

Metro rail completes its first tunnel in Anna Ngr

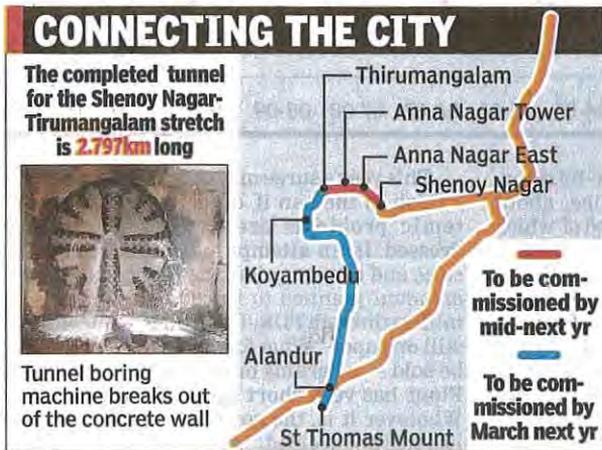
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: A tunnel for the Shenoy Nagar-Thirumangalam metro rail stretch, the first underground line likely to be commissioned by mid-next year, is ready. The first tunnel which is 2.797km long, was completed when a boring machine breached a concrete wall at Thirumangalam a few days ago. A second parallel tunnel will also be ready in a few days; the boring machine has covered 90% of the distance.

The underground stretch will link to the elevated line from Koyambedu to Alandur and St Thomas Mount which is due for commissioning by March next year. Residents of Anna Nagar will be able to use metro rail to reach Koyambedu, Alandur and St Thomas Mount when the Shenoy Nagar-Thirumangalam stretch is commissioned.

As the tunnels are being completed, metro rail is simultaneously building underground stations along the stretch. There are four underground stations planned—Shenoy Nagar, Anna Nagar East, Anna Nagar Tower and Thirumangalam.

A metro rail official said work on Thirumangalam station, Shenoy Nagar and Anna Nagar Tower is progressing fast. "Roof, concourse level



and base of the underground station have been completed at Thirumangalam station while roof and concourse slabs are being built at Shenoy Nagar," he added. The station room work is going on at Thirumangalam. Work is also on to excavate soil to build entries and exits to the two stations.

Construction of underground stations is a time consuming and tedious process because the stations are located in the middle of busy neighbourhoods. "We had to convince residents that it was safe as we had to dig close to the base of multi-storey residential buildings to build diaphragm walls which support the edges of the station buildings when soil is excavated

and base, concourse and roof of the stations are built," he added. Metro rail made many presentations to residents at different locations explaining the project, construction details and benefits.

However, the corporation is struggling to open the Koyambedu-Alandur elevated line which is behind schedule after a contractor failed to meet deadlines.

Metro rail officials are hopeful that the underground section will be completed on time as more than 60% of the tunneling work, which adds up to 36.308km, has been completed. The Central-Thirumangalam stretch of the underground line is progressing fast.