

Metro rail forms panel to acquire land for phase-2

Move Aims To Bypass Lengthy Legal Battles

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Private talk is mutually beneficial as the panel makes people understand that they can give CMRL land at more than the market price which they may not get by moving to court, said an official

On Friday, Good Shepherd School in Nungambakam handed over land for building Sterling Road Junction metro station after a delay due to lengthy legal proceedings.

A metro rail official said they have acquired several properties through the private negotiation committee. "Recently we cleared five cases including those for Kellys, Chetpet, Adyar Gate junction stations," the official said. "Private talk is mutually beneficial instead of long legal battles as we make people understand they can give us the land for more

than the market price which they may not get by fighting a case," the official said. CMRL requires 117.12 hectare land to construct the 118.9km phase-2.

Private negotiations with property owners come after CMRL faced difficulties in acquiring land for the construction of the 45km phase-1. This time, CMRL is also making changes to the design and location of stations, wherever possible, to cut down on the amount of land acquired.

"Since it is a design and building contract, we have the flexibility to change de-

sign and minimise the area of land being taken from owners as much as possible. We take our design consultants along with us when we hold talks with owners and make changes," an official said.

For instance, officials said they have taken over 17,495sqft instead of 0.88 acre, as was initially planned, from Good Shepherd school, a major portion of which is the school's playground. The school had moved the court against the acquisition.

On Friday, a cheque was handed over to the school authorities for giving the land. "We are not taking the playground. We have taken over a piece of land from a corner of the school campus where there is a school block. We will rent out the building to the school for a year till they get a new block ready," the official said.