

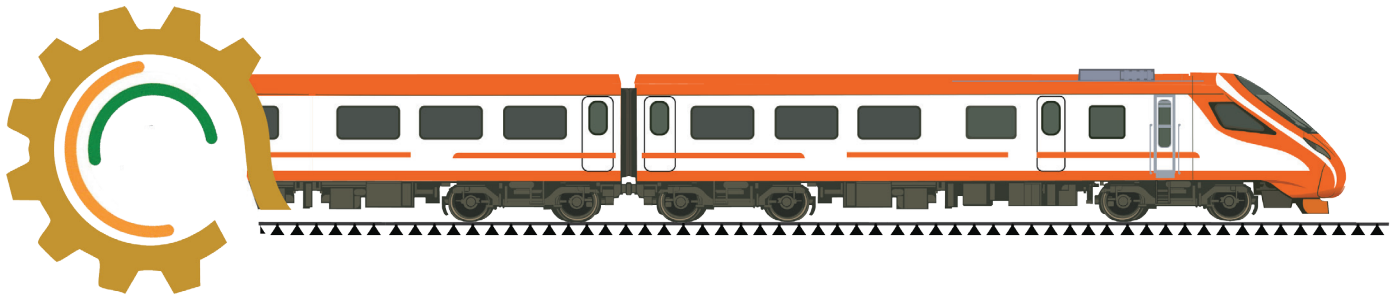
SYSTEMATIC PROJECTIONS

Magazine on the Rail & Metro Awards 2026 Industry of India

Powered by Rail Analysis India

Market Research • Print Magazine • Consulting

DESIGN & MAKE IN INDIA



FOR THE WORLD

Market Insights | Industry Highlights | Interviews & Editorials | Latest Technologies
Project Updates | Product Expertise | Tenders & Contracts



You are Invited!
7th Rail Analysis Innovation & Excellence Summit 2026
Celebrating Achievements in Rail and Metro Sector
Date: 30th Jan, 2026 | Venue: Hotel Le Méridien, New Delhi, India



"With the commissioning of the 55-km section of India's first Namo Bharat corridor, we are already witnessing the transformation."



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH SHRI SHALABH GOEL

Managing Director,
National Capital Region
Transport Corporation (NCRTC)



Rail Analysis: With a 55-km section of the 82-km long first Namo Bharat corridor already operational, what impact this project has made in development across its beneficiary states?

Shri Shalabh Goel: Namo Bharat was conceptualised as one of the solutions to address the challenges arising from imbalanced development across the National Capital Region (NCR). With the commissioning of the 55-km section of India's first Namo Bharat corridor, we are already witnessing the transformation.

The impact is visible in multiple dimensions, most apparent in real estate activity. Areas near the Namo Bharat stations

in Meerut and Ghaziabad have started showing signs of growth, densification, and development of new townships aided by integrated planning that is attracting residential, commercial, and institutional projects.

The corridor is also acting as a catalyst for structured urbanisation. Meerut has earmarked more than 3,200 hectares under TOD in its 2031 Master Plan, while Ghaziabad has recently approved a GIS-based Integrated Master Plan 2031, expanding its development area to over 32,000 hectares.

Both cities are working towards embedding TOD principles into their zonal plans, encouraging compact, walkable, and

mixed-use developments that combine housing, commerce, and recreation around transit. Beyond real estate, the corridor is strengthening regional economies. Improved connectivity is encouraging professionals to relocate to their hometowns while continuing to work in Delhi.

Industrial clusters in Meerut and Ghaziabad are benefiting from faster access to NCR markets, reducing logistics costs and enhancing competitiveness. As the full corridor is commissioned, it will further unlock the region's immense potential in housing, commerce, and industry, setting new benchmarks for urban growth in the country.

Rail Analysis: Sustainability is the key focus area today for mass urban transit projects across the globe. Would you like to provide us some key takeaway strategies NCRTC is implementing to make Namo Bharat one of the greenest modes of public transit?

Shri Shalabh Goel: Sustainability has been embedded in the design and operation of Namo Bharat since its inception. On the operational side, the system runs entirely on electric traction, while the trains are equipped with regenerative braking technology that recycles electrical energy back into the grid, saving up to 30% energy.



Solar-powered depot for a sustainable future

Additionally, in alignment with India's National Solar Mission, NCRTC aims to generate about 15 MW peak in-house solar power from rooftop panels at stations, depots, and other buildings, primarily for non-traction purposes.

To date, solar power plants with a capacity of 4.7 MW have already been commissioned. By incorporating rainwater harvesting structures and recharge pits into the design of stations, depots, and along the viaducts, the project is also contributing towards water conservation.

"NCRTC has been awarded Platinum Rating by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhar & Duhai Namo Bharat Stations as well as the Ghaziabad & Murad Nagar Receiving Sub Stations (RSSs) besides Net Zero Energy (Operations) rating by IGBC for Sahibabad and Guldhar Namo Bharat Stations, making them the first of its kind stations in the country."

Rail Analysis: What role does seamless Multi-Modal-Integration play in promoting the use of public transit systems and leading a significant shift from private vehicles?

Shri Shalabh Goel: The success of any public transport system depends on its acceptance by the people and their willingness to choose it over private vehicles. The system should ensure not only comfort, reliability, and safety but also seamless connectivity and universal accessibility. Recognising this, NCRTC made Multi-Modal Integration and interoperability a cornerstone of the Namo Bharat project.

Namo Bharat stations have been strategically designed to provide smooth connectivity with bus terminals, railway stations, airports, and metro networks, wherever possible. This enables effortless interchanges for commuters, saving travel time and making the transition between different modes of transport both seamless and efficient.

This approach is also in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's National Gati Shakti Masterplan. By enabling smooth transfers between modes, NCRTC seeks to provide a comprehensive solution to the growing mobility challenges, like congestion and long traffic jams.



Modern Namo Bharat station in the operational section

To facilitate this, we are working to ensure easy access to stations through walkways, lifts, escalators, travelators, foot over-bridges, and underpasses, facilitating universal access for all passengers.

Furthermore, the Functional Plan for Transportation in NCR for 2032 identifies eight Namo Bharat corridors. Of these, three have been prioritized for Phase I implementation: the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut, Delhi-Gurugram-SNB-Alwar, and Delhi-Panipat-Karnal. These three corridors are planned to converge at Sarai Kale Khan Station, where they will be fully interoperable, helping passengers to travel comfortably without the hassle of changing trains.

Rail Analysis: Even for the first time in the country, both, regional rail and metro train will be operating on the same infrastructure in the city of Meerut. Can you share some insights about this unique service offering?

Shri Shalabh Goel: The integration of regional rail and metro services on a common infrastructure in Meerut is indeed a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country. For the people of Meerut, this innovation also means the arrival of the city's very first metro system. With an addition of 9 new stations on the same infrastructure, a 23 km intra-city network with 13 stations have been developed for Meerut Metro.

This will operate alongside the Namo Bharat services, which cover the full 82 km corridor. While Namo Bharat trains are designed for regional connectivity with a maximum operational speed of 160 kmph, the maximum operational speed of Meerut Metro is 120 kmph, making it India's fastest metro system. Together, the two services will offer high-frequency, reliable, and modern travel options for both local and regional commuters.

Carefully coordinated scheduling and easy interchange at all four stations providing both services, namely Meerut South, Shatabdi Nagar, Begumpul and Modipuram, will allow commuters to switch between Namo Bharat and Metro services seamlessly. Importantly, passengers will be able to undertake their journey using a single ticket, eliminating the need for separate bookings and enhancing convenience.

Rail Analysis: Namo Bharat has witnessed continuous growth in its daily ridership. What steps are being taken to sustain this upward trend and build long-term commuter trust and preference?

Shri Shalabh Goel: The growth in ridership, over the past many months, reflects the growing public confidence in this entirely new kind of regional mobility solution. Our approach from the start has been to provide world-class infrastructure with a commuter-first mindset. Speed, safety, and comfort form the foundation of the system, and we are continuously fine-tuning operations based on commuter feedback and real-time data. We are also mindful that sustained ridership growth is closely linked to how well we integrate the system into people's daily lives.



Commuter train ready for rapid transit

That's why Multi-Modal Integration (MMI) has been crucial to our planning, seamless access to stations via first/last mile services like electric buses, autos, and feeder services are being strengthened further across stations. At the same time, we're enhancing the passenger experience through efforts like station retail, digital ticketing, and other such initiatives. Looking ahead, as the network expands, we expect ridership to grow organically. But the real goal is not just more footfall but enabling a sustained shift towards public transport. That happens when commuters find value in choosing Namo Bharat over private vehicles, not just occasionally, but every day. And we're committed to making that a reliable, rewarding choice.