Metro Rail MD NVS Reddy debunks the myths associated with Metro Rail and puts things in the right perspective in an exclusive interview with Ramachandra Murthy, Editor-in-Chief of HMTV and The Hans India.

If the project was taken underground as was the case in Bangalore where heritage structures are located, there would have been no objection. Do you agree?

Ramachandra Murthy in conversation with NVS Reddy

Metro Rail will take 5-6 years. Moreover, Chennai and Bangalore Metro Rail which have already faced lots of problems. Elevated metro rail is five times more efficient than underground which requires ventilation and air-conditioning maintenance in Bangalore the Vikatan Soukha is being affected due to the metro rail.

HMR is a multi-department project. It started off in 2003 during former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu’s rule. But the later governments sat on it. It’s a big project. Out of the 200 metro rail projects in the world only four – Delhi, Kolkata, Birmingham, and Taipei are taking profits. We were asked to make this project a success through PPP model. It is not going to get into losses as the LT is being injected 50 per cent of the cost and the government 10 per cent.

When and how will the LT start breasting (from HMR)?

LT has given 35 years concession, out of which five years for construction and then 30 years for operation. We have given it in DBFOT model – Design, Build, Finance, Operation and Transfer model. The system is being implemented for the first time when a private company is involved. About 50 per cent of revenue will be from fare, 45 per cent from property development along 290 acres of land on the sides of Metro Corners and 5 per cent from advertisement revenue, circulated and other aspects. In 4.5 years it will be in losses and consequently it will enter into profit making.

Nagole-Mettuguda line to be in operation by 2015

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HMR will run on electricity, how will the system work?

HMR system will receive power from TNEB directly. It will be transferred to HMR’s 2 substations in Mosapet and Uppal. From a capacity of 132 kv, 23 kv will be used for traction and 33 kv for the rest of the requirement. Solar power will also be tapped which will meet 30 per cent of the requirement. While brake regeneration system of HMR will help in the restoration of power generated.

When is the project expected to be completed?

It is a 5-year project which was started in June 2011. We are hopeful of completing it before 2017. By 2014, December, Nagole-Mettuguda Metro line will be ready and operations would begin by the beginning of 2015.

Tell us about the technology that is used.

Commsite- communication based telecommunication system which runs on radio frequency is highly advantageous. Delhi Metro is planning to use it in its Phase III project. How will the ticketing system work?

Direct ticket, monthly pass, smart card and also through mobile recharge options will be available. Will there be any concession for physically challenged, senior citizens and other beneficiaries?

There will be no concession as it is a private organisation and they are investing about 96 per cent of money i.e., near Rs 14,000 crore and they will not get profit till 2.5 years of its functioning. If at all any concession is given, it should be from the government.

What should be the policy in case of any strike in a certain political situation in the state?

This project has been insolated from all the conditions, hence it will not be affected. And it falls under HMR jurisdiction.

Tell us about the Metro Rail and MMTS integration.

MMTS, Metro Rail, main rail and bus system will be integrated as metro alone cannot be the solution to deal with the traffic condition in the city.

Will APSTC be in less due to Metro?

No, it is complementary to RTC. The public dependence on public transport in the city is 44 per cent out of which RTC’s share is 42 per cent while MMTS’s share is 2 per cent. The dependance on public transport can go up to 60 per cent. Metro Rail will complement the other two services.

How many are being employed through HMR?

Directly and indirectly over 50,000 people will be employed through HMR. Most technical experts have been picked globally for the project.

Is there a government body to check the standards?

It is being done at three levels. An international agency, Louis Berger, does the first level check. HMR has its own structural experts. Further, a panel of senior experts who were involved in Delhi metro and other metros in the country do check the standards. Was there any pressure to change the routes of HMR like in ORR project?

There was immense pressure. But, we have signed a pact where change of routes is not possible. Even the Chief Minister’s order can’t change it.