

#### RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT RAJYA SABHA

Member of Standing Committee on Defence
Member of Consultative Committee on Finance
Member of Central Advisory Committee for the National Cadet Corps
Co-Chairman, District Development Coordination & Monitoring Committee, Bengaluru Urban District

21st August, 2017

Lear Navendre Suphyi,

Sub: Request your intervention to ensure Integration of intermodal connectivity when Planning the Bengaluru Metro at Cantontment Station as per the Detailed Project Report of 2014.

I am writing to you following a representation received from Citizens of Bengaluru, who are agitating the inexplicable change in the alignment of Bengaluru Metro from its proposed DPR of 2014.

The Bengaluru Metro of which the Government of India is a shareholder - is designed to be an important part of meeting the citys future mobility requirements. It is basic principle of any new mode of mobility that it would explore as much integration with existing modes like Railways and Buses to the maximum so that the whole mobility solution far exceeds the sum of each part.

However in the city of Bengaluru, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is shifting the upcoming Bengaluru Cantonment Metro Station away from the original location as stated in the approved Detailed Project Report (DPR) from the parking lot of Cantonment Railway Station to a public playground at Bamboo Bazaar. In spite of various representations from Resident Welfare Associations, Civil Society Organizations and Activists. BMRCL has stated to media that they have taken a stand to move the metro away from the location approved in the DPR to a farther location increasing the distance between the railway station and the metro station from 80mts to over 800 mts. To date BMRCL is and continues to unable to justify this shift that makes integration to the Railways more difficult. This integration is critical because the Indian Railways is planning a suburban commuter rail system that will also provide additional public transportation mode and capacity to the Bengaluru commuter.

In addition, the proposed location is a playground that is used by hundreds of young children and youth and is protected by The Karnataka Parks, Playfields and Open Spaces (preservation and regulation) Act 1985. Hence BBMP is neither permitted to give away the land nor can BMRCL use this land for constructing the Metro Station. The South Western Railway has publicly clarified their willingness to cooperate and make the land available for BMRCL through Press Release No. 89 dt. 24.07.2017.

www.rajeev.in



I request your urgent intervention to ensure that integration of Metro at Cantonment station and as a general principle that wherever possible, such integration with Railway stations and Major Bus stands are mandated on BMRCL. For short term considerations, the long term benefit to the city and its commuters must not be sacrificed. Integrated mobility planning is the need for Bengaluru and indeed all cities that are addressing its challenges of growth.

Given your ministry being the nodal division for coordination, appraisal and approval of Urban Transport matters including Metro Rail Projects at the central level, I urge you to kindly intervene in this matter and ensure the construction of the Cantonment Metro Station proceeds as per the originally approved Detailed Project Report.

Yours Sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Sri Narendra Singh Tomar Hon'ble Minister of Urban Development Government of India New Delhi

#### Enclosed:

1. Memorandum requesting for retaining proposed Bengaluru Cantonment Metro Station(Under Phase 2) at the earlier proposed location opposite to Cantonment Railway Station Main Entrance dt 03 August, 2017

Date: 03 AUG 2017

TO: Shri RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Hon. M.P. (RAJYA SABHA) Jupiter Innovision Centre No. 54, Richmond Road, Bengaluru – 560 025.

Dear Sir,

As <u>Concerned Citizens of Bengaluru</u>, we bring to your kind and immediate notice that the decision to shift the proposed Cantonment Metro Station from opposite to Main Entrance of Cantonment Railway Station (land owned by Indian Railways) to a Playground (land owned by BBMP), near New Bamboo Bazaar, Shivajinagar, is AGAINST the interests of both BMRCL and the Citizens of Bengaluru.

It is unfortunate that BMRCL has not yet come out with a comprehensive public statement as to why exactly this decision was necessary. However, from what we have gathered, the reasons may be to do with reducing cost and time to complete the Project, as well as technical aspects like curvature and depth of the Alignment, in addition to reducing travel time on this line and catering to more people.

We would like to present to you the facts which will help you in taking appropriate decision to retain the location as earlier approved, in front of Cantonment Rly. Station (location A), instead of shifting it to a playground near New Bamboo Bazar, Shivajinagar (location B).

- 1. ALL RELEVANT FINACIAL AND TECHNICAL FACTORS HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED EARLIER AND THE LOCATION WAS FIXED AT "A" AFTER DUE CONSIDERATION, AND APPROVAL FOR THE SAME WAS GRANTED BY GOK & GOI, AS PER DPR.
- 2. Any Metro project **must avoid disconnect at any cost -** with any other existing Mode of Transport, and work towards integration. At "A", the zero mile connectivity to the Indian Railways' network, will be a huge reason for integration with about 40,000 Footfalls daily.

Total 14 pages

- 3. In addition, the same Red Line will be extended to the **International Airport** and all travellers will need this connectivity between the Airport and Railways. This will be the shortest and quickest route between the Airport and the Railway network, and will add to the footfalls.
- 4. The Suburban Train System has been initiated and the Cantonment Railway Station will be a major hub for this System, adding hugely to the footfalls. Even at present, every day, thousands of people, particularly LABOURERS & DAILY WAGE EARNERS arrive for work in the mornings from KGF, BANGARPET, KOLAR, MASTI, MALUR and surrounding areas and return in the evening, using trains at Cantonment station. These numbers will grow by leaps & bounds with Suburban Trains.
- 5. Shivajinagar area will have a separate Metro Station at the Shivajinagar Bus Stand, which is a major hub, and there is no need for 2 metro Stations within one locality. The areas near Cantonment Railway Station (like Vasanthnagar, Cunningham Road, etc., with numerous Major Hospitals, Hotels, Institutions, Schools & Colleges, etc.) will benefit hugely with Location "A".
- 6. The new location "B", even if granted free to BMRCL by BBMP, is most unsuitable for the Metro Station on account of its access being through a narrow (one-way) single street / road.
- 7. Also, location "B" is presently being used every day by hundreds of children and youth from the surrounding areas for various activities, including playing. This is the only available playground in the nearby locality. A school near-by also uses this as a Playground for its children. Also, the people from the surrounding areas use this Ground for holding religious functions every year. (PHOTOS ATTACHED Green Flag)
- 8. THE KARNATAKA PARKS, PLAY-FIELDS AND OPEN SPACES (PRESERVATION AND REGULATION) ACT, 1985 clearly states that "No park, play-field or open space specified in the list published under section 4 or section 5 shall be used for any purpose other than the purpose orpurposes for which it was used on the date of commencement of this Act in such area". BMRCL's EIA Study for this Corridor (Report of 426 Pages), on page 15, quotes this Act and states: This act was enforced to provide preservation and regulation of parks, play-fields and open spaces. The act has prohibited construction of buildings under Section 8. According

specified in the list published under section 4 or section 5 shall be alienated by way of sale, lease, gift, exchange, mortgage or otherwise and no license for the use of any such land or buildings for any other purposes shall be granted and any alienation made or license granted in contravention of this section shall be null and void. It is absolutely clear that neither BBMP is permitted to give away the Land to BMRCL nor can BMRCL use this land, and any such act would be considered null and void. The letter and spirit of this Law will be broken by BMRCL if it decides to go ahead with the Station at location B, even if the Station is underground, more so when an already approved and much better alternative is available (at Location A).

9. Commuters would be put to great discomfort with the Station at B, on account of the distance to be covered from B to the Cantonment Railway Station. The Distances (easily found from Google) are as below:

By Road :-

From Cantt Rly StnMain Entrance to B

-1.5 kms.

From B to Cantt Rly Stn Main Entrance

-1.8 kms.

By Walk (assuming a straight line skywalk) :-

Betn. B & Centre of Platform of Cantt Rly Stn

-800 metres.

- (PRINT-OUTS ATTACHED) PINK FLAG
- 10. Thousands of Passengers / Commuters who would like to utilize Cantonment Railway Station daily will end up spending a lot of time (bare minimum 15 minutes) and Expense (if they choose to use local transport between B and Cantonment Railway Station, like Bus, Auto, Cab, etc.). This will also result in adding traffic congestion to the roads surrounding B to cater to the Commuters who want to use the Cantonment Railway Station by local transport between B and the Railway Station.
- 11.It is abundantly clear that the Shift of the Metro Station will directly affect All Commuters from across the City as well as Travellers who would like to use both Metro and Railways, and those wanting to take a train after arriving at the Airport.
- 12.In **Phase 1** the connectivity to near-by Railway Station leaves a lot to be desired and here is an opportunity to get almost an in-house Connectivity with the Railways, and any decision to shift the Metro Station will be **retrograde** and in fact, must not even be considered, for any reason(s) whatsoever. No other Railway Station will be able to provide better

Integration. Cantonment is the Third Busiest Railway Station of Bengaluru, with about 40000 footfalls on any typical day, and the numbers will leapfrog with Metro Station at A and Airport Connectivity as well as the upcoming Suburban Train System. The possibility of High Speed Trains from here to Chennai and other major Stations will add to the numbers. It is important to note that the Integration here would be far better than what has been achieved at City and YPR Railway Stations under Phase 1.

- 13. There is **very good BMTC Bus Connectivity presently at A** and this adds to the reason for the Metro Station to stay at A. In fact, BMTC buses ply in all directions from outside Cantonment Railway Station.
- 14. The Metro Station at A will have **good roads on all its 4 sides**, which is a major advantage. The Metro Station at B can at most have a road along a small part of the perimeter, and there is no possibility of roads on most of the Periphery because of existing buildings, mosque, etc.
- 15.SWR has publicly clarified as below regarding their willingness to cooperate with BMRCL (Press Release No.89 Dt. 24.07.2017): There have been reports in media regarding alignment of metro line near Bangalore Cantonment station being away from existing Bengaluru Cantonment station. In this connection South Western Railway has issued a clarification statement. In May this year BMRCL has asked South Western Railway for temporary allocation of about 16,000 Sq. Mtrs. of land for four years and permanent licensing of about 2500 Sq. Mtrs. land near Bengaluru Cantonment Railway station for the Metro construction work. In this connection joint site survey has been proposed in order to identify the exact requirement of land, possibility of its sparing and taking up process for transfer of land thereafter. The issue is under discussion and will be finalized after feasibility study and mutual dialogue between South Western Railway and BMRCL. All the issues referred to Railways including easy transit between Cantonment Railway and metro stations will be taken into account. It is a fact that certain area is identified for composite station development work for which tender has already been floated. Press release issued by Railway stated that Railway Board's letter of 1st June 2016 permits Railway to allow operating rights to Metro based on Detailed Project Report (DPR) submitted for the project even without actual transfer of land. Generally Railway processes land acquisition through State Govt., for all it's works of new line, doubling etc. Railway is open to considering any

proposal of sparing land to BMRCL to facilitate Metro work in such way that it is practicable and beneficial to everybody.

- 16.As far as Technical Issues of Curvature and Depth are concerned, it is submitted that these are not insurmountable by the resources and expertise that BMRCL has already gained, and also these kind of curvatures and depths have been handled by BMRCL already and are being handled at many Metro Lines all over the world.
- 17. Regarding saving of about Rs. 200 Crores, saving of running time by 1 minute as well as reduction in Project completion time by a few months, please note that (a) these were all considered in the Approved DPR and are part of the Approved Project, (b) these are not at all significant when compared to the massive benefits which will accrue on account of huge footfalls at A, and (c) the same savings can be achieved by other means than by shifting the Station itself to B.
- 18. As you most certainly will appreciate, Namma Metro is going to serve the population of Bengaluru for several decades, maybe a century. Any wrong decision will have a severe impact on the future of this City. Integration is, and should be the no-compromise-at-any-cost mantra for Namma Metro. Posterity should not blame BMRCL for a golden opportunity in hand being given a deep burial. On the contrary, BMRCL must go out of its way to ensure a world-class Integration (remember, travellers from all across the globe will use the Metro to reach from the Airport to this point A, which is closest and quickest, to the heart of the City) at the Cantonment Railway Station.

In the light of the above, we are sure you will take all factors into account, and direct the concerned BMRCL Officials to reverse their recent decision to shift the Cantonment Metro Station to point B, and to retain the same at Point A, as earlier approved, in the larger interests of the Commuting / Travelling Public and in the interests of BMRCL itself.

We hope to hear positive and encouraging news from you at the earliest, since any delay in appropriate decision, as well as taking an inappropriate decision, will prove costly.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely

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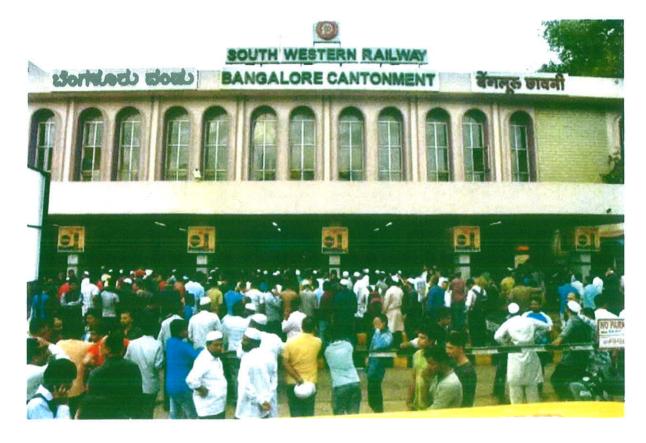
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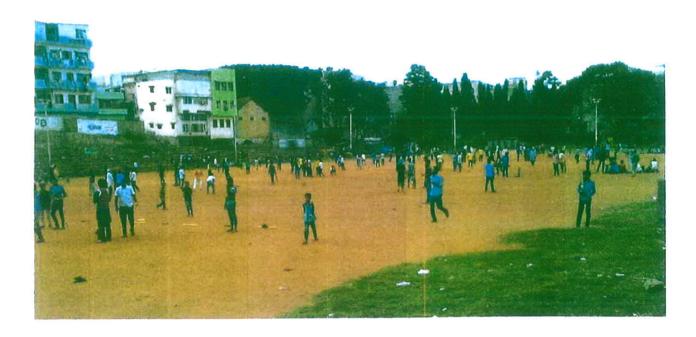
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#### View of Cantonment Railway Station





### Play Ground Citizens and Children playing at Madina Ground:





### Proposed Cantonment Metro Station at Bamboo Bazar:



### Distance from New Cantonment metro Station to Cantonment Railway Station

