

# Metro rail on right track for differently abled

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Public transport, despite its affordability and reach, has not suited the differently abled in the city, most of whom prefer private modes of transport. No proper thought has been given to designing disabled-friendly transportation projects.

But the Chennai Metro Rail project includes some of the best designs available in the country. Every part of the journey — from entry at the station to boarding the train and exiting — has been planned well, keeping the disabled in mind. Even the staff at the stations have been trained in sign language to guide passengers.

“The elevators are being made at street level so that people can directly get into the building. The lifts are fitted with buttons with Braille on them, allowing people to touch and choose. Even the presence of the buttons are present not at the usual place near the doors, but on the right side, allowing people on a wheelchair to access it without a



A view of the metro rail's interior.  
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problem,” explained a CMRL official.

Each metro station will have three such elevators for the public. The station will have customer relationship assistants (CRA) if the disabled need them. Thirty CRAs have been trained in sign language.

The platform is made of tiles with tactile markings that can be followed.

The height of the platform and train have been made such that they are away by a few centimetres, allowing a wheelchair to enter without a hitch.

The problem persists at local train stations in the city: tactile tiles exist, but the inline between the plat-

form and train is almost impossible to be scaled on a wheelchair unless there is help.

Each of the two coaches have two seats reserved for the physically challenged. The seats also make way for a space for wheelchairs.

Each of the coaches is built with a delay button which, when pressed, delays the closing of doors. “Once the button is pressed by any individual the driver keeps the doors open for longer, looking through the CCTV connected to his cabin, allowing the safe entry or exit of the passenger. This is helpful for both the elderly and the differently abled,” said an official.