

Metro's Phase I extension project may face delays

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Chennai Metro's Phase I extension project, linking the northern part of the city to the centre, has hit a new hurdle because of COVID-19. Many components that are required for the project need to come from China, and contractors are now looking for alternatives, as several offices in China have been shut due to the epidemic.

According to Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) officials, several parts for platform screen doors, some parts needed for civil work, electrical equipment and lifts are usually purchased from China by various contractors.

Some contractors have already communicated the possible impact and delays this is likely to cause to CMRL officials, said sources.

"Though most materials for the project have already



CMRL plans to begin operations on the Phase I extension by June.

reached the city, we are yet to procure some items. We have now instructed the contractors to look for alternatives from other countries or from within India itself. For instance, for platform screen doors – installed in underground stations as a safeguard to bar commuters from entering the tracks – we have told contractors to look for glass or steel from other locations. Similarly,

for the civil work, contractors are looking for options in other cities. The reason they usually choose China is because it is relatively cheap," an official said.

On full swing

When asked if this would have a major impact on the project, officials said that there may be some effect, but they would make up for it and finish the project on time.

"We are hoping to get all components soon. Work is already on in full swing, and when we receive the remaining parts for some of the work, it should be completed as well. We will ensure that this does not delay the project," another official said.

CMRL plans to begin operations on the Phase I extension, connecting Washermenpet with Wimco Nagar, a distance of 9 km, by June.