



TRIVANDRUM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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Outrage Over Potential Shift to LightTram Metro in Thiruvananthapuram

News report suggesting that Kochi Metro Rail Ltd (KMRL) may be considering the implementation of a LightTram Metro in Thiruvananthapuram, instead of a conventional Metro, has ignited significant alarm and uproar among the residents of Thiruvananthapuram and also about their purported change in stance and attempting to derail the Metro Project.

News of diverting from the long-anticipated conventional Metro has left many residents disheartened. That too when it looked like the Government had arrived at the conventional Metro as the best suited for the Capital and the Project was almost about to take off. Our City deserves a transportation system that is not only efficient and sustainable but also aligned with its unique needs and aspirations. Any decision regarding such crucial Projects must be made transparently and with the active involvement of stakeholders.

While Kochi Metro was constructed using public funds and is mobilising finances for its expansion, KMRL being myopic and lamenting over the lack of resources for Thiruvananthapuram Metro and shedding crocodile tears cannot be accepted. We strongly believe that KMRL is trying to scale down the Project to Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode to help ease the financing of Kochi Metro's expansion. KMRL's study must focus on future-ready transportation solutions rather than delve into the economic aspects of the State.

The potential move towards a LightTram Metro, as suggested in the report, raises serious questions about the priorities and commitments of KMRL towards Thiruvananthapuram's transportation infrastructure. This is a planted News by KMRL themselves in an attempt to gauge the reaction of the people. KMRL should immediately clear the confusion and announce its stance. We also urge the Government to intervene and ensure that the interests and aspirations of the people of Thiruvananthapuram are upheld.

Besides, the assertion that a LightTram Metro would be more sustainable quoting Swiss based HESS Green Mobility Feasibility Report and Transportation Experts that fail to address the topographical challenges and unique landscape of our City, can only be taken only with a pinch of salt, especially after extensive studies and investments have been made towards the development of a traditional Metro system for Thiruvananthapuram.

Furthermore, the dissenting opinions expressed by Experts like Metroman E Sreedharan highlight the scepticism surrounding the feasibility and practicality of the proposed LightTram Metro on Kerala's roads also are noteworthy.

TCCI is not open to any reasoning at this juncture and request the Government to ensure that the Metro Project as envisaged earlier is implemented without further delay.

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