

# Beyond aesthetics, walls of metro stns bring in revenue too

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**Chennai:** The otherwise drab walls of metro stations have come to the CMRL's rescue. The agency has been struggling with low patronage and these walls have become a major source of non-ticketing revenue helping manage daily operation and maintenance.

At least seven metro stations have been put up for semi-naming rights, wherein a brand uses its name and colours to paint and advertise on the walls on metro stations, officials said, adding that this initiative has helped generate anywhere between ₹3.5 crore to ₹7 crore a year for CMRL.

Officials said AG-DMS, Nandanam, Thousand Lights, Teynampet, Saidapet stations on arterial Anna Salai, Shenoy Nagar metro and Koyambedu metro stations have been put up for semi-naming rights. Brands awarded with semi-naming rights can use its name as a prefix to the station's name. This, in addition to painting the metro's exteriors as per the brand's colours, allows firms to advertise at major locations like Anna Salai, while it generates revenue for cash-strapped metros.

"The brands are given rights for three years and are

charged ₹50 lakh to ₹1 crore a year," an official said.

A year ago, the exterior of Nandanam metro was painted bright red after Muthoot was awarded the semi-naming rights. Recently, Baashyam Constructions won the contract and was allowed to paint Koyambedu station viaduct yellow and blue. Soon, the walls of Shenoy Nagar and

C Suresh Kumar



**EYE-CATCHING:** Koyambedu station viaducts sport bright new colours after a firm was awarded semi-naming rights

Saidapet stations too will sport new colours. Officials said talks are on to rope in more firms for other stations. "Companies have approached us, expressing interest in prefixing their names in our phase-2 stations once operations begin," an official said.

CMRL is also looking to rent out station space to retail outlets to generate additional non-fare box revenue while also attracting more commuters.