

Experts call for scientific study on Hosur Metro line

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The proposed 23-km corridor, for which a detailed feasibility report is in the advanced stages of completion, is intended to connect Hosur with Bengaluru's Metro network. (Photo | Express)

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Updated on: 07 Aug 2026, 5:51 pm · 2 min read

BENGALURU: Amid Tamil Nadu's push for a proposed Metro link connecting Hosur with Bommasandra, transport experts have welcomed the focus on strengthening public transport but cautioned against prematurely deciding on a Metro, arguing that travel demand – not political announcements – should determine the mode of transit.

The proposed 23-km corridor, for which a detailed feasibility report is in the advanced stages of completion, is intended to connect Hosur with Bengaluru's Metro network.

Prof Ashish Verma, convenor, Indian Institute of Science's Sustainable Transportation Lab, said the feasibility study should establish demand in terms of passengers per hour per direction and identify peak-load sections before recommending a transit system.

"Public transport connectivity between important commercial centres is welcome, but deciding the system first and then conducting a feasibility study is an unscientific approach. The demand assessment should determine whether the corridor requires Metro, Metro Lite, suburban rail or an RRTS," he said.

Verma pointed out that several Indian cities introduced Metro systems despite inadequate demand, resulting in poor ridership and underutilised infrastructure. He also dismissed reports suggesting that system compatibility could prevent integration with Bengaluru Metro.

"Compatibility is not a real issue. Different systems only need physical integration at a common terminal where passengers can seamlessly transfer. We already have examples such as Kochi's Metro and Water Metro, and internationally there are interchanges between suburban rail, Metro, trams and ferries," he said.

'Suburban Rail to Hosur better option than Metro'

Rail and mobility expert Sanjeev Dyamannavar, however, questioned whether extending Bengaluru's existing Yellow Line to Hosur would be operationally suitable. "Metro systems are designed primarily for urban travel. If large numbers of commuters from Hosur begin using the same Metro, passengers boarding from Bommasandra, Electronics City and other Bengaluru stations may face severe overcrowding because Metro has limited carrying capacity," he said.

According to Dyamannavar, Metro is best suited for journeys of about 30-40 km, while longer regional trips are better served by suburban rail or RRTS. He recommended extending the proposed suburban rail line from Heelalige to Hosur instead.

"Suburban rail offers higher carrying capacity, faster speeds, fewer stops and lower construction costs. It can also be integrated with Chandapura Circle so that passengers travelling to central Bengaluru can transfer to Metro at Bommasandra or continue via suburban rail to KSR or any other railway station," he said.

He added that if governments remain keen on a Metro connection, they should consider a separate special purpose vehicle (SPV)-based cross-border Metro between Hosur and Electronics City instead of extending Bengaluru's existing Metro network, thereby preserving capacity for intra-city commuters while improving regional connectivity.