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Ministry of Finance**

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**First Regional Conference on Mass Rapid Transport Systems for Urban Areas – Opportunities and Challenges starts in Kolkata**

The Managing Director, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Shri Mangu Singh said that there is a need for expansion of metro transportation in tier-II cities. He said that it is not necessary that every city has a metro system, rather it should be based on the requirements of each city. In this regard, he mentioned that they have recommended alternative transport mode for Dehradun, capital of Uttarakhand. Shri Singh was delivering the inaugural address at the first regional conference on 'Mass Rapid Transport System (MRTS) for Urban Areas – Opportunities and Challenges' in Kolkata today.

Shri Rakesh Ranjan, Advisor, NITI Aayog stated, MRTS which is beyond metro rail, has a critical role in regional connectivity. However, issues of under-investment in MRTS needs to be addressed, he said. He also spoke in length on the financial viability of metro railway system in the light of investment requirement in urban transport system which amounts to Rs 100 thousand crores. In his address, Mr. Soon-sik Lee stated, AIIB is enhancing the quantum of loan to India from existing US \$ 1.7 billion to 2 billion. India is a founding member of AIIB.

Dr. Kumar V. Pratap, Joint Secretary (Infrastructure, Policy & Finance), Ministry of Finance stated, MRTS is necessary for its efficiency and environmental benefits because it causes less pollution and less congestion thus providing more efficient and cost-effective services, which is in tune with the mantra of the Government. With MRTS, more people per unit of energy can be transferred as compared to personalized transport, he said. Hence, MRTS is economically more viable in comparison to other modes of transport. Shri Mukund Kumar Sinha, Joint Secretary, Urban Transport, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, stated, investment requirement for MRTS is to be around 4 billion US dollars in the next five years.

Shri Mangu Singh, Managing Director, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Limited, further opined that a good transport system is necessary for social, economic and cultural growth of India, provided with matching resource and developmental facilities to keep technology updated. He further pointed out that a sustainable urban transport system too, is the need of the hour in the present green field scenario of India. Urbanisation is the natural centre for growth. Investment in the MRTS will decrease pollution and accidental rates. He further stated, DMRC is growing in its role as a nurturing hub for other metro rail aspiring cities. DMRC with enhanced emphasis on renewable energy, is providing consultancy to Bangladesh and Indonesia for their respective metro rail projects.

Shri Parashuram Singh, Managing Director, Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation, mentioned the impediments lying in the extension of Metro Rail in Kolkata, including the reality that Metro Rail has to take into account the heritage buildings lying in alignment with it as well as the burden of removing 1000 hutments lying along its alignment.

The other dignitaries who spoke on the occasion included Shri Kumar Keshav, Managing Director, Lucknow Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., Miss Deepa Kotnis, Executive Director, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. and Prof. Sanjay Gupta, School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi among others.

The conference was jointly organized by Ministry of Finance, AIIB, ASSOCHAM and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). Before the third annual meeting of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to be held in Mumbai

3/15/2018

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from June 22 to 27 this year, eight such regional conferences will be held on the issues relating to infrastructures development, sustainable infrastructure, mass rapid transportation system, port and coastal infrastructure, urban development and the like in eight different cities of India.

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