

# HMR ON TRACK

## IT IS AN URBAN REJUVENATION PROJECT NOT JUST AN ENGG PROJECT: HMR CHIEF

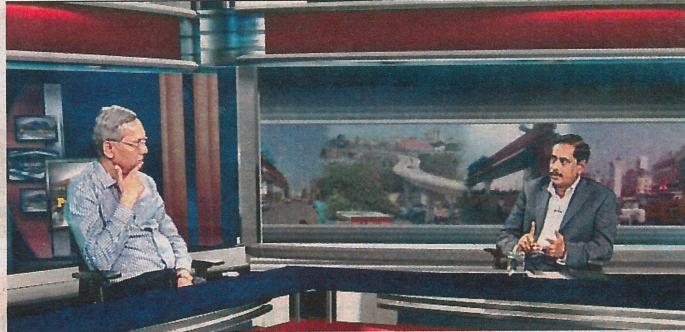
**Metro Rail MD NVS Reddy debunks the myths associated with Metro Rail and puts things in the right perspective in an exclusive interview with K Ramachandra Murthy, Editor-in-Chief of HMTV and The Hans India.**

*There is a general apprehension that Metro Rail is going to ruin the heritage face of Hyderabad. What do you say about it?*

It is a false campaign. We are not looking at it just as a transport system but overall development of the city. A comprehensive survey was done to ensure that no heritage structure, religious construction and graveyards are affected. Metro Rail will reduce pollution and traffic woes. Hyderabad will emerge as an international city. Cities like Tokyo, Hong Kong and others have morphed into beautiful cities after the introduction of Metro Rail.

*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?*

Hyderabad has rocky terrain. Even for the foundation of elevated pillars we are doing drilling and not employing the blasting system, which is not allowed and is dangerous as the project is passing through the middle of the road. Cost of the project is also three times more than elevated metro rail. For tunnel Metro rail 50-60 feet ground needs to be dug up. But Hyderabad does not have huge roads and digging itself



K Ramachandra Murthy in conversation with NVS Reddy

will take 5-6 years. Moreover, Chennai and Bangalore Metro Rail which are underground are already facing lots of problems. Elevated metro rail is five times more efficient than underground which requires ventilation and air-conditioning maintenance.

*In Bangalore the Vidhan Soudha is being affected due to the metro rail,*

*would our Assembly be affected due to HMR?*

Assembly is not being affected. In Bangalore the metro work is halted for the last 8-9 months. They said they would build an underground station and replace the statue but they did not get the green signal. In our country the democratic right is being misused. Objection is always raised. Now there is an objection that why the elevated model was chosen. If we had chosen the underground metro model then they would have come up with an objection, why an expensive model was chosen. In projects of such magnitude, criticism is inevitable.

*What would be the average speed of Metro Train and how will it save time?*

Metro Rail will reduce the road travel by three times. Presently, the average road speed is 9-10 km in the city. Metro rail is designed at 90 km/hour speed. With a station at every 1 km, the average speed will be around 35 km. For example, from Miyapur-LB Nagar road travel time is 1.45 hours but in Metro Rail it will take just 45 minutes.

*The HMR project is criticised a lot, don't you think it could have been avoided if the it was debated before execution?*

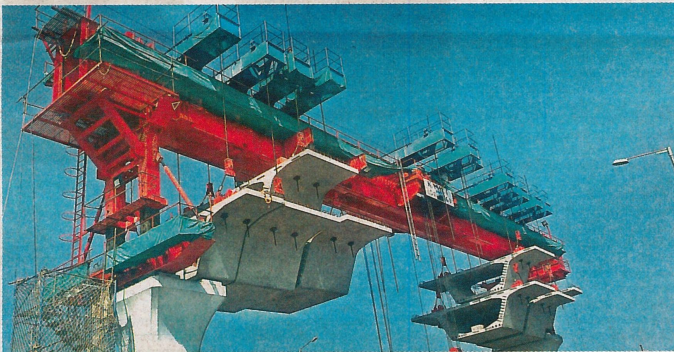
HMR is a most debated project. It started off in 2003 during former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's rule. But the later governments sat on it. It's a big project. Out of the 200 metro rail projects in the world only four Metros - Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taipei are making profits. We were asked to make this project a success through PPP mode. It is not going to get into losses as L&T will be investing 90 per cent of the cost and the government 10 per cent.

*When and how will L&T start benefiting from HMR?*

L&T has been given 35 years contract, out of which five years for construction and 30 years for operation. We have given it in DBFOT model - Design, Build, Finance, Operation and Transfer model. This system is being implemented for the first time where a private company is involved.

About 50 per cent of revenue will be from fares, 45 per cent from property development along 296 acres of land on the sides of Metro Corridors and 5 per cent from advertisement revenue, circulation and other aspects. First 4-5 years it will be in losses and consequently it will enter into profit making.

Continued on P2



This is how a track is being laid on to the elevated pillars. Work is already on at Uppal.

## Nagole- Mettuguda line to be in operation by 2015

Continued from P1

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

HMR system will receive power from Transco directly. It will be transferred to HMR's two sub-stations in Miyapur and Uppal. From a capacity of 132 kv, 25 kv will be used for traction and 35 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 2012. 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.*

CBTC- 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 be?*  
Direct tickets, 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 90 % of money i.e. near Rs 14,000 crore and they will not get profits till 4-5 years of its functioning. If at all any concession is given, it should be from the government.

*What if there is any policy change in certain political situation in the state?*

This project has been insulated from all the conditions; hence it will not be affected. And it falls under Hyderabad 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 APSRTC be in loss due to Metro?*

No, it is complementary to RTC. The public dependence on government 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 dependence 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. Best 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 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 will not be valid.

*Any demands for extension for Metro Rail?*

There are a lot of demands for extension of the Metro line. For instance, there is a demand to extend it along Miyapur-Patancheru, LB Nagar-Vanasthalipuram, Tarnaka- ECIL X Road, JBS-Awal and also to Shamshabad airport and Old City.