

<b>MEDIA : DNA India</b>	<b>TITLE: Monorail Project : "Trial run taught us valuable lessons"</b>
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# 'Trial run taught us valuable lessons'

**Kanesan Veluppillai**  
*president,*  
*Scomi International*



*With his company bagging the prestigious contract for constructing the country's first-ever Monorail, Kanesan Veluppillai, president of Scomi International is understandably a proud and happy man. The Centre even made a special mention of the project in the Union Budget 2010-11. In an interview with Ninad Siddhaye, Kanesan says India is emerging as one of the largest markets for monorail - even bigger than the metro - with several other states evincing interest in jumping onto the monorail bandwagon.*

**How significant was the testing of monorail in Mumbai? It was just a single rake over a distance of 200 metres...**

On the face of it, it may seem just a single rake running a distance of barely 200 metres. However, as a consortium partner of the first-ever monorail, we have learnt a lot from that experience. For a common Mumbaier, it is just a trial run, but

for us it was a journey which began from our factory in Malaysia and ended on the beams at Wadala. A lot of effort was needed since we had to coordinate with various agencies to get the rake into Mumbai.

**Were you satisfied with the testing?**

Local officials wanted to see whether the monorail was actually compatible with conditions in Mumbai. We did a trial run with the objective of testing the rake under local conditions. There were some good lessons that we learnt. I am sure these lessons will prove vital to the minor changes required in the monorail model in the days to come.

**We have been hearing about Scomi's plans to enter the Indian market in a big way...**

We will definitely play a major role in the development of the monorail in India. Many Indian cities, including the Mumbai

Metropolitan Region (MMR), are going to acquire the monorail system in the next few years. We will definitely have an advantage over competition since we are already constructing India's first monorail. The second proposed route of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMR-DA) which will run from Thane-Kalyan-Bhiwandi will have a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model for the first time for monorail. We will be participating in the bidding. We are already in talks with some major Indian infrastructure companies on equity participation basis.

**You also have plans to set up a plant in India? Will that boost your chances in future monorail projects?**

Though the final decision on where to set up the plant is yet to be taken, I am sure Maharashtra will be one of our most preferred locations. In fact, the

government of Maharashtra was the first one to offer us an opportunity to set up a plant here; followed by Gujarat and Karnataka. However, I am not saying we are certain of bagging all projects in future in India, though we will definitely have the upper hand.

**What is the future of the monorail?**

The world over, transport systems like the monorail are rapidly gaining importance. Brazil is set to have an 8-car monorail with a passenger capacity close to 40,000 per hour per direction — which is five times more than that of the Mumbai monorail. Many other countries including China, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and even India are getting a lot of monorail projects. The fact remains that Europe and China have ended the capacity of constructing new metro routes; which means they will also now focus on more and more monorails.



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