

Landscaping At Central In 6 Months, Underground Parking At Shenoy Nagar By 2021

# By year-end, these metro stations will get lawns, lounges, parking lots

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**A** year down the line, you could grab a coffee, lounge on a lawn watching cars zip past some of the busiest stretches and then board a metro train or drive away in your car parked in an underground lot.

Three infrastructure projects being built by Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) are taking shape at Central, Shenoy Nagar and Guindy. These complexes — which will have parking, food courts, entertainment options and integrate multiple modes of transport — will be complete by the end of this year.

If Central Square will boast of a 30-storey plaza, there will be an underground passenger amenities centre with a mini-mall in west Chennai at Shenoy Nagar and an urban square for south Chennai at Guindy. The facilities are being developed to generate additional non-ticketing revenue for CMRL.

"The landscaping on street level above Central metro will begin after Pongal holidays. In six months, there will be lawns and greenery. The underground parking at Central will be ready in a year and the one at Shenoy Nagar by March 2021. The Kathipara project will be completed this year," said a metro rail official.

Amid public outrage, the underground centre below Shenoy Nagar's Thiru Vi Ka park, which lost more than 138 trees to make way for the station, is taking shape. Construction slowed down when residents, concerned over losing their only green space, moved work to stop work. Officials said work has picked up pace after the court ruled in CMRL's favour.

"Shenoy Nagar will become like Anna Nagar in a few years and we want to have a facility which people can utilise. We will begin restoration of the park after construction is complete," an of-

## TAKING SHAPE

What metro rail is building to augment its services



icial said.

Laying the foundation for the 30-storey central plaza is underway. It will double up as an underground parking facility. The square will be a multi-modal hub for commuters who can park vehicles and board buses, trains or metro trains. Work is on to build two new pedestrian subways that will link the government hospital with Central station and Evening Bazaar Road. "Central Square will be an identity for the city. It will decongest the road by taking the pedestrian crowd underground and by providing space for vehicles parked on the road," an official said. Kathipara will become a multi-modal hub linking Alandur and Guindy metro stations, Guindy suburban railway station, and Alandur and Guindy bus stops.

But experts said CMRL should invest more on last-mile connectivity that will encourage people to use public transport. "Central Square is a great opportunity to seamlessly integrate long-distance trains, metro and suburban rail, and buses. But destroying a park to build off-street parking is outdated. Paris followed such old-school principles in the 1960s, but today it is reducing parking requirements. Parking is a magnet that attracts more vehicles," said Aswathy Dhillip, senior programme manager, ITDP.

## WHERE

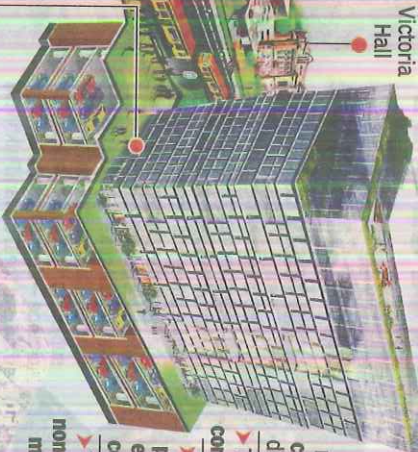
### CENTRAL SQUARE

**30-storey Central Plaza** with bays for private and government buses

**Three-level underground parking** with space for more than 800 cars

**Two new pedestrian subways** across Poonamallee High Road

**Landscaping, walkways, fountains** in front of Ripon Building and Victoria Hall



## WHAT

**3 non-rail infrastructure projects** by metro rail under construction in three different parts of city

- > These will near completion by 2020-end
- > Projects will provide parking space, food and entertainment for commuters and visitors
- > These will generate non-ticketing revenue for metro rail

### KATHIPARA JUNCTION

**Intermodal urban square** will link Alandur and Guindy metro stations, Guindy suburban rail stations, and Alandur bus stops

- > Bus bay, parking area, toilet blocks, office blocks, kids' play area, seating area, galleries, open-air theatre, ATMs

### SHENOY NAGAR

**Two-level underground commuter amenities centre** under Thiru.Vi.Ka Park

- > Parking for 600 cars and 1,000 bikes
- > Shopping area, Restaurants

Illustrations: Shind Akkararambali



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