

When Chennai Central becomes the city's transport hub

Urban intermodal integration will become a reality at the station when Metro Rail becomes fully operational in a few years

Sunitha Sekar

CHENNAI: When the Metro Rail is ready to run, the Chennai Central station junction will be a classic case of urban intermodal integration.

Nearly every form of public ground transport – buses and trains (suburban, inter-State and mass rapid transit system-MRTS) – will be linked to the Metro Rail station at Chennai Central.

A few years down the line, when Metro Rail becomes operational, this point will be the ideal interconnect for public transport in the city, say Metro Rail officials.

The pace of construction of Chennai Central Metro station – the largest of the underground stations, sprawling 70,000 sq. m. at a depth of 25 metres – is gaining ground.

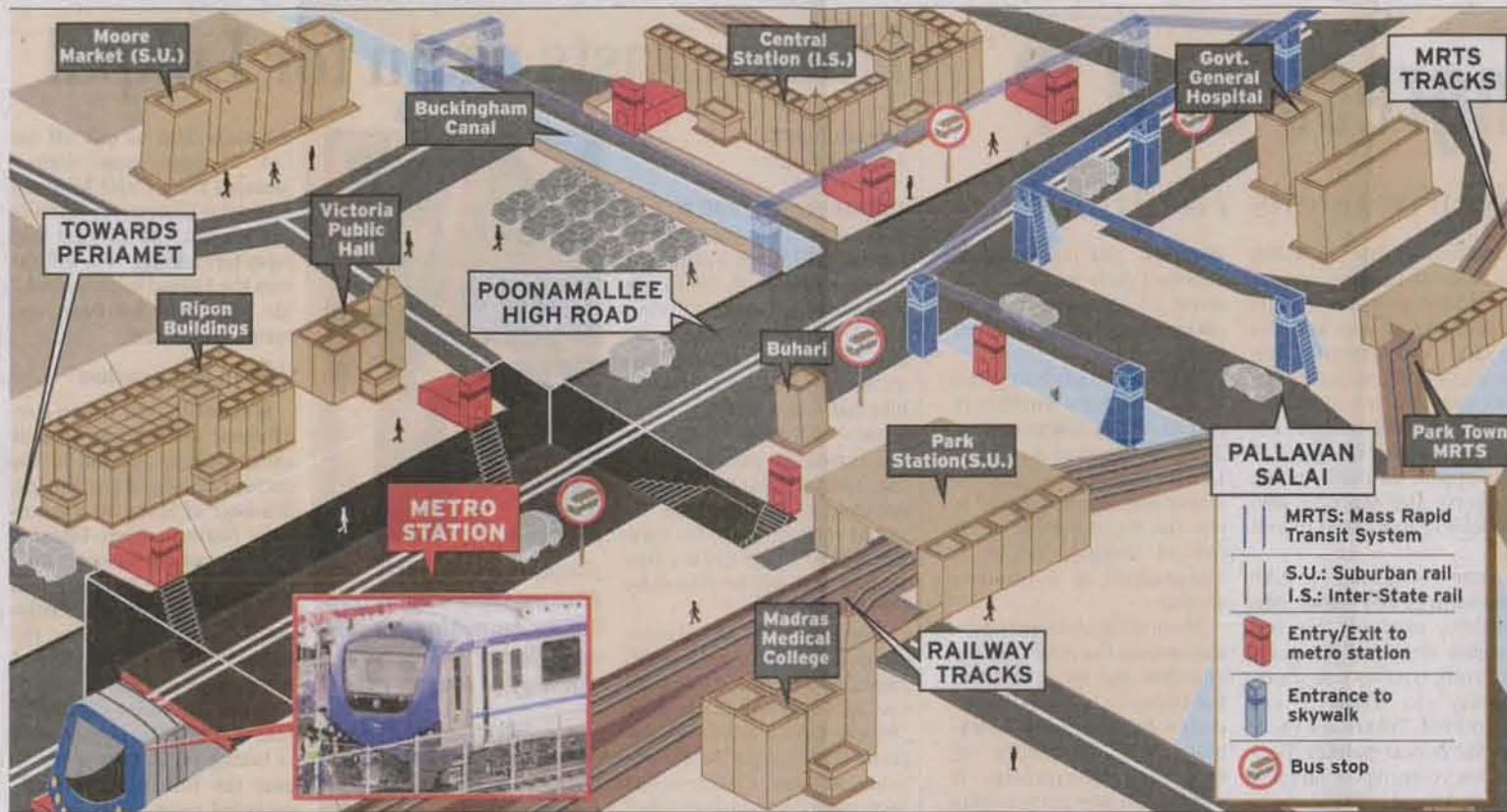
"We are currently constructing the diaphragm wall (a box-like concrete structure around the station). Simultaneously, excavation work and construction of roof slab and one entry/exit are also taking place," says an official of Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL).

Multiple points of access

The station will have six entry/exit points for access to Southern Railway, suburban

PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

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*The transparent skywalk is the proposed structure, subject to approval

INFOGRAPHIC: SATWIKGADE

and MRTS stations, Ripon Buildings and Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital. "We will create footpaths for the convenience of pedestrians who may want to switch from one mode of transport to another," the official says.

There will be adequate parking, over three layers, for about 500 cars and 1,000 two-wheelers, according to officials.

Chennai Metro Rail, being built at a cost of Rs. 14,600 crore, will have two corridors – one, connecting Washermenpet to the airport via Chennai Central

and the other from Chennai Central to St. Thomas Mount. Chennai Central Metro station will be the hub that will connect both

these corridors. "We are expecting the footfall at the station to run to several lakhs," says another official.

In a joint venture, Afcons and Transtunnelstroy bagged the contract worth Rs. 1,566 crore from CMRL to construct Chennai Central Metro along with eight other stations.

Airport check-in at station

This apart, CMRL also plans to introduce airport check-in facility at Central Metro station. According to CMRL officials, passengers can complete check-in procedures, collect their boarding passes at this station, take the Metro to the airport, get security clearance at the terminal and board the flight.

There is a five-level terminal Metro Rail station, spread over 17,300 sq. m., coming up at the airport. But Metro Rail work at the airport stands suspended as CMRL terminated the contract awarded to Lanco Infratech Limited due to delay in execution of the work.

If the work resumes soon at airport Metro station and its progresses as per schedule at Chennai Central Metro station, then the airport-rail link will be a reality in Chennai by 2015, officials say.

Skywalk closer to reality now

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: The city's first pedestrian skywalk is closer to reality with the first phase connecting six points getting clearance.

The skywalk will come up along Poonamallee High Road and connect four points inside Government General Hospital, Park Town railway station on the MRTS line, and Evening Bazaar Road.

The L-shaped facility will be 600 metres long and cut across Poonamallee High Road at one point.

The construction is expected to commence in March next year, and on completion, will help the large number of patients and visitors to the hospital. Over 13,000 pedestrians cross the road at Chennai Central during rush hour.

The skywalk has already received clearance from Southern Railway, and only recently, hospital authorities gave in-principle approval for the proposal.