The Other Metromen & Their Challenges

:: **Shantanu Nandan Sharma**

Delhi Metro. That burnished showpiece of railways continues to enjoy pride of place among all its projects. But will new Metro networks being rolled out dent its iconic status? Or won't they?

Six states, 225 km of new rail lines — Metro rail in India is expanding as rapidly as rapid transit systems should. Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Jaipur are executing metro projects worth more than ₹50,000 crore. And cities such as Kochi, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Indore, Chandigarh and Bhopal are launching theirs.

But to measure up, do others have an Elattuvalapil Sreedharan, who has set high standards in engineering, financial discipline and in meeting several deadlines at Delhi Metro?

Experts say manpower shortage at the top and middle rungs has become a challenge for these new projects. To make matters worse, Indian Railways has refused to send its high-performing engineers on deputation to Metro projects. As a result, state governments launching Metro rail projects are increasingly falling back on IAS officers to manage their start-up phases. In fact, a Metro head of any of these new projects could end up as an animal husbandry secretary in the next few years. *ET on Sunday* takes a look at four new "Metromen" and their challenges in executing multi-billion-rupee Metro rail projects.

NVS Reddy | MD, HYDERABAD METRO

At Hand
Building a 71 km-long line in 5 years

Bio
Not an engineer, but an accounts officer with Indian Railways

Had experience in urban transport planning, financial management and PPPs

Served as additional commissioner, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation

Total Project Cost

₹14,132 cr

To be built on public-private partnership mode

90% funding by L&T; balance (10%) is contributed by Andhra Pradesh government and Centre

Concession for 35 years, extendable by 25 years

Key Challenges
To implement the elevated Metro amid congested roads

Integration of other modes of transport, pedestrian and non-motorised transport

It is also a redesign opportunity to transform Hyderabad into a people-friendly green city

K Rajaraman
MD, CHENNAI METRO

At Hand
Building 45.1 km of Metro under phase-I by 2014-15

Bio
B Tech in electronics and MBA; joined IAS in 1989

Served as TN industry secy

Served as commissioner, town and country planning

Total Project Cost

₹14,600 Cr

The central and state governments to contribute about 41%

The balance will be arranged from a loan granted by Japanese agency JICA

Another 9 km with a cost of ₹2,845 crore is in pipeline

Key Challenges

Managing traffic during the built-up phase

Ensuring special pedestrian access in a few stations

We have plans to integrate Metro rail with proposed monorail network
From a media interaction

N Sivasailam
MD, BANGALORE METRO

At Hand
Building 42.3 km of Metro rail including underground section of 8.82 km

Bio
A mechanical engineer and an MBA before joining IAS

Drafted Central Vigilance Ordinance & Bill, 1998

Total Project Cost

₹11,609 cr

42% increase from original estimate

Central government to bear 23% of cost, state government 33% and the rest will be loan

₹4,905-crore loan to be raised from Japanese agency JICA and financial institutions

Key Challenges

Have been at loggerheads with railways on issues like station designs and land

Completing the project by December 2013 with the same cost estimated at 2009 prices

Creating a champion team and keeping it motivated during highs and lows of the project is a challenge

Kuldeep Ranka
MD, JAIPUR METRO

At Hand
To build a 9.25 km-long Metro at stage-I by July 2013

Bio
BTech in computer science; joined IAS in 1994

MD, Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation

Total Project Cost

₹2,034 cr

Rajasthan government is the sole owner

But the Centre is expected to pick up equity soon

₹700 crore will be borrowed

Key Challenges

Delivering the project in record two-and-half years

Doling out compensation for land because of demand for more

In rolling out the project, we are trying our best to keep Jaipur's heritage intact