

METRO DIPS AND CLIMBS OVER CITY

OTA TO AIRPORT Metro has begun work on this stretch. The line will be an engineering marvel as it enters airport land, goes underground near Trident Hotel, emerges after 500m and enters the main road to reach the airport station. Movement of heavy vehicles has been restricted along GST Road from Tambaram to prevent traffic congestion as metro will intensify work soon

KATHIPARA Metro is working out a strategy to install viaducts over Kathipara flyover. In two months, machines will install spans over the arms of the flyover. Work will be done at night to reduce traffic congestion. Two elevated lines — Saidapet-Airport and Koyambedu-St Thomas Mount — will soar over the arms. The lines will converge at Alandur metro station

SLOW AND STEADY

Metro rail work is gaining momentum, but the construction is slowing the pace of traffic on the roads, especially at Guindy and Little Mount

GUINDY It is a hub where commuters change over to travel to different parts of the city. Metro work will be tough as the elevated line crosses the main road to reach Guindy railway station adjacent to which metro is constructing its station. Pillars have been completed and viaducts have been placed along the stretch from Little Mount to Guindy bridge. Now, viaducts have to be placed from Guindy bridge to the proposed metro station

LITTLE MOUNT Metro rail will install a viaduct over the main road where the line turns from Saidapet towards Guindy. The metro alignment turns along with the road towards Guindy. Preliminary work to build Little Mount metro station is on at this spot. This is tricky as the intersection a busy one. Metro has occupied the road, so carriage space has reduced and traffic moves slowly



ALANDUR Metro's elevated lines over Kathipara flyover will take a sharp left to enter Alandur metro station. The Saidapet - Airport stretch will emerge from the station and then turn right into airport campus and then go underground

Illustration: Shinod Akkarapambill

Washermanpet-Airport Line To Rise Over Kathipara, Go Underground Near Airport; Ride To Be Theme-Park Thriller

V Ayyappan | TNN

Metro rail's elevated line is taking shape at Guindy like a mammoth jigsaw puzzle being solved with rapid precision. Within two months, an army of dedicated workers building the rapid transit system will construct a viaduct that soars over the clover-leaf Kathipara grade separator, using giant cranes to install pillars up to 22 metres high. Once completed, the viaduct will be an unprecedented architectural marvel in Chennai.

A train on metro rail's 23.1km corridor from Washermanpet to the airport will first plunge underground and hurtle along Anna Salai till Saidapet as traffic whizzes by on the road above. It will then run above ground from Saidapet to Guindy, before rocketing up to the height of a seven-storey building over the Kathipara fly-

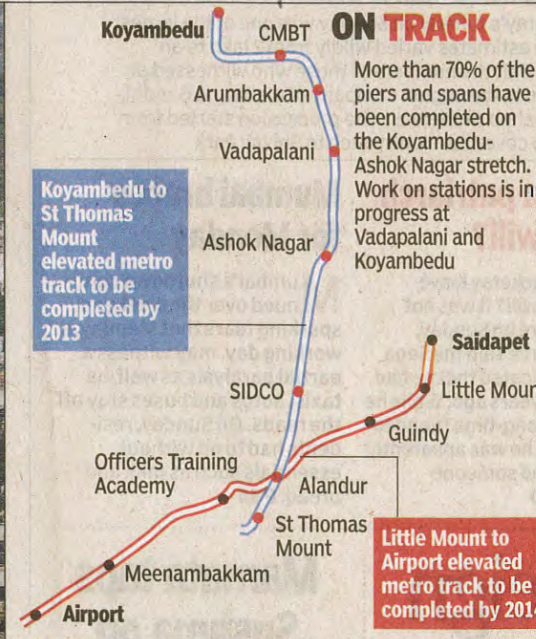
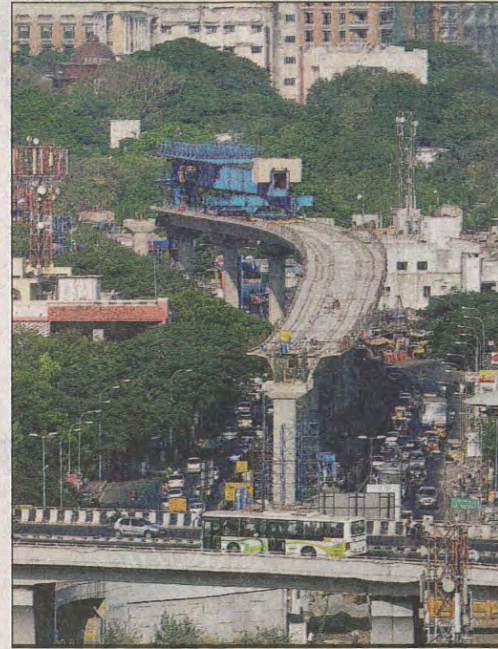
ver and then snaking its way to Meenambakkam.

"Prefabricated sections will be assembled and installed for the viaduct in the middle of night to minimise traffic disruption," a senior official of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL) said. "We will stop traffic on the flyover for a few hours each night once the pillars are installed for work to assemble the sections."

The line will be six to seven metres higher than the flyover. Metro rail officials said constructing the elevated line from Little Mount to the airport will be a more challenging task than building the line from Koyambedu to St Thomas Mount as the work will have

UP IN THE AIR: Pillars for the metro line near Kathipara flyover take shape. The line will be as high as a seven-storey building over the flyover

C Suresh Kumar



to be done along one of the busiest stretches in Guindy. Installing spans over Kathipara flyover will be a huge task. Near the airport, engineers will have to factor in the flight path of aircraft.

"We have completed the stretches that are easier and quicker to build," the senior CMRL official said. "Now we are ready to start work on the sections that are harder to build, like the viaduct over the Kathipara flyover."

More than half of the pillars and spans needed from Little Mount to Officers' Training Academy (OTA) have been installed. Of the 271 pillars required, 172 are in place as are 51 spans of the 80 spans. Work is now progressing on the Little Mount metro station.

The pillars and spans were installed by diverting traffic through Dr MGR Medical University.

"We will restore the road and give back land occupied to the university to build a new road

when metro line construction is completed," another CMRL official said.

Metro workers are cutting a trench near the airport after demolishing the old perimeter wall diagonally opposite Trident Hotel where the line will go underground for more than 500 metres to stay out of the flight path of aircraft using the airport's secondary runway.

Work is moving fast between OTA and the airport, with 14 of the 95 pillars needed being erected on GST Road from OTA to Meenambakkam.

The elevated line along Guindy will be like a theme park thrill ride, turning right from Saidapet, then left and plunging down alongside the Guindy flyover to cross the railway line and reach Guindy metro station. The line will then rise over the main road again and soar over Kathipara flyover.