

Metro's 31-storey edifice to house hotels on top floors

Other floors will have a museum, offer office space

SUNITHA SEKAR

CHENNAI

Sitting in a restaurant on the 31st floor, residents and visitors can take in a panoramic view of the city. They also can have a bird's eye view of the iconic heritage buildings below, such as the Central Railway Station, Victoria Public Hall and Ripon Buildings lined up on one side and the bustling streets on the other side.

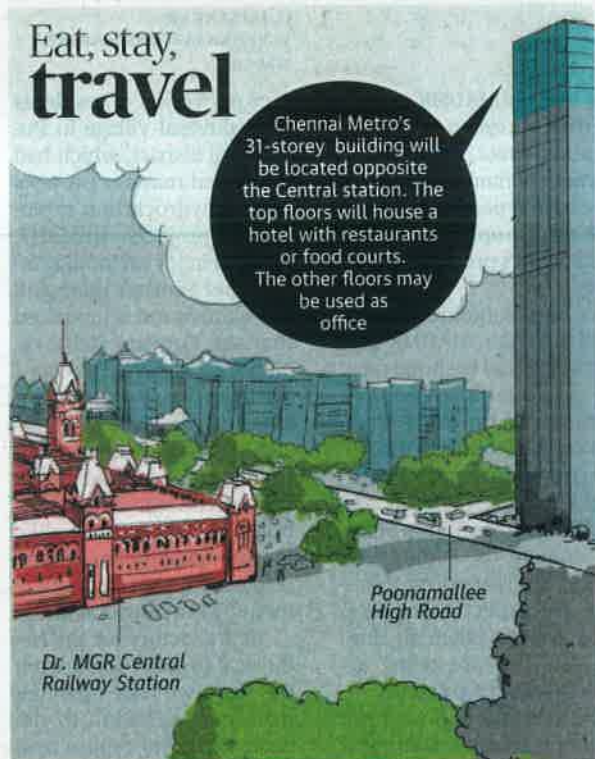
Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is building a massive Central Square near the Central station with a 31-storey building.

Now, the CMRL has decided that top few floors of the building will house hotels. There will also be a host of options for people to dine in one of the top floors, sources said.

Central Square has been planned in such a way that commuters can seamlessly switch from one mode of transport to another. They will have several choices to travel.

There will be exclusive bus bays, underground parking lots, option to travel from MRTS or suburban or Metro or outstation bound trains.

"We thought there should also a nice option for people visiting the city to stay and dine in this heritage area. We want to make it a tran-



sport and commercial hub that offers commuters everything. Apart from a hotel and restaurant, we may have most of the floors for office space," an official said.

The CMRL has got no-objection certificate from the Airports Authority of India (AAI) already and is awaiting two more mandatory clearances.

"First, we got the nod from AAI for the 31-storey building as there are ob-

structions and safety issues in the flight path. Now, we are working to get approvals from CMDA and Fire and Rescue Services Department. As soon as the approvals come, we should be able to call for tenders to begin the construction," the official said.

The CMRL is also in the process of having a museum at Central Square that will exhibit how Chennai Metro was built in the city.