

# Taj theme & gaming team: Microsoft's new office in Noida is a story of two firsts

Sharmila Bhowmick | TNN | Updated: Feb 7, 2021, 11:46 IST



A-

A+



Spread across 1 lakh sqft, Microsoft's third India Development Center (IDC) is being readied for post-pandemic... Read More

NOIDA: Here, employees need not wait for the weekend to drive down to the [Taj](#) and click the mandatory sun-kissed selfie with the Charbagh in the background. A walk down the ivory-white marble corridor with a stream of light perforating through the intricate Mughal lattices on to the floor will be an everyday affair.

Yes, the [Taj Mahal](#) has come closer home — not in the form of any hotel or an installation in any park, but as [Microsoft's](#) new office. And it's not just the design that one should look out for. Microsoft's [gaming division](#) — a first in the country — will also work out of this office.



Boardroom

Spread across 1 lakh sqft, Microsoft's third [India Development Center](#) (IDC) is being readied for post-pandemic operations in [Sector 16A](#) of the city. The idea to set up Taj-like interiors was given shape by [RSP Design Consultants](#), an architecture firm based in Bengaluru. What was tough though, according to the designers, was to blend in a Mughal architectural masterpiece into a high-technology corporate office — balancing aesthetics and functionality at the same time. Not just white Jaipur marble and semi-precious stones, the office will have lattice screens, arches and domed ceilings too.



Waiting area

"Selection and placement of the artwork was carefully determined in the transitioning and informal spaces, considering the surrounding elements. Customised artwork also had technology icons and symbols integrated into the design to show the true blend. The free-flowing corridors around the central cores of this office symbolise the river," said Arunjot Singh Bhalla, MD of RSP Design Consultants.



Reception

Meenakshi Sharma, the design lead of the project, said the space for informal meetings had been inspired by the ghats. "The setting of the hub, as one emerges from the lift lobby, takes its cues from the Charbagh. The walls and ceilings are enriched with motifs inspired by the Taj and the entire planning is informed by the monument's setting," said Sharma, who is also the associate director of RSP Design.



Conference hall

The design for the office was commissioned in 2019 and the interiors were developed over the whole of 2020. It was on January 28 that Microsoft announced its Noida-based IDC. This is the third such facility in the country after Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

But another first-of-its-kind in this office is the [Xbox](#) gaming division, which will also conduct research here.

"Recognising the strategic importance of establishing Microsoft engineering presence in Noida, my team went over and beyond in ensuring that our first engineering hub in Noida truly represents the Microsoft Design Language infused with local culture and inheritance. In this respect, I feel the team overdid themselves, and the newly opened Noida office is one of the most beautiful Microsoft workspaces, we have designed to date," said Riku Pentikäinen, regional director of Asia Real Estates Operations, Microsoft.

Rajiv Kumar, managing director of Microsoft India Research and Development, said, "Digital transformation is set to trigger the new frontier of innovation. The excellent facilities at Microsoft's Noida workplace provide the right environment for shaping the future of the IT industry in this part of the world."