

Advanced Functions on Display as Tokaido Shinkansen N700S Debuts

On July 1, a brand-new model of the Tokaido Shinkansen train made its debut. As the first full model change in 13 years, the N700S includes performance advancements as well as upgraded cabin interiors. The state-of-the-art Shinkansen has achieved a fresh approach for swift travel across the Japanese archipelago.

Twelve new trains are expected to be put into operation in 2020, increasing to 40 trains by 2022. It will run on the Sanyo Shinkansen line as well as serving the busy route between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka, generating much anticipation as the main train of the future across Shinkansen lines.

The first N700S, designated Nozomi 1, departed from Tokyo for Hakata Station in Fukuoka. As station master Takeshi Matsuki raised his right hand signaling departure, the train left Tokyo Station exactly at the scheduled time of 6 A.M.

Central Japan Railway Company president Shin Kaneko said at the departure ceremony: "I am confident that this is the best Shinkansen overall — safety, stability, and comfort. I would like many passengers to enjoy traveling."

A total of four inbound and outbound trains were in operation on that first day.

In order to make seating more comfortable, the N700S includes improved seat reclining functions. The Green Car (first class) and a portion of the regular cars are equipped with an active vibration control device, which reduces horizontal shaking during travel.

No More Concern About Power Outages

Furthermore, the N700S is equipped with lithium-ion batteries. In case of a power outage, they will provide enough power to enable the train to safely proceed to the nearest station while also allowing use of the onboard restrooms by passengers.

Kosuke Masui, 36, has two years of experience as an engineer on trains of the Central Japan Railway Company (JR Central). He was a crew member aboard a train stranded inside of a tunnel during a power outage and knows the inconveniences. Speaking of the new Shinkansen, he said, "It has become a train that will not cause an inconvenience to customers."

In October 2017, the train that Masui was aboard as the conductor made a sudden stop between Gifu-Hashima Station and Maibara Station. Heavy rainfall from the typhoon led to a power outage in the vicinity. For a few hours, the train was forced to a standstill in a dark tunnel.

Masui reflected: "The restrooms could not be used and the air conditioning stopped. All I could think about was evacuating the passengers from the uncomfortable situation as soon as possible."

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This unpleasant experience has been etched on his mind. About half a year later, in March of 2018, Masui was approached by his supervisor about being the exclusive test driver for the newly modeled Shinkansen. Among the approximately 800 Shinkansen drivers of the Central Japan Railway Company, only two drivers could take on this role.

Masui immediately replied with a yes to the prestigious offer. Looking back, he said: "It is a role that everyone wants. Along with immense joy, I felt a growing sense of nervousness because I knew I could not fail."

Source: Advanced Functions on Display as Tokaido Shinkansen N700S Debuts
<https://japan-forward.com/advanced-functions-on-display-as-tokaido-shinkansen-n700s-debuts/>

東海道新幹線N700Sがデビュー 機能向上で快適空間実現

東海道新幹線の新型車両「N700S」が7月1日デビューした。13年ぶりのフルモデルチェンジで、走行性能、客室の設備が従来型より向上。列島を駆け抜ける新たな移動空間を実現した。本年度中に12編成、2022年度末までに40編成が入る。東京－新大阪間に加え山陽新幹線にも乗り入れ、主力車両としての活躍に期待が集まる。

一番列車は東京発博多行き「のぞみ1号」。松木毅東京駅長の右手を挙げる出発合図で定刻の午前6時ちょうどに出発した。ホームであった式典で、JR東海の金子慎社長は「安全、安定、快適、環境の全てが最高の新幹線と自負している。多くのお客さまに旅行を楽しんでほしい」とあいさつした。1日は上下計4本が運行する。

N700Sはリラックスできる座り心地にしようと、座席のリクライニングを改善。グリーン車や一部普通車に横揺れ軽減の「フルアクティブ制振制御装置」を搭載した。

停電での走行、苦い経験「もうさせない」

また、N700Sは、リチウムイオン電池のバッテリーを搭載しており、停電しても安全な場所まで自力走行ができトイレも使える。2年にわたる走行試験を担ったJR東海の運転士、増井浩介さん（36）は、かつて停電のためトンネル内で立ち往生した列車の乗務を経験。「お客さまに不便な思いをさせない車両になった。丁寧な運転を心掛けたい」と話す。

平成29年10月。増井さんが車掌として乗務した列車は、岐阜羽島－米原間でストップした。台風による大雨で漏水が発生し、付近は停電。列車は数時間にわたり、暗いトンネル内で身動きが取れなくなった。

「トイレも使えず、空調も止まった。一刻も早くお客さまに不快な状況から脱出してもらおうことだけを考えた」と増井さん。苦い経験が脳裏にこびりついている。約半年後の30年3月。増井さんは上司から新型車両の専属テストドライバーへの打診を受けた。JR東海の新幹線運転士約800人からわずかに2人だけの名誉に「ぜひ」と即答。「みんながやりたい仕事。うれしさと同時に失敗できないという緊張感が芽生えた」と振り返る。

出典：東海道新幹線N700Sがデビュー 機能向上で快適空間実現
<https://japan-forward.com/japanese/東海道新幹線N700Sがデビュー>