

Housing the history of Indian Railways for a decade

Staff Reporter

CHENNAI: Amidst the chugging of the toy train which seemed to be unleashing the child in cheery adults riding it, speakers blaring songs including 'chaiyya chaiyya' and 'gadi bula rahi hai,' and century-year-old coaches 'edutaining' visitors, the Regional Railway Museum celebrated a decade of its existence. The MG Steam Crane Hercules which was used for emergency relief during accidents in the 1930s, hospital on wheels which has an operation theatre, and a ward, and heritage models of steam engines are among the 42 outdoor exhibits at the museum. The museum also has a gallery of scaled models, an indoor museum which has photographs and a working scale model of trains in a three-level layout and a toy train that takes vis-

itors around the museum

Speaking at the 10th Anniversary celebrations of the Regional Rail Museum, Abhay K. Khanna, General Manager, ICF, announced a slew of new additions that will be made to this young museum. Much has been added in the last one year as well," he said. "We are going to add some more 'do you know' boards and are also going to have a new section where visitors can see the internal parts of engines and coaches and learn about what goes on inside a train. Many people criticise the railways for not running services on time. Do you know how many departments have to co-ordinate and say yes for a wheel to move?" he added.

He said that they are also in talks with IRCTC to set up a food court. Though the museum's brochure says that an

average of 5500 visitors have been coming every month to the museum of late, regular visitors say that it is mostly those who live around the area, and schools that visit it the most. "The museum is well-maintained and very informative, but not many people know about it. My children enjoy coming here, and often try and relate these coaches to the trains they travel in," says S. Geetha, a visitor.

Mr. Khanna says that, "The museum must feature prominently in the tourist map of the city, and for that we are in talks with the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation. I" Deepak Krishnan, General Manager, Southern Railways, the chief guest, said that the museum could be used on the professional front to familiarise those joining the railways about its rich heritage.



TRACK RECORD Over 5,500 visitors visit the museum every month — PHOTO: S.S. KUMAR