

Metro to run loco to test Anna Salai stretch

Track between AG-DMS and Washermanpet to be checked

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On Friday, Chennai Metro Rail will run a locomotive all the way from the AG-DMS to Washermanpet Metro station. Services on the nearly 15-km section are scheduled to commence at the end of the year.

When operations finally start, commuters will be able to travel all the way from Washermanpet to Chennai Airport, via Anna Salai.

The locomotive run is a crucial step, as Chennai Metro Rail will be testing the track from AG-DMS to Washermanpet Metro station for the first time. In the coming months, it will run trains along this stretch, culminating in the start of full-fledged operations by December, sources said. This is an underground stretch.

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL), when they run a locomotive, they get to know of the problems, if any, with the track and how they ought to be resolved. "Recently, track works were completed and installation of other systems like signalling and electrification will be done. Also, the construction of stations is in progress," an official said.



The stretch will have eight stations – Washermanpet, Mannadi, High Court, Chennai Central, Government Estate, LIC, Thousand Lights and AG-DMS. Of the eight, Chennai Central and the AG-DMS Metro stations are already operational and have train services.

The Anna Salai stretch, particularly from Government Estate to AG-DMS, has been a challenge, owing to unpredictable soil condi-

tions, officials said. The first contractor, Gammon India and its Russian partner Mosmetrostroy, delayed construction, the officials added.

While Mosmetrostroy abruptly left the project due to a financial crunch, Gammon India's project subsequently had to be terminated. It then took months for a new contractor to step in and resume work on the stretch.