

With safety check, metro rail a step closer to rolling out

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Chennai: Another bureaucratic process for the commissioning of the metro rail in Chennai was completed on Tuesday. The commissioner for Metro Railway Safety (CMRS) S K Mittal inspected the operational control centre (OCC) -- the nerve centre for the metro and the stations -- and tracks between Koyambedu and Ashok Nagar.

Officials from Chennai Metro Rail Limited expected the clearance to come through in two weeks. "After the clearance comes through, the stretch between Ashok Nagar and Alandur will be inspected. That clearance will take another two weeks," said an official. The commissioner did not complete the entire stretch in one visit as there was no time. "We cannot help it," he added.

The entire network can be controlled through the OCC. "All the trains are programmed and run automatically. From the OCC, they can be controlled manually and monitored. OCC also has a two-way communication system with the trains and signals along the tracks," said the CMRL official. Lifts, escalators, control rooms and ticketing machines in the station be-



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tween Koyambedu and Alandur were also inspected. The inspection report will be sent to the Union ministry of railways before the approval comes through.

In his previous visit earlier this month, Mittal also checked the 'rolling stock' or trains for braking, passenger communication systems, emergency evacuation procedures, anti-collision functions and fire safety measures. At Koyambedu, he checked for train wash plants, inspection lines and workshop lines. The go-ahead for this was given on Monday. The CMRS has sent its recommendations to the railway board for that rolling stock to be sanctioned. It is expected soon.