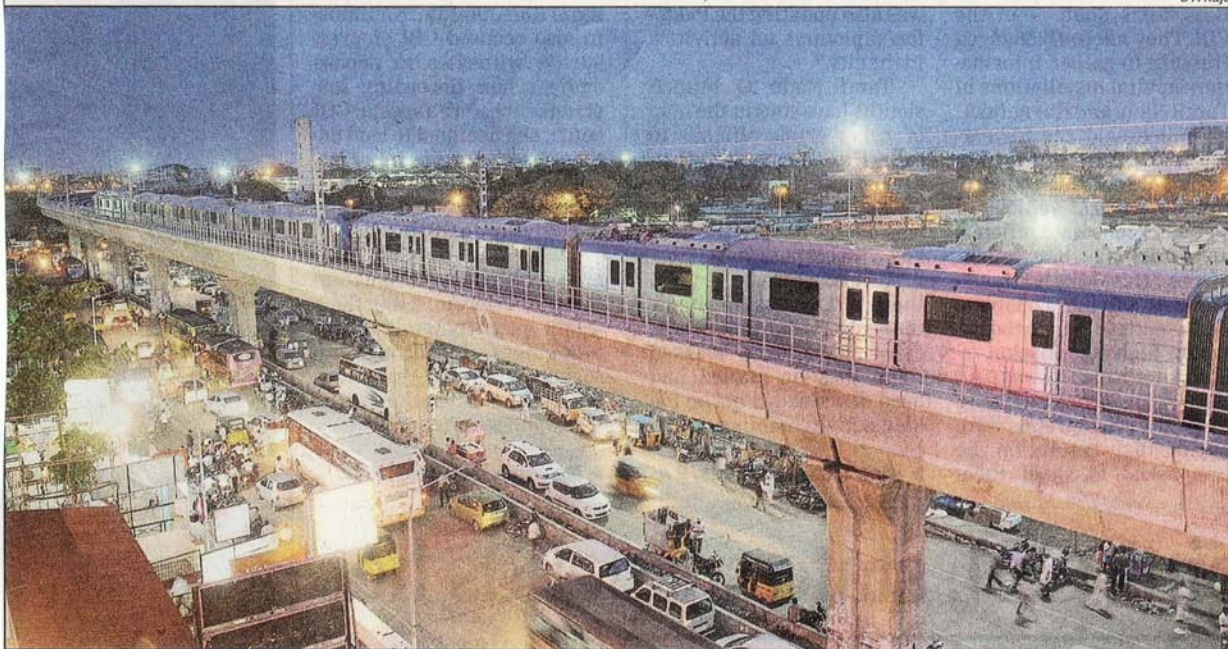# METRO BY NIGHT

B A Raju

CHUGGING THROUGH THE CITYSCAPE: A four-coach train on a trial run along an elevated viaduct between Koyambedu and Ashok Nagar after the line was electrified. The stretch is scheduled to open by early 2015

Metro rail begins trial runs on second track

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: A trial run of a metro rail train was conducted on the second line between Koyambedu and Ashok Nagar. The line was recently electrified.

"We operated a train once soon after electrification. This is the second trial. Regular trials began from Thursday on the parallel line from CMBT to Ashok Nagar," said a senior Chennai Metro Rail Ltd official. The stretch is part of the CMBT-Alandur-St Thomas Mount elevated line scheduled to be opened for traffic early next year.

Two trains were pulled using a diesel locomotive at different speeds. Overhead power cables will be tested, after which rakes with metro rail engines will be tested. Officials will monitor performance of the tracks and the different parameters of the train in the coming days.

Several trials will have to be carried out before the line can be opened. The line till Ashok Nagar is ready and work on laying tracks and installing overhead cables from Ashok Nagar to Alandur is underway. The viaduct till Alandur station over Kathipara flyover is complete. Sources said CMRL officials planned to extend trials to Alandur as early as possible.

Trials on the first track, began in November last year. The train is also being run as a showpiece.

Meanwhile, trains manufactured at Alstom's facility in Sri City have started to arrive at Koyambedu depot. The third set of trains, of the 33 to be made at the factory, reached the depot a few days ago. These trains are first tested on a test track, then hauled to the elevated line using a diesel locomotive before being run as part of routine trials.

CMRL has awarded contracts to new companies to complete station work that the earlier contractor could not finish on Koyambedu-St Thomas Mount stretch.