above the ocean floor with towers and cables. Yutaka Mochida, renowned as the world's pre-eminent tunnel digger, suggests carving a reinforced tunnel underneath the ocean bed. "If we had 10,000 workers," he says, "it

and Alaska via a 100km tunnel under the Bering Strait.

"Whenever an idea is first presented, people say, 'Oh, you're crazy, that's impossible.' But once the idea starts to materialize you get enthusiasts," says Viktor Razbegin, the bearlike director of Russia's Interdepartmental Center for Integrated Regional Transport Projects. This train is just starting to roll.

With HIDEKO TAKAYAMA and KAY ITOI in Tokyo, B. J. LEE in Seoul, OWEN MATTHEWS in Bishkek, KEVIN PLATT in Beijing, EVE CONANT in Moscow, SUDIP MAZUMDAR in New Delhi, JOHN HALL in Poipet and KEN STIER in Kuala Lumpur

SHERBELL—CORBIS SABA (LEFT), WEBSTER LEHIKUVA OY—CORBIS SABA

NEWSWEEK SPECIAL ISSUE 35

Newsweek SPECIALEDITION 2001/7/11 翻訳

オリエント急行

…(中略) アジアにおいて最も野心的鉄道プロジェクトが課題に直面している。日本と韓国の上にトンネルを掘るというまるで狂気じみた幻想(というのは後援者の一人が文鮮明氏であるからだ)であるその計画は、3つの海底トンネルを2つの小さな島で連結するものである。全行程中の最後の区間は長さにおいて(70Km 以上)、深さにおいても(140m)とかつてない規模になる。

1980 年にある大手建設会社は海底の橋の隔たり部分を海面上の塔やケーブルで吊るし両技師をつなぐことを提案した。世界的に秀でた非常に名高いトンネル掘削者である持田豊氏は、海底下に補強したトンネルを掘削してゆくことを提唱している。もし 1,0,000 人の働き手があれば 10 年で終るであろうし、またかかる費用は 25 兆円以上になると話している。

ところで日韓トンネルのようなプロジェクトがまじめな議事事項として取り上げられる日もそう遠くないかもしれない。ロシア人はサハリンを日本につなげるというアイデアを本気では考えなかった。最近の香港における会議で日本人の交通専門家の山本のりお氏は持田氏以上にトンネルプロジェクトを含めた提案を野心的に行なった。“世界の屋根を横切る鉄道”と題された提案は、ベーリング海峡下を 100Km にも及ぶトンネルでシベリアとアラスカを連結するという内容でした。

「あるプロジェクトが最初に紹介されると、人々は『あなたは狂気じみている。それは不可能だよと口々に言った』。しかし一度そのプロジェクトが計画的になると人々は熱心になる」とロシアのビクター ラッビキン氏は語っている。その列車は今走り始めた。