

Elattuvalapil Sreedharan is an Indian civil engineer and a retired IRSE officer popularly known as the "Metro Man". He is credited for changing the face of public transport in India with his leadership in building the Konkan Railway and the Delhi Metro while he served as the managing director of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation DMRC between 1995 and 2012.



E. Sreedharan hails from Thrithala constituency, Palakkad district of Kerala state. He completed his Civil Engineering degree from the Government Engineering College, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh (JNTUK). He has been a recipient of several honorary degrees including D.Litt by Rajasthan Technical University, Kota, Rajasthan, Honoris causa from IIT Roorkee, Honorary doctorate by Cochin University of Science and Technology, Honoris Causa by Mahamaya Technical University.

He joined the Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE) in 1954. In 1963, Sreedharan was put in charge of the restoration work of the cyclone-washed Pamban Bridge that connected Rameswaram to mainland Tamil Nadu. He restored the bridge in just 46 days against an initial deadline of six months for which he was conferred the Railway Minister's Award.

In 1970, as the deputy chief engineer, he was put in charge of the implementation, planning and design of the Calcutta Metro, the first-ever metro in India. Sreedharan not only completed this much-heralded project but also laid down the foundation of modern infrastructure engineering in India. In 1981, under Sreedharan's leadership, the Cochin Shipyard Limited launched its first ship, the MV Rani Padmini. Under his leadership as CMD, Konkan Railway built 93 tunnels along a length of 82 km and involved tunneling through soft soil. The total project covered 760 km and had over 150 bridges. Sreedharan was given the sobriquet of Metro Man by the media for his grand success in executing the completion of the Delhi Metro. After his retirement from DMRC, Sreedharan has been appointed as Principal Advisor of the Kochi Metro Rail Project which was unveiled in 2017 which was a landmark achievement in terms of completion time, control systems used and initiatives such as employing transgender people, vertical gardening, respecting migrant labourers and use of solar power. Sreedharan has also been appointed as Chief Advisor for the Lucknow Metro. He has been advising for the Jaipur Metro, Coimbatore Metro, and a proposed Metro rail system in the Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada (VGTM) areas.

He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2001. His stint in the Delhi Metro has been considered so successful and crucial to India that in 2005, he was named one of Asia's Heroes by TIME magazine in 2003, awarded the Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur (Knight of the Legion of Honour) by the Government of France in 2005, and the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2008.

Sreedharan was appointed by the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to serve on the United Nations's High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport (HLAG-ST) for a period of three years in 2015. He is also a member of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. He attributes his exemplary success to the principles learnt from Bhagwad Gita.