

PWD opened the bidding process for the project's tenders on Friday. A senior PWD official said the tendering process will be completed by April 1 and the project will likely take four months to complete.

"Since this is a major arterial road for the city, we will carry out the recarpeting work in phases during off-peak hours and at night so that traffic disruptions are minimal," said the official cited above.

"The existing bituminous layer will be scraped off and the surface entire stretch, including the service lanes on either side, will be revamped. We will add new layers of glowing studs and horticulture work," added the official.

The six-lane Outer Ring Road encircles the city, spanning 47km, with three lanes in each direction. Several stretches of Outer Ring Road have been notified as National Highways. The corridor between Modi Mill and Chirag Delhi is around 4km long.

Once complete, officials will get down to recarpeting the Chirag Delhi to Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi section of Outer Ring Road — a roughly 5km-long stretch, added the official.

The project to revamp these roads was cleared by PWD minister Atishi last month. At the time, she had said these roads were originally constructed and upgraded "a while ago, leading to their gradual deterioration."

"PWD has conducted a thorough assessment of the roads



Commuters at a traffic snarl near the Kalkaji flyover in south Delhi.

with the assistance of experts and the department has been instructed to initiate the upgrading process. We will ensure minimal disruption to commuters during the construction phase," she had said.

On February 20, HT reported that the Public Works Department (PWD) has sent a proposal for administrative approval to build an elevated road parallel to the Kalkaji flyover in south Delhi as part of a plan to build a signal-free corridor from Modi Mill to IIT-Delhi.

Presently, a one-way flyover comprising three lanes facilitates vehicular traffic from Modi Mill towards Nehru Place while

vehicles travelling in the opposite carriageway move at the surface level. PWD will convert this into a six-lane flyover with three lanes on either side.

"The project will be to build a six-lane flyover along with its extension to meet the ramp of the six-lane Modi Mill flyover leading to an elevated corridor on the stretch," a PWD official had said.

Traffic merges from four sides on the section of Outer Ring Road near Okhla NSIC Metro station — connecting Okhla Mandi near Captain Gaur Marg with Okhla Estate, Sarita Vihar and Faridabad to the south; Ashram and New Friends Colony to

the north and Sukhdev Vihar and Jamia Millia Islamia on the eastern side of the corridor — often leading to snarls. The project will also involve widening and redesigning the surface-level road on either side of the flyover.

In subsequent phases, the agency also plans to decongest the 8km corridor by doubling the single-carriageway flyover at the single-carriageway Outer Ring Road Savitri Cinema. Outer Ring Road is also one of the most crucial routes to the Delhi airport.

The Delhi government had said the project was a step towards improving connectivity and easing traffic congestion in south Delhi.

cards were sold for higher prices to people in Vietnam and social for gaming apps and social media profiteering. Nearly 700 SIM cards of three private service providers were issued on the IDs of poor people in Agra and nearby areas, they added.

Deputy commissioner of police (IGI airport) Usha Rangnani said that the scam was unearthed following an investigation into a cheating case filed at the IGI airport police station under Section 420 of the Indian

fraud. The scam involved the sale of SIM cards issued in the names of gullible people after luring them for a very small amount of money. The SIMs were then sold to people in Vietnam. Investigators also identified multiple bank accounts in which Anil received the money he earned illegally. The accounts were reported in 19 cyber complaints filed from various parts of India. He was using a Chinese crypto-currency app named Binance, recently banned in India, police said.

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**NEW DELHI:** A Delhi Police head constable, who was allegedly driving in an inebriated condition, rammed his Maruti Baleno car into multiple vehicles near Daryaganj in central Delhi in the early hours of Sunday, officers aware of the case said.

The policeman has been identified only by his first name Mohit. He is posted with the special cell

We have taken action under section 185 of Motor Vehicles Act," deputy commissioner of police (central) Harsha Vardhan said. Giving details, police said the incident came to light at around 2am, when the PCR received a call about an accident near Delhi Gate. A team reached the spot and found a cab driver named Ramesh Tiwari at the spot who told investigators that he was driving a passenger from Daryaganj towards ITO when the driver of a Baleno

grazed his vehicle at a high speed, and fled towards ITO. The car was already being chased. I also started following the car. The driver was speeding... his vehicle was intercepted near Delhi Gate. The car had a police uniform... and an empty bottle of alcohol inside the car. Some policemen came and took him away," officers said, quoting Tiwari. Police added that nobody has filed a complaint against Mohit so far.

## Constable rams car into multiple vehicles in central Delhi: Police

# Transforming railway stations into new city centres

**Manoj Sharma**  
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**NEW DELHI:** Railway stations are integral to a city's history and identity, serving as gateways through which visitors get their first impressions of a city. India boasts some of the grandest stations in the world, but many stations constructed during the British Raj have, over time, deteriorated into dirty, dilapidated, and chaotic places.

While several airports across the country have been modernised, railway stations remain caught in a time warp, lacking amenities that meet the requirements of contemporary travellers. Now, several colonial-era railway stations across the country are undergoing a major transformation into city centres under the Union government's Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, reshaping the city-station relationship. Under this scheme, 1,318 railway stations are earmarked for development or redevelopment. These include stations in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) such as New Delhi, Delhi Cantonment, Anand Vihar, Gurugram, Ghaziabad, and Faridabad.

Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation for 554 stations and virtually inaugurated the first phase of the redeveloped Gomti Nagar station in Lucknow.

Apart from Gomti Nagar, the stations that have already been redeveloped include Gandhinagar Capital, which boasts a luxurious five-star hotel atop it, and Rani Kamalapati railway station in Bhopal.

"The redevelopment work is currently underway at 65 major stations across the country and is at different stages of progress. Many of these stations, such as Chandigarh, are already over 50% complete. Most of these stations are being redeveloped under an engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) model," said a senior railways official associated with the station redevelopment project. "Over the years, we have been upgrading stations under various schemes, but now we are fully redeveloping them. The aim is to provide a world-class experience to travellers and create new city centres at railway stations, integrated with the surrounding urban environments through place-making," he added.

**Backs to terminals**  
The Amrit Bharat Station scheme focuses on constructing terminal buildings, covering both ends of railway lines with mod-



The Gandhinagar Capital railway station has a hotel atop.

ern facilities and designs, including separate arrival and departure areas at different levels. Redeveloped stations will boast amenities such as airport-like concourses, digital information systems, executive lounges, shopping areas, cafeterias, and spaces for business meetings, among others. Many, like the New Delhi railway station, will also serve as a massive multimodal transit hub, with several luxury facilities.

"The concept of redeveloping railway stations as city centres stems from the idea of maximising their potential as dynamic urban hubs. This approach seeks to integrate transportation infrastructure with commercial, recreational, and residential amenities, creating a vibrant urban environment," said Dikshu Kukreja, whose firm CP Kukreja Architects developed the master plans for the Gandhinagar Capital and Gomti Nagar stations.

The Gandhinagar Capital station, inaugurated in 2021, is India's first redeveloped station. It features a modern facade, an interfaith prayer hall, a baby feeding room, a posh waiting lounge, a business centre, and an airport-like concourse. The concourse serves as the main congregation space, connecting all entry gates to platforms, lounges, toilets, cloakrooms, food courts, retail shops, and

ticket vending machines. Similarly, Gomti Nagar railway station in Lucknow, whose completed first phase covers around 1 million square feet, features two separate terminals, a concourse connecting them, elevated departure, ground floor arrival and various amenities, including hospitality and retail blocks.

"In India, railway stations over the years became the centres of chaos in a city. But mega stations in the world like the Grand Central in New York or the King's Cross Station in London do not choke the traffic movement, and so inspired by them we introduced separate departure and arrival points at Gomti Nagar station, a first in India. The redevelopment of Gandhinagar Capital and Gomti Nagar railway stations aim to transform them into bustling urban districts that cater to

**THE REDEVELOPED STATIONS WILL BOAST AMENITIES SUCH AS DIGITAL INFO SYSTEMS, SHOPPING AREAS, LOUNGES, CAFES, AND SPACES FOR MEETINGS, AMONG OTHER THINGS**

diverse needs and activities," says Kukreja.

The proposed redevelopment plans for stations in Delhi-NCR, also aim for grandeur and modernization. The nondescript Gurgaon station, constructed in 1950 is set for a nine-story makeover. With three floors dedicated to railway operations, one for passenger amenities, and four for commercial ventures, including cafes, it promises a whole new look.

The proposed blueprint for Andheri station in Mumbai includes east and west side station buildings, with an expansive concourse linking both. It will have five commercial towers on the east side. "While nighttime traffic at the station is low, it presents an opportunity for transformation into a bustling city centre for dining and shopping. The redevelopment plan is rooted in the idea that stations should be responsive to the city's needs and contribute positively to its community," said Harsh Varshneya, principal architect at Sthapati Associates, a firm that has developed master plans for stations such as Bangalore Cantonment and Andheri station in Mumbai.

**Evolving role of the railway station**  
Railway stations have evolved since their inception in the mid-18th century. During the British

Raj, the primary purpose of the first railway stations was to facilitate the transportation of goods — particularly raw materials such as cotton, jute, and coal, from the hinterlands to the ports for export to Britain. Initially, passenger travel played a secondary role, but it gradually gained importance as the railway network expanded and connected more regions across the country. The stations were designed to facilitate the movement of trains, passengers, and goods.

"Now, the main focus of design is on passengers, as goods movement is shifting to new freight corridors and stations," said Goonmeet Singh Chauhan, co-founder, Design Forum International (DFI), which developed the master plan for the redevelopment of stations such as Amritsar, Delhi Cantonment and Thiruvananthapuram.

Railway stations in India were often built on the outskirts of cities, as transportation hubs to minimise disruptions caused by train traffic and to meet the extensive land requirements of railway infrastructure. But over the decades, cities grew around them, and today, many railway stations in India find themselves surrounded by densely populated urban areas.

"Historically, cities grew as administrative or commercial



The redeveloped Gomti Nagar station in Lucknow.



An artist's impression for Andheri station includes east and west side buildings, with an expansive concourse linking both.

centres and railway stations typically saw wholesale trade centres grow around them, and therefore bound the neighbouring smaller towns in the region as one economic whole," Chauhan said.

"In India, stations typically have the main buildings on one side, leading to an uneven development of the city with one side often neglected. The lack of proper foot-over bridges at the stations limited the cross-city movement. New stations we have been designed address this with wide foot over-bridges, facilitating movement between the two sides of the city without entering the stations," he said.

**The challenges of redevelopment**

Architects say redeveloping stations without affecting railway operations is a herculean task involving maintaining platforms, ticketing systems, and other critical infrastructure. "We must carefully phase our approach, constructing new facilities before demolishing the old ones, all while contending with the existing spatial constraints. For example, a new booking office is constructed

before demolishing the old one," said Varshneya.

While prefabricated or modular construction techniques help as they allow faster assembly on-site and reduce the overall construction timeline, there are many other complexities to be taken care of. "We engage with multiple stakeholders — municipal authorities, traffic police, and other entities to align our station master plan with the broader city master plan," said Varshneya.

However, the biggest architectural challenge lies in the redevelopment of heritage stations like Bangalore Cantonment. "It involves preserving historical features while introducing modern amenities and functionality, ensuring that every new addition harmonises with the existing architecture and environment," said Varshneya.

**Symbolising heritage**

While laying the foundation stone for the development, the Prime Minister said that these stations will symbolise both Vikas (progress) and Virasat (heritage) showcasing local culture and architectural heritage.

Ahmedabad station, for example, will be inspired by the Sun Temple in Dwarka station by the British made.

"The British made stations in the colonial era, we are prioritising texture and plan materials in construction ever feasible. The design must represent drawing from its origins, thereby instilling a sense of belonging," said Chauhan, adding that the station design exercise in place.

"A railway station space, should prioritise inclusivity, and while capturing the city — its culture and architecture."

Some of the buildings have been natural novelties. Gandhinagar Railway station visitors are surprised by a five-star hotel — atop live-run. The hotel's lobby is 77 feet wide, while room is 150 feet.

"Staying in a railway tracks on Instagram-worthy for guests. Make their special hotel for the lasting memories get great views lush green city any train noise," said Vikas Sengupta, The Leasing agent.

Kukreja said stations will urban lands help catalyse revitalise neighbourhoods, and livability," he said.