

# "MTHL will change the way we commute in the city"



In an interview with *Times Property*, SVR Srinivas, IAS, additional chief secretary, and metropolitan commissioner, MMRDA throws light on the progress being made across key infra projects in MMR



**SVR Srinivas,**  
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**MMRDA is looking to make the region a \$250 billion economy in the next five years. How do you plan to realise this goal?**

Mumbai is water-locked on three sides, making connectivity an absolute necessity. Projects like the Mumbai-Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) will improve connectivity and bring the two far ends of MMR within reach. This will lead to a tectonic

shift in how things are supplied and as a result, entire MMR will get an upgrade including South Mumbai. We are already contributing around 30-40 per cent towards the state's GDP and we are extensively working on completing all key infra projects across MMR as they will determine our growth chart. Besides, the focus is also now on giving a push to sectors such as logistics and pharma, and encouraging domestic investment as infrastructure (especially MTHL) will change the way Mumbai looks today. To reach this goal, we need to focus, strategise, and execute properly and we are working towards that every day.

**Which key infra projects are eyeing completion this year?**

We are planning to complete a slew of projects this year and one such project is the Parsik Hills tunnel in the Airoli-Katai Naka road project. Along with that, we have our eyes set on an elevated road close to that. On the Eastern Express Highway, to ease the traffic bottleneck, we are going to expedite work on the Chheda Nagar flyover from Mankhurd to Thane. Also, the Mankoli Creek bridge will be

completed around May this year and it is expected to ease traffic, especially from Dombivali-Kalyan towards Mumbai. Another ambitious project that we are planning to finish in the next couple of months is the water supply project for Vasai-Virar, as it is one of the fastest-growing belts in the state today and people will hugely benefit from it.

Last but not the least, we aim to complete MTHL by the end of this year (more than 90 per cent of the work is already completed). Besides, the MTHL will get crash barriers that are built, tested, and meet international standards and we are also working on setting up the Open Road Tolling (ORT) system wherein vehicles will not have to stop on the bridge to pay the toll.

**What is the status of other marque projects such as the extension of the Eastern Freeway between Anand Nagar and Saket, the Coastal Road in Thane and the Sewri-Worli elevated corridor?**

A consultant for the extension of the Eastern Freeway between Anand Nagar and Saket has been appointed recently and we are following

up on that. As far as the Coastal Road in Thane is concerned, we are working closely with the Thane Municipal Corporation for land acquisition and will be calling out bids very soon. The project will be completed in three packages. It will be like garlanding of the ring road for Thane where one end goes towards Mira-Bhayandar, one towards Gujarat, and one will go towards Borivali. The work on the Sewri-Worli elevated corridor is underway and we have relocated around 800 families from 1000 slums. We want to complete this project in three phases. Moreover, this corridor is very important as it connects the upcoming Coastal Road with MTHL.

**What kind of progress can we expect along the Metro corridors?**

We have already opened two Metro lines this year and there are no other lines, which will be completed this year. Whenever the Metro depots are completed, we will be able to complete the remaining lines. However, we aim to open to the public Phase I of Metro lines 6, 9, 4 and 5 next year, and our ultimate focus is to complete all the Metro lines in the next three years.

