

Unlike phase-1, metro phase-2 work won't hinder traffic much

Roads To Have Fewer Barricades, Metal Sheets Will Cover Trenches

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B A Raju

Chennai: Sturdy steel sheets to be laid on the road to cover underground construction sites will allow smooth flow of traffic when Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) begins work on the phase-2 network in June 2020. The sheets will replace barricading, which takes up most part of the road causing congestion. CMRL will use the metal sheets to cover all trenches dug to build underground station boxes along the 118.9-km phase-2.

Called the decking technique, metal sheets about 5mm thick will be placed on the roads to cover shafts sunk into the soil on either side of the road for the construction of underground stations and tunnels, a metro rail official said. A portion of these large shafts will later serve as the entry/exit points to the station. The sheets, which will be on the road level, will be 3m wide on either side of the road and sturdy enough to withstand heavy vehicles and traffic movement. The sheets will also have support railing underneath.

"Decking will ensure continuous movement of traffic. This is one of the new methods we are adopting to minimise hassles for commuters during phase-2 work," a metro rail official said.



A RELIEF: Instead of cordoning off areas dug up for underground station work, CMRL will use metal sheets to cover the trenches and let the traffic flow

CMRL came up with this idea after traffic movement in the core parts of the city such as Anna Salai, Poonamallee High Road and Arcot Road were severely affected during the construction of the 45km phase-1, which took almost a decade. Even then trenches cut on either sides of the road on Anna Salai when construction was underway for LIC and Thousand Lights stations had been covered with sturdy metal sheets in a few places.

While the sides will have the metal sheets replacing barricades, the centre of the road above planned underground metro stations, where the soil will be cut open, will be barricaded. "We may barricade the sides of the road only when we build the underground station's diaphragm wall. Otherwise, we would occupy only the centre of the road," the official said.