

■ **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 shopowners 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 ag-



MG Road. (File picture)

encies 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 Maharajas 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 Etienne Lhomet and Marion Hoyez of CODATU were at the press conference.



MG Road will 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

— 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 Edappally and Vyttila 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 development 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

AMBITIOUS PLAN



● According to the foreign urban planners, Edappally junction assumes great significance with the presence of big shopping mall, church, mosque, schools 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 ADD ON FEATURES LIKE QUALITY PUBLIC SPACES, PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY AREAS AND SHOPPING STREETS
— ETIENNE LHOMET, of CODATU

junction assumes great significance with the presence of big shopping mall, church, mosque, schools and residential areas.

Better connectivity to the area with city buses, integration of the Metro with a bus rapid transit system,

development of public spaces along the Edappally Canal and construction of footpaths are some of the plans proposed for Edappally. The Edappally Canal should be developed for water transport for better connectivity, feel the experts.

“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 add on features like quality public spaces, pedestrian friendly areas and shopping streets,” said Etienne Lhomet of CODATU.

Meanwhile, responding to the implementation of the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA) KMRL managing 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

NEW VISION TO SMARTEN KOCHI

Special Correspondent

A blueprint for pedestrianisation of three core centres of the city with refreshing public spaces having a green cover and an integrated inter-modal transport system offering last-mile connectivity was flagged here on Friday.

The ambitious vision to catapult the city into a pedestrian-friendly urbanscape of the 21st century was conceived at a workshop held between May 30 and June 3 and attended, besides Kochi Metro Rail Limited, by CODATU – a French NGO supporting KMRL to interconnect multiple modes of transport, and officials from the French Lyon Town Planning Agency.

“Our aim is to redevelop the city along the metro rail route to facilitate people to migrate to hassle-free multimodal public transport with internet-based services and other amenities,” said Elias George, MD of KMRL and chairman of the proposed Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA), Kochi.

Officials of the French delegation said while the arterial M.G. Road could be

TARGETTED COMPLETION IN 2 YEARS



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

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

Hospital road to have park and walkway

300-metre pedestrian way in front of Maharaja's College stadium

Upgrade of KSRTC bus stand

Development of bus station
Walkways to nearby places
Green public spaces on either side of the canal and walkways
Skywalk to mall
Water transport
BRT
Interconnecting water, road, rail transport
BRT
Elevated parking

redesigned with ‘green continuity’ up to the sea-front abutting Subhash Park, Vyttila could be transformed into a sub-centre and Edappally could become a green, walkable, multimodal hub.

A 300-metre stretch in front of Maharaja's College Ground could be turned into a walkers' haven.

There could also be a pedestrian lane by integrating the Metro pillars, providing easy access to cellar parking areas and inner courtyards. While there would be a two-way street on one side of the Metro, the other

side with a designer pavement would be exclusively for pedestrians, the French consultants said.

The Hospital Road astride the college ground

“Our aim is to redevelop the city along the metro rail route to facilitate people to migrate to hassle-free multimodal public transport.”

ELIAS GEORGE
MD of KMRL

could have a new park and wide footpaths. For inter-connectivity, the water-front along the stretch could be linked to the Metro by way of a bus lane, they suggested.

Mr. George later added that KMRL would launch its own fleet of buses for metro's feeder service.

A key area along the waterfront off the Park Avenue Road could be rejuvenated as a vibrant public space.

While the existing KSRTC bus stand could be upgraded, the South Railway Station could have a

green public space in the front, with only taxis and autos allowed to drop passengers at the entrance.

Private vehicles could have a separate parking area not far away. The railway station could have a wide pedestrian bay linking it to Chittoor road, said the French experts.

Vyttila as sub-centre
The mobility hub could be an ‘iconic’ public facility with pedestrian access and elevated parking.

The pathway to the boat jetty here could be redeveloped for interconnectivity, with a possible bus

rapid transit corridor (BRT) along the bypass.

Edappally as hub
Metro could be linked to a BRT corridor while the canal there could be redeveloped for water transport. Wide walkways, some as broad as 10 metres, were proposed for effortless access to all nearby areas. A skywalk could be provided to the mall.

Mr. George said while UMTA Bill was with the government, sanction for UMTA was being accorded by way of a government order to fast-track the projects. Officials of the city corporation, other local bodies and merchants along the M.G. Road would be consulted before pressing ahead with the plans, he said.

The city mayor was actively involved in the four-day deliberations.

The French consultants said they would return in July and September this year to further fine-tune the plans and firm up a concrete proposal.

Etienne Lhomet and Marion Hoyez of CODATU and Julia Rudolph (urban landscaper) and Patrice Berger (urban architect) of Lyon Town Planning Agency attended.

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 Etienne Lhomet, representative of CODATU.

THE HIGHLIGHTS

M G Road

- Pedestrianisation of a 300-m stretch in front of Maharaja's College Stadium.
- Pedestrian lane integrating the Metro pillars, keeping an easy access to underground parking areas and inner courtyards.
- Two-way street on the left side of the M G Road with a walkway.
- Planting more trees for creating a green belt a long M G Road.

Vyttila Jn

- 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 Jn

- Better connectivity to the junction with the help of city buses. 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 Kaloor 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



TIMES NEWS NETWORK

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 Vytilla as city sub-centres.



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 Jos Junction. And the stretch on western side of the pillars will be developed for pedestrians and other non-motorized 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 organizations and local bodies, in two weeks and chalk out a detailed plan".

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

"We will try to provide centralized and multilevel parking facilities. The possibility of utilizing 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 line 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 would be developed as a green and pedestrian-friendly multimodal hub. Public spaces will be developed along the canal. Apart from this, Vytilla will be turned into an attractive sub-centre. Edappally and Vytilla 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.