

State govt sanctions ₹250cr for Metro-3 line

Mumbai: The state government has sanctioned Rs 250 crore for the Metro Line 3 project. It will be paid to Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd that is executing the project. This is the second tranche of the Rs 500 crore budgeted for the project in this financial year. In January this year the government had paid Rs 250 crore.

The project is being funded in a 50:50 ratio by the Centre and state. As per the pact, 50% of taxes to be paid to the Centre and cost of land acquisition, relief rehabilitation amounting to Rs 1,615 crore (interest-free secondary loan) with waiver of Rs 806 crore state taxes is to be paid to MMRCL by the state government. This amounts to Rs 2,421 crore. Till January this year, the government had paid nearly Rs 1,926 crore. With this tranche of Rs 250 crore, it would have paid MMRCL nearly Rs 2,176 crore.

The underground Metro Line 3 project was to be commissioned in 2019 in time for the then state elections but construction of tunnels and stations has been delayed. Last year the government extended the lease of over 3 lakh sq feet of Azad Maidan land by another three years as MMRCL said the work was delayed. The site for the metro car shed is also stuck in a political slug fest between Shiv Sena-led MVA government and BJP at the Centre. While Sena has been keen to shift it to Kanjurmarg, the state BJP has been insisting on Aarey Colony and has been supported by the Centre.

In the recent state budget, deputy CM Ajit Pawar, who holds the finance portfolio, announced that the line will be extended to Navy Nagar, increasing the metro route to nearly 35 km.

—Clara Lewis