



Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa launches a tunnel boring machine for Metro project in city on Friday. Ministers R. Ashok and C.M. Udasi are also seen. — SHASHIDHAR B.

Metro's next big challenge: Getting tracks underground

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May 20: Amidst much criticism over the delay in starting commercial operations on Reach-I, the Bangalore Metro Rail launched tunneling work on the East-West corridor. On Friday, Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa unveiled a tunnel boring machine (TBM) imported from Japan, which marked the start of tunneling work.

"The launch of tunneling work for Bangalore Metro assumes special significance as this is the first project of its kind in any of the southern states in India. I hope that the East-West corridor, with the underground section and four underground stations, are com-

pleted at the earliest following all safety norms," the chief minister said while inaugurating the work.

The tunneling work in the East-West corridor involves twin tunnels of 2.4 km each (total 4.8 km) and a ramp structure of 450 mts. The tunneling work till Central College will be completed by August while tunneling work for the entire stretch between Majestic and Minsk Square will be completed by July 2012. The deadline for tunneling work and construction of four underground stations in the E-W corridor is August 2013. The four underground stations along this stretch will come up at Cubbon Park, Vidhana Soudha, Central College, City Railway

Station. The tunnel from City Railway Station to Cricket Stadium will be 20 mts in depth. Underground stations will be constructed using 'bottom-up' construction mechanism for permanent works and a temporary retaining wall with a combination of tie-back and strut system.

The E-W corridor tunnels and UG station work has been assigned to the joint venture of CEC, Soma and CIC. Two new 6.44 m diameter Hitachi Zosen Slurry TBM will be used for this project. Apart from the TBM launched on Friday, another one will begin work next month. A team of 520 people from over seven countries are working on this underground section.