

Metro collects 1.7k soil samples

Priority Stretch Of 52Km To Link Madhavaram & Sholinganallur

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: Construction of a portion of metro rail's phase-2 is set to begin before the year end and soil samples from as many as 1,700 locations will be key in planning the men, machine and methodology to be adopted.

The 52km priority corridor, which is expected to begin by December, will link Madhavaram to Sholinganallur spanning more than 35.5km, and a portion of the IT hub on OMR and Madhavaram via CMBT that is 15.24-km long. "The corridor



CONNECTING CORNERS: The 52km corridor will link a portion of the IT hub on OMR and Madhavaram via CMBT spanning 15.24km

was divided into smaller stretches and tenders were awarded for soil investigations. Soil tests have been completed in most of the locations and we have already started receiving final reports," a Chennai Metro Ra-

il (CMRL) official said.

Unlike phase-1, where soil samples were collected every 100m, those for phase-2 have been collected for every 25m to 50m and analyzed. The soil collected will be studied for its properties and

will help decide the type of machines and methodology for construction. The type of soil will also decide the deadline for the construction.

During phase-1, soil investigation made contractors realize they were tunnelling near Central Metro through loose soil on top and rocky soil below. With the risk of sinkholes forming on the road and damaging nearby heritage structures high, tunnel-boring machines were operated below the average speed of 8metres a day. Boring a 500m long tunnel between high court and government hospital took nearly a year.

In phase-1, incomplete soil investigation was cited as a reason for a Russian tunnelling contractor abandoning work at Anna Salai. It was alleged that soil condi-

tion on Anna Salai was rocky, but it did not reflect in the soil investigation report. "Because soil samples were collected for every 100m, the strata in between were unpredictable. This time, we have collected for every 25m. So, there would no way of contractors running into unpredictable soil condition during construction," an official said.

Boring rigs drill 150mm diameter holes and soil samples are collected up to a depth of 450mm. Samples are then sent to a laboratory for analysis and a report is prepared.

CMRL is expected to float tenders for construction by June. "We also let the construction contractors conduct their own soil investigation before they start operations, as they plan their work accordingly," an official said.