

HMR can boast of a young brigade of train operators METRO RAIL TO RUN ON WOMEN POWER



The Nagole depot of Hyderabad Metro Rail. (Right) Union Minister Bandaru Dattatreya inspecting Nagole overhead station. (Bottom) Nampally Radha, one of the seven women train operators.

PHOTOS: G. RAMAKRISHNA

Rohit PS

Nampally Radha lives life in the fast lane. Employed with the Hyderabad Metro Rail, this 23-year-old is among the seven women holding fort as a train operator in a male-dominated profession.

"This is a job that very few have. It was my dream to be a metro train operator," she matter-of-factly said when asked by several surprised journalists why she chose a profession that is seen as a man's job.

Her choice of profession is not accidental. Armed with a diploma in electrical engineering, she took the six-month training to become a train operator.

Since her deployment last year, Radha has clocked several hours of train operation, zooming from Uppal to Mettuguda twice everyday at 80 to 90 kilometers per hour.

In contrast, the South Central Railway deployed its first woman loco-pilot for MMTS in 2012, who continues to be the only one in the profession.



Like Radha, six other young women are among the 52 train operators HMR has hired.

Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Bandaru Dattatreya, who praised Radha for her career choice on Saturday,

was keen on knowing how many other operators are women. A senior technical staff member said they were keen on hiring more women. HMR can boast of a young brigade of train operators as most of them are no older than 30 and have sound technical education.

The official also explained that though trains are sophisticated enough for automated operation, an operator's role is crucial, mainly in coordinating stops and operation of the sliding doors.

While the doors open automatically, they will be closed by the **HYDERABAD** operator.

"These are fresh campus recruits, either technical graduates or diploma holders. And, they are being tested for sharp reflexes," said senior metro rail officers, unwilling to be quoted.

Currently, L&T Metro Rail Hyderabad (L&TMRH) is running five or more trial runs on the Nagole-Mettuguda stretch or stage one of the construction schedule of the concessionaire building the project.



Mettuguda-Secunderabad service only next year

Metro rail works between Mettuguda and Secunderabad will be completed early next year, HMRL Managing Director N.V.S Reddy said on Saturday.

He also clarified that no date had been fixed for operation between Mettuguda and Nagole, the first eight kilometre stretch ready for operations.

Mr. Reddy, who accompanied Union Minister for Labour Bandaru Dattatreya during an inspection tour of the Nagole and Uppal overhead stations on corridor-three (Nagole-Shilpamam-Raidurg) and the adjacent train shed facility, said that 50 per cent of the works were completed, physically and financially, as 36 km of viaduc had been installed.

The Union Minister on his part assured that all cooperation was being extended by the Central government to the metro rail project.

He also promised support to farmers of Uppal area who had represented to him about delay in obtaining compensation for land they had given up for the metro rail development. The Minister was accompanied by Malkajigiri parliamentarian Ch. Malla Reddy and Uppal legislator N.V.S.S Prabhakar. The metro rail project is being built or three corridors with the other two being - Jubilee Bus Station to Falaknuma (Corridor two) and Miyapur to L.B. Nagar (Corridor one)

ON FAST TRACK

48 km of foundations are laid **45** km of piers are through **36** km of viaduct completed

EXPENDITURE SO FAR ON THE PROJECT

L&TMRH Rs. **7,000** cr HMR/TS Govt Rs. **1,700** cr