

# RRTS corridor comes live — with fastest metro

Country's first RRTS corridor will cut travel time between Delhi and Meerut to under an hour

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The ₹30,274 crore Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), connecting Uttar Pradesh's Meerut to the heart of the national capital, became fully operational on Sunday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurating it along with the Meerut Metro.

The country's first RRTS corridor, designed for a top speed of 180 kilometres per hour (kmph), with an operational speed of 160 kmph and an average speed of 90 kmph, will cut travel time between the two cities to under an hour. This may be one of the fastest metro services in the country. The corridor, which began operations in 2023 on a 17 km stretch between Sahibabad and Duhai in Uttar Pradesh, now spans 82.15 km and connects to the newly inaugurated Meerut Metro. The crucial stretch between Sarai Kale Khan — central to the larger RRTS plan for



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off the Meerut Metro and Namo Bharat train, at Shatabdi Nagar Namo Bharat Station

PHOTO:PTI

Delhi — and New Ashok Nagar was inaugurated on Sunday, enabling end-to-end travel for commuters.

The project was conceptualised to decongest the national capital by improving connectivity between Delhi, the National Capital Region, and Meerut. Two

more corridors connecting Delhi to Alwar and Karnal were also planned, but have yet to see any physical progress.

At the inauguration in Meerut, Modi said the integration would allow commuters to travel within the city or directly to Delhi, ending the compulsion for many

workers and students to live in rented accommodation in the national capital.

"A unique feature of the project is the integration of Indian Railways, Metro, and bus terminals at Sarai Kale Khan, Anand Vihar, Ghaziabad, and Meerut. For the first time in India, Namo Bharat and Metro rail services will operate on the same track and at the same stations," he said.

According to officials, the world's most successful cities in mobility rely on a combination of transit systems, rather than just Metros or buses. "The length of Delhi's mass transit system, including the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and the Namo Bharat network, will be 743 km — longer than London's Crossrail, the Hong Kong Mass Transit Railway, and Paris's Réseau Express Régional (French for Regional Express Network)," an official said.

The corridor is expected to increase the modal share of public transport in the region from 37 per cent to 63 per cent, according to the National Capital Region Transport Cor-

poration (NCRTC), the special purpose vehicle implementing the RRTS.

The project was funded with 20 per cent equity from the central government, with contributions from the Delhi and Uttar Pradesh governments. It has been completed with \$2 billion in multilateral debt, including \$1 billion from the Asian Development Bank, \$500 million from the New Development Bank, and \$500 million from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

State-owned lenders such as the Indian Railway Finance Corporation are exploring a co-funding model with multilateral banks for future RRTS corridors, officials said.

The project also incorporates several advanced global technologies. NCRTC has adopted the European Train Control System Level 2 with Hybrid Level 3 — among the most advanced signalling and train control systems — across the corridor.

The Namo Bharat trainsets have been manufactured by French rolling stock manufacturer Alstom at its Savli (Gujarat) plant.