

Metro to link route planned under monorail network

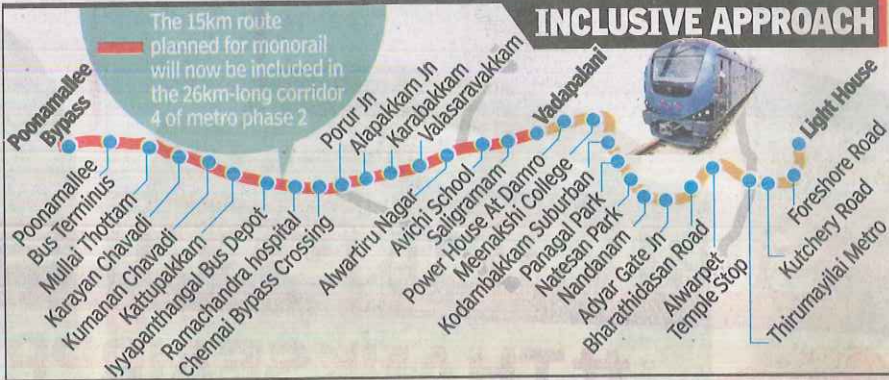
Porur, Other Areas To Be Part of Phase-2

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Chennai: It is not clear if monorail, one of former chief minister J Jayalalithaa's pet projects, will ever see the light of the day but localities like Porur, Iyyapanthangal and Poonamallee, planned under the system, will be linked under the 118.9-km phase-2 of Chennai Metro Rail Limited.

A comprehensive study on passenger flow revealed high traffic density between Porur and Poonamallee that metro rail, not monorail, is capable of handling it, said CMBRL managing director Pankaj Kumar Bansal. Corridor 4, now planned between Light House and CMBT, will be extended up to Poonamallee and will finally stretch over 26.1km with 30 stations. The 118.9-km phase-2, estimated to cost ₹69,000cr, will comprise corridors 3, 4 and 5.

"We presented the traffic data to the state government



and suggested that metro rail would be more suitable in these localities than monorail. After the government approval, we revised corridor-4," Bansal said. Talks are on with four international banks and construction may begin soon, he said.

As of 2012, monorail was to connect Kathipara to Poonamallee — linking Porur, SRMC Hospital, Iyyapanthangal, Kattupakkam, Kumananchavadi and Karayan-chavadi in a 'Y' shaped alignment including an arm from Porur to Vadapalani — and Velachery to Vandalur. While Kathipara is linked with Alandur in metro phase-1, the rest are part of phase-2.

After the government's approval, an additional detailed project report for corridor 4 retained the stretch between Light House and Vadapalani as per the old plan, but tweaked the route from Vadapalani to link localities from Porur to Poonamallee. Corridor 5 was also changed to include CMBT and Kaliyamman Koil Street that were removed from corridor 4. Now, stations have been planned at Alwathirunagar, Valasaravakkam, Karabakkam, Alapakkam Junction and Porur junction as interchange facilities linking corridors 4 and 5.

A part of corridor 4, initially planned to be underground, has now been changed to

elevated. Officials said the line between Light House and Meenakshi College in Kodambakkam will be underground, as it links the city core. From Meenakshi College to Poonamallee will be elevated. "We decided to change it to elevated as there is availability of space," an official said.

The state government proposed a 42-km two-corridor monorail at an estimated ₹6,402cr and tasked Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) to execute. But the project is yet to take off. Experts had been highlighting that the city would require a mix of metro rail and monorail system to make public transport popular.