

Fate of Fővám tér station appears headed for resolution

Building of platform tunnels beneath Danube begins

In order to further speed up ongoing work, construction has begun of the section of platform tunnels at Fővám tér unaffected by proposed alterations that are still under the process of authorization. Work is proceeding at a good pace, and DBR is confident that the approval of the authorities will be secured within a few days, and that work can continue uninterrupted.

Citing ground conditions, Hídépítő Zrt, the company tasked with the building of the station structure at Fővám tér, announced in December last year that it would be unable – or able only with an extremely long delay – to build the platform tunnels extending beneath the river Danube from the Fővám tér station using the technology

it had itself chosen and been contracted to apply. Negotiations ended favourably for the city of Budapest as the station may now be completed within budget, safely and with a shorter delay, while the process of modification of Hídépítő's building permit is underway. Experts are shifting the 40-metre platform tunnels that extend beneath the Danube almost 20 metres in the direction of Kálvin tér in order to place them at a greater distance from the riverbed. The construction technology will not fundamentally change. The excavation method also remains, using the so-called "pipe umbrella" technology to guarantee safe construction, which essentially means building a protective arch of metal pipes above the future tunnels, but beneath the Danube.



Tunnel construction can continue as authorities' approval secured

Shields can move on, but inner walls of Szent Gellért tér station must be completed first

In December, the National Transport Authority approved the new technology of the tunnel-building BAMCO consortium related to the construction of a connecting tunnel close to Szent Gellért tér. Consequently, construction of the tunnel may continue, albeit only as far as the underground station located beneath the square, since the latter's inner walls must be completed by the same BAMCO consortium as contractor before the arrival of the tunnelling shields. This is in order to ensure that neighbouring buildings are safeguarded, particularly the old building of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME).

The BAMCO consortium is almost eight months behind schedule with the building of the connecting tunnel to the Szent Gellért tér underground station. A few months ago it recommended a new technology whereby it would essentially drive shields along the route of the future connecting tunnel, and then build the connecting tunnel itself while guaranteeing maximum safety. However, it did not request the required consent of the authorities in good time, and in the meantime the shields reached the

boundary of the connecting tunnel. The progress of the shields thus had to be halted. Construction of the tunnel may now continue, but only along the length of the connecting tunnel as far as the station, since the terms of the contract specify that the inner shell of the station must be completed before the arrival of the tunnelling shields in order to safeguard neighbouring buildings. Tunnel-building work is expected to resume following the festive period.



Financial dispute resolved between DBR and BAMCO

Client may accept only justifiable claims

The DBR Metro Project Directorate has attached legal provisos to the payment of three significant excess claims from the tunnel-building BAMCO consortium. This means that although the consortium, in order to enable work to continue, has received interim payment of the sum of 13 million euros recommended in the resolutions of the arbitration committee, the difference will be recoverable should the claims subsequently prove unjustified.

Previously, the BAMCO consortium submitted claims for

a considerable surplus amount of costs to the DBR Metro Project Directorate, a significant portion of which were disputed by the client. Under the agreement now concluded between the parties, the consortium has assumed its tasks outside tunnel construction. In this light, the last few weeks have seen the standpoints of DBR and the BAMCO consortium draw closer, and it now appears they will succeed in reaching a peaceful settlement acceptable to the Metro Project Directorate. The Directorate will continue to allow only legitimate and justified claims in future.



No secrets: Press permitted to inspect metro construction up close

New CEO and project manager conducted open tour of site

Guided by Dr. István Kocsis, the new CEO of BKV Zrt, and Gusztáv Klados, DBR's new project manager appointed at the end of October, last month journalists were able to inspect the stations of the Metro4 line currently under construction on the Buda side of the city within the framework of an exclusive tour organized for the press.

The event began at the Metro4 Information Centre in Budapest, where the two leaders gave a short presentation on current issues. After providing instructions on workplace safety and putting on the appropriate protective wear, they then descended with journalists into the tunnelling shield launch shaft. They then travelled through all stations on the Buda side of the Danube on a small train that is otherwise used to transport concrete ring elements, right up to the tunnelling shield itself. After viewing the massive shield structure of more than 100 metres in length, they travelled on by private company bus to Szent Gellért tér, where the event concluded. Several dozen journalists

and television crews took part in the event. Responding to major demand, DBR soon plans to organize another viewing, this time of the stations under construction on the Pest side.



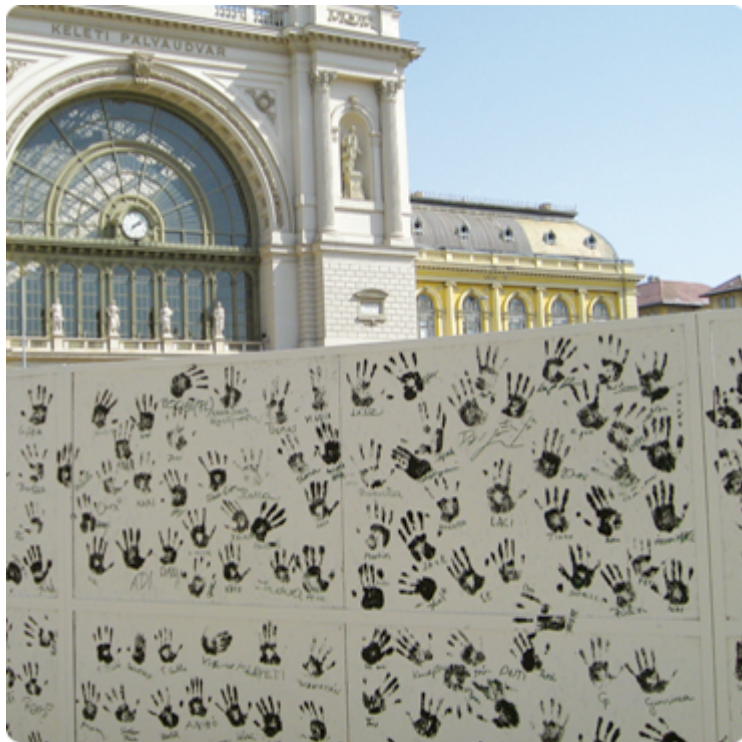
Head of Hungarian metro building appears on show of National Geographic Channel

A film about the SMART tunnel began broadcasting in November, detailing the earlier work of Gusztáv Klados, the project manager directing the Metro4 construction since October

National Geographic Channel has broadcast a film presenting the work recently completed by Gusztáv Klados in Kuala Lumpur. The vast SMART stormwater drainage tunnel is wide enough to also accommodate a double-decker motorway. The documentary, shown on the channel since the end of November, presents the difficulties and beauties of the project's construction.

The Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur in Southeast Asia is perennially threatened by massive flooding as a result of the tropical climate. For this reason, the city's leaders decided to construct a stormwater tunnel 9.7

kilometres in length and 13 metres in diameter, which in dry weather can also function as a double-decker motorway. The route of the tunnel, similar to the Budapest project, runs largely beneath buildings, and any error in construction could thus endanger many million dollars' worth of property and hundreds of lives. The world's first combined stormwater and motorway tunnel, and the monumental work entailed in its completion, is now revealed by National Geographic Channel. The film details the problems and difficulties faced by the tunnel builders, who learned their craft from the Hungarian expert Gusztáv Klados, and who are themselves now experienced tunnel builders.



Almost 2,000 people leave their handprints on metro construction in 2008

Supporters' imprints can be seen on construction hoardings at Baross tér and Móricz Zsigmond körtér

The DBR Metro Project Directorate organized a support campaign for those wishing to leave their handprints on Metro4 construction hoardings. At the two "station" events, almost 2,000 Budapest residents decided to cast their votes for the new metro line. According to the latest surveys, the new metro enjoys an 84% level of support among residents of the capital.

At Baross tér and Móricz Zsigmond körtér, the organizers of the campaign aimed to make empty construction hoardings more pleasing to the eye. The event was part of a series of programmes intended to demonstrate the metro builders' commitment to new directions in art and new means of expression. One of the most beautiful and state-of-the-art metros in Europe is now being built in Budapest, and is set to become a modern 21st century symbol of the city. Since last year, contemporary artworks have been on display on the hoardings of the Rákóczi tér station, while recently an exhibition of the best work of an international graffiti

competition opened at the same site. At Kálvin tér, young artists painted a metro carriage on the hoardings, while at Szent Gellért tér the hoardings feature a huge picture presenting Budapest transport old and new. One of the stations under construction recently even hosted an exclusive underground theatre performance.