

## Eating, shopping and check-in on metro airport line

The Delhi Metro's Airport Express Line that promises to take you from central Delhi to the airport in 18 minutes flat will also provide check-in facility, 'secure baggage handling' and have in-built terminals with shops and eating joints, officials said Thursday.

According to Delhi Metro spokesperson Anuj Dayal, from the moment you reach the metro station on this line 'you will experience a state of the art experience'.

The airport line is nearing completion and is slated for a September 2010 opening ahead of the [Commonwealth Games 2010](#) in October.

The section is to have six stations -- New Delhi, Shivaji Stadium, Dhaula Kuan, Delhi Aero city, Indira Gandhi International Airport and Dwarka Sec 21. The line is 22.7 km long of which 15.7 km runs underground and seven km is elevated.

The three-level Shivaji Terminal station sprawled over 14,000 sqm in the heart of the national capital, for instance, will have one level dedicated for commercial activities. Eating joints and shopping arcades are also being planned, officials said.

'Trains will run at a speed of around 135 km per hour. To facilitate this, we have used 'Rheda' system for high speed trains which till now has been used by Indian Railways for trials. Trains will take only 18 minutes to reach the airport (Indira Gandhi International Airport) from [New Delhi](#) station,' Madhu Singh, director of works department, Delhi Metro told reporters.

Since the line is being built to cater to air passengers, three stations -- New Delhi Railway station, Shivaji Stadium and Indira Gandhi International Airport -- will have fully automatic baggage handling system (BHS).

There will be as many as 40 check-in counters as well as separate metro ticketing counters at the stations. Metro officials said that the concessionaire of the airport line was also in talks with Customs officials to open duty-free counters.

'The BHS facility is provided only for those passengers flying out of the city. The service is not available on return journey (from the airport to the New Delhi station). However, passengers can check in from Dhaula Kuan and Dwarka Sector 21 stations also,' Singh said.

The City Air Terminal being built at three stations having BHS facility also boasts of modern facilities like multi-level parking system and car drop-off facility besides elevators and lifts. The design also reveals plans for food courts and lounge areas.

'It will have huge terminals and resemble a mini airport,' Singh said.

Eight sets of six-coach trains, made by Spanish company CAF, will be used on the line. 'The initial frequency would be 10 minutes with varying stoppage time at stations,' Singh said. The frequency could increase to one train in two minutes eventually, the official added.

'The line is built on a BOT (build-operate-transfer) basis and the concessionaire can charge a

maximum of Rs.150 from New Delhi to IGI. From Dwarka Sec 21 (the last stop after airport to IGI) the charge would be Rs.30,' the official said.

The line will be run by a consortium of Reliance Infrastructure-CAF for a 30-year period. The Express Line is being built at a cost of Rs.45 billion out of which around 50 percent spent on civil works is being handled by the Delhi Metro. 'Around 95 percent of the civil works are complete.'

'We expect a passenger ridership of 40,000 per day although the concessionaire projected a lower figure of 25,000,' Singh said.

The official added: 'Trains will be operated for 20 hours as four hours are needed for maintenance... but depending on the concessionaire, services could run 24 hours by alternating the tracks.'

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