



Vithal Kurakula and Patruni Sastry perform at Kukatpally Metro Station on the eve of World Music Day on Friday. — K. DURGA RAO

Hyd Metro dwells on melodies

Metro hubs to host 220 artists across 65 acts in next 4 days

MRITTIKA BANERJEE | DC HYDERABAD, JUNE 20

Busking is illegal but, on Thursday evening across seven Metro Rail stations, it didn't feel like it. Public space opened itself to songs of all kinds.

The music came without stage and without pretension and with just a Metro Rail ticket in hand. "It should happen more often," said one student who was returning from college at the Parade Ground station. Her friends nodded, clutching phone cameras and recording the moment.

This was Metro Medley, Hyderabad's take on World Music Day.

Over four days, the Metro system will play host to 220 artists across 65 acts, performing in Telugu, Hindi, English, Tamil and more, from folk to fusion, from storytelling to electronic loops.

The initiative is organised by Goethe-Zentrum Hyderabad, in association with L&T Metro Rail (Hyderabad) Limited, Alliance Française, George Hull Collective and Dark Vibe Society. Ameerpet, Dilsukhnagar, Durgam Cheruvu, Kukatpally, MGBS, Parade Ground and Uppal stations have become stages between 5 and 7 pm, until June 23.

World Music Day was first celebrated in France in 1982 as Fête de la Musique, a festival that encourages anyone to step into public spaces and play. At Parade Ground, the evening closed with Vignesh Anil performing unplugged Tamil ballads.

"It's a celebration of World Music Day, yes. But it's also about making busking visible. Right now, busking is illegal in India.

This is our way of imagining how it could

be," he said.

Ameerpet had flea stalls selling jewellery and kurtas. They were not officially part of the event but they softened the space. "It's like a metro carnival," said a visitor.

A large cut-out next to a photo booth read Me Time on My Metro. On stage, performances changed rapidly—from the Chilkuri Burrakatha Brundham to Band Echodrive and Project Madhuram.

Prashant, a corporate employee at Ameerpet, had paused on his commute and ended up staying. "It was refreshing. I forgot everything about work for those five minutes. It cleared my head." Moments like this, he said, could work as a breather for city folk, the kind busking sometimes provides.

The line-up at Durgam Cheruvu ran from Shivali and Vibefixx to Chetan Sai Vamala, a 12-year-old synth artist who began performing at six.

"I like Indian classical music. Also guitar and tabla. Performing here is a very good opportunity. You don't get to feel that connection on a formal stage.

Here you're close to the people. This can help someone who is not having a good day," he shared.

The Alliance Française team said the idea is to grow slowly. Last year, the festival was limited to five stations and 150 performers.

This time it spans seven stops and over 220 artists, which has created fleeting moments of joy where one least expects them.

A ride from Parade Ground to Ameerpet costs ₹37. Another ₹37 can take one to Durgam Cheruvu.

For the next couple of days, travelling between these stations will be like travelling with live music.