Getting to school safely, and on time, with the ropeway

Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto and LEITNER ropeways open the first urban ropeway in Mexico

Mexico City: Mexico's first urban ropeway is now a reality. Covering a distance of nearly five kilometers, the system consists of two gondola lifts and is helping to solve traffic problems in Mexico City's densely populated Ecatepec de Morelos district. President Peña inaugurated the new ropeway on 4 October.

Up to 3,000 people an hour will be transported, for which the ropeways will be in operation 17 hours a day. The ropeways are directly linked to the public transport system. For the inhabitants and visitors of Ecatepec de Morelos, this connection means a considerably easier and improved quality of life. "For Ecatepec and La Cañada areas in Mexico, this ropeway represents a clean, ecological and modern solution. Instead of being stuck in a 50-minute traffic jam, the ropeway brings passengers to the main road heading into Mexico City in under 19 minutes," explains Paul M. Abed, head director of the project within the CONSORCIO ARISTOS S.A.B. DE C.V., the concessionaire of the project. "This is a precious time-saving (377 hours per year!) for people, which they can spend with their families instead", Abed adds. "In addition, the La Cañada area is home to many schoolchildren and students who previously had to walk several kilometers to school every day. The ropeway is a safer solution for these youngsters. Parents can drop their kids off at the ropeway station, knowing they'll make it to school on time and, above all, safely, instead of risking being run over or even mugged".

Art on the station facades

The ropeway consists of two separate gondola lifts, linked by an interchange station, which connect Via Morelos with San Andrès De La Cañada. The line sections, which are 2.9 and 1.8 kilometers long respectively, feature a total of seven stations for boarding and deboarding. The stations, painted by regional and international artists, liven up the cityscape.

As it was not possible to use helicopters within the municipal area, in some places special technical tools were employed for the construction of the ropeway system. For instance, a drone was used to install the rope.

Environmentally friendly transport solution

The launch of the ropeways in Mexico represents the first use of the LEITNER DirectDrive in North America. The drive system, the only one of its kind in the world, functions without a gearbox, offering significant advantages over other types of drive.

For one, it is efficient and environmentally friendly, and for another, it minimizes the ropeway's down-time because of low wear and tear and a low risk of breakdown, which is a particularly important criterion for any kind of local public transport. In addition, it runs more quietly than conventional drives.

Abed is very happy about the new transport solution: "Urban ropeways are an environmentally friendly and efficient solution for cities faced with crowded streets and unplanned urban growth. We are proud to have built the first system in Mexico, and hope to set an example for an efficient, high-quality and reliable transport solution".

With this new transport project, Mexico is following the successful example of other

LEITNER ropeways is part of the High Technology Industries (HTI) Group, which also includes the brands PRINOTH (snow groomers and tracked utility vehicles), DEMACLENKO (snow making systems), POMA (passenger ropeways), AGUDIO (material ropeways), LEITWIND (wind power plants) and MINIMETRO (cable-hauled railway vehicles). The divisions of LEITNER ropeways are Winter Sports, Tourism, Urban Passenger Transport, and Material Transport. The headquarters of the company, which was founded in 1888, are in Vipiteno (BZ), South Tyrol/Italy. Ropeway production sites are located in Italy, Austria, France, Slovakia, the USA and China.

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