

**The Times of India**

**Title : BMC plans affordable housing, eyes salt pans**

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### **Increases City's Risk Of Floods, Warn Activists**

The revised draft Development Plan (DP) 2034 has for the first time proposed creation of affordable housing for Mumbaikars, but plans to do so on salt pans and other such land so far kept outside the development spectrum.

Civic officials claimed affordable houses of various categories, ranging between 18 sq metres to 60 sq metres, will be constructed on land outside Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) areas. "We plan to use salt pan lands beyond the CRZ area for affordable housing. Land which comes within CRZ-I, II and III will not be touched. Even as far as No-Development Zones (NDZ) are concerned, areas which have natural features or are ecologically sensitive will not be affected. These areas we have marked as 'NA' which means they will not be touched today or even in future. However, beyond that, we will allow construction," said a senior civic official.

The BMC has especially planned huge incentives for NDZ areas. No-development zones, mostly coastal areas owned by private individuals or government agencies, will be thrown open for affordable housing. Land owners will get incentives as a plot will be divided into three parts with 33% for affordable housing, 34% for buildings saleable at market rates, and the rest for open spaces and public amenities like old age homes. BMC's target is creation of 1million homes in the next 20 years but only people who don't own a house in the city, are not living in a slum or a cessed building will be eligible to buy them. The civic body will allot the houses through a lottery system.

Architect P K Das said it was 'bluff' perpetrated in the name of affordable housing. "A real assessment of the development potential of the existing developable land has not been done. The authorities should have considered building affordable housing on government land, including slum land, where FSI is available. This is being left for private development and instead natural assets are being touched," said Das.

Citizen activist and advocate Godfrey Pimenta said that planning any construction on salt pan lands even if it does not come under the purview of CRZ is environmentally suicidal. "Salt pans act as a buffer to hold excess sea water. This move will leave little space in the city for the excess water to percolate and with construction everywhere, chances of flooding will only increase," said Pimenta.

Activist and Bandra resident Shyama Kulkarni said Mumbai is a coastal city and the DCR should have listed out measures to deal with flooding. "We are taking away the city's natural absorbent by proposing buildings there. With nallahs already clogged during monsoon, this will only add to flooding in the city," said Kulkarni.

## CHEAP HOMES TO COST CITY DEAR?

<p>&gt; The draft DP 2034 mentions creation of <b>1 million</b> affordable homes in Mumbai in the next 20 years</p>		<p>&gt; It will require <b>3,000 hectares</b> of land for the purpose</p>				
		<p><b>LAND REQUIRED</b></p> <p> <b>No-Development Zone</b> 2,100 hectares</p>				
		<p><b>Tourism Development Area</b> 500 hectares </p>				
<p><b>HOUSING CATEGORIES</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>18-20 sq metres <b>LIG</b></td> <td>20-40 sq metres <b>MIG</b></td> <td>40-60 sq metres <b>HIG</b></td> </tr> </table>		18-20 sq metres <b>LIG</b>	20-40 sq metres <b>MIG</b>	40-60 sq metres <b>HIG</b>	<p><b>Salt Pans</b> 260 hectares </p>	<p><b>Mumbai Port Trust</b> 140 hectares </p>
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