

₹1kcr allotted to RRTS for link to Meerut

TEAM TOI

New Delhi: In a major boost to regional connectivity in the national capital region (NCR), the Centre has allocated Rs 1,000 crore to the country's first regional rapid transit system (RRTS) in Friday's Interim Budget.

National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC), which is mandated to implement the project, is geared up to start construction on the inaugural Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor. Pre-construction activities such as geo-technical investigation, road widening, utility diversion and initial pile load testing are already in advanced stages, a spokesperson said.

The 82km corridor with a high-speed rail network promises to cover the distance between Meerut and New Delhi in less than 60 minutes. "It is a dedicated, high-speed and comfortable commuter service that will create opportunities and will decongest Delhi," the spokesperson said. In the previous Union budget, the RRTS project was allocated Rs 659 crore, which was huge compared to the 2017-18 budget's Rs 0.01 crore.

Though the Delhi government has given its in-principal approval for the project, it has refused to provide its share of Rs 1,138 crore for the Rs 31,902-crore project. In a recent reply to Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority, the government has said its static share in the distribution of central taxes since 2001 is the reason why it can't provide its contribution.

Out of the eight identified corridors to connect various NCR towns with high-speed rail commute under the Functional Plan on Transport for NCR-2032, three have been prioritised for implementation in Phase 1. These are the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut, Delhi-Gurgaon-Alwar and Delhi-Sonapat-Panipat corridors.