

SC dismisses plea against Metro facilities at Thiru Vi Ka Park

CHENNAI: In a major boost to Chennai Metro Rail, the Supreme Court has dismissed the Shenoy Nagar residents' plea against the construction of the underground shopping complex cum parking facility planned at Thiru Vi Ka Park and upheld the Madras High Court order in this regard.

"We find no ground to interfere with the impugned order passed by the (Madras) High Court. However, as the trees have already been cut and after construction of underground parking, the park has come up, we propose to supervise the bringing out of the park. As such, let compliance report be furnished to this court as to the bringing out of the suitable park within six months," Justice Arun Mishra and Justice S Ravindra Bhat directed.

The residents of the Shenoy Nagar had appealed against the Madras High Court order dated September 29 setting aside their plea against construction of the shopping complex cum parking facility at the park. According to the petition, number of trees were cut down when Metro Rail work began in 2011 for the station which came up in the park. They alleged that the construction of the mall would not only damage the ecosys-

tem but result in concentrated urbanisation and commercialisation, resulting in deterioration of peace and calm of the residential locality.

A Metro Rail official said that Thiru Vi Ka Park which would be restored by it would draw visitors of all age groups by providing different types of activities such as children's playground, open air theatre, play area, jogging tracks and yoga and meditation areas. A musical fountain at the centre of the park would be a main attraction.

As far as the trees are concerned, the official said that when it took over the park, there were 320 trees. "Some of them were retained and 33 trees have been transplanted. Miyawaki Concept Forest are planned at the four corners of the park with 4800 trees by grouping of various indigenous species of plants together. In addition to the deep-rooted trees, the centre of the park will have landscape gardens with many plants and medium sized trees and shrubs. As a result, there will be 5,200 trees in the park," the official noted.

The park would not only serve as a breathing space amidst the concrete jungle but also as the identity and add value to people, the official said.