

# Top speed: Metro rail set to lay tracks in north tunnels

## CMRL Floats Tenders For Railway Line Switches

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** Completing tunneling work in north Chennai much ahead of deadline, Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL) is gearing up to lay tracks to connect Washermenpet with Korukkupet.

CMRL has floated tenders to procure turnouts (railway track switches) for ballastless tracks that enable trains to move from one line to another.

The 9km phase-1 extension project linking areas in North Chennai with the rest of the city is expected to be ready by mid-2019.

The tender is for supply of turnouts for tracks for the

### AHEAD OF TIME

**Phase-1 extension | Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar**

Project initiated in 2010

Cost | ₹3,770 crore

Underground stretch | 2km with two underground stations (Theagaraya College and Korukkupet)

Work for underground stretch



Total distance 9.051km

launched in July 2016

**Elevated stretch | 7km with six stations (Tondiarpet, Tolgate, Thangal, Gowri Ashram, Thiruvottiyur and Wimco Nagar)**

phase from Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar. The company taking up the contract is expected to supply the turnouts within a period of six months.

CMRL officials said they may, however, start laying tracks in the tunnels only by March 2018. They are also yet to float tenders for the supply and laying of the ballast-less tracks. "For phase-1, we floated a single tender for supply and laying of tracks. We will soon float tenders for phase-1

extension," an official said.

Ballastless tracks laid on concrete and bituminous mixture involves tracks laid with head-hardened steel. Unlike the tracks with ballast laid by Indian Railways, ballastless tracks last long, need less maintenance and can withstand high train speeds. Metro rail systems in other cities have ballast-less tracks.

The two tunnels connecting 2km from Washermenpet to Korukkupet were completed in September and

October, three months ahead of deadline.

"We still have work to do in underground stations before we start laying tracks," an official said.

The underground section will have three stations: Washermenpet, Theagaraya College and Korukkupet. Construction is underway on a 7km elevated corridor with six stations.

Around the same time when track-laying work is expected to begin in North Chennai, CMRL may be ready to open two lines including a part of Anna Salai between AG-DMS to Saidapet and Central Metro to Nehru Park. But before that, they want to complete the remaining portion of tunneling work in Anna Salai for phase-1 project.

Tunnel-boring machines are drilling past Anna Flyover toward DMS. While the first tunnel was completed on October 18, the second is expected to achieve breakthrough in about a month.