

'No curbs by green panel on Aarey Metro car shed'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC) has claimed that the National Green Tribunal has not placed any restriction on the construction of a car depot at Aarey Colony.

Environmentalist and citizen's groups have filed a petition in the NGT, which is yet to pronounce a final order in the matter. The MMRC has filed an intervention petition in the matter, a hearing for which was conducted on Wednesday.

MMRC's managing director Ashwini Bhide said, "The NGT has declared that restriction on the project is limited to only 100m from the boundary of Sanjay Gandhi National

Park. There are no restraining orders against the car depot. This is a positive development for the Metro-III project."

The NGT has asked the MMRC to present a list of areas consumed by Metro depots in

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Delhi, Kolkata and other cities. "The MMRC will provide all necessary details asked by the NGT before the next hearing on January 19," she said.

Meanwhile, in a affidavit filed before the NGT, Stalin Dayanand of Vanshakti pointed, "It is of prime importance to keep Aarey protected in view of the frequent leopard sightings and documented rich bio-

diversity in Aarey, that includes Indian civets, monitor lizards and other reptiles."

Opposing the depot on Aarey land, the affidavit states, "Environment experts appointed (on the six member committee) have concurred with the view that Aarey has tremendous ecological value and it is not the best choice for a car shed. In fact, they have clearly stated that Aarey stands as third preference on a list of sites provided to the committee."

The affidavit also points that "there are numerous examples, like in Delhi and Kolkata metro projects, wherein much lesser space has been used for car shed than that demanded by the MMRC.