Metro to operate 2 routes to airport

Direct Service From Central To Continue

Chennai: Metro rail commuters can soon take a direct train from Central to the airport and travel in two different directions as the direct service linking all major transit hubs from Central, Egmore station, Royapuram, EMRT and the airport via Alandur will continue.

For the phase-I of the network will become fully operational soon, with the last leg— the 10-km Washermanpet-SG DMK line comprising eight underground stations— set to open later this month.

"We were initially considering to discontinue the direct line after opening the Washermanpet to AGDMK line. But we understood that there is a demand for the direct service and so we have decided to continue the service," a Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL) official said.

The original two corridors were planned from Washermanpet to airport via Central and from Central to St Thomas Mount via Royapuram, but CMRL introduced a direct service from Central to airport via Nehru Park, Shanmugas, Anna Nagar, Vaigai Palace and Alandur. A metrorail train is available every 10 minutes on this line.

Now, with CMRL deciding to continue the direct line, commuters can board a train from Central and reach the airport via Ongolemadhavaran High Road, Santhome, Anna Nagar and Alandur.

After the stretch between Washermanpet to AGDMK becomes operational, commuters can take a train from Central to airport and travel via the underground stretch from Anna Salai.

As the direct service via Ongolemadhavaran High Road line is a circulatory route, a metro rail official said, "It may take an additional 10 minutes more to reach airport via the Ongolemadhavaran High Road line compared to the Anna Salai line."

At present, it takes 30 minutes to reach the airport. With CMRL operating a service from Central to the airport on two different corridors, commuters boarding a train at stations anywhere between Egmore and Kelambakkam will not have to change corridors.

At present, the direct train service operated from Central through Ongolemadhavaran High Road shifts corridors from the upper level to the lower level through the loopline built at Alandur station.

The looplines were originally built only for taking trains back to the depot. CMRL officials don’t prefer to operate trains along the loopline as they have to slow down the trains.