

# Benches, fountains at Central Square in 3 months

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** In around three months, the city will get a new getaway spot where adults could relax by pruned lawns and children could play next to water fountains. A part of the Central Square will be ready with the area above Central Metro station in front of Moore Market Complex, Victoria Hall and Ripon Building getting lawns, walkways and benches. The Rs 400cr project aims to develop a landmark that will facilitate a multi-modal transport system and encourage pedestrians to use underground facilities.

“Much of it will be ready in three months. Our idea is to develop the area into a major landmark in the city,” said a metro rail official.



B A Raju

**TAKING SHAPE:** Work on at the Central Square

By mid-2020, the area will have black-tiled concrete benches, ground-level water fountains with tiny sprinklers, decorative lights along the rims of the benches and elevators of Central metro. While the open area above Central Metro in front of Moore Market Complex will have facilities for people to relax and child-

ren to play, the space in front of Victoria Hall and Ripon Building, which was taken over during construction of Central Metro, will be laid with lawns and benches.

“We will demolish a part of the compound wall around Victoria Hall and build a raised pedestrian crossing to link it with the open area around

Central Metro. This raised crossing will allow vehicles to slow down while pedestrians cross,” an official said.

While much of the beautification work is expected to be ready by mid-2020, officials said a major part of the Central Square project which includes an underground parking and two new pedestrian subways is likely to be ready in one year.

The construction of a three-level underground parking lot that can accommodate more than 800 cars is underway near the Park suburban station. Once the parking lot is ready, a 20-storey Central Plaza with bays for private and government buses, passenger amenities, shopping area and office space will be built. Contract for the construction of

Central Plaza will be floated separately, an official said.

Apart from a renovated pedestrian subway and another new subway linking Central Metro, which are open for the public, construction is on for two other pedestrian subways linking Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital with Central and Evening Bazaar Road and Central Railway Station with the bridge opposite.

Once the square comes up, passengers alighting from any train or bus can have easy access to other transport facilities for their onward journeys either through walkways or pedestrian subways. Passengers could also park their vehicles in the underground parking facility before they board a train or bus to travel outstation.