

INFRA BONANZA: EXPECT SMOOTH COMMUTE, CONNECTIVITY

Aarey-BKC stretch of Metro 3 corridor to now open in April

ManthanK.Mehta
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (MMRCL) has pushed the deadline for the commissioning of the first phase — Aarey-Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) section — of the underground Colaba-Bandra-Seepz Metro 3 corridor to April as work on the car shed is not yet completed. The 12.5km Aarey-BKC stretch will offer connectivity to both domestic and international airports as well as the Versova-Andheri-Ghatkopar Metro 1 at Marol station.

“Earlier, we had announced December 2023 as the opening date for Phase I, but

ABOUT THE CORRIDOR

Phase I: Aarey-BKC stretch

10 STNS: Aarey Colony, Seepz, MIDC, Marol naka, CSIA Terminal 2 (international airport), Sahar Road, CSIA Terminal 1 (domestic airport), Santacruz, Vidyanagar, BKC

► To open in March-April

Phase II: BKC-Cuffe Parade

► To open in Sept-Oct

work on the shunting neck, which will connect the depot to the main line, is still underway,” Ashwini Bhide, MMRCL managing director, said on Thursday. “We hope

to open the Phase I line by March-April and the Phase II line — BKC-Cuffe Parade stretch — by September-October.” Earlier, the MMRCL had announced that the second phase will be operational in June-July. Bhide was speaking at an event organised by the Mumbai Marathi Patrakar Sangh.

The MMRCL hopes to complete work on the shunting neck at the Aarey depot site by January-end. Thereafter, trials and inspections will commence. The slow progress on depot work is attributed to delays in tree-felling permissions earlier, political squabbling over the depot site, and delays due to the monsoon. In March, the Bombay

high court had stayed the March 15 permission by BMC’s tree authority for felling of 177 trees at Aarey Colony for the depot, and had asked MMRCL to approach the Supreme Court. The following month, the SC gave the green light to the tree authority’s decision, but imposed a fine of Rs 10 lakh on MMRCL. The Aarey-BKC stretch, with 10 stations, aims to address high-density traffic areas. The MMRCL plans to operate a total of 260 services on the route, at a frequency of 6.4 minutes with nine rakes, of which one will be on standby. The eight-car trains will operate between 6.30am and 11pm on the Aarey-BKC section of Metro 3 corridor.