

Safety top priority for Metro Rail project

Checks are being conducted at every stage of construction, say officials

V. GEETANATH

The International standard allowable accident frequency rate is 0.5. We have been able to keep it same at 0.21 between 2011 and 2016. Our motto is safety first, as safety is the concern for one and all, says K.P. Sreehari, Head Quality & Environment, Health and Safety, L&T Metro Rail (Hyderabad). So far, So good.

Save for issues of right of way and alignment change, work on the Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR) project has been relatively incident-free. But questions are bound to be asked about the construction, monitoring and safety aspects in view of the recent and the not-so-recent incidents where flyovers collapsed while under construction, including a mishap at Punjagutta.

QUALITY CHECK

In safe hands

L&T Metro Rail Hyderabad (L&TMRH) and HMR have made an unique arrangement in the form of an Independent Engineer (IE) to begin with. Louis Berger, a globally-renowned engineering firm, is the IE and the consultancy cost of Rs. 83.60 crore is shared by HMR and L&TMRH.

"We do not interfere with the IE. They critically check designs and drawings, give recommendations, inspect and monitor quality of work at every stage to ensure that the system is built as per prescribed technical specifications, performance criteria and safety standards," explains HMR Managing Director N.V.S. Reddy.

Initially, HMR had formed a separate independent rung of retired railway and engineering experts. Checks began at the foundation stage itself for constructing piers/pillars where, after manual chiselling of the rock underneath, a concrete platform is laid before the pier rises above.

While each pillar of the rail has been installed with seismic arresters (the first metro in India), the viaduct atop the piers forming the carriageway is also done carefully with the help of overhead, high-capacity gantry cranes with most work done during nights for more safety and from the traffic point of view.

"We review all work plans prepared by the vendor. There are regular inspections for each stage

Workforce is trained well in safety measures through pep talk and monitoring by experts



FOOL-PROOF: With Metro Rail works picking up pace, authorities are taking step-by-step measures in maintaining safety standards. - PHOTO: NAGARA GOPAL

of work and are done as per protocol," testifies Mr. Sreehari. Even when crossing over road junctions, caution has been the watchword.

For instance, at Khairatabad and before in Punjagutta and elsewhere, ground supported staging with wide gaps was devised to allow traffic to flow. The steel sup-

port structures have been deeply anchored to the ground as a "precaution against any heavy vehicle crashing into the structures."

A two-layered protection with safety net is also in place to prevent any material falling on road users. Anywhere up to four months are taken for concreting the viaduct, positioning and

stressing of tendons, arrangement of bearings and removal of support shuttering are being carried out in nine stages.

"Checks and surprise checks happen are a continuous process. Our motto is - first time right! Apart from heavy duty machinery, there is lot of human interface with engineers, supervisors,

workmen etc., We have to continuously work on their mind through training, pep talks and monitoring. It is safety first always," avers L&TMRH V.B. Gadgil.

L&TMRH bagged the 'Best Upcoming Metro Rail' & 'Excellence in Safety' at the 5th Annual Metro Rail Summit last month.

Pre-fab steel bridge for Metro Rail ready

RoB to be constructed by the authorities will cross over the Oliphanta Bridge near Secunderabad station

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD: With pre-fabricated steel bridge getting ready at a Noida factory near Delhi, the stage is set for taking up construction of the Rail Over Bridge (ROB) by the metro rail authorities to cross over the Oliphanta Bridge near the Secunderabad Railway station.

Components of the bridge are being brought to the city before they are put in place in parts to cross over the railway tracks leading to and out of the station at a double elevation level to allow for double-decker trains. The viaduct will be 42 ft high from the railway line on the bridge and 58 ft high from the ground.

The steel bridge will also have three spans of 82 ft, 272 ft and 13 ft for the crossover, according to Hyderabad Metro Rail MD N.V.S. Reddy on Monday. He accompanied by senior L&T Metro Rail Hyderabad (L&TMRH) officials, including Project Director M.P. Naidu and others inspected the site, checked on the drawings and discussed the safety arrangements before the bridge erection starts.

It was decided to seek South



BLUE PRINT: Metro Rail officials studying the route of the Metro Rail. - PHOTO: BY ARRANGEMENT

Central Railway (SCR) permission for taking a one acre vacant railway land at Chilkalguda where the pre-fab steel material could be stored and works could be started fast. The Secunderabad (East) overhead station will be coming up near Hotel Ramakrishna near the Oliphanta Bridge for Corridor Three - Nagole to Shilparamam-Raidurg, while the West side station will be coming up on the Bhoiguda side towards Old Gandhi Hospital site for Cor-

ridor Two - JBS to Falaknuma.

Landing points for the East station will be in between the railway reservation complex and Rathifile bus depot for the convenience of the passengers of the railway station and the TSRTC bus depot. The landings could be connected with a skywalk with provision for an escalator, elevator and staircase facilities for commuters to move about freely.

Entry and exit points were also finalised for Paradise, Rasoolpura

and Prakashnagar metro rail stations along with space earmarked for parking.

The MD advised the L&TMRH engineers to minimise barricade space and complete ground work fast for better traffic management. At Begumpet where another RoB is getting into shape, the Postal Department authorities were urged to space a part of the open space in front of the post office for a metro pier/pillar and viaduct structure.