



AFCONS Infrastructure is lowest bidder to build Kochi metro's Kakkanad extension

Decision on awarding work to be taken after evaluation and concurrence of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank which has offered loan for the project

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Afcons Infrastructure has turned out to be the lowest bidder to construct the 11.20-km viaduct and nine stations for the Kochi metro's Kakkanad extension, as financial bids for the project were opened here on Friday.

The firm had built the trio of Goshree bridges that link Kochi city with Goshree islands a decade and a half ago.

The bid amount for the Kakkanad extension (christened Pink Line) was not far off the estimate that Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) had readied for the project. A decision on awarding work will be taken after evaluation and concurrence of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which has offered a loan for the project. This is in accordance with the tender guidelines issued by AIIB and is expected to take between 15 and 20 days, it is learnt.

Sources said they expected piling for the viaduct to begin by the end of May, before the monsoon set in, if everything went according to plan. The viaduct in the JLN Stadium-Infopark corridor can be completed in 18 months, while readying of signals, telecommunication systems, and tracks would take another six months. Work on entry/exit of stations (work on five of is already under way) will be done simultaneously.

The design and build tender to construct the viaduct and stations in the Pink Line corridor was opened on December 20. KMRL had said that the contracting firm that would be selected to execute the work will be incentivised, if it completed the work ahead of the 18-month time

span. The construction of entry/exit of Infopark, Chittethukara, Kinfra park, Collectorate Junction and CSEZ stations is on.

As per plan, a pair of 60-metre-long open-web steel structures similar to the one near S.N. Junction in Thripunithura will be built where the metro viaduct crosses the NH bypass at Palarivattom and in front of St. Martin's Church from where the metro extension will turn towards Palarivattom.