

# Ro-ros to carry cars across sea by 2019

**WEST COAST** ₹90-crore project to make travelling from Marve-Manori, Borivli-Gorai, Bhayander-Vasai, Virar-Palghar much faster

**Badri Chatterjee**  
badri.chatterjee@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** In the next two years, a ferry service across the sea will make travelling along Mumbai's west coast a lot quicker.

A Ro-Ro (roll-on roll-off) water transport service at four spots — Marve to Manori, Borivli to Gorai, Bhayander to Vasai and Virar to Palghar — that will let you ferry your cars over the sea is expected to cut down travel time from up to two hours to less than 10 minutes (see box).

A ₹90-crore Ro-Ro plan, proposed by the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB), got a green nod last week from the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA).

"After the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) gave us the coastal regulation zone (CRZ) clearances for the project in July, we studied the impact it would have on the environment. We have found the four projects will reduce travel time and pollution," said a senior official from SEIAA.

"While work on three of the four routes can start, minor aspects on the Borivli-Gorai route are yet to be studied," the official said.

The Ro-Ros will expand Mumbai's water transport system substantially, said experts. This is the first such project proposed for the west coast. It can transport 50 passengers and 10 cars on either side, officials said.

So far, citizens could only ferry two-wheelers between Versova and Madh and Manori and Marve.

"This project will be a new chapter in the water transport story of Maharashtra," said Atul Patne, the chief executive officer of the MMB. Patne said the ferry service will not only help citizens save money, but also bring down congestion on roads and cut pollution.

"There are three main aspects of the project — reduc-

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tion in traffic congestion, drop in pollution and reduction in time taken to travel these distances. From distances that were two hours apart, now the time taken will be a maximum of 10-12 minutes," Patne said.

The Marve-Manori project is expected to be ready by mid-2018, while the other will be completed by early 2019, Patne said. According to the MMB, at least two crore people in Maharashtra use Ro-Ros but only a handful of routes provide the facility to ferry two-wheelers.

The SEIAA has also approved a proposal to revamp all eight jetties. MMB officials said the work has begun.

"We will be issuing tenders this week for the project and will hire contractors to ferry medium-sized boats that can carry the estimated capacity of cars and people," said an MMB official, in-charge of the project.

"While the cost for each four-wheeler is still being worked out, we estimate the fare for two-wheelers and SUVs to be between ₹250-₹400."

Last year, chief minister Devendra Fadnis told the state assembly that Ro-Ro services would link south Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Alibaug and services would start by end of 2018.

MMB officials said work for the ₹150-crore Ro-Ro services between Ferry Wharf (Bhaucha Dhakka) and Mandwa in Raigad district along Mumbai's east coast, is 50% done.

"While the work is being jointly carried out with the Mumbai Port Trust, the jetty at Mandwa has been revamped and the project should be completed by May 2018," the MMB official said.

## GET THERE FASTER

The roll-on roll-off (Ro-Ro) water transport service will help you cover distances — which would take you up to two hours by car — in about 10 minutes. Here are the first four locations on Mumbai's west coast to get the Ro-Ros:

### VIRAR TO PALGHAR

**From:** Narangi Virar jetty, located south of Jhow Island, the route goes along the Vaitarna River, moving from the left side of Jhow and up to Kharwadashri Palghar jetty (which will be constructed). The location has thick mangrove cover and the local fishermen from the area have handed over a quarter-of-an-acre plot to MMB to construct the jetty. A road will be built from the jetty till Tembikhodave

**1.4km** The distance by sea  
**10 mins** The time it would take by Ro-Ro  
**1hr 34 minutes** The time it takes by car



### BHAYANDER TO VASAI

**From:** From the jetty close to Jessel Park, Bhayander, along the existing railway tracks to a jetty (currently under construction) near Vasai Fort, a kilometre away from the Koliwada village

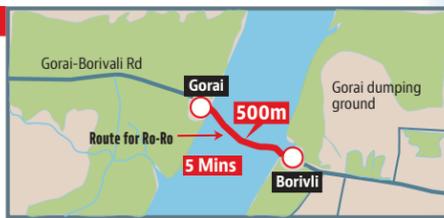
**1.7km** The distance by sea  
**12 minutes** The time it would take by Ro-Ro  
**1hr 47 minutes** The time it takes by car



### BORIVLI TO GORAI

**From:** South of Gorai dumping ground, the first jetty is near Shrunagar Society that goes along the Gorai road all the way up to a jetty on the other side of the creek, with Essel World and Water Kingdom to the south of the jetty

**500m** The distance by sea  
**5 minutes** The time it would take by Ro-Ro  
**1hr 40 minutes** The time it takes by car



### MARVE TO MANORI

**From:** Marve Beach jetty to Manori jetty

**500m** The distance by sea  
**7 minutes** The time it would take by Ro-Ro  
**1hr 19 min** The time it takes by car



(Source: Maharashtra Maritime Board)

## BMC TELLS 3K SOCIETIES TO START TREATING WASTE BY OCT 2

**HT Correspondent**  
hmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has issued notices to 3,084 housing societies/commercial establishments to start segregating and composting wet waste by October 2.

Then the civic body will not pick up the wet waste from their complex. In his past monthly meeting, civic chief Ajoy Mehta had ordered that housing societies producing more than 100kg wet waste daily or having an area of more than 20,000 square metres will have to segregate waste and also install waste processing units in their compound.

A civic official said they are writing to the housing societies to inform them about the October 2 deadline. The official also said that BMC plans to write to more housing societies about the same. "If these 3,000-odd housing societies themselves start composting wet waste, then close to 1,345 metric tonnes of waste will be reduced from going to the dumping grounds. This will also bring down BMC's waste-transport budget by 25%," an official said.

Of the three dumping grounds in the city — Deonar, Mulund and Kanjurmarg — only the latter has facilities of scientifically processing waste. Deonar and Mulund have to be shut as they have already reached their saturation point.

Meanwhile, with its various initiatives to improve the city's poor waste-management techniques, the BMC has claimed to have reduced the garbage reaching the dumping grounds daily by 1,100 metric tonnes. As compared to 2016, when BMC picked up close to 9,000 metric tonnes of garbage daily, officials have claimed that the figure has come down to 7,900 metric tonnes of garbage picked up currently.

**THE MOVE WILL ALSO BRING DOWN BMC'S WASTE-TRANSPORT BUDGET BY 25%, SAID AN OFFICIAL.**

## Man arrested for sexually assaulting two minor boys

**HT Correspondent**  
hmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** A 35-year-old man was recently arrested for allegedly sexually abusing two brothers in Vile Parle (East).

According to the police, the boys, aged 10 and 12, lived with their parents at Vile Parle while the accused, a vehicle cleaner, was their neighbour.

The incident came to light on Friday when the boys were at their Santacruz (west) school. The police said they confided in one of their teachers after which a case was registered at Santacruz police station.

"As the incident took place in Vile Parle jurisdiction, the case was transferred there," said Laxman Chavan, senior inspector at the Vile Parle police station.

The police said the cleaner sexually assaulted them at his home after he lured them with chocolates. The boys did not confide in their parents, said police. The

## HC: Ensure cops are sensitive towards child rape survivors

**HT Correspondent**  
hmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The Bombay high court directed the state government to sensitise its police officers on the effective implementation on the Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

A bench of justices RMS Savant and Sadhana Jadhav directed the state to ensure that police personnel dealing with survivors of sexual assault, and other crimes under the act, are "sensitive," and receptive to the survivors, and to ensure there are "adequate number of policemen to record the survivors' statements".

The bench was hearing a plea filed by an activist from Pune, seeking the court's intervention in a case where the Pune police had flouted norms of POCSO and let off an accused person, who had been charged of having raped

### POWAI SODOMY CASE

- Last month, a 13-year-old boy, who attempted suicide following repeated sexual assault, died at KEM hospital.
- He said that his 10-year-old friend had also committed suicide, as he too was sexually assaulted by the same accused.
- The boy and his friends were residents of a slum in Powai.

- The alleged incident took place on July 6 when the two were on the way to their classes.
- The accused caught hold of the boys and sexually assaulted them after threatening to kill them.
- Their parents learnt about it only when they received a call from their tuition teacher.

accused would often visit their house and the boys also used to visit his house.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused lured the boys by giving them chocolates and took them to his house. It has been learnt that the accused targeted one boy and then after a while started abusing the other," said another officer.

The police have registered a case under section 377 of the

Indian Penal Code along with sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

On Thursday, the crime branch held a 31-year-old driver from Telangana after he sexually assaulted two boys in Kandivli at a knife point in June.

Another incident came to light on August 2, when a 16-year-old boy was sexually assaulted by 15 boys at a deserted under-construction site in Andheri (West).

## Separate Ganpati pandal for tourists at Girgaum Chowpatty

**HT Correspondent**  
hmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is planning to establish a separate pandal for tourists at the Girgaum Chowpatty to witness its famous Ganpati visarjan (immersion). The decision was taken in civic chief Ajoy Mehta's monthly meeting on Saturday.

Officials said that BMC will also rope in the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) to set up the pandal. "The idea is to have a separate pandal with facilities like Wi-Fi connection, toilets, drinking water facilities for tourists," a senior civic official said.

The 10-day Ganesh Chaturthi festival begins on August 25. The BMC will also be training volunteers in disaster management in three separate sessions

## Employee robs bizman's valuables worth ₹18.23 lakh, held in Jharkhand

**Surendra P Gangan**  
surendra.gangan@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The Santacruz police recently arrested a businessman's employee from Jharkhand for allegedly stealing valuables worth ₹18.23 lakh, six months after he started working at his Santacruz apartment. According to the police, Jitendra Mahato, 30, stole cash, gold and silver valuables along with diamond-studded watches from Naresh Kadnani's apartment on July 23.

According to the police, Kadnani returned home to find the valuables missing and Mahato was nowhere to be seen. Police were able to track down Mahato's brother, whom he met before fleeing town.

Mahato was subsequently arrested on July 26, three days after he stole the valuables. Officials have recovered part of the stolen booty. He has been remanded in police custody till August 8.

## OTHER DECISIONS

- On Saturday, the civic chief said that hawkers not found with dustbins in their stalls will have their licences cancelled.
- The BMC plans to appoint pest-control agencies to reduce the spread of vector-borne diseases like dengue and malaria in dilapidated, abandoned buildings.

Meanwhile, the civic chief also asked all ward officials to register a police complaint against LPG gas suppliers if they are found providing gas cylinders to hawkers illegally.

## Mehta's move to shift slum dwellers leads to HC rap

**Surendra P Gangan**  
surendra.gangan@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** State housing minister Prakash Mehta, who is facing allegations of favouring builders in slum rehabilitation projects, allegedly forced a decision to rehabilitate slum dwellers in his constituency of Ghatkopar in tenements meant for people affected by the airport makeover. The state government recently overturned its decision to allot the tenements meant for airport revamp project-affected people (PAP) to slum dwellers after the Bombay high court intervened.

According to an official, the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), while making an exception, rehabilitated 425 slum dwellers living next to Tansa pipeline at Vidyavihar into tenements built on land earlier owned by Premier Automobiles, Kurla. This was meant for the airport makeover PAP. The SRA handed over the tenements to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) despite knowing that such a transfer was against the rules. The keys of the flats at Kurla were handed over to 425 slum dwellers by chief minister Devendra Fadnis on December 28, just a couple of weeks ahead of the code of conduct of the civic body elections came into force.

Months after the elections and the slum dwellers settled down at Kurla, the Bombay high

### CONG DEMANDS MEHTA'S RESIGNATION

- Demanding his immediate resignation, the Mumbai Congress staged a protest in Ghatkopar on Saturday against housing minister Prakash Mehta for his alleged corruption cases.
- Police arrested Congress workers along with party city chief Sanjay Nirupam, former corporator Pravin Chheda and later released them on bail.



court while hearing a writ by the slum dwellers slammed the state government for discrimination. The court asked that why, out of 13,000-odd slum dwellers at Tansa, most were shifted to smaller flats of 225 sq ft at Mahul Gaon in Govandi, while 424 shifted to Kurla in the bigger houses of 269 sq ft. It asked the government to clear its stand on the disparity. The government then reverted its earlier decision and asked the 425 tenants to shift to Mahul. It also told the court that it was an one-off decision, which was being corrected by evacuating the 425 tenants from Kurla. When the tenants moved court against the revised decision, the court again slammed the government, staying the evacuation order on Friday.

According to officials from the SRA, the decision of shifting only 425 slum dwellers was after

housing minister Mehta forced them to.

"It was a surprising decision at the behest of Mehta by the then SRA CEO Vishwas Patil. The SRA official did not even make a negative noting on the file. After the court rapped the government, Patil went to CM to revise the decision of evacuating the slum dwellers from Kurla.

It was a huge embarrassment for government and personally for CM as the court has slammed the government on both its decisions. The CM, while admitting to have taken a wrong decision, took SRA officials to task," an official from housing department said.

Mehta refused to comment on the issue. Local Congress MLA Arif Naseem Khan alleged that the BJP played vote-bank politics during the civic election.

## BMC allowed 8,000 trees to be cut in 3 years, says it transplanted 13,000

**HT Correspondent**  
hmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) gave permission to chop 7,842 trees in the past three years or an average of seven trees a day.

Of the trees cut, 4,743 were by private individuals or entities, 1,919 were by the state government and the remaining 1,180 were chopped by the BMC, for various reasons including infrastructure development, according to the civic body's reply to a query by RTI activist Anil Gal-

gali. The highest number of trees — 3,819 — were cut in 2016. The RTI reply received from the superintendent of BMC's garden department also stated that the BMC also transplanted 13,070 saplings during the same period.

The reply also stated that BMC conducted several plantation drives in three years, and managed to plant 49,060 saplings, of which 14,253 were planted in 2014, another 16,157 in 2015, and 18,650 were planted in the 2016.

Meanwhile, Stalin D, of NGO Vanashakti has disputed BMC's claims.

"It is not possible that BMC planted 49,060 saplings. I demand an audit, and Vanashakti is ready to volunteer to count the trees. I am also sure that of the 13,070 trees that were transplanted, 90% have not survived. BMC has no mechanism to check if a transplanted tree has survived."

Jitendra Pardeshi, the superintendent of the BMC's garden department, remained unavailable for comment.