

Metro to Touch Wimco Nagar

Express News Service

Chennai: The Union government has cleared Chennai Metro Rail's proposal to extend the Phase I extension of the project by a further 9 km from Washermanpet to Wimco Nagar at Tiruvottiyur. Union Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu told reporters on the sidelines of Nayudama Award function here on Thursday that he cleared the proposal on Wednesday.

He also said Chennai Metro's commercial runs from Koyambedu to Aandur will take place by next March.

He also said that Srirangam may not make it to the list of 10 heritage cities this time but we would consider the request of former Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa. He said the list was a part of budget proposal so Srirangam could not be included.

Naidu also hit out at Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi for his "poison" re-

mark and said Congress stood to lose by not inviting Prime Minister Narendra Modi for 125th birth anniversary of first Premier Jawaharlal Nehru.

The minister said that it was Congress that has exploited people on caste, creed and sex. He was reacting to a statement by Rahul Gandhi that the foundation of love and brotherhood is being demolished. "On one hand houses are being painted and roads are being cleaned. On the other, poison is being spread," Rahul had stated.

Naidu also said that the death sentence to Indian fishermen is disturbing but at the same time he also cautioned against over-reacting. "People are agitated but we are dealing with another country. It is not a local issue. It pertains to geo-politics. Government will sort out the issue amicably. I also have taken up the issue with my Sri Lankan counterpart," the minister said.