

Trial run on north Chennai metro rail line by month-end

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Chennai: Trials run on the phase-1 extension line in North Chennai will begin at the end of this month, as the 9km stretch from Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar is expected to be ready for operations by January 2021.

The completion of the line, which was to be opened for service in June 2020, was delayed due to the lockdown.

Metro rail officials said some of the critical components expected from China and Europe, which were delayed due to the global lockdown, have also started arriving. "We have received most of the ma-

terials. The rest will be here by the end of October," an official said. Phase-1 extension line, construction for which started in 2016, has nine stations including three underground stations, which can take passengers directly from Wimco Nagar to Airport across a 32km stretch. The line will also have an elevated maintenance depot at Wimco Nagar.

As the stretch gets a final touch, a diesel locomotive will be operated on the line to check the alignment of the tracks. It will be followed by operation of a metro train both in manual and automatic mode to test the integration of the trains with other critical systems like sig-

nalling and communication. The syncing of the platform screen doors, information display boards on the station platforms and the automatic fare collection gates in the ticketing area will also be checked. There will be a final round of inspection by the commissioner of metro rail safety, whose approval is mandatory for the opening of the line.

Officials said the Wimco Nagar depot, built on a 48,000sqm area to accommodate 11 stabling units, will also be ready by the end of this year. The depot will handle daily maintenance and minor repair works for trains that will be operated on a 32km corridor.