

BEAUTY

BUSINESS

Metro floats advt tenders

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If the plans of CMRL (Chennai Metro Rail Limited) really work out, then metro rail would be one place where beauty and business blend best in the city. While 'decorating' the interiors of its stations on the elevated corridor with life-size replica of Ajanta and Ellora cave paintings (superimposed on tiles), Chennai metro rail has also floated tenders to generate revenue through advertisements.

Two separate tenders have been floated to advertise on the few hundred piers and portals on Koyambedu-St Thomas Mount corridor. CMRL officials hope that the advertisements will keep posters defacing the city at bay once its massive ad campaign gets going.

The advertisements will also replace the dull monotony of the row of concrete pillars with colourful lighting, sometimes decorative lights. "Unlike most govern-

ment tenders, the highest bidder will be awarded the contract in this tender," said a senior CMRL official, clarifying that the idea is to generate revenue from every possible means and prevent littering simultaneously. CMRL has fixed the size of advertisements boards at 5ft width and 8ft height maximum for both piers and portals. One of the crucial contractual conditions is that the firm should avoid nailing or drilling on its structures. CMRL has also said a categorical no to loose hanging wires, an otherwise common sight in the city, even at the tender stage.

As regards station beautification, apart from the image of an Ellora woman, first design handpicked by CMRL officials, other designs will be also chosen based on public feedback besides the kind of illumination available in the station and around the pillars. Priority would be given to images symbolizing Tamil culture.