

Irla nullah will stink no more

By Linah Baliga, Mumbai Mirror | May 16, 2018, 05.27 AM IST



As part of Juhu Vision neighbourhood beautification plan, the nullah is set to be fitted with a unique filtration system; it is prone to flooding and is better known for its stench.

Juhu's Irla nullah, better known for its stench, has already been transformed into a green community hub complete with parks, gardens and cycling tracks. But come November, even the stink will be a thing of the past, as the nullah is set to be fitted with what is being touted as the country's first filtration system for a water body of this kind.

The project is being designed by architects PK Das & Associates, in association with NEERI (National Environmental Engineering Research Institute), led by Director Rakesh Kumar, which will design the system, details for which are being prepared by IIT Bombay. The project is being funded by the MPLAD funds of former MP Javed Akhtar and is pegged at Rs 25 crore. It is being executed by the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA), under the supervision of the Gulmohur Areas Societies Welfare Group (GASWG).

A filter gate will be installed on the nullah's 1.2-km stretch – from Club Millennium to PVR Juhu, after which the nullah goes through the Juhu pumping station, and then on to the sea at Moragaon.

“Our filtration system is located in the nullah at Club Millennium. The system consists of four parts – the first being a filtration gate to capture all the waste floating in the nullah. The second part of the system comprises three silt trap beds designed to slow the flow of the water, to allow the silt to settle. This silt trap beds will be cleaned regularly by the BMC,” said architect Samarth Das of PK Das & Associates.

The BMC has issued the requisite NOCs for the construction and execution of the filtration system. Das explained that the third part of the system, called the CTU unit, is a series of basel walls that further clean the nullah water. “These walls are perforated boxes that contain coir and other filtering materials that clean the water. Floating phytoid plant beds will make up the final part of the filtration system, and will be fixed to the sides of the nullah walls. The roots of these plants assist in cleaning the water and improving its quality,” Das said.

The filtration system is part of the larger Irla nullah project that envisages, walking and cycling tracks, with landscaping and lighting on either side of Irla nullah, and fall under the Juhu Vision plan for a green pedestrian network of open spaces through the Juhu neighbourhood.

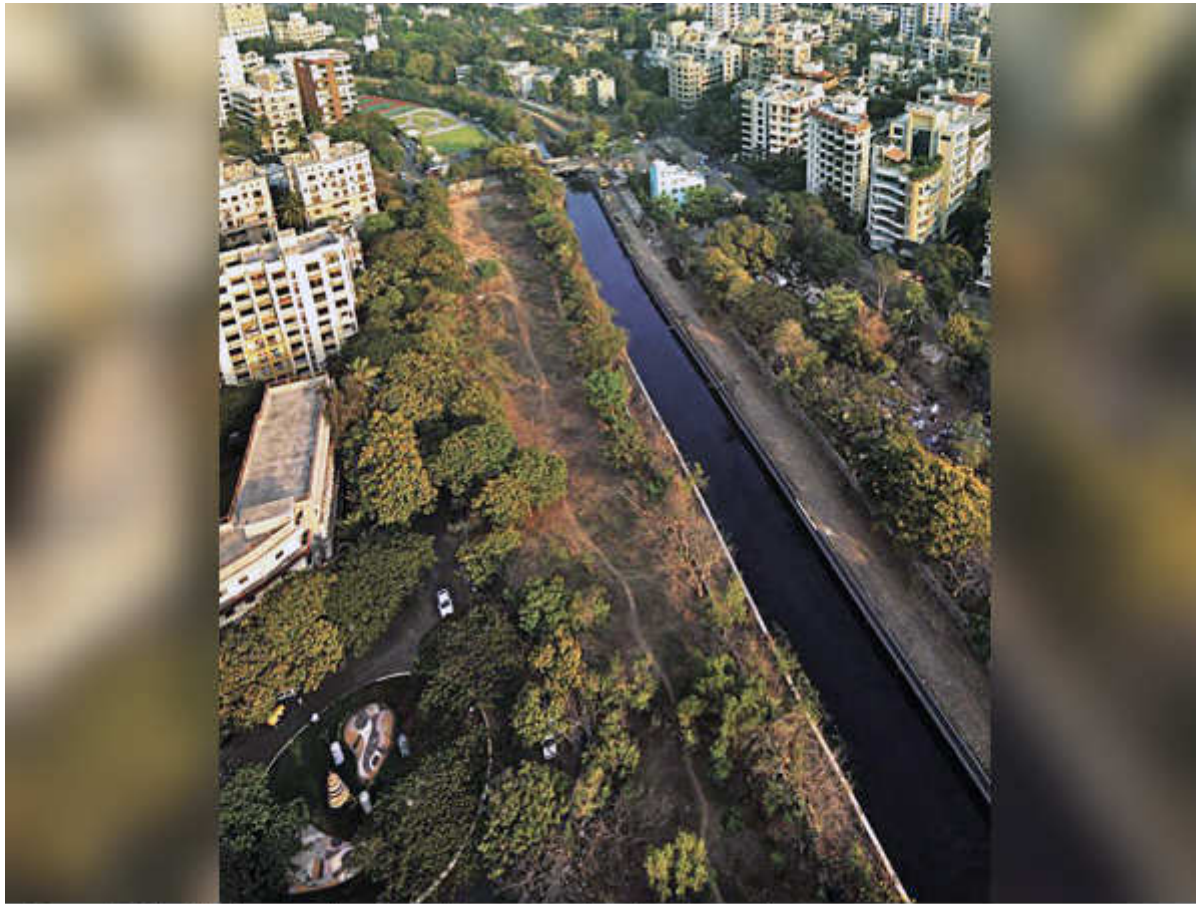
“Irla nullah always gets flooded during the rains. This automatic cleaning will make the area safer, and there will be no stink. Because we are developing the area around the nullah with jogging and cycling tracks, and with clean water, people will use the open space more. It is an additional gift,” said Ashoke Pandit, chairman, GASWG.

When Mirror contacted a senior MHADA official who is handling the nullah project, he said, “We have built an approximately 2.75-km walking stretch. We have also built an amphitheatre and developed a new park, Kishore Kumar Baugh, which was earlier encroached land. We have planted new trees, and made cycling tracks on either side of the nullah. We will also make a foot-overbridge where cycles and pedestrians can cross. We have installed a reverse-osmosis plant to water the garden. The purified nullah water will be used for gardens. We have also illuminated the garden, and work on the nullah filtration will be completed by November.”

Kishore Kumar Baugh, Kaifi Azmi Park and the Children's Forest Park, along with a green stretch along the nullah, have all been developed as part of the Juhu Vision plan. The walking and cycling tracks, lighting and landscaping along the entire stretch are complete. Now, the project heads into the final stages, i.e. cleaning the nullah water, and this is slated to be complete by November.

Local BJP legislator Ameet Satam said it was a welcome project and a unique way of cleaning nullah water.

“They will grow algae and weeds in the nullah, specifically plants that can keep the nullah water clean. They have also constructed a promenade along the nullah. If this experiment is successful, it should be implemented elsewhere in the city too, where there are nullahs,” Satam said.



Irla nullah's filtration system is set for completion in November