



## **KALINDEE RAIL NIRMAN ENGINEERS: Signal Strength**

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In 1976, when Sanjay Gandhi expressed a desire to see the Pink City Express run at 100 km per hour, officials in the Railway Ministry were dumbfounded as trains then ran at a maximum speed of 75 km per hour. Fulfilling Sanjay's wish meant an upgrade of signals at 10 stations between Bandhikui in Rajasthan and Rewari in Haryana. To do so within a span of seven to eight months was unthinkable. The ministry roped in 27-year-old R.D. Sharma, a gritty and hardworking former railway official.

Sharma was awarded the contract with a six-month deadline and Kalindee Rail Nirman was established in December 1976. With an initial investment of Rs 7.5 lakh, the project was completed on time and handed over to the ministry two days before its deadline expired, a big achievement for both Sharma and Kalindee. In 1984, it became a public limited company, adding Engineers to its name. Today, with a turnover of Rs 280 crore and a workforce of over 450 people, it has laid down over 1,000 km of track, with a construction speed of 2 km per day, the largest and fastest for any private player in India. Since its inception, Kalindee has designed and executed several projects, including gauge conversion, new railway line construction, modernisation of yards and ballastless tracks as well as automatic fare collection systems for the Metro Rail. In 1994, Kalindee was awarded the Rs 50-crore Konkan Railways project for which it designed and implemented the signalling and communications system for 54 stations. Its other triumph was the conversion of the 121-km metre gauge stretch between Villupuram and Madurai to broad gauge and the installation of solid state interlocking signalling systems.

Sharma is now eyeing the Indian Railways' modernisation projects worth Rs 2,30,000 crore. For him, all seems to be on the fast-track.