

Metro-3 on track: 734 Kalbadevi, Girgaum tenants vacate structures

30 BUILDINGS Work on the two underground stations on in full swing; 447 tenants residential, 287 are commercial

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MUMBAI : In one of the biggest rehabilitation projects of recent times, 734 tenants from 30 buildings on the Girgaum-Kalbadevi stretch in South Mumbai have vacated their structures to make way for the fully-underground Metro-3 (Colaba-Bandra-Seezp).

Officials from the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC) said the work on two underground stations — Kalbadevi and Girgaum — is on in full swing and the MMRC will start excavation at these sites this month. Of the 734 tenants, 447 are residential and 287 are commercial. The MMRC has relocated 86 tenants to Pimpalwadi in Girgaum. For the rest, the MMRC will pay an average monthly rent of ₹30,000 to residential and ₹42,000 to commercial units.

Touted to be one of the most challenging projects in the country, Metro-3 will connect the island city to the western suburbs. MMRC has completed

31-km of tunnelling and 15 of the 32 tunnel breakthroughs have also been completed.

Ashwini Bhide, managing director, MMRC, called it one of the most challenging parts of the project. She said, "It was a very challenging aspect, as we did not have any earlier benchmarks, we had to re-write the policy, negotiate with the stakeholders and also co-ordinate with other state agencies."

Girgaum and Kalbadevi are home to traditional Marathi and Gujarati families. The MMRC required close to 10,000 sqm plot for the Metro work. The residents had initially resisted the plan in 2015 and also protested against the project. They were also supported by the Shiv Sena then. However, the MMRC finally agreed to the demand for relocation of project-affected people within the 500-metre radius.

Pandurang Sakpal, a Sena leader from South Mumbai, said, "We fought for relocation within a 500-meter radius which the

authorities were not agreeing to initially. We also fought for the fishermen from Chira Bazaar, who are now being paid ₹10,000 a month as rent. There are only some four-five cases pending which is because of ownership disputes."

The displaced residents will get rehabilitated in three buildings — Kalbadevi Commercial Centre, Kalbadevi Heights and Girgaon Heights — that are going to come up at the same location by 2021.

Bhide said they have already floated tenders for Kalbadevi Heights and are expecting to float tenders for Girgaon Heights before the election code of conduct comes in place.

Nilesh Ahirekar, a resident of Girgaum, said, "We have shifted and we are also getting rent on time but our constant worry is if we will get our houses back in the same area."

Ahirekar had two houses of 100-square feet each. He is getting a rent of ₹50,000 for the two houses.

BREAKING NEW GROUND

The underground Metro-3 will connect the island city to the western suburbs. MMRC has so far completed 31-km of tunnelling and 15 tunnel breakthroughs.



■ The MMRC on Friday completed 3.184-km of tunnelling work from Azad Maidan to Mumbai Central Metro station. HT PHOTO

27 stations

(Cuffe Parade, Vidhan Bhavan, Churchgate, Hutatma Chowk, CST Metro, Kalbadevi, Girgaum, Grant Road, Mumbai Central Metro, Mahalaxmi, Science Museum, Acharya Atre Chowk, Worli, Siddhivinayak, Dadar, Sitaladevi, Santacruz, Domestic Airport, Sahar Road, International Airport, Marol Naka, MIDC, SEEPZ and Aarey Depot)

Expected ridership: Around 13 lakh by the time the project is launched. Around 17 lakh by 2030

Implemented by: Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL), a joint venture of the state and central government

Connect: Six business districts, many educational institutes, the domestic and the international airport

Status: Under construction (MMRC has completed approximately 20km of tunneling)



COLABA December 2021

The underwater project
2 tunnels of 1.18km length each, 12.5m below the city's Mithi river, to be dug using tunnel-boring machines (TBM), between Dharavi and BKC

1 170m cross-line tunnel to be dug
South-end of BKC station will be underwater