

# Safety commissioner gives approval for DMS-Washermanpet Metro stretch

*CMRL mulls extending service from 4.30 am to midnight to attract rail and air passengers*

■ K KARTHIKEYAN

**CHENNAI:** The 9.926km DMS-Washermanpet stretch of phase-II of Chennai Metro has obtained the green light from the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety (CMRS), southern circle.

Safety commissioner K A Manoharan, who has been inspecting the stretch since Saturday, has expressed satisfaction in the work done by Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) in the last stretch of the 45-km long first phase of the city's Metro Rail network. Speaking to DT Next after concluding his inspection, the official said that they had split in to four separate teams and studied various parameters of the underground section.

The reports prepared by the four teams would be put together, and the feedback would be send to CMRL in three days, added Manoharan. False ceiling works pending at Thousand Lights and



**Safety commissioner K A Manoharan and team during the safety inspection on Monday**

LIC stations

When asked about his assessment of the stations, especially passenger safety and amenities, Manoharan said it was good. "Except some works pending at Thousand Lights and LIC stations, the rest of the stations

(seven) are over. Even in the two stations, only false ceiling works are pending. They (CMRL) will be able to complete the work in four or five days," the CMRS added.

The onus is now on Chennai Metro Rail to impress upon its political and official bosses in the

secretariat to finalise the date of inauguration of the stretch. Once operational, this would extend Metro Rail connectivity to the northern pockets of the city.

CMRL managing director Pankaj Kumar Bansal had told reporters during the commencement of the inspection on Saturday that they were consulting the higher authorities over this, and added that they would open the stretch for public use very soon.

CMRL, which has been planning to inaugurate the stretch before the end of the month, has also been studying the arrival and departure times of flights and trains connecting Chennai so as to extend the service hours in such a way that it would attract the air and rail passengers.

According to sources in CMRL, the Metro Rail services could be advanced to 4.30 am and extended up to around midnight, the busiest times of the city's rail terminals and the international airport respectively.