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Eased CRZ may see devpt boom on coastline

Nauzer.Bharucha @timesgroup.com

The stringent coastal regulation zone (CRZ) rules supposed to protect the coastline from rampant construction could become virtually irrelevant in Mumbai after the high court upheld the tweaked norms.

Many city builders with coastal plots have since rushed to the National Hydrographic Institute in Dehradun and the Institute of Remote Sensing in Chennai. They have certified areas such as Backbay - from Nariman Point and Cuffe Parade to Girgaum Chowpatty - and Mahim as bays and marked out builders' plots as being outside the 100m zone.

CHANGE: FOR GOOD OR BAD?

- In 2011, the Union environment ministry reduced the minimum distance for construction near a bay from 500m to 100m. It still remains 500m for other seafronts.
Recently, developer Hubtown approached the Bombay HC when clearance granted to its 5.5acre Prabhadevi plot by the state coastal zone management authority was stayed.
The developer said except a small portion, its entire land fell outside the 100m zone of the Mahim bay.
Mahim has been marked a bay by the National Hydrographic Institute.
The HC agreed and directed the authority to issue a clearance certificate to the developer within four weeks.
It asked BMC to consider the developer's application for development of the plot.



In Mumbai, it will not make much of a difference because most areas falling under CRZ II are already developed. VIJAYDAR PHATAK | URBAN PLANNING CONSULTANT

Technically, the entire city is a bay. However, the CRZ's objective is to check the pressure on coastal ecology and environment. This order contradicts the basic idea of CRZ. P K DAS | ARCHITECT AND ACTIVIST

CRZ is meant to tackle sea level changes and flash floods. If construction is allowed, these areas become vulnerable. The state should ask the SC for its interpretation. P SHETTY | ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY OF MMR

norms have already been diluted for redevelopment of slums and dilapidated cess buildings. In Mumbai, it will not make much of a difference because most areas falling under CRZ II are already developed.

issues like sea level changes and flash floods in coastal areas. The moment you allow construction, these areas become susceptible and vulnerable," pointed out Prasad Shetty, secretary of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region's environment improvement society.

order contradicts and undermines the basic idea of CRZ," said Das. Any relaxation will have a cascading impact on the entire city, he added.

Architect and housing activist P.K.Das said the HC order will be a precedent to relax CRZ in Mumbai. "Technically, the entire city is a bay. However, the objective of CRZ is to restrict further densification of coastal areas and check the pressure on coastal ecology and environment. This

Man who robbed sr citizens wanted to be an actor

VijayV.Singh@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The home nurse who had assaulted a Khar senior citizen couple had come from Jammu & Kashmir to try his luck in the film industry and had undergone facial surgery for it too, the Khar police said on Friday. They said he had done a diploma course and had taken up the job of a medical assistant to manage expenses here.

PLAY SAFE



- Check the background details of servants before hiring them.
Collect details of their relatives and friends in city.
Register your servant with the local police.
Never open a cupboard in the presence of servants.

ing her ornaments. Sachdev then attacked Hiranand and tied him to his bed. He then locked the house from outside and walked away with ornaments from the cupboard.

Leander alleges death threat to him, daughter

V Narayan & Swati Deshpande | TNN

Mumbai: Tennis star Leander Paes (41) lodged a complaint on Tuesday and an FIR was registered on Thursday against a person, claiming to be cricketer Atul Sharma (31), with the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) police, for allegedly threatening him and his eight-year-old daughter with "dire consequences".

Advocate Mrinalini Deshmukh, who represents his estranged live-in partner and model Rhea Pillai, denied any illicit relationship. "As regards threats to Paes by a man, I have no comments to offer as I have no knowledge," she said.



Leander Paes with Rhea Pillai

Paes said in his complaint, "The cricketer, who is in a relationship with my partner, warned me and my daughter of dire consequences and gave death threats in the family court premises. He was there on the fifth floor of the family court premises. He was furious at me as I had submitted evidence in the court that indicated his illicit relationship with my partner."

Bikers want cops to target motorists too

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The traffic police department, which had announced a crackdown on motorcyclists riding in the wrong direction, may have to keep an eye on bike-borne men in khaki too. TOI's report elicited a huge response from citizens, many of whom pointed out that the police, even when not attending to an emergency, often wrongly enter one-way streets on two-wheelers.

highlight locations where the menace was rampant and urged that the campaign be extended to motorists too. "I have often seen bikers riding in the wrong direction from the Colaba post office side towards the market on S B S Marg, endangering the lives of people. I have confronted drivers of cars being steered in the wrong direction. People do it with impunity as they know they can get away with it," said Ramasubban Balakrishnan. CA Sunil Athale, who filed the plea, said school buses and tempos often drive in the wrong direction. "The Mhada to Lohhandwala Circle stretch in Andheri (W) is a problem area. We fear a major mishap," said Athale.

Bikers on wrong side of Mumbai roads face jail

Mumbai: Cracking down on bikers violating the one-way rule, the Mumbai traffic police have decided to slap cognisable offence cases against them, reports Nitasha Natu, according to TOI.

The TOI report on the police campaign tempos often drive in the wrong direction. "The Mhada to Lohhandwala Circle stretch in Andheri (W) is a problem area. We fear a major mishap," said Athale.

SPARKLE BEFORE THE FESTIVITIES

Anil Shinde



RAZMATAZZ: Special children celebrate Diwali with teachers and parents at a Thane school on Friday

Special court reserves verdict in 11/7 train blasts case

Swati.Deshpande @timesgroup.com

Mumbai: A special court that conducted the trial of seven synchronized train blasts in Mumbai in 2006 reserved the judgment in the case on Friday. The trial of 13, accused of causing the July 11 blasts that ripped first class compartments in suburban trains killing 209 people, is over and the verdict will be pronounced at a date to be fixed by the court. Eight years since Mumbai's deadliest train terror attacks, the trial had seen many twists and turns with questions raised by the defence about the prosecution case.

Table with 2 columns: DATE (July 11, 2006), TIME (6.24pm to 6.35pm), LOCATIONS (Matunga, Mahim Junction, Khar Road, Santa Cruz, Jogeshwari, Borivli, Bhayander), DEATHS (209), INJURED (700), TRIAL CONDUCTED BY (Special MCOCA judge Y D Shinde), WITNESSES EXAMINED BY PROSECUTION (200), WITNESSES EXAMINED BY ACCUSED (40), THE ACCUSED (Faisal Shaikh, Ali Bashir Khan, Mohammad Ali, Majid Shafi, Sajid Ansari, Kamal Ansari, Ethesam Siddiqui, Zameer Shaikh, Sohail Shaikh, Muzammil Shaikh, Tanvir Ansari, Naveed Hussai and Abdul Shaikh).

Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) and was presided over by special judge Y D Shinde. The prosecution had examined 200 witnesses in the case, while the defence advocates examined 40 witnesses. Special public prosecutor Raja Thakare had conducted the trial and examined witnesses to compile "strong and cogent evidence" in court. The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) had arrested 13 accused in the case and all were in prison during the trial. A major point of contention be-

tween the two sides has been the alleged confessions of the accused. The prosecution has heavily relied on confession statements to prove the complicity of the accused, but the accused maintained the confessions are fake and cannot be considered as evidence. It is one of the first cases where the defence filed queries under the RTI Act to prove the innocence of the accused. The police had rounded up Muslim youth for investigation, attracting criticism from the community.

Now, book a kaali-peeli taxi through a mobile app

HOW TO USE IT

- Download Ola Cabs mobile app from the Google playstore/Android platform free of cost.
Using the app, a commuter can mention his pickup point and destination and see all black-and-yellow taxis available on a real time navigation map.
App sends out alerts to all taxis present in a radius of 3 km.
Within 60 seconds, cabbies in the area have a choice of accepting the booking.
Once booking is accepted, driver's details and car registration number is sent via SMS.

Mumbai: It is now possible for you to book even a black-and-yellow taxi—at the usual cost—sitting at home with the help of a mobile application. All you need to do is switch on the app and mention your destination. Within 60 seconds, the app will send your request to all registered taxis in a 3-km radius. In the next few minutes, you get an SMS alert with the name and mobile number of the driver. "It will reduce the stress of waiting for a taxi on the road or facing refusals from drivers. Also, you do not spend a single paise extra for using the app and getting the service at your doorstep," said Anand Subramanian, director (marketing communication) of Ola cabs, which has created the app. "We are just a facilitator and don't charge commission from drivers or commuters. You can book cabs through this app for even short distances, say 2 to 3 km, and pay as per the meter," he said.

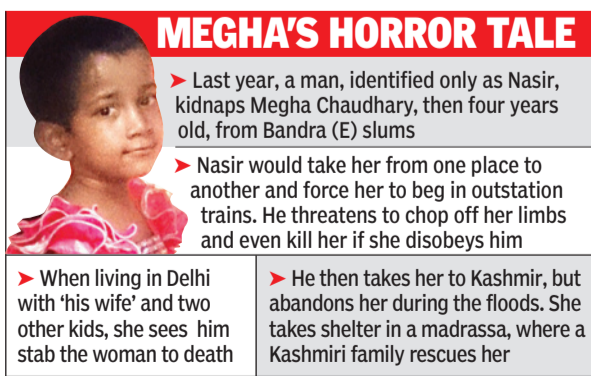
5-yr-old from Bandra survives 18-month kidnap ordeal

Girl, Forced To Beg, Saw Abuctor Kill A Woman; Was Rescued In Kashmir

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Mumbai: Five-year-old Megha Chaudhry from a Bandra (E) slum has been to hell and back. Eighteen months ago, a man kidnaped her from Bandra, forced her to beg on outstation trains, stabbed a woman in front of her, and then dumped her in flood-ravaged Kashmir. But she survived to tell her tale thanks to a Kashmiri family who took care of her and helped reunite her with her parents, who do odd jobs. "We searched for Megha everywhere—in Maharashtra and also in the neighbouring states. We lost all hope after six

months. We even consulted a baba... we got worried when we learnt of kidnapers who would sell minor girls in Kashmir," said her maternal grandfather, Ramesh Thakur. Megha's ordeal began last year when she and her mother were enjoying chhat at a roadside stall. The five-year-old told Thakur that the kidnapper, whom she identified as Nasir, lured her with chocolates, took her to a railway station and boarded an outstation train. She said Nasir threatened to chop off her limbs and even kill her if she did not obey him. He forced her to beg on trains as they travelled from one place



MEGHA'S HORROR TALE Last year, a man, identified only as Nasir, kidnaped Megha Chaudhry, then four years old, from Bandra (E) slums. Nasir would take her from one place to another and force her to beg in outstation trains. He threatens to chop off her limbs and even kill her if she disobeys him. When living in Delhi with 'his wife' and two other kids, she sees him stab the woman to death. He then takes her to Kashmir, but abandons her during the floods. She takes shelter in a madrasa, where a Kashmiri family rescues her. Delhi, Nasir killed the woman. "He stabbed her in the stomach and she died. We left the house," she told Thakur. Megha said Nasir took her to Srinagar, where they lived till floods struck. He abandoned her and fled.

to another and slept on footpaths and railway stations. A woman, who claimed to be Nasir's wife, and two other children joined them for a few months. Megha told Thakur that when the five of them were living together in a house in

University directs colleges to refund 'extra' fees charged

Stormy Senate Meet After V-C Walks Out

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Mumbai: Mumbai University will soon issue a circular to its affiliated colleges to charge fees as per prescribed norms and direct them to refund any extra fees they have charged "illegally" in the last few years. The announcement was made by vice-chancellor Naresh Chandra at the MU's senate meeting on Friday, after members complained of several colleges "overcharging" students. Around 30 senate members also walked out of the meeting in the evening after vice-chancellor Rajan Welukur disregarded the procedure. Welukur staged a walkout for 10 minutes after a member interrupted him while talking. "Terminating this as an insult to the senate procedure, all students and teachers' representatives walked out for the rest of the meeting. Univ registrar M A Khan said that the quorum (one-third of the 102 senate members) was met and so the meeting continued. An official said that Welukur had given time to all members to talk before he started with his explanation and he was interrupted. He was, however, back in a few minutes. The university's perspective plan for academic year 2015-16 was tabled and passed in the absence

of these senate members. The remaining members accepted the plan with a few suggestions on giving additional impetus to the newly-formed district of Palghar. The university's perspective plan has recommended encouraging colleges offering courses in architecture, law, applied art and B Ed (special education) along with community and night colleges. In a meeting held in September, the management council had decided to not grant affiliation to any new colleges in 2015-16. However, Palghar will be given special provisions to set up new colleges. Senate member Sanjay Shete appealed to the uni administration to discontinue the contract with MKCL as it has repeatedly failed to deliver as students and colleges have suffered due to technical glitches. Shete also claimed that MKCL has all the students' data since 2006, which should be otherwise the uni's property. MU officials assured that the decision on the termination of the agreement will be taken up post-Diwali. Teachers' representatives from BUCTU said Friday's meeting was the second last time the current senate would have met and discussed pending issues. The senate will be dissolved after March next year.

Pup-burning: FIR filed after protest

Mumbai: A day after four puppies were burnt alive in Vasai (East), the police on Friday registered a case against unidentified persons. A protest by animal activists outside Nalasopara police station on Friday spurred the police to lodge an offence. A litter of six puppies, about three months old, had been tied up and allegedly set afire on a playground in Evershine City. Two of the pups were rescued by a couple of teenage boys, Rahul Shirsekar and Indraprakash Vishwakarma, who heard the canines whimpering. The other four puppies were badly charred.