

With arrival of 9 trains by July, a key step forward for first underground Metro

SWEETY ADIMULAM

MUMBAI, MARCH 30

THE COMMERCIAL operations for the first phase of Mumbai's first underground metro - Aqua Line - will be carried out with nine trains, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (MMRCL) has told *The Indian Express*. The arrival of the trains, each having eight coaches, is expected by July. It will be a key step forward for the Aqua Line Phase-1 launch, targeted to be completed by December.

Also known as the Metro 3 line, the underground metro shall cover the Colaba to SEEPZ route, via the Bandra Kurla Complex



From
Colaba
to SEEPZ.

Photo:
MMRC

(BKC). The commercial operation for the first phase - on the BKC-Aarey route - is likely to begin early next year. The Phase-1 trial run will kick off once the depot work is substantially complete, officials said, including the construction of the shunting neck. The facility is used for the purpose of allowing a train to shunt back into a rail yard without the need for the train to occupy a running line. Meanwhile,

two train sets recently completed the trial run at 65 kmph.

A 33.5 km-long underground corridor, the Aqua Line will have 27 key stations. Of these, 26 stations will be underground. Aarey is the only "at-grade" station where a depot is being constructed. As per the MMRC, 54 per cent of the depot work has been completed so far.

The depot will act as an essential facility for the smooth operation of this underground metro line. It will provide stabling lines for 31 rakes or trains. Overall, 57 per cent of the track-work has been completed so far. The depot work is 15 per cent complete, as per the officials.