

# Metro Rail invites corporate firms to co-brand stations

Companies keen on tie-up with CMRL

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In a bid to increase revenues, Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is inviting big names from the corporate world to pick up co-branding rights of stations. According to senior CMRL officials, talks are on with a few companies, including realty developer DLF, World Trade Centre

(Bengaluru-based Brigade Group holds licence to build this in five southern cities) and the Ozone Group.

## For Phase II project

The official added, "This is for the phase II project. In this project, a company's name can be prefixed in front of a station's name. That apart, we are exploring various other options like giving them rights to advertise inside stations and for announcements inside trains as well," he added.

But what is significant in phase II is that they are contemplating giving branding rights even as the station construction is yet to begin.

Sources told *The Hindu* that they may even consider giving companies the option of designing, building and operating a station. "There are a few options that we have been discussing now; one is that the companies pay us a bulk amount (a few crores) depending on location and space. The rights will be given for a certain pe-

riod," an official from CMRL said.

DLF is in discussions to explore various avenues of the partnership. N.C. Somaiah, vice-president, operations, DLF Cybercity, said, "The detailed design process is under way with CMRL and we will take this up in gradual steps. The alignment of the Metro line as well as the location of the station is yet to be finalised." Officials from the Brigade Group said that talks were on with CMRL but refused to divulge details.

S. Vasudevan, chairman and managing director of the Ozone Group, said, "We are in discussions with them for the station at Koyambedu because of its proximity to our property. We are looking at exclusive connectivity from our project to the Metro Station."

"We are also talking to them on a proposed station at Navalur in OMR. We have an SEZ development there. We are looking at whether we can connect our SEZ and the station," he added.



In phase II, corporate companies may be given the option to design, build and operate a station. ■ FILE PHOTO