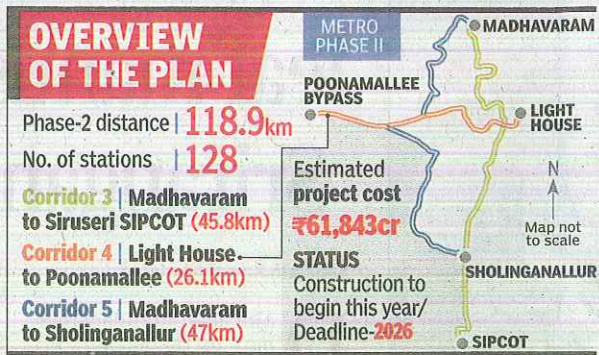


Work to begin on part of metro rail phase 2

In Focus Link Between Light House And Poonamallee

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Chennai: A majority of the city's infrastructure projects are hit by the second covid wave and labour shortage, but metro rail's phase-2 project has picked up pace with Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) floating a tender to lay tracks to link city's core localities like T Nagar and Vadapalani with the IT hub in Porur and the Poonamallee bypass.



These locations are part of the 26.1km corridor from Light House in the east to Poonamallee and pre-construction work on the 15.8km stretch in this corridor is likely to begin in a month as two companies were awarded contracts recently.

Phase-2 network has three

corridors covering 118.9km, which is planned to be ready by 2026. After floating several tenders to construct the 118.9km phase, CMRL has started looking for a firm that can supply, install, test and commission track on the underground and elevated sections of corridor-4 from Light

House to Poonamallee bypass as well as Poonamallee depot. The 26.1km line includes a 16km elevated corridor with 18 stations and 10.1km underground section with 12 stations. Earlier officials said they may opt for ballasted tracks for the depot to cut cost and ballastless tracks for operation of trains on the mainline.

A metrorail official said work on phase-2 had slowed down due Covid-induced nationwide lockdown last year and the state assembly elections this year. "But we had been working on getting the paperwork ready during the lockdown period. The work has also been delayed due to the model code of conduct that was in place during the assembly elections. We do not

want any further delays," an official said.

CMRL recently awarded four construction contracts to three companies. It included two contracts for construction of a portion of corridor-4. Officials said contracts will begin pre-construction work like soil investigation and other surveys if required in a month.

Corridor-4 links many of the city's core localities like Marina Beach, Mylapore, Nandanam, T Nagar, Kodambakkam, Vadapalani and Saligramam with the IT hub at Porur and west Chennai localities like Chennai bypass crossing, Iyyappanthangal bus depot, Katuipakkam, Karayan Chavadi and Poonamallee, which are otherwise poorly connected by public

transport.

On corridor-4, Larsen & Toubro was awarded a contract to build a 7.9km elevated line from Power House in Kodambakkam to Porur junction with nine stations within a period of 2.9 years and Hindustan Construction-KEC International Consortium was given a contract to build 7.9km elevated line with nine stations from Chennai bypass crossing to Poonamallee bypass in three years.

"The companies will have to complete the formalities of signing the contract within 28 days and begin work after that. So, we can expect some work to begin after 28 days, but mobilising manpower and bigger machinery may take some time," an official said.