

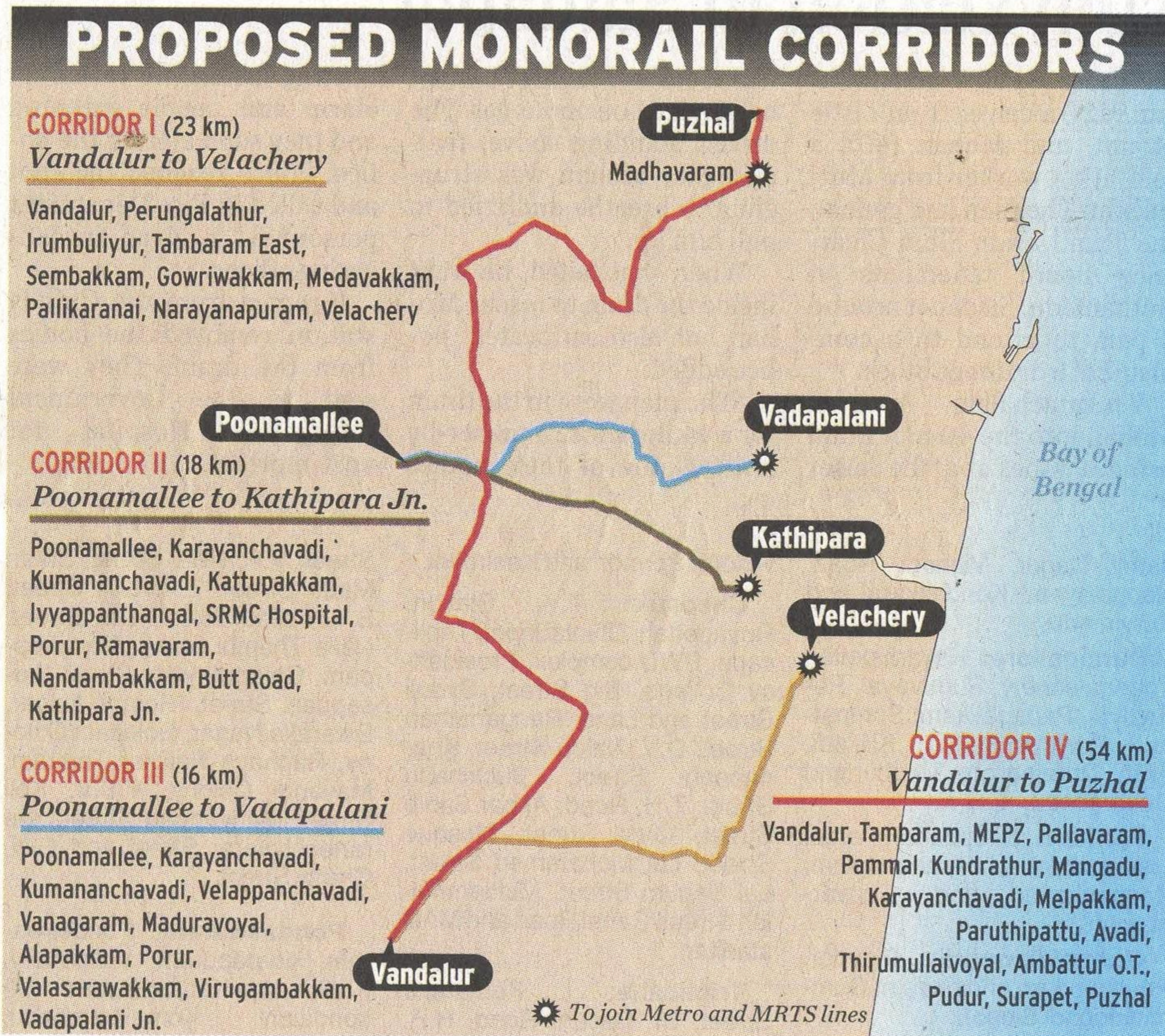
Plan to integrate public transport in city

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CHENNAI: The State government in its Budget on Monday has announced a comprehensive plan to develop mass transit corridors on Anna Salai and EVR Periyar Salai. As part of the plan to create better access to public transport, the government would be giving funds to the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) for purchasing new buses and to commission the Metro rail.

Satisfied with the fast progress of the Metro project, a sum of Rs.750 crore has been allotted in the Budget for 2012-13. The Phase 1 of the 45-km project would have two corridors – Washermenpet to Chennai Airport and Chennai Central to St. Thomas Mount. The metro would provide the much needed relief on the congested corridors of Anna Salai and EVR Periyar Salai.

With Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (CUMTA) being activated, it gives a fillip to the unification of the different public transport facilities. This will integrate the public transport in the city including buses, Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS), suburban rail network, monorail and the ongoing Metro.



Note: Phase I - Corridor I, II, III Phase II: Corridor IV

The government has announced that the monorail project would be taking off shortly with the calling of the global bids. The first phase is estimated to cost Rs. 8,500 crore and would cover three routes stretching for 57 kilometres. The three routes are:

Vandalur to Velachery via Tambaram East, Poonamallee to Kathipara via Porur, and Poonamallee to Vadapalani via Valasaravakkam. The project will be implemented through the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) model.

The second phase of the project would be running for 54 kilometres from Vandalur to Puzhal via Madhavaram.

Nearly Rs. 548 crore has been allotted for purchasing 3,000 new buses for State Transport Undertakings (STU) including MTC. Also e-

ticketing system through hand-held devices would be introduced in all STU buses to reduce the workload of bus conductors and to ease purchasing of tickets by commuters.

The State government would be seeking funds from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to take up several infrastructure projects such as forming link roads, widening of roads, constructing grade separators and elevated roads.

The infrastructure projects form part of the Chennai Traffic and Transportation Study carried out by the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority. Other highlights in the budget that should bring cheer include: Our faulty traffic signals should not put one to further test.

Of the Rs.65 crore sanctioned for road safety, Rs.25 crore is earmarked for the Highways Department, with the amount being utilised for improving traffic infrastructure and awareness. Highway patrol would also be further increased with the existing 122 patrol units increased to 260. More reasons for one should vroom on an e-bike now. The VAT on electrically operated two-wheelers is reduced from 14.5 per cent to 5 per cent.