

Ahmedabad Metro to link GIFT City and Gandhinagar by June

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The first metro train is expected to chug into GIFT City in April 2024, with the Gujarat Metro Rail Corporation (GMRC) preparing to conduct trials for Phase-II expansion of Ahmedabad Metro.

The train will connect GIFT City to both Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, benefitting over 20,000 employees of the fintech hub for whom State/private buses and private vehicles are the only commute options currently. "We are going to conduct a trial run for the priority reach comprising 20-odd km of the Phase-II of Ahmedabad metro in April, which will connect the Narendra Modi stadium at Motera to GIFT City and Sector-1 of Gandhinagar city," Pushkar Singla, Chief General Manager (Corporate Planning), GMRC told



GREEN FLAG. Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagging off a metro train during the inauguration of phase-1 of the rail project between Thaltej and Vastral, in Ahmedabad (file photo) ^{PTI}

businessline. "If we get the necessary permission, then commercial metro rail operations to GIFT City and Gandhinagar will begin in June," said the official who is also the chief PRO for the project. Both GIFT City and State capital Gandhinagar will be connected to the Ahmedabad Metro network under Phase-II of the project costing ₹5,384 crore. Unlike Phase I that had underground sections, Phase II will have

only elevated corridors and will begin at Narendra Modi cricket stadium at Motera, where Phase I culminates. The second phase will extend the metro network northwards connecting Sector-1 and Mahatma Mandir (venue of Vibrant Gujarat summit) in Gandhinagar. At GNLU metro station, a short 5.42-km-long metro line will branch out eastwards and connect GIFT City lying across the Sabarmati river.

Afcons Infrastructure, an arm of Shapoorji Pallonji Group, is constructing the 8.1-km elevated viaduct and eight metro stations between Motera and GNLU. It is also constructing the stretch between GNLU and GIFT City.

The total length of Phase-II is about 28.2 km and has 22 metro stations. "We are well within the budget for the Phase-II. We have already spent around ₹1,800 crore," Singla said. The per km construction cost for Phase-II is about ₹175 crore.

"The remaining section of Phase II, for which work began in October 2022, will finish by December 2024," Singla said, adding that the 28.2-km-long Phase II of the Ahmedabad Metro will be completed by end of this calendar year. Proposals to extend the second phase are also being considered by the government. This includes a

6.3-km-long route to Ahmedabad International Airport and another 6-km-long section to GIFT City with two more metro stations. If these proposals are cleared, cost of Phase-II construction is expected to go up roughly by over ₹2,000 crore.

PHASE I OF METRO

Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurating the first phase in September 2022, certain sections of the metro continue to be incomplete.

This includes a 1.4-km-long section between Thaltej and Thaltej Gam on the East-West Corridor which is expected to be completed only by March 2024. Similarly, the metro station at Sabarmati continues to remain non-operational. The station is part of the multi-modal hub being created as part of the Ahmedabad-Mumbai Bullet train project.