

Tailor-made IIT course to train engineers for metro rail

Sandhya Soman | TNN

Chennai: IIT-Madras has started a postgraduate diploma programme in metro rail engineering and management in association with Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL). The first batch of students of this customised course will pass out in a few months and join CMRL.

"We need qualified people who can handle both the technical and management sides of the operations. The one-year course will help us get a talented workforce for the future," said a senior CMRL official.

The BTech graduates who

are doing the course learn the nuances of contract management, including how to float tenders for projects. "There are a lot of management lessons and I can apply whatever I learn as soon as I start working," said S Bhavya, a student.

The technical aspects are equally important. "It is a highly specialised field that needs engineers who have a good understanding of civil, mechanical, electrical, and electronics and communication engineering," said R G Robinson, associate professor, civil engineering, IIT-M. The course has been structured so that students will learn more about these streams.



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The only other institution

that offers a similar course is IIT-Delhi, which has been running a programme in association with Delhi Metro Rail Corporation for about two years.

IIT-M has been running an MTech programme for infrastructure company Larsen & Toubro (L&T) for more than a decade. "L&T is huge and needs people with training in technical and management components," said Robinson.

Since metro rail engineering is a specialised course, only students with a BTech in civil, mechanical, electrical, or electronics and communication, can apply. Candidates are shortlisted based on their

score in the Graduate Aptitude Test in engineering and a qualifying examination. Those selected receive a monthly stipend of ₹20,000 from CMRL.

"The first batch, which will pass out in July 2012, will have to work for CMRL for the next five years. Students find it attractive as it is a core engineering area and the metro system is coming up in many Indian cities," said Robinson.

Students also see opportunities in the field. "There is also scope for the students to work abroad later as most major cities have metro rail systems," said a senior official.