

Mumbai Metro-5 gets CRZ clearance

By Prayag Arora-Desai, Mumbai
PUBLISHED ON APR 05, 2021 01:29 AM IST

The Maharashtra State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) has granted coastal regulatory zone (CRZ) clearance to the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority's (MMRDA) Metro-5 line, which will connect Thane to Kalyan. The decision to grant CRZ clearance was taken during the 217th meeting of the SEIAA on March 18, the minutes of which were accessed by Hindustan Times.

This development follows the Maharashtra State Coastal Zone Management Authority's recommendation (from 2017) to grant CRZ clearance for the 25-km fully-elevated corridor, which will connect Thane's Balkum Naka and to Kalyan APMC via the powerloom town of Bhiwandi and will have 17 stations. Currently, the areas are connected only via the overcrowded suburban railway. The cost of the project is pegged at ₹8,417 crore, with an expected ridership of about three lakh people each day by the year 2031.

As per the MMRDA's proposal, the Metro alignment will pass through two water bodies at Kasheli Bridge in Thane and Durgadi Fort in Kalyan. In Thane, the alignment will cut through a CRZ-I notified area for just over a km near Kasheli Bridge, while another 1.5-km will pass through a CRZ-II area. Another 608m of the alignment are passing through the Ulhas river. In Kalyan, about 20m of the alignment will pass through a CRZ-I notified area, while 250m will pass through a CRZ-III notified area. Another 320m will pass through the Ulhas river.

With grant of CRZ clearance, the MMRDA now has the permission to build 156 piers (each being 1.8m in diameters) in CRZ-notified areas in order to support the above-ground corridor, which will be integrated with Metro-4 line at Kapurbawadi, and also with the suburban rail at Kalyan station. The piers will be built at intervals of approximately 25m between them.

Dr Sonia Sethi, additional metropolitan commissioner and project director, Mumbai Urban Transport Project, confirmed the development, saying, "The SEIAA has accorded CRZ clearance to Metro Line 5 subject to certain conditions, such as necessary approvals from the MoEFCC and the Bombay High Court for mangrove areas affected."

In December 2020, the MMRDA has sought the MoEFCC's go-ahead for diversion of 2349.5 sqm of mangrove forest land for the project. Of these, 1,971.71sqm of forest land are proposed to be diverted in Balkaum, Thane, while 377.86sqm of forest land are to be diverted in Kasheli in Bhiwandi. Officials confirmed the matter is currently under process, and that the Centre's nod is still awaited before construction work can proceed.

In a statement issued January 26 this year, the MMRDA had stated that work on the Metro-5 line is expected to be completed by December 2024.

Link to this article: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/mumbai-metro-5-gets-crz-clearance-101617566351590.html>