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MHADA all set to give Dharavi a facelift

Housing agency prepares roadmap to develop 56-acre out of the 535-acre of Asia's second largest slum which has 90,000 hutments

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After seven years of its conception, the Dharavi facelift project took its most decisive turn on Wednesday with the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) preparing a roadmap for the redevelopment of the portion of land given to it by the state government. This means the work on the project would begin this monsoon.

It was only recently that Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan had given an approval to MHADA to develop sector 5 amid protests within the state government, with certain factions rooting for private developers.

With over 90,000 hutments, the second largest shanty town in Asia (after Karachi) has been divided into five sectors for redevelopment with sector 5 being assigned to MHADA.

Sector 5, situated between Sant Kakkaya Road and Mahim Creek and Sion station, spreads over 56 acres and houses 9,387 slum dwellers on 14 acres of land.

The brains behind the project say the slum dwellers in sector 5 can be rehabilitated in just eight acres in high-rises.

As per the roadmap, the high-rises will have commercial establishments on ground and first floors while the rest will be used for residential purposes.

This arrangement will leave MHADA with 48 acres for town planning and the creation of an additional stock of 5,000 affordable houses.

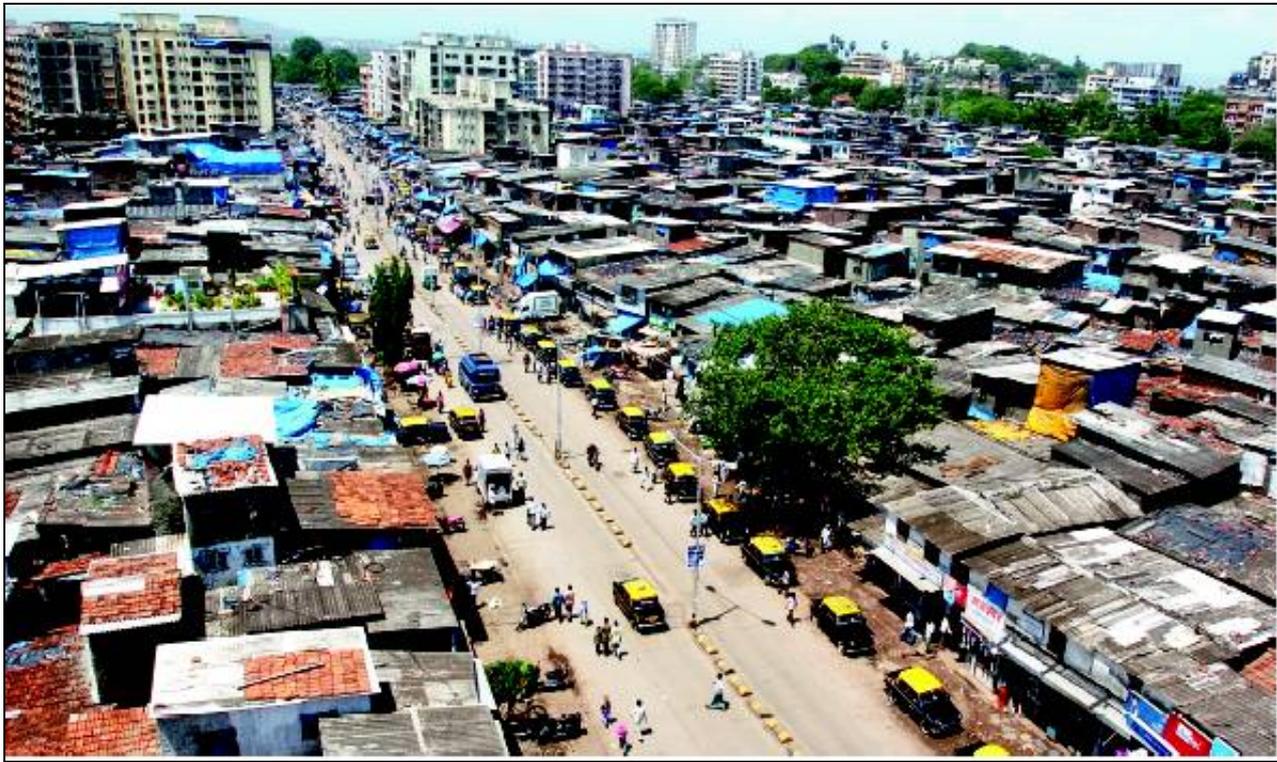
Vice President of MHADA Satish Gavai said, "The chief officer of Mumbai Housing and Area Development Boards has been made the project head and coordinator."

He added that the responsibility of preparing the list of tenants residing in transit camps and chawls and their rehabilitation has been entrusted upon the chief officer of Mumbai Buildings Repairs and Reconstruction Board. "For Sector 5, MHADA will conduct a fresh survey to prepare the list of eligible tenants. However, we will follow cut-off date given by the state," he said.

Gavai added, "The tenants will be rehabilitated in nearby areas after taking into consideration the monsoon and end of school vacations. We will clear only those areas where we have to begin the construction."

THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS

» The total area of the second largest slum town in Asia is spread over 535 acres out of which sector 5 comprises of 56 acres. » Sector 5 is spread over 56 acres and houses over 9,000 slum dwellers on 14 acres. » According to the roadmap, the slum dwellers can be rehabilitated in eight high-rises. » This will leave MHADA with 48 acres for town planning and facilitate creation of an additional stock of 5,000 affordable houses.



Dharavi (above) is the second largest slum in Asia after Karachi's Orangi township in Pakistan