

State shelves plan to hive off Colaba Woods

Shriram Venekar

'Metro-3 Won't Affect SoBo Green Lung'

Richa Pinto & Manthan K Mehta | TNN

Mumbai: The Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC) on Tuesday said that it would not use Colaba Woods during the construction of its ambitious Metro-3 project.

The project involves construction of a 32-km underground Colaba-Bandra-Andheri Seepz Metro corridor with 27 stations.

According to the notice issued by the MMRC, initially only a small part of the Colaba Woods garden was considered to be used during the construction of a station. However, after taking cognizance of the views expressed by various organizations and residents, the area within Cola-

CITIZENS FOR THE CITY

ba Woods has been excluded by modifying the requirement for the construction area. The notice stated: "The proposed station adjacent to Colaba Woods is located within the civic garden portion, which is a part of the Development Plan road. No part of the underground station infringes on Colaba Woods."

"We have issued the notice to prevent misinformation being circulated about the project so that residents can get a clear picture," said MMRC managing director Ashwini Bhide.

Residents are not convinced and have demanded a 200m buffer zone around the garden. "The MMRC has con-

GROUND REPORT



Residents at the Cuffe Parade garden

HISTORY | In the early 80s, the Tata Electric Company takes over a plot of land being used as a garbage dump from the civic body. Today, the green patch boasts of facilities like an amphitheatre, a reading area for street children, basketball courts and a play area

HEALTH HOTSPOT | The park has manicured gardens with antique benches and is frequented by joggers and senior citizens

INITIAL PLAN | The state government had intended to acquire a small portion of the Colaba Woods Garden during the construction of a station for the Metro-3 project

U-TURN | The area within Colaba Woods has been completely excluded by modifying the requirement for the construction area

TREE CENSUS

> A foliage-enumeration study had been carried out in April by botanist Dr Chandrashekhar Marathe in the **31,000** sq m garden at the insistence of a group of residents

> Number of trees | **803** (543 exotic)

RARE TREES

> **Beggars' bowl** (scientific name is *Crescentiacujete*) | This tree can be seen in Jijamata Udyan and Colaba Woods Garden

> **Toona** (scientific name is *Toona ciliata* M Roem) | Tree is mostly found in the sub-Himalayan region

> **Mysore fig tree** | This tree is usually found in 'semi-evergreen forest area'

Slumdwellers, high-rise residents join forces to fight Metro-3 threat



TOI report on March 10

veniently stated that it would not use any portion of the Colaba Woods garden for construction, but we feel the building activity is likely to have a huge impact on the exotic variety of trees in the garden," said a resident.

"The MMRC needs to create a buffer zone around Colaba Woods where no construction will take place. They should not have any construction activity outside the garden gate," said Manjeet Kripalani, a resident of Cuffe Parade.