

Monorail corridor to meet Metro

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MUMBAI: The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has decided to connect the Monorail corridor with Colaba-Seepz underground Metro 3 line to improve the connectivity to Mahalaxmi-Parel-Wadala areas.

The Chembur-Jacob Circle monorail corridor will be extended by about 500 meters to connect it with the under-construction Mahalaxmi Metro station. The move is expected to make Monorail operations more viable and provide seamless connectivity to its commuters.

MMRDA officials said that the process of studying how to go ahead with the extension and the cost of the project is ongoing. Post the study, the MMRDA plans to float bids for the construction of the additional track route and a station, which will be called Mahalaxmi Monorail station.

“We are planning to extend the Monorail route by around 450 to 500 meters and connect it with the Mahalaxmi Metro station. This will make the Monorail more viable considering it is in loss now, and also give commuters the option to travel from south Mumbai travel up to Chembur seamlessly via the interchange at Mahalaxmi Metro station. From here, commuters can take a Monorail and

go up to Chembur,” said SVR Srinivas, Metropolitan Commissioner of the MMRDA.

Srinivas added, “The current waiting period for Monorail is very high, say around 25 minutes or even more with just three trains. However, we have already placed orders for more rakes. They will start coming in phases in two years. Simultaneously, we also plan to start the construction of the extension of Monorail from Jacob Circle to Mahalaxmi Metro station.”

According to MMRDA officials, the extension of Monorail beyond Chembur is being planned but is not under active consideration. Plans to link Monorail with Wadala-Thane Metro-4 corridor is being considered so it can be connected to densely populated areas of central Mumbai, including Dadar, Lower Parel, Chinchpokli.

Built at a cost of over ₹2,000 crore, the Mumbai Monorail been receiving flak owing to poor ridership and multiple technical issues.

The MMRDA feels the extension will prove to be a game-changer for commuters. SP Khade, Former Director of Mumbai Monorail, said, “If all the current technical problems in the Monorail rakes are solved, and after it is made safe for commuters, this corridor will be of true use. The extension will also make sense if the frequency is brought down to 5-10 minutes.”

Troubled history of Mumbai Monorail

Monorail



Chembur to Jacob Circle (Mahalaxmi)
Route: 19-km

Extension proposed of around 0.5 km

TIMELINE

2008: Construction of Monorail begins after MMRDA appoints Malaysia-based Scomi Engineering.

2011: Project was to be ready by 2011, but it couldn't meet the deadline.

2014: Only the first phase between Chembur and Wadala was made operational.

2015: Comptroller Auditor and General of India (CAG) pointed out fallacies in the project.

2015: A rake was stuck mid-section near Bhakti Park, Wadala and commuters had to be rescued later.

2016: Services were disrupted thrice due to problems related to



tyre bursts, tyre falling off the rolling stock and doors opening midway due to issues in electric supply.

2017: Monorail halted halfway into Chembur station due to power failure.

2017: Monorail phase-1 services suspended due to a fire incident.

2019: MMRDA takes over operations of the Monorail and terminates contract of Scomi Engineering.

FROM WHERE?

Jacob Circle, also known as Sant Gadge Maharaj chowk monorail station, to Mahalaxmi Metro station.

2022: MMRDA decides to procure new rakes and extend services by 500 metres up to Mahalaxmi.

2022: Work on extension expected to start by year-end.