

Metro to be new lifeline of Mumbai: Ashwini Bhide

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STATING THE plan to extend the Metro services across the city by 2040, Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC) Managing Director Ashwini Bhide Wednesday said that Metro will be the lifeline of the city in the coming years.

Bhide, who is also the additional municipal commissioner of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), was speaking at the "Loksatta Shaharbhavan" programme.

Bhide added that along with Metro, Mumbai and Metropolitan region is witnessing infrastructure projects such as coastal road and tunnel Road.



Ashwini Bhide at the Loksatta Shaharbhavan in Powai, Mumbai, on Wednesday. *Amit Chakravarty*

"The British undertook the development with next 150 years in mind and on similar lines these projects will take care of

next 150 to 200 years," she said.

"Mumbai and Metropolitan region is growing, urbanisation is increasing. It is important to manage the growing cities and metro was envisioned for the same. The concept of Metro was presented much before. But we had suburban rail line that was enough and hence Metro was delayed. But when pressure on locals increased, we had to start the Metro project. The MMRDA had prepared a plan with 14 lines covering 357 kilometre in 2004," said Bhide.

Bhide has been leading the work on Metro 3 which is 33.5-km long. "Completing the work of Metro 3, which is an underground line, was a financial and technical challenge. We are in the last stage of Metro 3's Aarey to BKC phase and it will begin functioning in

next few months," she said.

The BKC-Colaba second phase will begin six to seven months after first phase, she added.

"Few more metro lines will begin after Metro 3 which will be interconnected and by 2040 the Metro services will be extended across the city. Metro will be the lifeline of Mumbai," she said.

Bhide mentioned that traffic jam should be tackled to ensure strengthening of public transport and as a result, the civic body had undertaken the coastal road project.

"The project will be inaugurated in phases between February and May 2024. It will clear the traffic jam and will help cover the distance between Nariman point and Wori in 10 minutes," she said.