

## Meerut to Sahibabad in 30 minutes as rapid rail extends, passengers overjoyed

The train starts at Meerut South and will run up till Sahibabad. The train is accompanied by a modern, specially-abled-friendly railway station with enhanced security, parking and cab facilities.



*The rapid rail, called the Namo Bharat Express, will allow residents of Meerut to reach Delhi within the hour.*



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### In Short

- The first Namo Bharat rapid rail will be at 6 am from Meerut South
- The train will shorten commute for residents in Meerut, and will run at 160 kmh
- More stations to be added after Meerut South, with construction underway

The much-awaited The Meerut South RRTS (Regional Rapid Transit System) station became operational on Sunday. Passengers were overjoyed as the extension mean that they could reach Sahibabad from Meerut in 30 minutes.

Women called it a Raksha Bandhan gift, while others dubbed it a great achievement for the city. India Today TV covered the entire journey and reached Sahibabad station from Meerut South Station in just about 30 minutes while speaking to many onboard.

"It's a good journey, we are travelling in AC, earlier we had to face jostling in buses. The train has a speed of 158 kilometres per hour," said one passenger.

"Due to this train, people who were living in Delhi can now travel back faster," said another passenger. "Because of it, there will be more companies looking to set up in Meerut, and more schools will open. Everyone will reap the benefits."

The women travelling on the train deemed it a gift for Raksha Bandhan.

The journey began at 4:29 pm, reaching Modinagar North at 4:34 pm, Murad Nagar station at 4:45 pm, Duhai around 4:48 pm, Raj Nagar at 4:51 pm, Ghaziabad at 4:55 pm and finally Sahibabad at 5 pm. The entire journey took a mere 30 minutes.

The train is expected to run at a speed of up to 160 kilometres per hour.

The Meerut South Station, from where the journey began, has been built spectacularly with additional security arranged. Every inch of the newly built station is under camera surveillance. Security guards are also present at the station at all times. Notably, the station is also built to be specially-abled-friendly with a separate lift installed for the specially-abled, elderly or sick people. Along with the stairs, an escalator has also been installed.

Apart from rapid rail trains, the station will also provide local metro services for the Meerut region. The station has three tracks on three platforms - two for Namo Bharat trains and one for metro services. The station has three levels: ground, mezzanine, concourse and platform. It is about 215 metres in length, 36 metres in width and 22 metres in height.

The Meerut South station will also boast the largest parking facility in Uttar Pradesh on the rapid rail corridor, enhancing passenger convenience. Two parking lots located on either side of the station's entry and exit gates have been built over an area of about 13,000 square metres. These parking lots can accommodate around 1,200 four-wheelers and two-wheelers.

Additionally, dedicated parking is also available for auto-rickshaws. The station is designed to facilitate easy pick-up and drop-off for vehicles coming from both Meerut and Delhi, with direct access from the main road. For the convenience of differently-abled passengers, the station includes a designated parking area and ramps for easy access, so that they can travel comfortably on the Namo Bharat Express.

On the train, two mobile charging points have been provided on every seat. The tickets for the train have been put into two categories. In the regular category, the ticket from Meerut South to Sahibabad is for Rs 110, whereas in the premium category, the same ticket is for Rs 220 -- double the regular fare.

Residents of Meerut are expecting a lot of benefits from the rapid rail's introduction. Most are ecstatic and were seen thanking the government. The train is expected to reach stations farther than Meerut with construction work going on at other stations.

The Meerut South Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) was opened for passenger operations from 2:00 pm on Sunday. With the addition of this 8 km additional section, a total of 42 km of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor is now operational, which includes 9 stations from Sahibabad in Ghaziabad to Meerut South in Meerut.

Passengers will be able to board the train from 6 am to 10 pm on the entire section from Sahibabad to Meerut South. The first train in both directions will leave at 6 am, and the last train will leave at 10 pm from the terminal stations Sahibabad and Meerut South.

The one-way concessional fare for Namo Bharat Train will be Rs 110 for Standard Class from Sahibabad to Meerut South and Rs 90 for Standard Class from Ghaziabad to Meerut South. ■