

Filthy Irla nullah to be turned into green zone

The Rs 20-crore, four-year beautification project beginning this month, will provide jogging and cycle tracks on either side and a three-layer system to keep the water clean

P K DAS & ASSOCIATES



A computer image depicting how the area will look after completion of the project

Sudeshna Chatterjee
@timesgroup.com

Since the July 26, 2005 deluge, the Irla nullah in Juhu has been called many things, including 'a disaster waiting to happen'. Surrounded by hundreds of shanties, and often choked because of the rubbish thrown in by the slum dwellers, the nullah – one of city's major storm water drains – often floods the societies in JVPD Scheme during monsoon.

The nullah is now set for a makeover, with jogging and cycle tracks on either side, the entire area turned into a green zone; and clean water in the nullah courtesy a three-layered auto cleaning system. The beautification of the nullah will begin this month, based on the recommendations by the Chitale Committee, which the state government had set up post the 2005 deluge.

RANA CHAKRABORTY



The nullah as is today

Rajya Sabha MP Javed Akhtar has pledged to extend financial assistance to the 4-year project – costing about Rs 20 crore. "I support the idea to better the landscape along the drain. I've decided to dedicate my MP Local Area Development Fund for the project."

Speaking to *Mumbai Mirror*, architect P K Das from P K Das & Associates, which has designed the project, said,

"Of the total length of 7.5 km, in the first phase, a 2.5-km will be developed. This is not just about creating tracks. There will be contiguous network of open spaces, including amphitheatres, to enrich community spirit."

With wider roads on both sides, civic workers will also have better access to the nullah for its cleaning. While Mumbai has a total length of 381 kilometers of rivers and drains in the city, in many cases, there is little or no space along them – though it is a must for the civic body to build six-metre roads on either side.

BMC Additional Commissioner Aseem Gupta said, "We will look into the success of this project. If this clicks, we will beautify service roads along other major drains and rivers across the city. We have started building service roads along nullahs and rivers, and plan to cover 204 kms by 2014. We too have plans to do sewage treatment on these outlets."