

'Metro won't affect cricket at Azad and Oval maidans'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Cricketing activities will not be affected by the work at Azad Maidan and Oval Maidan for the underground Colaba-Bandra-Seepz Metro III project.

"Cricket pitches or matches at the Oval Maidan will not be disturbed during the construction of the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ Metro III corridor," Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation MD Ashwini Bhide said. "A few cricket pitches at Azad Maidan will need to be relocated."

She said Oval Maidan is spread over 9 hectares, or 90,000 sq m, and the Metro III corridor will require, temporarily, 0.39 hectares, or 3,900 sq m, of the ground towards its northern side. She said the space required was 4% of the maidan during the project implementation period of three to four years.

"The ground will be restored and returned post-construction," Bhide said.

Azad Maidan is 20 hectares, or 2 lakh sq m, and the Metro corridor requires, temporarily, 3.27 hectares, or 32,700 sq m, which amounts to 16% of the ground. The portion, which is behind the Press Club, will also be restored and have better entry-exit facilities in the end, said authorities. Bhide said 1,000 sq m at Azad Maidan would be required permanently.

"At Azad Maidan, a few cricket pitches will be relocated in consultation with the sports department," she said. "While only a part of 32,687 sq m will be used during construction, the remaining part... will be open for cricket and related activities."