KMRL to take up work with French help

MG Road to get facelift

DC CORRESPONDENT
Kochi, June 5

As part of its urban transport development plans, Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) will undertake an urban rejuvenation package to revamp MG Road, which has been in very bad shape due to the ongoing Metro works, with the help of French urban planning experts.

A delegation from CODATU, a French non-profit knowledge provider agency and Lyon Urban Planning Agency are in the city for the last four days and have visited major city centres and prepared a design and road map for developing roads and streets.

Initially, KMRL will convene a meeting of shop owners along MG Road and other stakeholders of the city development within two weeks to discuss the proposal. Addressing a press conference here on Friday, KMRL managing director Elias George said that MG Road would be converted into a vibrant dynamic urban street cum shopping space.

“We’ve asked the French experts to provide an ideal plan for MG Road’s revamp and requested them not to consider the political or other constraints,” he said. Addressing the media, officials of the French agencies said that MG Road would be developed into a quality public space with enough street furniture, pedestrian friendly facilities, trees and vegetation.

Some of the proposals to upgrade MG Road are pedestrianisation of a 300 metre stretch in front of Mahatma Gandhi College Stadium, pedestrian lane integrating the Metro Pillars, keeping an easy access to underground parking and inner courtyards, two way street on the left side of the Metro pillars, planting more trees and selecting a nice pattern for the pavement.

Patrice Berger and Julia Rudolph of the Lyon Transport Authority and the Lyon Urban Planning Agency respectively and Étienne Lhomet and Marion Hoyez of CODATU were at the press conference.

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— ELIAS GEORGE, KMRL managing director
Vyttila, Edappally to be sub centres

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI, JUNE 5

The French urban planning experts have submitted a proposal and design to the Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) on developing Vyttila and Edappally as major city sub centres. The two areas are strategically very important and can be the major interconnection points of various modes of transport, according to them.

Some of the major developments in plans proposed for Vyttila are providing easy access for the pedestrians to the Hub and to convert the Mobility Hub into a state-of-the-art public facility which will integrate major modes of transports.

According to the foreign urban planners, Edappally junction assumes great significance with the presence of big shopping mall, church, mosque and residential areas.

 "Our next mission will be in Kochi by the end of July followed by our next visit in September. Our objective is to prepare an ambitious vision for the Kochi of the 21st century with an addition of features like quality public spaces, pedestrian friendly areas and shopping streets,” said Etienne Lhomme of CODATU.

Meanwhile, responding to the implementation of the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA) KNRTA, executive director Elias George said that the UMTA bill was still under the consideration of the state government. “Since the government has already issued an order in this regard we can constitute the Authority before the bill is passed,” he said.

KOCHI METRO RAIL

Authorities aim to turn the city into a pedestrian-friendly urbanscape, which interconnects multiple modes of transport

Special Correspondent

A blueprint for pedestrianisation of three core centres of the city with revamped public spaces has been submitted.

"Our aim is to redesign the city along the metro rail route to facilitate people to migrate to hassle-free transport with integrated multimodal public transport and other amenities," said Elias George, MD of KMRL and chairman of the UMTRA Consultancy Team.

Officials of the French delegation said that the arterial M.G. Road could be redesigned with a green environment up to the oldest section of the city and Edappally could become an open, walkable, multi-modal hub.

A 300-metre stretch in front of Mahatma Gandhi College ground could be turned into a 10-lane two-way street.

There could also be a pedestrian lane by integrating the Metro rail to walkways. While the existing Metro rail station could be upgraded, the South Railway Station could have a new park and additional parking area. A new bus rapid transit corridor (BRT) could be linked to the Metrorail by a bus lane, they suggested.

"The French experts have proposed a two-way structure on one side of the Metro, while the other side with a designer pavement could be exclusively for pedestrians, the French consultants said.

The Hospital Road would connect the college ground and provide easy access to cellular parking areas and other facilities. While there would be a two-way street on one side of the Metro, the other side with a designer pavement could be exclusively for pedestrians, the French consultants said.

"Our aim is to redesign the city along the metro rail route to facilitate people to migrate to hassle-free transport with integrated multimodal public transport," Elias George said.

NEW VISION TO SMARTEN KOCHI

TARGETTED COMPLETION IN 2 YEARS

- Development of bus station
- Walkways to nearby places
- Development of pedestrian-friendly areas
- Interconnection of water, road, rail transport
- BRT
- 300-metre pedestrian way in front of Mahatma Gandhi College
- Upgrade of KSMRT bus stand

Two-way street on one side of the Metro for traffic on the other for walkers

Alternative pedestrian roads to turn M.G road into a shopping hub

Hospital road to have park and walkway

KSMRT bus stand

Upgrade of KSMRT bus stand

Walkways to nearby places

Development of pedestrian-friendly areas

Interconnection of water, road, rail transport

BRT

300-metre pedestrian way in front of Mahatma Gandhi College

KSMRT bus stand

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KMRL Plan for a Chic Kochi

It focuses on some key features long ignored by Town Planners.

Express News Service

Kochi: In its effort to revamp the urban transport scenario of the city, the Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) has come up with a comprehensive plan which will focus on some key features long ignored by Town Planners.

As a preliminary step, the KMRL, with the support of CODATU, the knowledge providers on urban mobility, has mooted some ambitious proposals that can change the face of the 21st century Kochi.

"Our plan is to give a boost to the public transportation system and better pedestrian facilities. Along with the construction of a world-class metro rail, KMRL also wants to integrate major transport systems, which is the idea behind the single ticketing system we are planning. By giving a boost to the public transport system, KMRL hopes that more people will migrate to the public transport sector from private vehicles and cars," said KMRL managing director Elias George.

He said that the KMRL, in its urban rejuvenation package, will give top priority to the development of M G Road. "Our vision is to convert M G Road, which is not in a good state now, into an advanced urban road. There are a number of commercial establishments on both the sides of the road. We will soon convene a meeting of various stakeholders of the city’s development and the merchants and shop owners of M G Road to discuss a comprehensive plan to restructure the thoroughfare and convert it into the most active commercial space in the city. The French team has come up with a plan which we will discuss it with them," he added.

Regarding the implementation, George said that KMRL is totally aware of the hurdles that it needs to overcome while converting its vision into reality. "We hope that we will be able to overcome the political constraints and the technical difficulties by formulating a viable plan," George added.

Along with M G Road, the French agency has come up with a plan to develop two major junctions – Edappally and Vyttila – into two other main centres in the city.

"Our next mission will be in Kochi by the end of July, followed by the one in September. We are into the process of preparing an ambitious plan for the Kochi of 21st century with add-on features like more pedestrian streets, pedestrian-friendly areas and more public spaces," said Eloiem Lhomet, representative of CODATU.

Vyttila In

- Changing the image of the existing Mobility Hub into a state-of-the-art public facility which will integrate major modes of transport, including rail, road and water.
- Providing an easy access for the pedestrians to the hub.

Edappally In

- Better connectivity to the junction with the help of city busses. Other than the bus bays, even a small sub-centre similar to the hub can be planned in the area as the bus station at Aluva is far from the junction.
- Integration of the Metro system with a bus rapid system.
- Easy access to the nearby areas (St George Church, mosques, schools and apartment complexes) through pedestrian paths.
KMRL unveils ‘dream vision’ for MG Road

**THE ROAD AHEAD**

Pedestrian-friendly plan proposed for arterial road

**Kochi:** In what is being called a ‘dream vision’ for urban planning, the Kochi Metro Rail Ltd (KMRL) has come up with a pedestrian-friendly route map to integrate the public transport system in the city on Friday.

The Metro agency has targeted MG Road for the first phase of the project and hopes to simultaneously develop Edappally and Vyttila as city sub-centres.

**KOCHI METRO**

The route map, presented by KMRL, proposes to limit vehicular movement on MG Road to the eastern side of Kochi Metro's pillars from Madhava Pharmacy Junction to Jea Junction. And the stretch on western side of the pillars will be developed for pedestrians and other non-motorised transport (NMT) such as bicycles.

"The whole idea is to develop the public transport system. We want people to migrate from cars to public transport such as buses. And our priority is to provide better facilities to pedestrians in public spaces," KMRL managing director Elias George said.

The concept sketches of the project are ready and the agency will hold discussions with various stakeholders, including merchant organisations and local bodies, in two weeks and chalk out a detailed plan.

Initially, KMRL will focus on developing a 300m stretch in front of Mahatma Gandhi Road as a model project. Trees would be planted on this stretch for comfort and shade. The pedestrian lane would be designed in such a way to provide easy access to underground parking spaces and inner courtyards of buildings along the road.

"We will try to provide centralised and multilevel parking facilities. The possibility of utilising existing parking spaces on roads adjacent to MG Road will be explored. The Kochi corporation has expressed willingness to provide land to set up parking spaces," said a KMRL spokesperson.

The Metro agency has also proposed "a green continuity between the sea and MG Road". As part of the plan, new parks and wider footpaths will be developed on Hospital Road which connects MG Road and Park Avenue. A bus lane will connect the waterfront on Park Avenue to Kochi Metro stations. The existing KSRTC bus depot on the road will be upgraded.

KMRL also said Edappally and Vyttila would be developed as a green and pedestrian-friendly multimodal hub. Public spaces will be developed along the canal. Apart from this, Vyttila will be turned into an attractive sub-centre. Edappally and Vyttila have already grown as commercial hubs.

"We want to begin work on MG Road as KMRL is keen to rectify harm done to businesses due to Metro work. This is an ongoing process and expected to be in place within the next two years," said George.

The ‘dream vision’ was announced after holding the workshop - a mass transit project: An opportunity for urban development - to create a road map for an integrated transport system for Kochi.