

■ Track welding starts ■ Third set of tunnel-boring machines lands

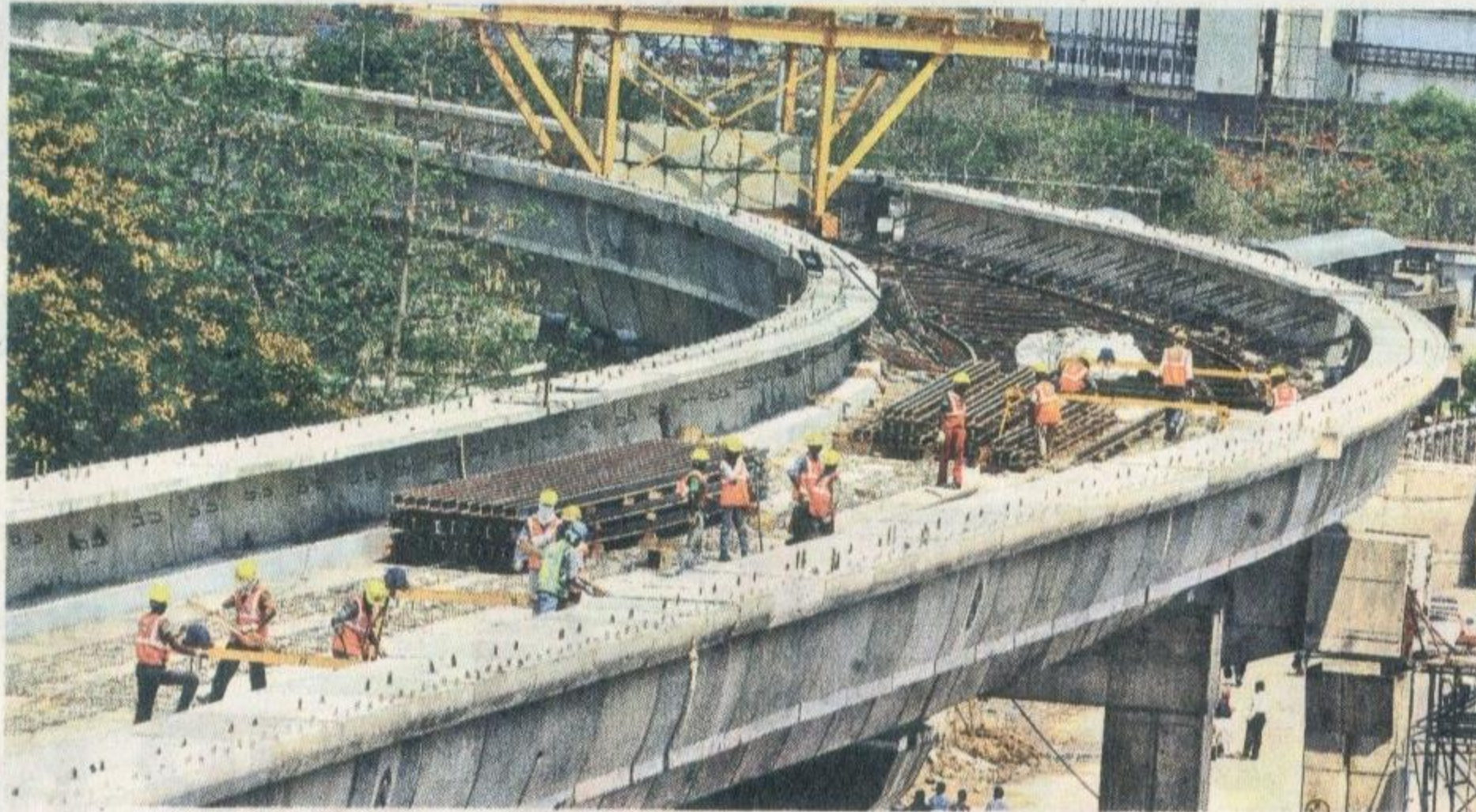
Metro track-laying work begins

K. KARTHIKEYAN | DC
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Work on the elevated section of Chennai metro rail between Koyambedu and St Thomas Mount has gained steam with the start of the track-laying works on the route.

The 18meter long imported tracks had been shifted to the work site and lifted on to the overhead decks since Monday. Senior CMRL (Chennai metro rail limited) officials told *Deccan Chronicle* that track welding would begin in a few days and fastening of the rails to the concrete blocks would follow it. CMRL officials have set December 2013 deadline for the commissioning of the Koyambedu-St Thomas elevated corridor.

Coincidentally, the third set of tunnel boring machines (TBMs) has



Workers are busy at preliminary works for laying the tracks on the decks of elevated corridor of Chennai metro rail on Koyambedu-St Thomas Mount stretch.

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arrived at the Chennai port. The two new TBMs would be dispatched in parts to the work site at

government Omandurar estate shortly, officials said adding that the two TBMs, fifth among the 11

TBMs, would be put to use for tunneling between Government Estate, LIC and Thousand Lights.

Currently, the diaphragm wall construction at the stations is in progress.

The TBMs have a capacity to tunnel up to 10ft per day. The fully automated TBMs are designed in such a manner that the machine would do tunnelling and construction of walls of the 'tube' alternatively with minimum human intervention. The tunnelling and underground wall construction would be paced in such a manner that the people in the buildings over ground would not feel the vibrations of the dredging taking place about 9meters below their feet.

CMRL got a shot in the arm recently when the Madras high court ruled in its favour on a PIL challenging the dredging happening under human habitations and construction of metro stations in old buildings.