

Namo Bharat: PM flags off India's first RRTS

17-km stretch connects Sahibabad and Duhai Depot in UP

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PHOTO: PTI

The Centre on Friday inaugurated a 17-kilometre priority section of the country's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridor service between Delhi and Meerut, being built at a cost of ₹30,000 crore.

The 'Namo Bharat' train service, earlier called RapidX, connects Sahibabad and Duhai Depot in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while flagging off the RRTS service, said more such corridors will be launched in India in the coming years.

The Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS, the foundation stone for which was laid in March 2019, aims to bring down the travel time between Delhi and Meerut to less than an hour. It will be covering the urban centres of Ghaziabad, Muradnagar, and Modinagar.

The train has five standard coaches, including one reserved for women and one premium coach.

Standard coach fares will range between ₹20 and ₹50, while a premium ticket will cost between ₹40 and ₹100, varying according to the distance.

The entire corridor is expected to be operational by 2024-2025, Modi said, while making a point about the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

"The Meerut portion of the Delhi-Meerut RRTS will be ready in the next one to one and a half years, and I'll be serving you then as well," the Prime Minister said.

Out of the eight RRTS corridors identified to be developed in the National Capital Region (NCR),



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three — Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor; Delhi-Gurugram-SNB (Shahjahanpur)-Alwar corridor, and Delhi-Panipat corridor — have been prioritised in the first phase.

The semi-high-speed trains, which can run up to a speed of 160 kilometres per hour, have been developed by French rolling stock company Alstom at Savli in Gujarat.

The RRTS has multiple features, including automatic train protection, traffic management system, and platform screen door sub-systems based on long-term evolution (LTE) communication between trackside and train.

"It is a moment of pride for us at Alstom to yet again be a part of India's rail revolution. RapidX will be a first-of-its-kind experience for Indian commuters for its speed, advanced technology, and passenger experience," Olivier Loison,

managing director (MD) of Alstom India, said.

Loison added: "This project also marks the world premiere of several new signalling technologies, which will set new benchmarks in the rail space globally. All of this is set to make sustainable mobility at scale real in India. These Made-in-India trains reflect our robust capabilities, and we are truly humbled to be contributing to India's rail-based infrastructure growth."

Modi said that this decade will be one of radical transformation in the Indian rail sector, in all areas, ranging from safety to speed.

Concerns over railway infrastructure were raised earlier this month, after Indian Railways witnessed two major accidents within four months, claiming nearly 300 lives and injuring around a thousand.