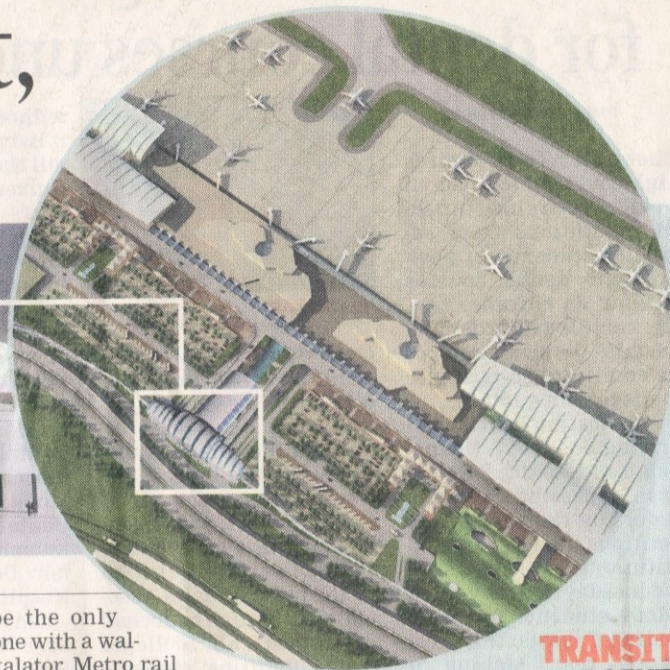


Work Begins On Five-Level Rs 48cr Station At Airport; Facility To Be Ready In 2 Years

Soon, fliers can hop off jet, RIDE METRO TO CITY



STEEL WONDER: An artist's impression of the metro rail station at the airport



V Ayyappan | TNN

Two years from now, fliers will be able to disembark from a jet at Chennai airport and hop onto a metro train to ride into the city. Getting to the airport will be just as hassle-free once the metro station at the airport becomes operational by 2014.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) has started construction of a snazzy bubble-shaped metro rail station in front of the passenger terminals. The station is expected to be ready by July 2013, a year before metro rail tracks will be laid on the viaduct along GST Road, from Little Mount to the airport in 2014.

Once the station is opened, Chennai will be only the second city in the

country to have a metro link to its airport. The airport will be the only one in the country to have complete multi-modal urban transport connectivity, with metro rail, suburban train and bus services to ferry passengers to and from the facility.

The design of the station is meant to be an aesthetic extension of the upgraded airport's architectural theme. The futuristic design will include a steel and glass façade, like the new domestic and international passenger terminals.

The Rs 48 crore contract has been awarded to Erode-based URC Construction, says S Bhaduri, executive director, construction, AAI. "The station is being built by AAI because it is located inside the airport area near the existing police station," he said.

A 'bhoomi puja' for the station was held on Wednesday.

After basic groundwork is completed, work on the foundation will begin in a week.

The airport metro station will be spread over 17,300sqm and will have five levels — basement, ground floor, metro ground floor, ticketing concourse and platform. The building will be made of concrete and will have aluminium roofing over a steel portal.

The station has been designed for easy transit to the airport and vice-versa. Passengers who ride a metro rail train to the airport will be able to use a walkalators through tubes running from the concourse floor of the station to the airport's domestic and international terminals.

The airport metro station will

be the only one with a walkalator. Metro rail will build walkways, skywalks and subways to connect other metro stations to the nearest suburban railway stations and bus terminals.

Though the station is being built by AAI, Chennai Metro Rail Ltd will take care of the interior design to maintain uniformity among metro stations. "The station will provide all amenities that commuters and air travellers need," an official said.

The facilities will include refreshment stalls and check-in counters where people with only cabin baggage will be able to check in and get boarding passes.

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TRANSIT POINT

Basement: Car park for airport users

Ground level: Space to park cars for metro rail passengers. This will be a paid parking lot

Metro station ground level: Offices of metro rail and space for passengers

Concourse level: Ticket counters and other facilities. Passengers will be able to access airport terminals through a tube from this floor

Platform level: Trains will arrive on this floor