

Metro to house trains at Poonamallee

C Suresh Kumar



POINT OF RETURN: The existing metro rail depot at Koyambedu

Tenders Called For ₹225Cr Depot On 15.3Ha

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Chennai: Poonamallee will have one of the two major depots in phase-2 metrorail project that will service and maintain 186 coaches or cars or 31 six-car metro driverless trains which will be operated between the city's core localities like Marina Beach and T Nagar and developing IT hubs like Porur.

Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) recently invited bids for the construction of the depot at Poonamallee which will be linked with the terminating station of corridor-4 from Lighthouse to Poonamallee covering 26km.

Construction for the 118.9km phase-2 is expected to begin by mid-2021 and be ready in five years.

According to the detailed project report, 17.4hectare land will be acquired for the construction of the depot on 15.3hectare and staff quarters. The depot, expected to be ready in three years, will be

built at an estimated cost of ₹225crore. It will have 24 lines for stabling or parking six-car trains after daily operations, three lines for inspection of trains and four lines for workshop. At any given time, three six-car rakes would be under inspection and the remaining will be stabled for early morning services.

"The depots will usually not have all the trains at the same time. A few will be parked at the depot while a few others will be parked on the mainline, so it would be easy to begin early morning operation on time," an official said. At present, CMRL has a depot at Koyambedu which accommodates a fleet of 52 trains for operations on the 45km phase-1 and 9km phase-1 extension line. An elevated depot at Wimco Nagar is likely to be ready this year.

The depot, to be located on one side of the Poonamallee Bypass Road where corridor-4 terminates near the cloverleaf at the Outer Ring Road will be linked with Poonamallee Bypass station with extended stabling lines.

Earlier, CMRL decided to get the elevated line between Porur and Poonamallee on corridor-4 to be ready first in the phase. It has also invited bids for driverless trains. The depot at Poonamallee will be

required for parking and maintaining the new trains when they arrive from the manufacturer and to operate them on the Porur-Poonamallee line when it is ready.

When the depot is ready, it will be the centre for maintenance of all the trains that will be run across core city areas from Lighthouse in Marina Beach, Nandanam, T Nagar, Kodambakkam to far flung areas like the IT hub in Porur, Iyyappanthangal and Poonamallee which are poorly linked with public transport.

The phase will also have another depot at Madhavaram, which will be built on a 27.8-hectare land. It will be the largest depot in the phase maintaining trains operated on corridor-3 from Madhavaram to Siruseri Sipcot and corridor-5 from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur. Plans to build a minor elevated depot at Sholinganallur was dropped to cut project cost.