India’s First Monorail comes to Mumbai
Mumbai creates history
To be operational very soon

Mumbai is all set to create history. India’s financial capital will soon see a brand new mode of transport – The Monorail.

For the past few days, the pleasantly coloured Monorail has been doing rounds every 15 minutes between Chembur and Wadala; much to the excitement of Mumbaikars. The entire city has been awaiting the launch of this brand new mode of urban transport; which has already become the talk of the town.

Both, the Mono and Metro Rails will share the burden of suburban rails and will help provide more comfortable journey within the city. The East-West connectivity offered by the Versova-Andheri-Ghatkopar Metro corridor and the availability of a Monorail from Wadala to Chembur which areas are not connected with rail based transport will surely be welcomed by the city.

The first phase of the Monorail – from Wadala to Chembur, an 8.93-km stretch – is now ready. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) is, therefore, happy to showcase the progress achieved so far. The construction of the switch-deck at Chembur, in particular, was an accomplishment in itself as the area is too congested coupled with bustling traffic and pedestrian activity.

The construction on RC Marg was yet another challenge. But, the support from the local residents, local representatives and great cooperation from the MCGM and Traffic Police made the task easy. Now, that the safety certificate is processed and granted, the Monorail will be commissioned soon.

The Monorail project is being implemented in two phases – Chembur to Wadala and Wadala to Sant Gadge Maharaj Chowk. The seven stations on the 8.93-km long Phase-I of the Monorail corridor are – Chembur, V.N.Purav/RC Marg Junction, Fertilizer Township, Bharat Petroleum, Mysore Colony, Bhakti Park and Wadala Depot.

The 6.5 hectare Wadala Car Depot provides parking facility for 21 trains with Operation Control Centre, a Training Center and a Power Station, a Receiving Traction substation and a full-fledged administrative facility.

As far as Mono’s Operations Control Center (OCC) is concerned, it could easily be mistaken for a space center what with all the colourful gadgets sparkling on the huge wall! This is the Center from where Monorail’s speed, signals, brakes, communication, safety will be controlled.

The MMRDA’s effort is to ensure that the Mumbai Metro and Monorails are at their innovative best – being fully equipped with state-of-the-art technology and various glittering features like advanced passenger driver communication, CCTV cameras etc. It is also significant to note that both Metro and Mono projects are Green projects as none uses any fossil fuel. On the operational front, Metro and Monorails will use regenerative braking system which will enable about 25% saving in power consumption.

A number of successful mock safety drills have also been conducted to ensure safe evacuation of passengers from a Mono train parked on the guide-way beam to ground level, should there be any unfortunate incident. The mock drills were conducted with the assistance of Fire Brigade, Antop Hill Fire Station, Wadala Truck Terminal Police Station and the Matunga Traffic Division, who actively participated in the mock drill rescue operations.
The mock drills involved a stationary train with "passengers" on board, an emergency call to the Fire Department, the response time of the Fire Department and the use of a snorkel unit to rescue the "passengers" from the train. The drills involved only the relevant authorities and operations personnel with additional operations and maintenance personnel posing as "passengers" with hardly any disruption to any public facility or convenience.

Other features –
India’s first Monorail, once commissioned on both the phases, is set to earn yet another moniker. The 19.17 km Chembur-Wadala-Jacob Circle Monorail corridor will be World’s second longest Monorail corridor – the longest being Japan’s Osaka Monorail corridor which is 23.8 km. While there are 19 stations on the Osaka Monorail corridor, the Mumbai Monorail corridor will boast of 17 stations. The Monorail World Map marks Osaka Monorail corridor (23.8 km) as the longest in world, followed by Tokyo Monorail (16.9 km), Tama Monorail (16 km) and Star LRT in Kuala Lumpur (8.6 km).
While certainly impressive, the Osaka Monorail was constructed and put into to operations after an expenditure of Rupees 12,690 crores. The Mumbai Monorail will be constructed and put into operations at a cost of approximately Rupees 3,000 crores. Also, it is pertinent to note that the fare structure for the Mumbai Monorail is most reasonable as compared to that of Osaka Monorail which charge fares from US$ 2 to US$ 4.50. The Mumbai Monorail fare ranges between Rupees 5 and 19 only.
The Mumbai Monorail will flaunt itself in three colours – Refreshing Green, attractive Pink and Sky Blue. The bright coloured Monorails are sure to please the Mumbaikar who is any way exhausted looking at the concrete skyline. Ms.Ashwini Bhide, Additional Metropolitan Commissioner, MMRDA, and her team were responsible for the colourful touch afforded to the Monorails in association with National Institute of Design, Ahmadabad. (Ends)