

Metro to start tunnelling at Saidapet

Boring Machines Are Being Assembled At Work Site Near Panagal Building

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: Giant boring machines will soon start gnawing away under Anna Salai for metro rail's underground line. They will make a tunnel from Saidapet to Teynampet, part of the Washermenpet-Central Airport line.

Workers have begun building a barricade at a median near Panagal building in Saidapet. Work on constructing guide walls is nearing completion. "At this phase," said a senior metro rail official, "we are starting tunneling operations in the LIC direction from our site next to the Tamil Nadu Open University building."

The metro line will run underground from Washermenpet via Central and Anna Salai to Saidapet from where it will be an elevated line till the airport. The underground line will, at its deepest, be 30.8 metres below the Beach-Egmore railway line opposite Ri-



L R Shankar

DIGGING DEEP: Work on the underground metro line has begun in Saidapet

pon Buildings. On the same stretch, 30 metres will be under the Cooum, where designed metro coaches will be travelling at speeds of 80kmph.

Metro rail has begun moving components of tunnel boring machines, recently shipped from abroad, to the site. A

senior official said precast segment moulds had arrived after being factory-tested in China and Korea.

"After all components reach the spot, the machine will be assembled and lowered into a deep shaft from where boring will begin. We are yet to set a

date to begin," said a senior Chennai Metro Rail official.

The tunnels will be reinforced with concrete walls that will shore them up as the line passes below busy roads and buildings. These walls will be made in segments using specially designed moulds and

transported to the work site. Moulds are installed simultaneously when machines start boring. Metro has started boring from the May Day park site towards Anna Salai. It will make a tunnel that will run below the new secretariat complex and LIC towards Saidapet.

"A ramp has already been built across the Adyar for the line to switch from underground to elevated corridor. Work is progressing briskly at Central, New Secretariat, LIC, Thousand Lights, Teynampet and Nandanam to build underground stations," said the official. The Central-Anna Nagar route tunnel will be 23 metres below the surface, while the Washermenpet-airport route tunnel will run 28 metres under the ground. Work on underground stations is progressing at a brisk pace on the Central-Tirumangalam section as well as on the Washermenpet-Saidapet stretch.