

# Cheer for Coimbatore: Budget allots ₹6,683 cr for metro rail

Nivedha.Selvam1  
@timesgroup.com

**Coimbatore:** In a huge pre-poll bonanza for the district, deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam allocated ₹6,683 crore for the metro rail project in the interim budget that was tabled on Tuesday. The fund allocation comes almost three years after he announced the metro rail project for the district in the assembly.

He said a detailed feasibility report for setting up the metro rail for about 44km at a cost of ₹6,683 crore in the first phase was prepared and the same under scrutiny.

A source said the five corridors, covering a distance of 144km, have been proposed and preparation of a detailed project report was underway.

The first corridor, the source said, would cover 26km between Ukkadam and Kaniyur, the second 24km between Uk-

kadam and Bilichi near Karamadai on Mettupalayam Road, the third 42km between Thanneerpandal on Thadagam Road and Karanampettai on Trichy Road, the fourth 44km between Karunya Nagar and Ganeshapuram, and the fifth corridor would cover 8km between Ukkadam and Vellore, where the integrated bus terminus would come up.

Earlier, the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) had se-

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lected the engineering and consulting firm, Systra, to conduct feasibility study for implementing the project in the city. It had in its report suggested four corridors.

About a year ago, the CMRL had decided to create a fifth corridor, connecting Ukkadam and Vellore.

Industries and trade associations have welcomed the

move. M V Ramesh Babu, president, Coimbatore District Small Scale Industries Association, said, "Considering the rising vehicle population on the road, flyovers will also become congested in five to six years. At that time, the metro rail project would be helpful to decongest the traffic on the roads. A lot of people would start using metro trains if proper connectivity is provided."

Good infrastructure, he said, would attract firms to the district, further boosting the industrial development.

Expressing a similar view Vanitha Mohan, vice-chairperson, Kongu Global Forum, said industries were looking forward to moving to two-tire cities with good internal, air and rail connectivity. "With this project in place, a lot of industries might come to the district. Lack of infrastructure development would suffocate the growth of the region."