

Metro paints station red, brands sit up

CMRL to Gain As Firms Want To Affix Names To Its Stations

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Chennai: With its bright red painted walls, Nandanam metro station has added colour to the junction. Soon, a few other metro stations too will sport a new look with different colours and popular brands prefixing their names as Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has started giving out contracts for branding stations to raise additional revenue.

Nearly two months ago, motorists crossing the bustling Nandanam junction wo-



R Ramesh Shankar

MORE MONEY: Painting metro stations with vivid colours has earned CMRL a revenue source, with firms coming forward for collaborations

uld have noticed the walls of the entrances and the ancillary building of Nandanam metro station sporting bright red paint. Officials said contracts were awarded and now The Muthoot Group's name has been added to the name of the station. "Soon, Teynampet and Thousand Lights will ha-

ve names of brands," an official said.

After Nandanam metro station caught the attention of the Chennaiites, officials said many firms have already approached them to affix brand names in the upcoming phase-2 stations. Metrorail officials said they have awarded

contracts for renaming and branding of Teynampet and Nandanam metro to Vas Media and Thousand Lights metro station to Spencer Plaza.

"Other firms and brands are showing interest in our phase-2 stations. A private hospital wants to affix its name to the Alwarpet station after it begins operation," an official said.

While many more stations would soon be renamed with well-known brands, for CMRL, this exercise is one of the avenues to generate non-fare revenue. Space inside and outside stations are also being rented out for setting up retail outlets and restaurants of well-known brands as well as ATMs. Efforts are also under way to award contracts for advertising inside the stations.

"Maximising options to ge-

nerate non-fare revenue helps in keeping the ticket fares low and operating efficiently," an official said.

The outer walls of a few metro trains too are covered with stickers of colourful advertisements while the inside walls have slots for brand promotions. Earlier, CMRL floated tenders to sell advertisement space on the pillars of the elevated corridors where brands can install boards with colourful lights. But so far, there seem to be no takers.

While low patronage is cited as one of the reasons for the poor use of ad space in stations and trains, with the opening of another 9km line in North Chennai, CMRL officials said their patronage may go up by 30% which will, in turn, attract more firms and bring additional revenue.