

Soil tests on last portion of metro phase-2 to begin soon

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: As construction for the 118.9km phase-2 metro rail project is expected to begin in early 2020, soil tests for the remaining portion of the phase in the eastern and southern suburbs, including the stretch between Porur and Poonamallee, earlier proposed to be served by monorail, will start soon.

CMRL has floated tenders to conduct soil tests between Ramachandra Hospital and Poonamallee on corridor 4 covering 7.18km and from Kovilambakkam to Sholinganallur of about 8.41km on corridor 5.

The two stretches are the last of phase-2 where soil tests are yet to begin. The line leading to Poonamallee will connect several localities high in passenger traffic and was initially proposed for monorail project, including Iyyappanthangal, Kattupakkam, Kumananchavadi and Karayanchavadi. The stretch from Kovilambakkam will link localities like Medavakkam and Perumbakkam.

A metro rail official said soil samples for analyses will be collected by drilling around 250 boreholes between Ramachandra Hospital and Poonamallee and



File photo

DIGGING DEEP: Metro rail soil testing work in T Nagar

nearly 300 boreholes from Kovilambakkam to Sholinganallur. According to the tender invite, soil investigation in these two stretches

must be completed in around six months.

While construction for a 52km priority corridor, where soil test is completed,

will begin early 2020, a metro rail official said, "Once the soil test is over in the remaining portion of the phase, construction will begin simultaneously."

CMRL engineers have already found that charnockite, a thick black rock, was present at a depth of 20m in the southern suburbs while it was observed at 10m in localities in the north.

The presence of this type of soil would be challenging and could possibly slow down construction particularly along underground stretches, as engineers would be forced to excavate through hard rock slower

than usual to prevent damaging structures on the surface.

Soil investigation in other stretches of the phase is at various stages.

Tests are under way along the stretch from Sholinganallur to SIPCOT (10.8km) and are likely to be completed by September.

Soil samples have been collected from around 50% of the locations between Lighthouse and Meenakshi College (8km). Tenders to conduct soil tests between Meenakshi College and Porur (15km) and from CMBT to Medavakkam Koot Road (25km) have been awarded.