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KMRL enters deal with ABC to promote cycling

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Kochi: Kochi Metro Rail Ltd (KMRL) has been desperately trying to promote non-motorized transport in the city, but the Metro agency was not successful in finding a bidder who would support them in this endeavour. Hence, KMRL entered into a tie up with Athi's Bicycle Club (ABC) to provide cycles at select points in the city.

“Though we invited tenders for non-motorized transport, we couldn't finalize a bidder. Few organizations are interested in such activities. We have made an arrangement with ABC to provide cycles and promote cycling,” said KMRL spokesperson.

The Metro agency said the tie up would be a branding activity for KMRL, and they would provide an amount to ABC for the service. KMRL said they will have to take up the matter with local bodies to obtain approval for setting up cycle tracks at various locations.

MS Athirup, the person behind ABC said that he had already obtained permission from Kochi corporation to install cycle racks at four points in the city. At the initial stage



KMRL's initiative will offer free bicycles at various points in the city

there will be 30 cycles. The locations include North and South railway stations, Menaka (near Taj Gateway hotel) and Kaloor Junction.

“This is a pilot project. Seven cycles will be made available at each point, except at Menaka, which is a busy point. At Menaka, we will place nine cycles,” he said adding that taking into the demand made by KMRL they would also start cycle racks at Palariavattom and Edappally metro stations.

He said a small portion of the space earmarked for two-wheeler parking at metro stations can be used for cycle

tracks. He said KMRL wants to bring in bicycles to provide last mile connectivity from metro stations.

According to Athirup scaling up operations would not be a herculean task. He said various private organizations would be interested in setting up cycle tracks, and money could be generated by branding cycles. “The real challenge is in management and maintenance of cycles. People might leave cycles at various points and it will have to be brought back to the racks,” he added.

Public can register their names with ABC at 96455 11155/ 9744011777.