## Metro-3 work won't damage old buildings: MMRC chief



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MUMBAI: Citizen groups and activists have regularly raised concerns over the safety of old, heritage buildings even as work on constructing the Metro 3 (Colaba-Bandra-Seepz) line continues in full swing. But the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd



Ashwini Bhide PRATIK CHORGE/HT

(MMRCL) wants to allay such fears. Ashwini Bhide, managing director, MMRCL, during a 'Coffee @ HT' session in the newpaper's Mumbai office, cited examples of cities abroad with heritage buildings and a metro system. Bhide said the technol-

ogy being adopted for ongoing work is tried and tested and safe. She also said a metro car shed at Aarey is being built outside the area marked eco-sensitive.

Bhide gave examples of cities like Rome, Athens, London and Paris that have heritage buildings, but still undertook metro construction. She said, "The technology (being used in Mumbai) is designed for a crowded, urban neighbourhood. Had it been in a greenfield, the technology would've been different. World over, many cities have gone through this process. It is not a trial and error method."

CONTINUED ON P12

## 'Mumbai needs another mode of transport'

MOVING AHEAD From technology to consent of residents, MMRCL chief Ashwini Bhide says the underground Metro-3 is on right track, insists BMC is cooperating

COFFEE@HT ASHWINI BHIDE,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, MMRCL.

HT Correspondents

HT Correspondents

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MUMBAP: The hurdles created by
Shiv Sena, the main ailliance
partire: in the Brihammumbal
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is on board for the Bharatitys
Janata Party-backed Metro projects, said Ashwim Bhide, managing director of Mumbal Metro
Rail Corporation Limited
(MMRCL).

The BMC has given permisThe BMC has given permisseals [needed for Metro] and is supporting the entire project.
Although the transfer of these
lands was opposed tooth-andnall, we have got the possession, "said Bhide, who was at Hindustan Times' Mumbal office
on Wetnesday, for a Coffee @ HT session, "said Bhide, who was at Lucked in a blutter fight with
BIP, the Sena-ruled BMC on
Monday held back a proposal to
give special powers to the state
government to bypass the civic
body for Metrop projects. Earlier,
too, the Sena-ruled civic improvements committee
rejected several proposals to committee
rejected several proposals to committee
rejected several projects from the session:

Denying major problems in
execution of the project, Bhide
said, "The BMC is very much a
part of this Metrol and the entire
machinery is helping us, and
coordinating with s."

Excerpts from the session:

Does the ongoing work for Metro projects pose any threat to old buildings in the Island city? Gupta: No, there is no threat. We are working according to international protocols. Barce-lona has a Metro network close to a heritage building. That is the case in Rome too. In London, a Metro is coming up next to a high-rise.

But Mumbai sees building col-lagues every monsoon...

But Mumbai sees are different.

But Mum

emough for a collapse. We are measuring even the minor impact.

Gupta: In case of urban areas, we keep monitoring the work, so we keep monitoring the work, so we keep monitoring the work, so we keep monitoring the work so we keep monitoring the work of the buildings near the spot. The vital parameters are pre-assessed and are kept in check. Some buildings are strong, which means the limit to which we can go ahead with work is method of construction is adjusted accordingly.

Blide: A survey of the condition of the building basically helps us design the method. It is not to create apprehension among people. After the survey, the strong work of the work of the

weak and ensure the impact is minimal.

Bhide: The status of dilapidated and heritage buildings will be monitored online until we complete tunnelling and working on the stations.

in such a way that the receptor isn't affected.

Bhide: It will not affect the safety of the building. In some cities, you can feel the whratton, especially fittis an underground to the control of the

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There is no trial and error.

What is the status of the building survey in south Mumba?

Blaties The Numba Metter Rail and the status of the status of the status of the status the status the before the tendering process. We needed to give the data to the builders to know what they would be dealing with. We have also carried out a utility survey and made at raff management plan. Now, it is the responsibility of the contractor. They have the contractor. They have ber. Almost 80-80% work in every package has been completed.

the owners. They are fully sensitised.
Guptar Considering the extent of owork in a dense city like Mumbal, how many complaints are we seeing There is a one-off owner of the control of th

more regressive monitoring.

Is there a time so for the construction activity? There are complaints that it is being carried out at night.

Builde: The HC has directed us to restrict construction at night in costal a regulatory zone (TZD).

Gupta: The cut bis only on nine locations.

Bhilde: It happened because the CRZ permissions stated no construction would be carried out at night, which the petitioner picked up. The Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) went beyond its jurisdiction.

Paris and London, Metros have come up near heritage buildings. There is a time-tested and safe method for urban tunnelling. We are members of the world tunnel association. It also has an Indian chapter, where we share knowl-edge and discuss technology and incidents. As late entrants in this sector, India will always get the benefit of tested technology. There is no trial and error.

The Bombay high court recently appointed as three-member panel to give recommendations. Guptar: The committee studied our processes and said they are good. They used a phrase—it is a short-form point for a long-term reach 1/4 fto the permissible limits. They have endorsed the procedures. They have saided from ore regressive monitoring.

beyond its jurisdiction.

While activists claim the National
Green Tribunal (NGT) has
ordered a status quo at Aarey cardepot ste, the construction has
begun. Have you got all permissions? Does the MGT order stop
you from construction?
Bhilder:Time and again, we have
clartified that there is no status
quo on construction at Aarey.
The area around Sanjay Gandhi
National Park (SGNP) is an ecosensitive zone, but the car shed
falls outside II. There is no question of stopping work at the site.

tion of stopping work at the site.

A police complaint has been filed against the MirRCL over this issue?

Bhide: We are not aware of it.
Gupta: Nobody can be stopped from filing a first information report (FIR), but why hasn't the NoT with an execution application against us? They are fighting this war in newspapers, not in courts.

Bhide: The petition is not about the car depot at all. It has been projected like that. The chairman and members of NOT have on several occasions said that there is no stay.

there is no stay.

The protests have been on for a long time? Is there a plan to have an open discussion with activists?

Bhide: The activists have decided not to approach the MMRCL. Their fight is only through newspers. I challenge, the control of the protests. This project has been approved by the Central and State cabinet, there is already a plan in place. The government has addressed the objections raised by people. How much importance can they get?

 Ashwini Bhide, senior IAS officer and managing director of Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL), at the Hindustan Times office in Elphinstone Road on Wednesday, We have been given the mandate of completing the project as soon as possible. There is no legal hassle. People are raising issues without substantiating their arguments.

transport.

Do you see Irain commuters shifting to the Metro corridor that is

corridor.

Blade-With just of corridor.

Metro. Road congestion will reduce. The overall commuting pattern will change. As the transport network expands, the city's development will revolve around it.

We have been given the mandate of completing the project assoon as possible. There is no legal has sele. People are raising issues without a substantiating their against the project as soon as possible. There is no legal has sele. People are raising issues without a substantiating their against the project as soon as possible. There is no legal has such as glving space for a substantiating their against the project and the project as the proposed in the area.

Binde: There is no evidence to prove the claims or [any basis for] apprehensions. The state of prove the claims or [any basis for] apprehensions. The state of provential the same as a project of provential the project and the project and the project with the project and the project with the project with the project with the BMC, as it is completed by the project and the project with the project with the BMC, as it is completed by the project with the proj

does this work?

Gupta: We analysed our tenders
between January 2016 and
March 2016. The pre-qualification process was carried out in
2013-2014. When we were finalising our tender, JKumar was not
blacklisted. Our tendering process is governed by JICA. The

Japanese agency only considers the debarment by them [JICA], or cross-debarment by a multi-lateral agency like World Bank, Asian Development Bank, etc. The committees evaluating the tenders had discussed the possibility of JKumer being blackbling of JKumer being b

cannot deny the tender legally.

In 'that a loophole?

Gupta: No, it's not. JICA is an international funding agency, they have their own guidelines, they have their own guidelines, the Supreme Court judgments, too, state that debarment by a particular agency is not applicable across the country. If that happens, then we will have to consider if a company has been consider if a company has been body or even the Chennal Corporation. This is a legal, not an emotional or perception-based issue. If we were legally mandated to debar the company, we would have done it.

ges, while the rest have one each. We can't put all eggs in one basket. It's too big a work for any Indian or an international company to handle alone.

Bhide: It's too big a work. How do you select a contractor? You have to ascertain their eligibil-

LU, at the Hindustan limes office in lity. The length of our package length is Skm. To qualify, a contractor has to show that he has successfully worked on three considerable with the passion of the skm. There won't be skm, the passion of the skm, the skm

manageable.

How difficult is it for civil construction to be seamlessly connected?

Gupta: We have appointed general consultants—an international conscrium with expertise consultants—an international conscrium with expertise consultants—and on the work, and the general consultant will ensure uniformity. However, the most difficult part is to integrate the technology, which will come after the civil work is done.

done.

There are two elevated corridors, and one underground. How do you compare the two in terms of the cost and time required?

Bidder Generally, the underground corridor is three times more expensive than the elevated corridors every where. In relations, the cost of the road net work of the road network and turns. Time-wise, work one-levated corridor may be completed faster. Underground Metro takes more time as we are flighting against every aspect on the surface. Once you are down and you seculed yourself from surface-level. Inidrances, the job becomes relatively easier. In case of an elevated corridor, you are in conflict with the surroundings.

Considering so many issues, will you be able to meet your dead-line?

Bhidec Of course, why not? In the past one year, we carried out all activities we planned. We are going in a systematic way. We know the problems and the challenge of the problems and the problems are the problems and the problems and the problems are the problems and the problems and the problems are the problems and the problems and the problems are the problems and the problems are the problems and the problems and the problems are the pro

wise, we have met our tragets. There have been delays owing to opposition and flitigation. Has it opposition and flitigation are sufficiently as the sufficient of the sufficient and sufficient an

There is also a plan to use controlled blasting or dynamites at certain locations. Which are these locations and what explosive is going to be used?

Gupta: It is not going to be dynamite.

swe is going to be used?

Gupta: Hisn origing to be dynamite.

Bhide: These are very low-intensity explosives. Again here,
wear using many technologies
ware using many technologies
upon the control of the control

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even realise it is happening. Pro-fessionals are doing the job.

Where will the davis go? There have been neave pouts that it will be used for the goal of the the coastal road.

Bhide: Ours is a design and bull contract, so the removal and disposal of debris is the responsibility of the contractor. When well do ut tendering, neither the coastal road nor the Shivaji memorial was on the cards. We had to give definite locations to contractors to dump the debris. We have identified a contractors to dump the debris. We have identified so districts. However, it is not fully mandatory for them to go to those locations only. They can even take some other option, provided it is environmentally foolproof. They cannot dump it in a CRZ area for in the sea. We are exploring how this muck can be used for the constal road, it depends on the timing and the quality of the mek. The muck can be used for the constal road, it depends on the timing and the quality of the mek. The muck can be quality of the mek. The muck can ye quite a different kind of rock.

It may be too early to ask, but any equite a different kind of rock.

crushed rock, but they may require adifferent kind of rock. It may be too early to ask, but any rough estimate of what the ticker price will be?

Shidde: Our financial analysis was based on the rates of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation in 2012-13. Even with that fare, the project is viable. There won the any returnon equity, but we will service the debt, and do our operation and maintenance. Today, the DMRC fares are revised. So when we complete the project, the DMRC fares are revised. So when we complete the project, the DMRC fares are revised. So when we complete the project, the DMRC fares are revised. So when we complete the project, the DMRC fares are revised. So when we complete the DMRC fares are revised. The DMRC far

Bhideon

DANGER TO BUILDINGS Some buildings are vulnerable, even when there is no work going on in the vicinity. The technology we are using is very safe. It won't cause a building to fall. We are measuring even the minor impact.

CAR SHED AT AAREY

Time and again, we have clarified that there is no status quo on construction at Aarev The area around SGNP is an eco-sensitive zone, but the car shed falls outside it. There is no question of stopping work at the site.

REJECTIONS FROM SENA Certain things are a matter of public posturing, but some happen on ground. The transfer of plots was opposed tooth-andnail, but we have got the possession. We are working very closely

their area.

with the BMC, as it is

DIVISION OF WORK How do you select a contractor? You have to ascertain their eligibility. To qualify, a contractor has to show that he has successfully worked on three contracts of the sar length in the past. There won't be any company in the world which would have done a 33.5-km underground

corridor thrice.



SK Gupta, director (projects), MMRCL, and Ashwini Bhide during the session.

Mumbai ...

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THREAT TO OLD BUILDINGS

We are working according to international protocols. Barcelona has a Metro network close to a heritage building. That is the case in Rome too. In London, a Metro is coming up next to a high-rise.

From people's perspective, aren't the deaths on tracks deserve action instead of delay?

WILDLIFE PLAN FOR AAREY

important? Don't pollution and death Public should debate about this, not us. We have a job to do and we'll do it.