

PM inaugurates RRTS: 'Will make life easier'

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PM NARENDRA Modi on Sunday inaugurated the country's first regional rapid transit system (RRTS) — the 82-km Delhi-Meerut Namo Bharat corridor developed at the cost of Rs 30,000 crore — which cuts the travel time between the two cities to less than an hour. With 16 stations connecting Sahiba- bad, Ghaziabad, and Modina- gar, among other urban centres, it has become possible to live in Meerut and commute to Delhi for work for lakhs of people.

"The inauguration of the Meerut Metro, Namo Bharat train, and the new section of the RRTS will make the lives of people in the NCR simpler, and more convenient," PM said.

Earlier, 55 km of the corridor between New Ashok Nagar and Meerut South was open. PM Modi on Sunday inaugurated the 5-km stretch in Delhi (between Sarai Kale Khan and New Ashok Nagar) and the 21-km stretch (between Meerut South and Modipuram) in Uttar Pradesh. He also inaugurated the 23-km-long Meerut Metro line between Meerut South and Modipuram, which will use the same tracks and infrastructure as the semi-high-speed Namo Bharat trains.

"The government's investment in modern infrastructure—including expressways, freight corridors, and the Jewar International Airport is creating vast employment opportunities," the PM said, and added, "Before 2014, Metro services reached only 5 cities, but now metros are running in more



than 25 cities, making India the third-largest network in the world."

Namo Bharat is a rail-based, high-speed and high-frequency transit system with a design speed of 180 kmph and an average speed of 90 kmph. Stations are located around 10 km away and trains run on frequency of about every 8-10 minutes. Fares range between Rs 20 and Rs 210, while passengers opting for the premium coach will have to pay around 20% more.

The Delhi-Meerut corridor is the first of several RRTS lines

planned to connect parts of NCR. Its foundation stone was laid by the PM on March 8, 2019.

"Last mile connectivity should be ensured by city authorities through various ways such as introducing permit systems of shared autos and building good footpaths," said OP Agarwal, former senior urban transport specialist at The World Bank. Jagan Shah, CEO, Infravision Foundation, underlined the multi-modal connections have to be seamless so that the system acquires high volumes of passengers.

