

# 50 pc tunnelling work completed

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

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THE TUNNELLING work for the Metro-3 line has reached the halfway mark. Having tunnelled through 28 km of the city's underbelly, the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ line is through its 50 per cent mark.

The Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL) — the nodal agency for the Metro-3 line — Monday announced the completion of 50 per cent of the tunnelling work in 19 months.

The total length of the project, which is 56-km, is calculated on the basis of two up and down tunnels for the 33.5-km alignment, deducting the underground station box lengths in between.

Ashwini Bhide, managing director, MMRCL, said: "Tunnelling under Mumbai's heritage buildings, old residential complexes and existing elevated Metro line with different and sometimes difficult geological conditions has been a daunting task. However, using advanced technology and without compromising the safety of workers, our team, along with general consultants, contractor JVs and multiple experts, has completed 50 per cent of the tunnelling work."

Bhide added, "After launching Krishna-1, the first Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) at Naya Nagar, Mahim, in September 2017, the MMRC has been working full steam with the help of 17 TBMs. While the tunnelling activity began in November 2017, first breakthrough (the surfacing of a TBM from underground) on the alignment was achieved in September 2018 and 12 more breakthroughs followed in the next eight months, until May 2019."

The 13 breakthroughs were achieved at SEEPZ, two at CSIA T2, Sahar Station, MIDC, Domestic Airport T1, two at Dadar, Worli, two at Vidyanaagari and two at Vidhan Bhavan. There are 12 launching shafts to facilitate tunnelling, at Cuffe Parade, Eros Cinema, Azad Maidan, Science Museum, Siddhivinayak, Naya Nagar, BKC, Vidyanaagari, Pali Ground, Sariput Nagar, Sahar Road and CSIA T2.

S K Gupta, director (Projects), MMRC, said: "The longest tunnel so far has been from Vidyanaagari to Domestic Airport (3.9-km) and the shortest one is from Sariput Nagar to SEEPZ (562 metre). In all, 19,504 segment rings have been used to complete 28 km of tunnelling. These segment rings are manufactured at six casting yards — four at Wadala and one each at Mahul and Jogeshwari-Vikhroli Link Road (JVLR). Another 19 breakthroughs are awaited on the Metro-3 alignment."



With an estimated cost of Rs 23,000 crore, the Metro-3 line is expected to be completed by Dec, 2021. *File*