

Front evacuation in Metro for emergencies

First-aid medical assistance, generator back-up at all stations



Hyderabad Metro Rail passing through the Begumpet stretch on Monday night. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

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Now that the Hyderabad Metro Rail is up and running-between Nagole and Miyapur via Ameerpet (30 km) for the last one week and as authorities concerned mull over tackling various issues which have come to fore, it is time to take stock of how emergency situations are tackled.

Several safety and security systems have been put in place from the design stage itself and from experiences during the recent rides, yet there are certain interesting features which are part of the emergency evacuations in the event of any failure of systems.

Usually, metro trains can be manoeuvred into the nearest station in case of a snag or emergency without much ado but in case of an "extreme contingency", the loco-pilot can trigger opening his front portion with built in stairs for passengers to descend one by one within minutes.

"Unlike most other metros built or under construction across the country, here the emergency outlet for the

metro trains is through the loco driver's cabin or frontally. Passengers can walk away through the track to the next station a kilometre away and there is no danger of getting in contact with any power line as all those have been put overhead and at sides", explains HMR managing director N.V.S. Reddy.

Some metro rail projects have side doors opening for passengers to disembark and onward onto a walkway built for the purpose beside the viaduct. Front evacuation is ruled out here because the power line is put between the tracks and there is every danger of passengers coming in contact with the live wire.

HMR and L&T Metro Rail Hyderabad had also considered having a power line on the track level or the 'third line' to have a "better aesthetic look" with no wires visible overhead but chose not to. A three-member experienced railway engineers evaluated both systems and suggested the 25 KV overhead power lines, according to Mr. Reddy.

Apart from CCTV monitoring inside coaches with

fire safety equipment and in stations too, first aid medical assistance is to be provided at all stations with generator/UPS back-up available for all essential services.

Also, our metro rail has three 'pocket lines' akin to traditional rail looplines provided at Hyderabad Public School (Begumpet), near Ameerpet and Bhoiguda. These can be identified easily as they are placed on 'U' shaped piers to an extent of 200 metres, slightly away from the main track for moving any train developing snag to the side so that there is no disruption of normal services.

Such trains can later be taken to Miyapur or Uppal depots for maintenance after operation hours or peak hours. Pocket lines which can accommodate six car trains can also help to run extra services during peak hours, he adds.

They are located on Corridor One - L.B. Nagar to Miyapur and Corridor Two - Nagole to Raidurg (both 29 km) and not on Corridor Two (Jubilee Bus Station to Falaknuma 15 km) because of the 'short' distance.