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Why can't BMC find place for fire engine outside Priyadarshini Park: Bombay High Court

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Bombay High Court

Mumbai: Following opposition from the residents of the tony Malabar Hill area of south Mumbai to a fire engine being parked inside the Priyadarshini Park, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday asked the civic body to file an affidavit, stating that it had no other option, reports PTI.

A bench of Chief Justice Manjula Chellur and Justice N M Jamdar said it was difficult to believe that in the entire Malabar Hill, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) could not find a "10-square metre area" outside the park. The court was hearing a plea filed by the Malabar Hill Citizens' Forum against the BMC's decision to park the fire engine inside the sprawling park by erecting a shed.

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Several trees were damaged and the park's entrance was demolished to make way for the fire engine and the parking shed, the petitioners claimed, adding that the gates of the park had to be kept open even at night now for the free movement of the fire engine. Advocate Joaquim Reis, appearing for the BMC, told the court that the fire engine occupied only a 10-square metre area in the park, which was spread over a 65,000-square feet (over 6,000 square metre) area, and that it was parked there for the residents' safety.

"But why are you insisting on staying in the park? In the whole of Malabar Hill, you cannot find any other place? Do not treat it as an ego issue. The corporation should instead create a congenial environment for the citizens," the bench said, adding, "And if you want to stay adamant on your stand, then put it on an affidavit."

"The whole of Malabar Hill area is so crowded because of encroachment by the public. The narrow roads are encroached upon by the residents to park their cars every night. But, no one cares about it. A corporation land is used to park two or three rows of cars. Why does the corporation not do something about it?" the bench asked and directed the BMC to submit the affidavit by October 11.

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