

# Metro rail to be ready by 2015-end

**Express News Service**  
**Chennai, November 16**

THE elevated section of the Chennai Metro Rail project will be completed by 2013 and the underground work will finish by December 2015, according to Chief General Manager of Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) V Somasundaram. Delivering a lecture on Metro Rail here on Monday, Somasundaram said that the Rs 14,600-crore metro rail is designed to remove traffic hurdles in central business district (CBD).

Talking about the project, he said the first phase proposal is for two corridors to integrate with existing public transport services, including the heavily used bus terminal and Central station.

Corridor 1 will be 23km between Washermenpet and Chennai international airport and with a current suburban railway link at Tirusulam. Running west and with an interchange with Corridor 1 at Alandur, Corridor 2 will be 22km between Chennai Central and St Thomas Mount to the south.

There will be about 32 stations with Corridor 1 having 17 and Corridor 2 having 15 stations, Somasundaram added.

He said 55 per cent of the corridors are underground and the remaining is elevated. "Elevated metro can be planned where the roads are wider and if the roads aren't wide then it has to go underground," he added.

The metro rail will initially have four rakes that will be extended to eight rakes. The designed speed for the railways will be 80 km per hour while the average speed will be 34 kmph, Somasundaram said. He said tunnels would be dug about 10 to 19 metres deep for the underground route of the metro rail. The seats will be in longitudinal and in each train about 1,052 persons can travel.

Regarding the feasibility of metro rail project, he said the share of public transport in Chennai has reduced to 53 per cent in 2006 from 60 per cent in 1990. "Ideally it should be between 65 per cent and 70 per cent only then the roads could be decongested," he added.

"There was a steady increase in the bus transport for the last two decades. In 1980-81, there were about 1,794 buses and in 2000-01, the buses increased to 2,816".