

# Opening of new Metro section

## and the Metro in historical perspective

(MTI) — From 4.30 a.m. tomorrow morning five-unit metro trains will be carrying passengers also on the newest section of the North-South line of Metro, running between Deák tér, District 5, and Élmunkás tér, District 13. The newly opened, 2.4 km-long section, built at a cost of 4,100 million forints, lengthens the North-South line to a total of 10.8 kms and increases the total length of the Metro lines to 25.6 kms.

Travelling time on the lengthened North-South line, from the Kispeszt-Kőbánya terminal, to the one under Élmunkás tér is 20 minutes, and the trains depart at intervals of 2 mins 15 secs during rush-hours. Thus, nearly 23,000 passengers can be carried an hour in either direction. At night, bus No. 182 will "stand in" for the Metro along the full length of the line.

Now, the North-South line intersects at two points one of the major arteries of Budapest—the Grand Boulevard. Until now, about 400,000 travelled between



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**A crowd of people seen at the Nagyvárad tér station along the North-South Metro line, while an operator tests the intercom equipment**



Deák tér and Kispeszt daily, the number is expected to rise now to 750,000; thus, along with the two other underground railways over one million passengers will

be carried daily by underground trains. The trains will ply the North-South line between Élmunkás tér—Kispeszt-Kőbánya terminal until the autumn of 1984, when a further section running right up to Árpád Bridge is scheduled to be opened.

Simultaneously with the work on the new stretch, the surface roads also have been modernized gradually. Thus, Bajcsy-Zsilinszky út has been renewed, new traffic light points and underpassage constructed, and the fly-over running above Marx tér has been opened. Construction work on Marx tér and its immediate vicinity is expected to be completed in 1982-83,—by then a system of underpassage linking the West Railway Station and the Metro will have been completed as will that of the bus terminal of the surface.

In a long-term perspective, the Metro together with the suburban railway lines will form the backbone of the high-speed rail transport system of Budapest. High-speed tram lines also will play an important part. High-speed trains and high-speed trams will carry the bulk of public transport. To help along realization of this goal, as soon as possible, a start has been made in the modernization of suburban rail lines.

### Underground history

Casting a glance back—and ahead—may be in order now that this new section has been added to the Metro system. The Municipal Authority of Budapest in April 1894 gave the go-ahead for the construction of an underground railway under the surface of what was then called Sugár út (Népköztársaság útja today). The first underground to be built on the Continent, it was to have a maximum speed of 25 mph. Europe's new technical feat was completed by April 1, 1896: Each metre of the 3,695 metre-long line cost about 1,000 koronas (crowns). Europe's first electrically operated underground railway was opened on May 2, 1896. The electric engine cars then put into operation continued service for 70 years.

Since the end of the 19th century, the Metro, the underground railway, had emerged as the most important means of public transport. The most extensive underground railway system in the world is to be found in New York—total length 450 kms. That of London's Underground totals 420 kms, the Paris Metro's 280 kms, and Moscow's 180 kms.

As for Budapest, 20 per cent of the national population lives here, and 24 p.c. of all jobs,

workplaces are found here. On an average workday five to six million trips are made in Budapest, the vast bulk of them on public transport means. The national leadership realized the importance of extending the underground system early enough: the government in 1950 adopted a resolution calling for construction of the Metro system in Budapest. About 40 p.c. of the East-West line between Népszádmium and Deák tér and the one linking Deák tér with the South Railway Station had been completed by the middle of 1954. However, the grave economic situation then forced the costly project to be discontinued. The economic project continuing the construction was approved in 1963. The Deák tér-Fehér út section of the East-West line was opened on April 2, 1970, the full line, running up to South Station, was opened on December 22, 1972. The 3.7 km-long section of the North-South line, between Deák tér and Nagyvárad tér was opened in 1976. Since then: it has been extended to run until the Kőbánya-Kispeszt terminal.

The future: The North-South line will cross under the centre of Újpest (D. 4), where tens of thousands of dwellings are under construction. The northern terminal of the line is planned to be in the Káposztásme-gyer housing development area, where several thousand new dwellings are under construction, too. The first section of the South-Buda-Rákospalota line (No. 4) will be built between Bocskai út and Baross tér. This line will cross under the Danube between Gellért tér and Kálvin tér. The Csepel High-Speed Train line and the suburban railway line running between Pesterzsébet and the Public Slaughterhouse will have lead-in section to the Kálvin tér station.

The total length of the Metro lines—together with surface underground railway opened in 1896—is expected to be 40 kms. The full high-speed transport—Metro plus suburban high speed trains—system is expected to carry 70 p.c. of the total public mass transport of Budapest at the beginning of the 21st century.

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