

Service lanes along OMR may be opened to ensure metro rail work doesn't hit traffic

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: When construction for a portion of metro rail network's phase-2 starts by the year-end, motorists heading to their workplace along OMR may not face much hassle as service lanes may be opened for a smooth traffic movement.

The stretch from Tidel Park to Sholinganallur will be part of the 52-km corridor where construction would be taken up first later this year.

A CMRL official said drastic changes in traffic movement may not happen on OMR as the road is already wide. "We will need about 10 m on the centre of the road for the construction of the elevated corridor. The service

lanes on both sides of the road will be opened," an official said.

The official said the contractor involved in preparing the design will also conduct traffic studies and suggest suitable changes for vehicular movement during construction.

Tenders to award construction contract to firms will be floated in June.

Once the contract is awarded, the firm involved in building the corridor will also conduct vehicular traffic studies. "We will also conduct our own traffic studies along the alignment.

Based on the reports we get from the contractors, we will discuss with traffic police a month or two before the

actual construction starts," another metro rail official said.

Official sources said changes in the traffic movement will be more challenging in the interior areas like Nungambakkam, Royapettah, Mandaveli, Anna Nagar and Thirumangalam where traffic is heavy.

Localities like Anna Nagar and Thirumangalam have already borne the brunt for more than five years when CMRL was constructing the underground section.

As part of Phase 2, metro rail will construct the 52km corridor from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur linking localities like Perumbur, Purasaiwalkam, Nungambakkam, Royapettah, Mylapore,

Mandaveli and Adyar. The corridor will also connect Madhavaram to CMBT via Kolathur, Villivakkam and Anna Nagar.

Commuters were put to inconvenience in several areas including Anna Nagar, 100 Feet Road and Anna Salai when CMRL began construction for the 45km Phase 1 nine years ago.

Traffic along LIC and Thousand Lights is yet to be restored as construction of the entry points to LIC and Thousand Lights underground metro stations are still underway.

"Work is nearly over, and roads are being re-laid. Two-way traffic in the stretch will be restored by May," an official said.