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# HMR gearing up for another challenge

Managing Director N.V.S. Reddy is now ready for the "equally challenging execution stage"

V. Geetanath

**HYDERABAD:** He's a little more relaxed these days as the much vaunted metro rail project construction has reached the main roads and many seemingly insurmountable hurdles have been crossed in the last few months.

Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited Managing Director N.V.S. Reddy is more upbeat having worked tirelessly on the project for the last six years from its inception, preparing legal framework, tenders and now the "equally challenging execution stage."

"We are working at how to take the city with us. It is the biggest ever project attempted through the public, private partnership mode and a tough project to implement in midst of the capital. Traffic management during con-



**UPBEAT:** N.V.S. Reddy, Managing Director of Hyderabad Metro Rail. - PHOTO: K. RAMESH BABU

struction is a big issue. Citizens will face some inconvenience despite the measures we are going to

take," says Mr. Reddy in his Metro Bhavan chamber.

Experiences of the Delhi Metro in handling traffic dur-

ing construction would be taken while the special task force headed by Chief Secretary Pankaj Dwivedi and with chiefs of civic departments as members is monitoring shift of utilities like pipelines, etc.

"We are going to take over the roads across the three corridors in phases. Work is on to widen road for more space," he explains.

Utmost importance is being given to safety during construction, he says, pointing out that the placement of the segments would be done atop on the viaduct as was done for the P.V. Expressway.

HMR would be "hand holding" L&T Metro Rail Hyderabad Limited during construction like coordinating with 35 departments. Twenty one highly experienced railway hands were also checking the work from its

side besides the Independent Engineer, Louis Berger.

Surely, the project has come a long way and HMR experienced dizzying highs and lows when first tender awarded to Maytas was cancelled in the Satyam scandal aftermath. "It came as a shock. We thought it was a good bid. We had tough one-a-half years. We had no option but stick to PPP or drop the project as the State was in no position to fund. L&T bagging the project gave lot of credibility," Mr. Reddy says.

If the project stood test of the time without any whiff of a scandal its also because of the painstaking effort that went into preparing the Concessionaire Agreement (CA), Manual of Standards & Specifications (MoSS), Shareholders' Agreement, etc., under the guidance of Planning

Commission advisor Gajendra Haldea.

Minute detailing of the project, including safety standards, was necessary as it was a private investment for a public purpose.

"We also have to ensure financial success for the concessionaire," avers Mr. Reddy. Opting for the standard gauge and the Tramways Act where even a wheel-less Maglev can be built also formed part of the legal frame.

As construction picks up, the MD credits his 'team: "They team stood by me when everyone wrote us off. I am really proud of that. The government and senior officials supported us all through allowing us to take quick decisions," exclaims the 56-year-old former railway officer.