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Water transport project: German bank team to visit city tomorrow

A three-member team from the German Development Bank, KfW, will visit Kochi on February 20 and 21 to assess the possibilities of developing the inland waterways of Kochi.

An official statement from the Kochi Metro Rail Limited said the team was slated to visit the proposed metro routes, other mobility infrastructure in the city and islands that are proposed to be connected with the waterways. Further, they will also hold discussions with Elias George, Managing Director, KMRL, and meet with other stakeholders of the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA).

The members of the team are Heiko Warnken, Head of Economic Cooperation and Development, German Embassy, Felix Klauda, Head of Division, Urban Development and Mobility -South Asia, and Usha Rao, Senior Sector Specialist – Energy and Transport, KfW Delhi Office

The plan mooted by the KMRL for the development of the water transport network in Kochi include rolling out new advanced hi-tech boats that are faster and more comfortable than the existing boats. The renovation of existing boat jetties, which are in a dilapidated condition, and construction of new boat jetties have also been included in the proposal. Along with the renovation of the jetties, essential facilities such as toilets and adequate parking space for the public will also be set up.

The KMRL is looking at receiving assistance to the tune of Rs. 624 crore from the German bank for improving water transport, other feeder services and non-motorised transport facilities in and around the city.

Earlier, the KMRL had prepared a preliminary project report, which was submitted to KfW for availing funds. The agency, however, sought a more comprehensive Detailed Project Report, which is now being prepared by the Urban Mass Transit Company (UMTC) under the Union Urban Affairs Ministry.

Exploring more options on water transport as a feeder system to the metro rail, the KMRL had held discussions with various

stakeholders in the network on January 13. A joint team of the UMTC and the KMRL had also visited the probable water routes in the city in December, 2014.