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Mumbai Update

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- **Slum dwellers submit a proposal to provide housing to 90 lakh people.**
- **Maharashtra Government to consider and respond to it.**
- **State challenged to stop its nexus with the builders-corporates.**

Yesterday a 25 member delegation, consisting of representatives of slum dwellers, hawkers, fisher people, project affected, senior activists and members of High Power Committee (formed under the directions of Mumbai HC to formulate Housing Policy for Slum dwellers) met Minister of State for Urban Development Sh Rajesh Tope, Minister of State for Housing Sh. Shegoinkar. Also present during the meeting were Secretary, Urban Development, Housing and Municipal Commissioner-BMC.

During the meeting a plan was submitted which would provide for housing of around 90 lakh people. The plan has also laid out the feasible sources of land and financial resources required for the same. The Plan based on a blue print proposed by Sh Shailesh Gandhi was reached upon by having inputs and suggestions from Architect, Housing Experts, Activists and slum dwellers. Delegation also included Sh Chandrashekar, Dr. Amita Bhide(TISS) & Dr. J. Adsule (Nirmala Niketan)

As per our estimates, for a decent and habitable housing an approx of 12 lakh tenements are required. Under the present SRS around 1 lakh tenements have been constructed till date which leaves us with the task of constructing 11 lakh tenements for the present population that is staying in slums. One can add an additional 10% to it, to be on higher and safer side, thus totalling it at 12 lakh tenements. In addition to this housing stock, one can add provision of dormitories to cater to the needs and requirements of that section of population that can be termed as 'floating'. As they are engaged in low paid jobs and in most cases staying alone in the city, cannot even afford a rental housing. These tenements will have system of common toilets to discourage influential classes inappropriately acquiring these tenements.

Only the land that is presently occupied by slums is to be utilised from the scheme and as per our estimates, only 60% of that will be required for constructing tenements, dormitories and supporting infrastructure. Rest 40% of the land is thus released and available for implementing the reservations of the Development Plan, which otherwise remains unfulfilled. Thus this scheme not only makes available land for housing, it also

provides for additional open spaces and other DP reservations. The total cost of this new scheme would be Rs 52,250 crores. The break up has been given in the table below.

1.	Built-up Area of 1 unit	30 sq.mt
2.	Cost of Construction of 1 unit @ Rs 10,000/sq.mt	Rs. 3,00,000
3.	Total cost of 14 lakh housing units	42,000 crores
4.	Cost of constructing 1500 dormitories housing 7,50,000 residents (500 in each)	2250 crores
5.	Cost of constructing 2 lakh MIG tenements.	8000 crores
6.	Grand Total	52,250 crores

In Mumbai, 1200 acres of land has been leased out to 550 lesses in both Mumbai city & suburb. These lands have been leased at rates which are far below than the prevalent market rates. These 550 lesses are paying a rent of only Rs 5.8 crores annually which really could fetch Rs. 9000 crores/annum (Rs. 6000 cr from land leased in city and Rs.3000 cr from land leased in suburb). These rents need to be renewed and brought to be at par with the prevalent market rates. When 9000 crore rupees is coming every year, rent of 5 years will be sufficient to fund the entire scheme.

The occupants of the tenements can be supposed to deposit a minimum deposit in order to avail a tenement (this can be a one time payment of Rs. 10,000) and a monthly rent/service charge of a fixed amount(we suggest it to be Rs 300/month). For dormitories the charges can be either daily or monthly (we suggest them to be Rs 8/day or Rs 150 per month per person). The renewed lease rent rates will be the source of funding the new scheme and thus putting no burden on the exchequer. The Ministers & Officials have promised to respond to the proposal in the next few days.

Also discussed were issues of demolitions that are being carried out violating the rules and rights of the poor. In the name of expanding the Storm Water Drains, on 24th December, more than 200 houses were demolished at Sainath Nagar, Irla nala Juhu. These demolitions were carried out to implement the BRIMSTOWD project which is being implemented under funding from JNNURM. While on the opposite side of the

drain, even today a office of a security agency stands intact, though it also being an encroachment only. The residents accused the Municipal Authorities of discriminating the poor only while tolerating & protecting the encroachments of the rich as also the Shopping Mall nearby has been left out.

The Authorities could also not respond to the query of reasons behind not implementing the National Street Vendor & Hawkers Policy. A Judicial enquiry was demanded in the matter of Hiranandani Gardens, where land was given to the developers at the rate of 40 paise per acre.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the present ministers as well a vow by the slum dwellers to sit on an indefinite dharna if the demands are not with the time period given.

Santosh Thorat, Nasrin Bano, Mohan Chavana, Hyder Imam,
Simpreet Singh, Mahatam Mouraya, Amit Maru, Medha Patkar