

Several departments worked together since June to protect Aarey: Maharashtra environment minister Aaditya Thackeray

12 October 2020

State environment minister Aaditya Thackeray said that several departments have been working jointly since June to protect Aarey as a forest.

“We salute the efforts of all those who campaigned to save Aarey. Meticulous work has gone into ensuring a balance, where the city gets a metro corridor but not at the cost of the rich biodiversity that could have been lost at Aarey. On the one hand, we have ensured that all the charges were dropped against citizens protesting to save the trees, while on the other, 328.9 hectares (ha) of Aarey has been declared a reserved forest. No other city in the world has declared a forest within city limits especially for a metropolis like Mumbai. At the same time, protecting this green lung has an overall impact in improving Mumbai’s air quality. We must learn to live in harmony with nature,” he said.

The minister added that the land for the new depot at Kanjurmarg was availed free of cost.

“The 102-acre land was handed over free [to the authorities concerned for the car shed] and the soil testing has already begun. It was always the state government’s land. The existing money spent on Metro-3 line till Aarey will not get wasted, as the corridor will come out of a tunnel and climb and merge with Metro-6. Metro-3 and 6 will have same technical specifications. The metro rail headway time also does not change. Metro-3 would get more footfalls as it will get connected directly to the eastern suburbs,” said Thackeray.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/several-departments-worked-together-since-june-to-protect-aarey-maharashtra-environment-minister-aaditya-thackeray/story-oPl6URw1h75c12HvFFzabM.html>