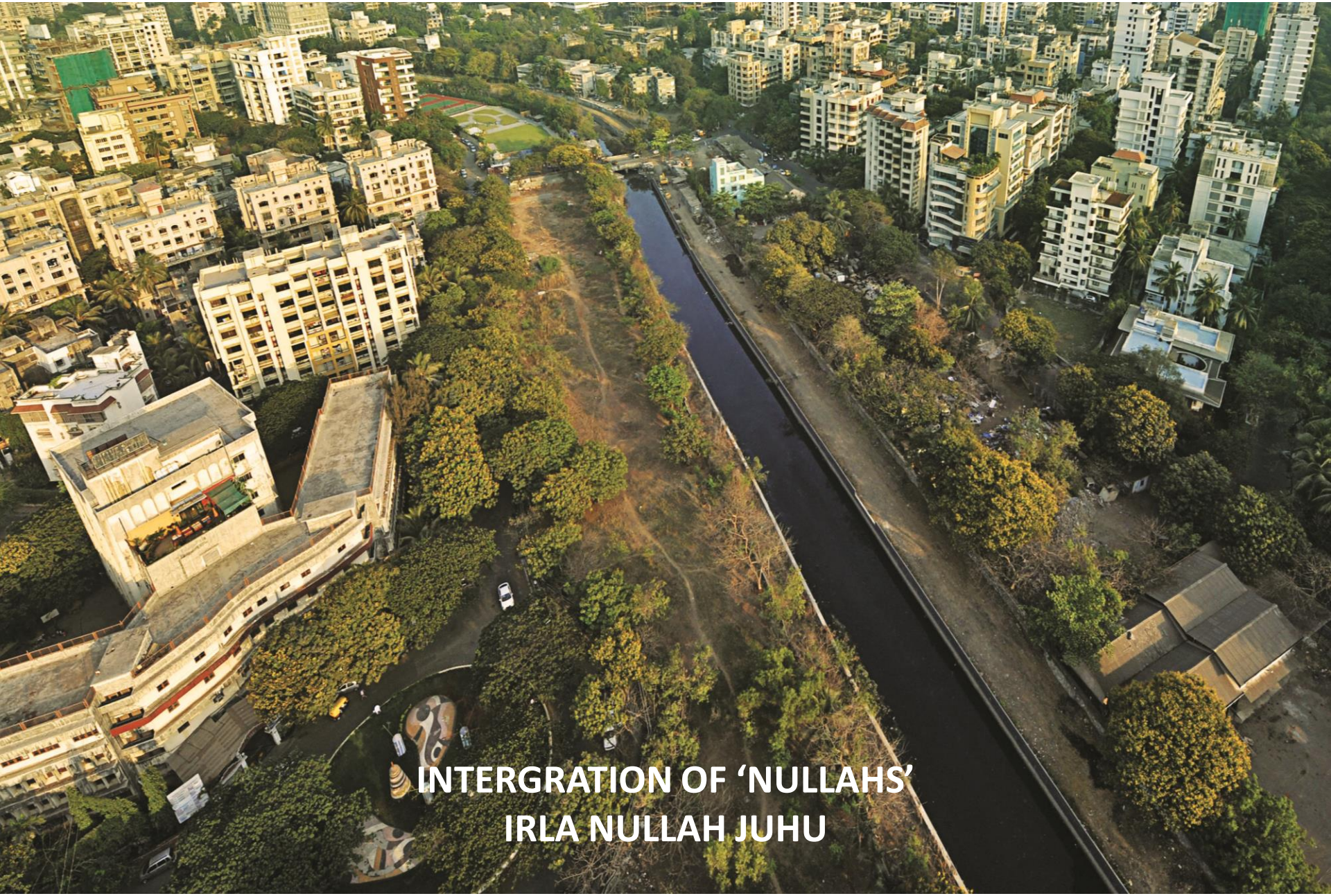
RE-ENVISIONING CITIES

P K D A S

&

A S S O C I A T E S

16th April 2018



INTERGRATION OF ‘NULLAHS’
IRLA NULLAH JUHU

WALKING, CYCLING AND A FOREST

Juhugiri. Pyar se.

Double open space: add almost 3 Oval maidans
Create 10-km tree-lined, flood-free walkway along Irla nala
Inter-connect open spaces with institutions & amenities
Re-align & integrate Metro rail network with public spaces
Protect beach, improve access, enhance facilities
Provide civic amenities for gaothans, redevelop slums
Form a model for neighbourhood planning,
participation & governance

Vision Juhu

Expanding public space

PK Das & Associates, Architects • Kamala Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute for Architecture • Mumbai Waterfronts Centre

Research Sponsor: ICICI Prudential

Contacts: anirudh.paul@gmail.com • pkdas.arch@gmail.com • darryldmonte@gmail.com

Filthy Irla nullah to be turned into green zone

The Rs 20-crore, four-year beautification project beginning this month, will provide jogging and cycle tracks on either side and a three-layer system to keep the water clean

P K DAS & ASSOCIATES

A computer image depicting how the area will look after completion of the project

Sudeshna.Chatterjee
@timesgroup.com

Since the July 26, 2005 deluge, the Irla nullah in Juhu has been called many things, including 'a disaster waiting to happen'. Surrounded by hundreds of shanties, and often choked because of the rubbish thrown in by the slum dwellers, the nullah – one of city's major storm water drains – often floods the societies in JVPD Scheme during monsoon.

The nullah is now set for a makeover, with jogging and cycle tracks on either side, the entire area turned into a green zone; and clean water in the nullah courtesy a three-layered auto cleaning system. The beautification of the nullah will begin this month, based on the recommendations by the Chitale Committee, which the state government had set up post the 2005 deluge.

RANA CHAKRABORTY

The nullah as is today

Rajya Sabha MP Javed Akhtar has pledged to extend financial assistance to the 4-year project – costing about Rs 20 crore. "I support the idea to better the landscape along the drain. I've decided to dedicate my MP Local Area Development Fund for the project."

Speaking to *Mumbai Mirror*, architect P K Das from P K Das & Associates, which has designed the project, said, "Of the total length of 7.5 km, in the first phase, a 2.5-km will be developed. This is not just about creating tracks. There will be contiguous network of open spaces, including amphitheatres, to enrich community spirit."

With wider roads on both sides, civic workers will also have better access to the nullah for its cleaning. While Mumbai has a total length of 381 kilometers of rivers and drains in the city, in many cases, there is little or no space along them - though it is a must for the civic body to build six-metre roads on either side.

BMC Additional Commissioner Aseem Gupta said, "We will look into the success of this project. If this clicks, we will beautify service roads along other major drains and rivers across the city. We have started building service roads along nullahs and rivers, and plan to cover 204 kms by 2014. We too have plans to do sewage treatment on these outlets."

THE STRUGGLE

2006

Residents win fight over entry to open ground

Residents pry open park gates

2009

Juhu residents fight for access to playground

2012

FARE GROUP +

2011

Fighting Ecological Disaster Tops Citizens' Agenda
City has hope as residents unite for some noble causes
Hunger strike planned against tree-hacking in Juhu-Versova

BMC backs citizens, asks trust to return Juhu plot
FOLLOW-UP

2014

Juhu's green lung back after 8-yr fight

2016

BEFORE

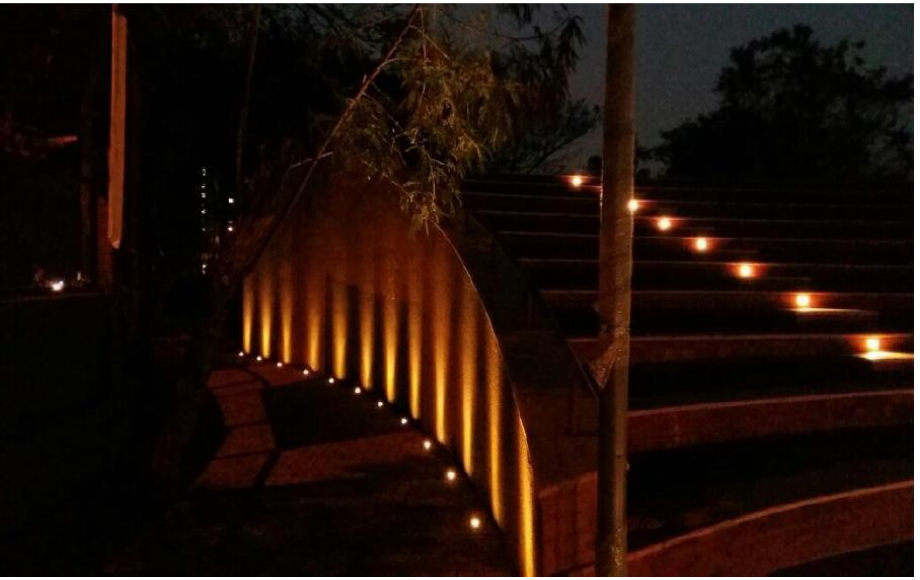
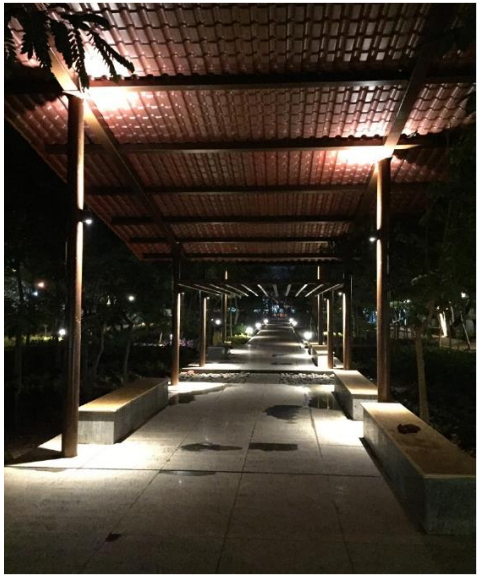
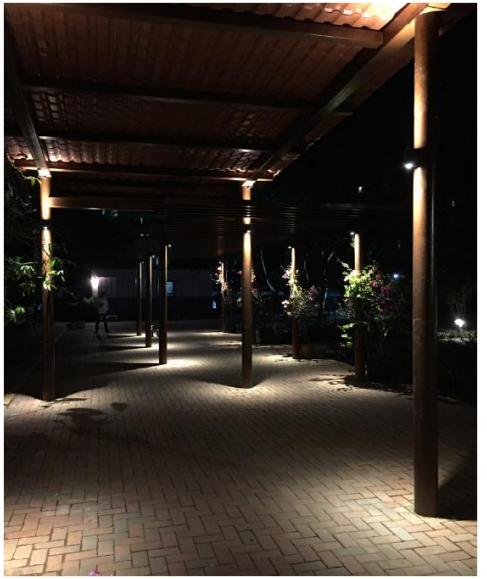
AFTER
RENDERCAD

WALKING / CYCLING TRACK

KISHORE KUMAR BAUG

INAUGARATION

VIJAY TENDULKAR RANGMANCH

RE INVIGORATION OF MUMBAI'S D WATER COURSES

Major Nullahs - 300 kms

Minor Nullahs - 400kms

RIVERS

MITHI - 18 kms

OSHIWARA - 7kms

DAHISAR - 12kms

POISAR - 3kms

Select L

Let Streams of Linear Open Spaces Flow Across Urban Landscapes

PK Das, Mumbai.
12 August 2015

the nature of cities

Many voices. Greener cities. Better cities.

OPEN SPACES MAP OF MUMBAI

MUMBAI'S OPEN SPACES MAP

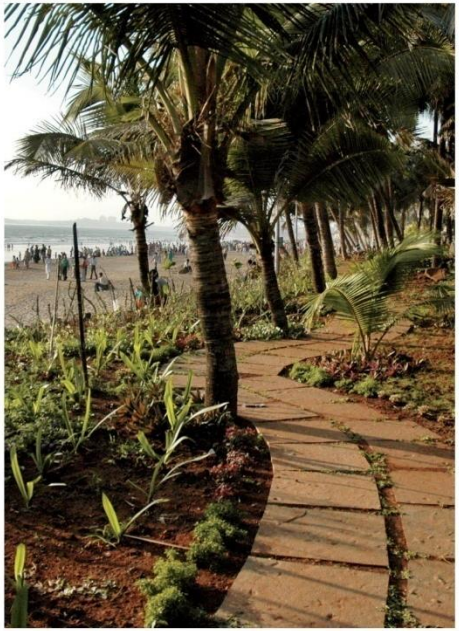
INDEX

	Nos.	AREA-SQKM	%	SIGN
MUMBAI BOUNDARY		482.74 (A)		
WARD BOUNDARY				
RAILWAY STATIONS & PROPERTY		9.41	1.94%	
AIRPORTS, DEFENCE, PORTS		14.557	3.01%	
MAJOR ROADS & HIGHWAYS		30.0	6.21%	
GARDENS [G] & PARKS [P]	428	3.41	0.7%	
PLAYGROUNDS [P.G]	690	3.77	0.78%	
RECREATION GROUNDS [R.G]	690	7.84	1.62%	
ENCROACHED OPEN SPACE [on G, P.G.,R.G, N.D.Z, Mangroves, Mudflats]	627	10.10	2.09%	
FISH DRYING YARDS	5	0.16	0.03%	
LAKES, PONDS & TANKS	23	7.06	1.46%	
CREEKS, RIVERS AND NALAS		13.14	2.72%	
WET LANDS [Includes salt pans]		8.01	1.66%	
MANGROVES		62.94	13.0%	
BEACHES	10	1.44	0.29%	
PROMENADES	6	0.12	0.02%	
HILLS , FORESTS & NATIONAL PARK		53.6	11.1%	
N.D.Z [excluding hills, mangroves,wetlands]		38.00	7.87%	
TOTAL AREA		257.31 (B)	54.4%	
Balance land area for development of Housing (5 categories as per DP), Industrial(6 categories as per DP), Commercial (2 categories as per DP), Amenities (34 categories as per DP), Services (15 categories as per DP) - (A) less (B) =		225.44 SQ KM	45.5%	

BANDRA BANDSTAND

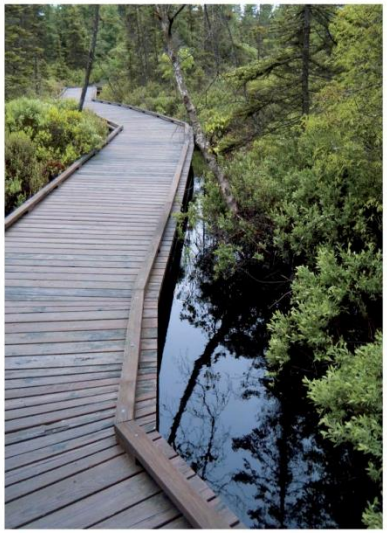
BANDRA FORT

JUHU BEACH



SEWRI WETLAND

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES



Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Boardwalks at Miami

Vermilion County wetland, Illinois

BANDRA TALAO

Proposed 3D at Bandra Talao

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

Wuhan - China near East Lake

Kota Kinabalu City, Malaysia

Lugarno, Sydney

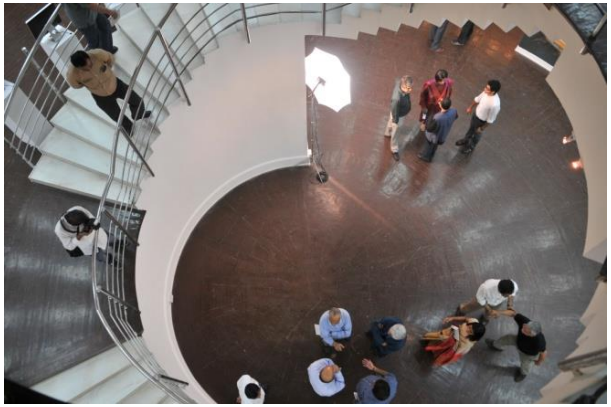
GATEWAY OF INDIA PLAZA

‘OPEN MUMBAI’ PLAN

OPEN MUMBAI EXHIBITION

NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART, MUMBAI

MARCH 15, 2012



BEACH CONSERVATION
AND NOURISHMENT

CITY FORESTS

TOO CLOSED FOR COMFORT

City neighbourhoods barely have open spaces for relaxation and enjoyment of the outdoors. The result has taken a toll on our quality of life

Nauzer K Bharucha | TNN

Demolish this structure and set an example for all times that 'enough is enough'. We are getting sick of this perpetual crookedness of the authorities and the supporters of these wretched officials. Confiscate their properties and build this children's park. It is absolutely sickening the way this city is being destroyed by greedy and corrupt officials."

This reader's outburst, following a TOI report on how a playground was usurped by a builder, underlines the Mumbaikar's anguish at the city's lack of open spaces. While Mumbai has a high wealth index, its citizenry suffers a diminishing quality of life.

Poor planning, haphazard construction and unabated encroachment of public spaces have resulted in living conditions deteriorating for the city's 12.4 million residents in terms of light, air and a healthy environment. BMC statistics show that in the island city, on an average, over 45,000 people are cramped into every sq km. Singapore (population 5 million) has a ratio of 7,300 people per sq km.

More frightful is data like: there are just seven public swimming pools to cater to Mumbai's huge population. It gets even more depressing. The widely quoted figure of 0.03 acre of open space for every 1,000 people is at least 40 years old. When it was computed, the city's population was just under nine million. Since then, even as the population has increased, large swathes of land reserved for public amenities have been either encroached on by slums or de-reserved for construction purposes. Mumbai's mangroves, playgrounds, parks, waterfronts and even protected forest lands are being steadily chewed up by slums, swanky housing societies and commercial complexes.

City-based gynaecologist Nozer Sheriar frequently advises expectant mothers to walk. "But where will they walk? On roads and broken pavements? It's ridiculous to even suggest this anymore," he said.

Reproductive health problems, especially increasing male infertility, he added, are linked to environmental pollution and the loss of green spaces. "It's anecdotal, but these factors play a part in such disorders," he said. Expressing concern that many sporting activities are possible only if one is a member of an elite club, Sheriar asked, "Which city in the world charges money to walk into a park?"

Architect Gananath Shetty had warned about Mumbai's peril four decades ago. Among the host of problems he spelled out in 1970 was the lack of children's playing areas. "It is a universally acknowledged scientific fact that play in the early years of life is one of the most important phases of development, leading to the blossoming of a child's faculties. In spite of the better standard of living today, there is a gulf of emotional poverty, loneliness, mental illness, delinquency and drug usage amongst the younger generation," he said. The architect further added that these conditions and habits spring mainly from living in congested environments where "immense building activity is carried on without love or understanding in the most squalid of surroundings". "These denigrating conditions have destroyed the basic elements of a child's play," said Shetty.

Housing activist P K Das, who was the architect for the redevelopment of seafronts at Bandra and Juhu, said, "We consider our city to be a ground for maximizing construction potential and deriving profits. Open spaces are neglected because they do not provide a financial turnover. Not surprisingly, the quality of life has miserably deteriorated for both the rich and poor." He added that Mumbai needs a comprehensive plan for open spaces.

Five years ago, a survey conducted by the Urban Design Research Institute showed 45% of the city's open spaces were lost. Of the 3,103 reserved plots that were surveyed, 1,397 were completely or partially covered or encroached upon.

The fight to reclaim the city's parks and playgrounds is being fought by a slew of spirited citizens' groups, activists and NGOs. In the last decade, an audacious move to exploit the 226-acre Mahalaxmi Race Course was halted after citizens approached the Bombay high court and got a stay. The plan to build a seven-star hotel, convention centre and golf course was backed by the son-in-law of a senior state politician.

Last year, the NGO Save Open Spaces stalled a builder's attempt to use a six-acre plot in Juhu for a slum redevelopment project by realigning the Irla nullah and shifting road and garden reservations. Vidya Vaidya, secretary of the General Arunkumar Vaidya Nagar Rahiwasi Sangh, which represents about 5,000 Bandra Reclamation residents, said, "We are forced to rush to the courts every time." The sangh is fighting to save an eight-acre plot, which is being eyed by a local politician.

As Mumbai struggles with its shrinking spaces, other cities march ahead. Singapore, a little over one-and-a-half times Mumbai's size, will throw open a 250-acre botanical garden in June. New York has a great variety of open spaces, from the sprawling Central and Prospect parks, to small neighbourhood lots that are local gathering places.

Said New York-based urban critic and international lecturer Roberta Brandes Gratz, "I think these small ones are the most valuable because they really connect residents to each other.... The best-looking and most functional public spaces are the ones local people create and design themselves."

HOW MUMBAI'S LAND IS CARVED UP

CENTRAL GOVT LAND

	No	Sq Km	%
Rly stations & property	–	9.4	1.9
Airports, defence, ports	–	14.6	3
Major roads & h'ways	–	30	6.2
SUBTOTAL	–	**54**	**11.2**

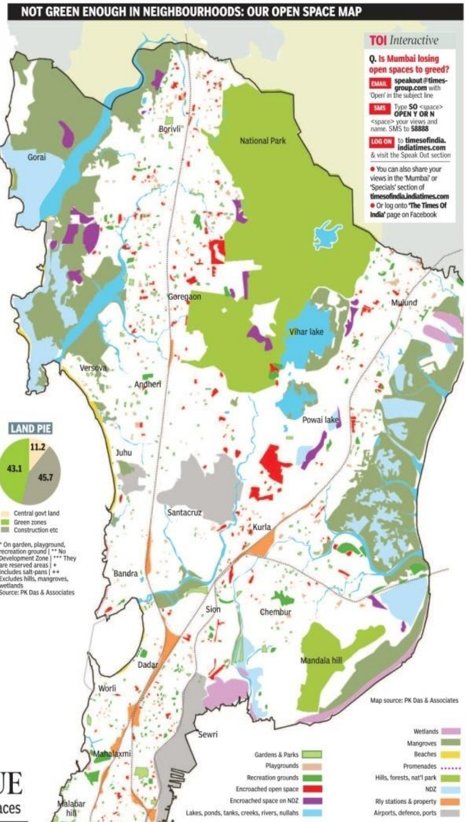
GREEN ZONES/OPEN SPACES

	No	Sq Km	%
Gardens & Parks	318	2.5	0.5
Playgrounds	631	4	0.8
Recreation grounds	603	7.2	1.6
Encroached open space*	501	5.3	1.1
Encroached space on NDZ**	–	4.8	1
Fish drying yards***	5	0.2	0.03
Lakes, ponds, tanks	23	7.1	1.5
Creeks, rivers, nullahs	–	13.1	2.7
Wetlands+	–	8	1.7
Mangroves	–	61.4	12.7
Beaches	10	1.4	0.3
Promenades	6	0.12	0.02
Hills, forests, nat'l park	–	53.6	11.1
NDZ++	–	39.5	8.2
SUBTOTAL	–	**208.2**	**43.1**

LAND FOR CONSTRUCTION, ETC

	No	Sq Km	%
Hsg, ind, commercial, amenities, services	–	–	–
SUBTOTAL	–	**220.5**	**45.7**
GREATER MUMBAI TOTAL	–	**482.7**	**100**

NOT GREEN ENOUGH IN NEIGHBOURHOODS: OUR OPEN SPACE MAP



* On garden, playground, recreation ground | ** No Development Zone | *** They are reserved areas | + Includes salt-pans | ++ Excludes hills, mangroves, wetlands
Source: PK Das & Associates

TOI Interactive

Q. Is Mumbai losing open spaces to greed?

EMAIL speakout@timesgroup.com with 'Open' in the subject line

SMS Type SO <space> OPEN Y OR N <space> your views and name. SMS to 58888

LOG ON to timesofindia.indiatimes.com & visit the Speak Out section

- You can also share your views in the 'Mumbai' or 'Specials' section of timesofindia.indiatimes.com
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CITIZENS TO THE RESCUE

Here are 5 examples of people initiatives to reclaim city spaces

Girgaum Chowpatty, bhel plaza and a sandy beach

Beach beautification wasn't on their mind, but their fight to save their daily bread led to one of the successful campaigns—with orders from the Bombay High Court. A group of bhelpuri stall owners at Girgaum Chowpatty moved the high court against the BMC's plan to demolish stalls in 1998.

The area around a water fountain nearby was being misused as were some spots on the beach. In 2001, the HC set up a committee to chalk out an improvement plan for the beach. The team had retired judge Justice S C Pratap, senior lawyers Rafique Dada, Navroz Seervai, Rajan Jayakar, public-spirited resident Indrani Malkani, politician Pramod Navalkar, civic official Subrat Ratho and eminent heritage architect Rahul Mehrotra. Their efforts led to a structured bhel plaza and, consequently, brought about a sea change in the experience of a day out at the beach for all Mumbaikars.

Over a decade later, the committee is still going strong. "But some issues are still pending and are in the process of being worked out," said Malkani.

Sea Change

- In 1998, bhelwallahs moved the HC against demolition of their stalls
- In March 2001, plan for a Bhel Plaza and a panel for improvement Of Girgaum Chowpatty was passed
- Girgaum Chowpatty improvement plan includes the beach, parks, children's play area, a club and a restaurant, Birla Kreeda Kendra and water sports at Choti Chowpatty
- The committee continues to have a say in regulating beach activities

> The only issue now is vagrants on the beach. There has to be constant vigil, which is not happening. There is also unauthorised occupation in the gaps between parked boats
>
> Rajan Jayakar | MEMBER, HC-APPOINTED COMMITTEE FOR IMPROVEMENT OF GIRGAUM CHOWPATTY BEACH

> Citizen participation is a powerful tool. The transformation of Girgaum Chowpatty is an example of how success can be achieved in partnership with the administration, thereby making the system work successfully
>
> Indrani Malkani | MEMBER, HC-APPOINTED COMMITTEE

A look at Marol garden, ground up

> A handful of us started doing up the garden. We dug pits, planted trees and watered them. Slowly, the patch started to turn a lush green
>
> Suresh Nair | MAROL MILITARY ROAD RESIDENTS WELFARE ASSOCIATION

> The garden has proved to be a blessing. The ladies wing that we set up has taken the initiative of educating slum children who come every evening
>
> Ramesh Pandit | MEMBER, MMRWA

To most people, turning a quarry into a garden replete with trees, lawn and different species of birds would seem not just daunting but almost impossible. But a look at the 6.5-acre garden ensconced in a remote corner of Marol shows that a group of people with an aim to transform their backyard can make it happen.

Since 2008, the rocky terrain with about five levels has been a favourite haunt of Marol residents. The Bharatvan garden has seen a growing stream of visitors for walks, meetings, jogs and sporting activities.

The metamorphosis of the quarry has been more than an uphill task. After realizing that the quarry—an erstwhile haven of drug peddlers and squatters—was earmarked for a garden, a group of residents got together and decided to develop it; members of the Marol Military Road Residents' Welfare Association (MMRWA) adopted the plot in 2000-2001. What began as a humble endeavour by some to revive a barren plot of land during their free time, turned into a larger effort with contributions from local politicians, including state minister Suresh Shetty, late MP Sunil Dutt, Avinash Kubal of Mahim Nature Park and various corporators. So far, the residents' association has spent Rs 25 lakh on the project.

Trupti Shetty, a resident involved with the garden, said, "It is like a mini-forest. The garden is beautiful and there are many varieties of trees. There is also a small play area and children love going there. It has brought peace and freshness to our lives. We do have problems of maintenance and security but then we did convert a barren land into a green space."

Greening A Quarry

- In 2000-2001, members of Marol Military Road Residents' Welfare Association adopted a quarry and endeavoured to convert it into a garden
- Soon, politicians, including state minister Suresh Shetty, late MP Sunil Dutt, Avinash Kubal of Mahim Nature Park and various corporators began to contribute to the effort
- In 2008, the 6.5-acre garden spread across five levels was thrown open to the public
- Today, the green relief attracts visitors for walks, meetings and sporting activities

► Continued on page 5

'OPEN SPACES HELP SOCIAL NETWORKING'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Imagine being able to walk or cycle from Malad to Colaba or Chembur to south Mumbai along well-maintained walking-and-cycling tracks, with gardens and parks to view or rest in along the way. Maybe you could even stop by a beach. Sounds unreal, especially in a city like Mumbai, which offers an abysmal amount of open space to its 12.4 million residents.

But this is one of the longer-term goals of the Open Mumbai plan being promoted by city architect P K Das and his team, who seek to change the way Mumbai deals with open spaces. The plan may sound fanciful but a year of research, documentation, mapping and collating statistics has gone into developing a vision that seeks to place "people and community life at the centre of planning, not real estate and construction potential".

The team has mapped a variety of open spaces and other green zones across the city, in the bargain concluding that Mumbai sprawls across 482.7 square kilometres and not 437, as commonly cited. The team has concluded that an incredible 43%, or 208.2 sq km, of Mumbai includes green zones like gardens, playgrounds, encroached open spaces, no-development zones, lakes, wetlands and beaches. Much of this can be developed as public spaces or at least protected from land sharks; mangroves, for example, could have boardwalks for viewing or strolls.

The plan seeks to link neighbourhoods to parks, walking tracks, beaches and promenades. "It seeks to network open spaces in a way that enables and nurtures social networking. Disparate open spaces, disparate activity, disparate public life can be integrated into a comprehensive whole," Das says. "The quality of public spaces a city offers its residents is a reflection of the residents' dignity and quality of life."

An example of how an area can be interlinked is in the Juhu Vision Plan, which seeks to integrate the beach with playgrounds, walking and cycling tracks. Authorities have already begun building tracks along the Irla Nullah with MPLAD funds given by Javed Akhtar.

Overall, Das's team calls for amendments and provisions to be included in the Development Plan and Development Control Regulations to facilitate a makeover in Mumbai. The plan calls for an Open Mumbai Board, made up of governmental agencies and citizens' groups, to prepare a comprehensive plan for developing open spaces, "thereby improving the quality of life and environment of the city".

WHERE'S MY PLAYGROUND? A bird's-eye view of the Andheri-Malad area shows high-rises and slums battling for space and just a small barren patch of land that could serve as a recreation area

Roadblocks cleared for Juhu 'city forest'

After a seven-year-long battle with a private agency, members of Save Open Spaces (SOS), a Juhu citizens group, succeeded in saving a vital recreation ground plot, earmarked as a 'city forest' at JVPD scheme. It was former municipal commissioner S S Tinaikar's vision.

The plot is adjacent to Vidyanidhi High School at JVPD scheme. Citizens had made a last-ditch effort to save the plot on January 18, 2011, and met municipal commissioner Subodh Kumar.

Citizens submitted a design plan, which was approved by civic authorities.

The design plan includes growing a forest alongside the Irla nullah, building walking and cycling tracks, introducing cultural spaces such as a small amphitheatre, an art exhibition centre, children's play area and a garden.

Get the Plot

- In 2004, citizens started a battle to save an 18-acre Juhu plot earmarked as 'city forest'
- In Jan 2011, a delegation met civic chief Subodh Kumar
- In March 2011, Kumar approved a proposal to cancel Ronson Foundation's lease, which had been given on a caretaker basis
- In Aug 2011, BMC gave its nod to take possession of plot

> This is a major win for residents who were fighting a losing battle since 2004. We hope this will restore the city forest as visualized
>
> Ashoke Pandit | MEMBER, SAVE OPEN SPACES IN JUHU

Cross Maidan gets a clean, mean look

It was a long-drawn battle for residents of Churchgate to get the authorities to take note of four acres of Cross Maidan that had turned into a no-man's land. The space that was encroached upon and rendered absolutely unusable became a sanctuary for residents in June 2010. Nearly four acres of Cross Maidan near Churchgate at one end of Fashion Street was thrown open to public.

For years, the patch had become a cradle for hutments and fences were broken. Residents recall it as a virtual "dumping ground".

The Organisation for Verdant Ambience and Land (Oval) Trust conceptualized the project's beautification. The plot now has a large expanse of trees, lawns, walking tracks and benches for seniors.

The Cross Maidan garden was handed over to the Oval Trust in 2006. At that time, it was discovered that the government resolution (GR) did not include more than an acre of the southern edge of the ground hawkers had encroached upon. "The process of getting another GR for that space took many years, and this area was handed over to the trust in October 2008. The entire procedure was lengthy but we kept going," said Nayana Kathpalia, one of the trustees of the Oval Trust.

"Even after the plot was handed over to us, the government gave it without clearing the encroachments. In fact, even now there is a commercial office functioning in the garden which needs to be cleared," Kathpalia said.

Cross-Over To Beauty

- For years, Cross Maidan remained encroached upon, its fences were broken and it was rendered unusable
- The maidan's beautification was conceptualized by the Organisation for Verdant Ambience and Land (Oval) Trust
- In June 2010, nearly four acres of the new-improved maidan were thrown open to the public
- The plot now has a large expanse of trees, lawns, walking tracks as well as benches for senior citizens

> It took us years to get the govt to pay heed to this plot. Now, Cross Maidan garden must be taken as an example of how a haven can be created with consistent efforts. The govt must ideally do its work and then seek citizens' help
>
> Nayana Katpalia | TRUSTEE, OVAL TRUST

> We used the ground as one of the venues for Kala Ghoda festival. A gate must be made at the Veer Nariman Road end to attract more visitors. The encroached ground is cleared. It is an example of how a dump yard can be converted into a green haven
>
> Shirin Bharucha | WORKS WITH URBAN RENEWAL TRUSTS

First Pasta Lane walks up the garden path

The struggle was probably as long and difficult as the task to transform an encroached space into a lush garden. After a long court battle and follow-ups with the BMC and government agencies, First Pasta Lane of Colaba finally got a green lung.

It all began 23 years ago with a residents' movement against an eatery's kitchen, a godown and a garage that had encroached upon municipal plots earmarked as gardens and a recreational ground. The movement lost momentum later and was revived in 2006 when the First Pasta Lane Residents' Association, through an RTI query, found out that the eatery stood on a BMC plot.

Residents followed up with the BMC for over two years and the kitchen was demolished. Preparations to create the garden started in December 2009, said Vijay Advani, joint secretary of the First Pasta Lane Residents' Association.

Pasta Perfect

- 23 years ago, Colaba residents first raised their voice against an eatery's kitchen, a godown and a garage that had encroached upon municipal plots earmarked as gardens and a ground
- In 2008, BMC demolished the eatery's kitchen; preparations to create the garden started in December 2009 and it was thrown open to the public in 2010

> It has benefited the whole community. Because of the kitchen, there was a lot of pollution. But now, we have a long stretch of open space, which is unusual in Mumbai. We have greenery and a garden. Neighbouring slumdwellers also use it
>
> Dilip Mehrotra | A RESIDENT

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CORPORATORS TO TAKE TIPS FROM EXHIBITION ON OPEN SPACES

Urban planner PK Das's designs to add 10 sq km to the existing 13.37 sq km of open grounds find favour with Sena; corporators to see if they can enforce ideas at ward-level

RINKITA GURAV
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IN a packed metropolis where breathing space is hard to come by, a city architect's plan to enhance Mumbai's open spaces by almost 10 sq km has got the attention of the Shiv Sena-ruled BMC. So much so that party executive president Uddhav Thackeray instructed his corporators to attend an exhibition by urban planner PK Das at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Fort to view his array of plans to increase the spaces without affecting any citizen.

On Tuesday, Sena's 75 newly elected corporators will go for the exhibition, with a view to incorporating the ideas at ward level.

According to Das's plans, there would be 9.85 sq km more open space in the city against the existing 13.37 sq km – or 1.1 sq m per person, the least in the country. The idea is to mark out spaces beside nallahs and rivers, and beautify them with walkways and cycling tracks; have boardwalks and promenades along the coastline, major tree plantations and recreation grounds or playgrounds (RG/PG).

Well-received

Said chairman of the BMC standing committee Rahul Shewale, "Uddhavji liked the exhibition and has asked the corporators to have a look at it. Das's planning would increase the open spaces in the city as per international standards. If we start working on the projects, they would be better than the coastal road project. I went for the exhibition and might include some of the things in the BMC's revised budget this year. We could incorporate a separate category in the budget: every year funds could be allocated under Open Spaces in Mumbai."

"We have certain beach nourishments projects going on at Mahim-Dadar-Prabhadevi and we could use Das's designs for other beaches and coastline," Shewale said, adding, "He has made an interesting suggestion of including the mangrove area, one of the most encroached in the city, in the development plan."

The BMC budget is set for revision in the standing committee when members can propose projects and revise provisions.

"We currently only have a head wherein Rs 492 crore has been set aside for RG/PG, while Rs 100 crore for the development," he said.

Said Das, "Open space is shrinking in the city, reflecting the quality of life due to the exploitation of land with construction potential. I have planned a comprehensive network system of developing and maintaining open spaces, thus enhancing the social networking in the city. If corporators are showing interest in the exhibition, it can be done at ward level also."

By Das's calculations, the spaces around 16 km of beaches, 37 km of planned nallahs, four rivers 28.3 km in length, and 70.97 sq km of creeks and wetlands — a total of 155.1 sq km — can be put to advantage to create extra space.

MY CITY!

SMART DESIGN: BMC standing committee chairperson Rahul Shewale looks at architect PK Das's (inset) array of plans for the city at the NGMA, Fort; the architect with his plan. PIC/BIPIN KOKATE

If All Goes As Planned, Bandra's Coastline Will Soon Get Its Fourth Promenade After Bandstand, Carter Rd & Land's End

Evening walk along Chimbai beach, anyone?

> So much garbage is thrown into the sea that there is no solution to it. The BMC garbage van comes at 11 am and the local residents throw their garbage into the sea after 8 pm. There should be bins near the shore. Until the garbage is removed, beautification of the beach will remain a distant reality
>
> Arden Ittlaskar | CHIMBAI RESIDENT

> The schedule of the tide is hampering the cleanliness drive. We also learnt that the BMC didn't have enough garbage trucks. It's even worse now. The harbour division was supposed to construct a tsunami wall to set up a certain boundary to break the force of the tide. Nothing came of that plan. Encroachment has increased and they first have to do a survey on the number of structures in the CRZ area
>
> Warren Falcon | CHIMBAI RESIDENT

SAND, SHORE AND LONG WALKS

Chimbai beach beautification plan

- A children's park, a playground and a few gardens have been proposed
- An edge wall would be built to stave off encroachers
- Space would be created for a weekend bazaar where the local fishing community would serve visitors fish, cooked traditional style

Crowd pleasers along the coastline

10 years ago, Bandra residents lit the 'Mumbai makeover' torch by transforming the coastline into promenades

SEA CHANGE AT BANDSTAND

PAVING THE WAY AT CARTER ROAD

SHOWTIME AT LAND'S END

Citizens, With Help From Judiciary, Restored Beach's Glory. But Lack Of Govt Will To Evict Temporary Encroachers Means The Fight Continues

COAST IS CLEAR

WINNING BACK JUHU

BUT BATTLE TO SAVE BEACH NEVER ENDS

JUHU REVAMP HOW THE BEACH WAS TRANSFORMED

VIEW TO THE FUTURE LINKING PUBLIC SPACES NEAR THE BEACH

MORE BREATHING ROOM

'Burb thrives on people power

Connecting the green dots

> A citizen walking along the Irla nullah's green space would be able to access all open spaces in the region without being caught in traffic jams

TOI Interactive — 'FIRST REVIVE MAHIM CREEK, THEN DADAR BEACH'

> When we filed the Public Interest Litigation (PIL), neighbours derided us saying the government would never move anyone out. When we did it, we became heroes overnight. I had retired when we filed the PIL. I spent from my Provident Fund, others too used their own hard-earned money to fund the campaign. It was our way of giving to this country when we have received so much from her

> There is not enough space for customers to stand, leave alone sit. Business is not what it used to be when we were on the beach. Of course, now that we have a licence, there is no harassment from the police and the BMC

Man who made space for Mumbai

VOICE OF SANITY In a city controlled by the real estate agenda, architect PK Das has campaigned for equitable development

HT Correspondent
feeds@hindustantimes.com

For PK Das, Mumbai has been more than a mere city for the past 40 years. The diminutive Das is more than what his professional titles – architect and urban planner – suggest. Das has been among the foremost voices on preservation of open spaces in Mumbai, the voice that argued for participatory planning long before the concept gained currency, and the voice of sustainable and equitable development in the city. No wonder, then, that he fondly refers to Mumbai as "my laboratory."

The last year has left Das satisfied in a small way. After years of campaigning for people's participation in planning the city, a theme that others amplified in recent years, the concept was included in the draft Development Plan 2014-34 that the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is preparing for the city. This tends to be a recurring theme in Das' work.

"Democratisation of spaces is important. Real estate turnover, in fact, has been the single largest thrust of our city's development, at the cost of basic infrastructure, social amenities, open spaces and people's use of space. The city tends to be controlled by a real estate agenda and arbitrary changes in land use policies and Development Control Rules, all of which work against the greater common good and turn out to be anti-democratic," he said.

As a young architecture student who came to Mumbai (then Bombay) in the 1950s from Shahpur, Das found the city growing on him. He turned out to be a fierce campaigner of its development. Over time, he managed to segue his professional work in architecture and interior designing, with the many issues of slums and land use in the city, with a focus on slum rehabilitation and open spaces. Along the way, he came to wear the hat of an activist.

However, unlike many activists, Das has firmly maintained an activist work, especially on such issues, has to bunker alongside the bureaucracy and the elected government. "There's no alternative to engaging with them, it is not possible or feasible to bring about lasting changes unless one works within the system to change it from inside. Protest activism is one kind of action, constructive activism another," Das said.

In collaboration with activist Shabana Azmi, journalist Cyntia Shah, documentary filmmaker and civil rights campaigner Anand Patwardhan and activist Anna Karian, Das set up the Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti to work constructively with slum rehabilitation. Its efforts were rewarded when the government altered a plot in suburban Goregaon and families were handed over keys of flats that they had a role in planning and making. It could have been a model for the rest of Mumbai, as authorities attempt to re-house more than six million slum dwellers in better homes.

Public spaces, Das believes, must be protected, preserved and made usable for the largest number of citizens. Mumbai's waterfronts are its prime asset and deserve to be democratised more than they currently are, he adds. His collaborative work on waterfronts in Bandra, Versova, Mahim and Dadar Chowpatty, and his comprehensive plan for rejuvenation of the Gaosway of India (railway) tracks are illustrative in that direction.

Das has also trained and mentored a large number of architects and planners during his professional years. "As young impressionable architects, we had to fight in the mid-90s. I used to find it highly admirable that he incorporated environmental practice into his work, explaining and explored avenues of social activism. We would be awestruck at his commitment and energy to social causes and campaigns. My admiration remains after being in my own practice for almost 19 years," says TR Gandhi, Independent architect.

"Through his work and projects, Das continues his experiment even today: how to bring democratic principles to bear on Mumbai's development, for which financial agencies and international consultants draw up designs and elevations. "Mumbai is far from being a developed city. Only when all its citizens have access to shelter, health, education and open spaces, can we call it that," he said.

Das firmly believes that activist work, especially on issues such as development, has to bunker alongside the bureaucracy and the elected government. HT PHOTO

PROJECTS AND AWARDS

- The principle of participatory planning, which he advocated for decades was finally included in the city's draft Development Plan 2014-34
- Open Mumbai, his acclaimed exhibition and campaign theme, which amplified participatory planning
- Restoration of waterfront spaces such as the Bandra Bandstand project and plans for other waterfronts in city
- Affordable housing and re-housing of slum dwellers through the organisation Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti, and restoration work of public spaces such as Lesh's End, Juhu Chowpatty, Dadar Chowpatty
- The driving force behind the MMR riverfront development, re-housing of conservancy workers and rehabilitation of project-affected people
- Recipient of first Urban Age Award instituted by the London School of Economics and Deutsche Bank, for the Mumbai Waterfronts project

THE AWARDS

- The HT for Mumbai awards are a recognition of individuals and organisations that have worked tirelessly and selflessly to make life in Mumbai better. The parameters used to shortlist them were: the individual/organisation should have been active for the last five years, should have been a changemaker, should have had a positive impact on public life and should have been practise on an issue without waiting for intervention from the government.
- The panel of judges comprised Dr Arson Tinkal, well-known historian and author; Chandra Iyengar, former banker; Rahul Bose, actor and activist; Sourav Bhattacharjee, editor, Hindustan Times, Mumbai; and Smruti Koppikar, editor (special assignments), Hindustan Times, Mumbai.
- The shortlists are in two categories – for individuals and organisations. Each shortlist comprises six candidates. The panel of judges will select three winners from each category. Their names will be announced at the HT for Mumbai Awards ceremony next month.

TOMORROW: SUNDAY FRIENDS

> PK DAS' EFFORT TO HAVE PARTICIPATORY PLANNING FINALLY HAS BEEN VINDICATED, WITH THE BMC MAKING IT A NECESSARY PART OF THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014-34. HE HAS ALSO SHOWN THE TOTAL AREA OF MUMBAI IS LARGER THAN THE OFFICIALLY STATED ONE.
> DARRYL D'MONTE, author and former editor

> PK DAS IS THE MOST INFORMED, INVOLVED AND HANDS-ON TOWN PLANNER. THE ARGUMENT AGAINST SLUM REHABILITATION IS THAT THERE ISN'T ENOUGH LAND. DAS HAS SHOWN THROUGH HIS SURVEYS THAT THIS ISN'T TRUE.
> SHABANA AZMI, collaborator on Nivara Hakk Sangharsh Samiti

Callous citizens, negligent government

MISSED OPPORTUNITY *In the second part on Mumbai's waterfronts architecture critic P.K. Das talks about how the situation is going from bad to worse...*

EIGHTY per cent of the city's population lives under inhuman conditions, while a relatively small segment has access to a substantial share of all amenities and services. Thus apathy and detachment. This has contributed immensely to rapid deterioration of public spaces — they are either owned or else not cared for.

Marginalisation of 'Koliv' — fisher folk communities who have been living for generations on waterfronts — is also an example of growing sense of detachment. Koli villages have been reduced to slum-like situations where even basic amenities are not provided. Instead, there has been continuous efforts to demolish and evict them, whether in Cuffe Parade, Bandra, Juhu or Versova. The threat to their existence is also a result of unsympathetic constructions around their settlements. The Bhai Bhandarkar movement to protect the Koli-rights is an important struggle for human rights and environmental protection.

Unfortunately, environmentalists — even though they are sincerely campaigning for forests, hills and water — have been ignoring human rights and housing. In the case of Borivali National Park, five million people have built their houses here. Environmentalists have moved courts, which if up-hold their petition, there will be a large-scale demolition.

Simultaneously, various housing rights organisations have been fighting for the protection of the slums. As a result, progressive groups have moved apart on matters that require an integrated and unified struggle. Protection of the forest is important but its clearance programme must include plans for slum rehabilitation.

Detachments are further reenforced by a growing religious fundamentalism and communal fervour, leading to the fragmentation of the city, whereby spaces are divided. This is publicly exhibited in temples or crosses or masjids in open spaces — pavements and waterfronts — and religious functions. The most prominent of these activities has been the Ganpati immersion. Mahim beach is often encroached upon by several Muslim festivals and gatherings. A similar event takes place on Dadar beach during Ambedkar Jayanti, a festival of the Neo-Buddhists.

Growing apathy is not only realised in individuals and groups but is also deep-rooted in the attitude of the government. Indiscriminate reclamation and supporting and nurturing anti-social behaviour in public spaces are some examples. Construction of BMC's sewerage treatment plants by reclaiming large stretches of Bandra beach has completely damaged the waterfronts. The corporation has not found it necessary to conduct a survey to identify alternative locations where such projects could be built without damaging the environment. Several questions. No replies.

During one such discussion, the Additional Municipal Commissioner in-charge pointed out that they are concerned about environmental aspects in all such projects and therefore are carrying out tree plantation around the treatment plants.

The Mahim outfall project by the BMC envisages construction of sewerage treatment plants at Bandra and Worli from where the treated waste will be carried to three-km deep into the sea before being released. However, the sewerage being released simultaneously on the shores will continue to be discharged without treatment. There is no immediate plan for comprehensive networking of the sewerage system and implementation of the scheme to separate storm water drainage from sewerage. Also, if the Marine plan works, storm water drainage at Worli will continue releasing almost an equal amount of waste on the shores.

Proposals for flyovers and roads along the west coast without any plan for simultaneous development waterfronts is another example of government detachment from sensitive environmental and social concerns.

Finally, the reluctance on part of the authorities to debate and disseminate information to the public about major proposals for development of open spaces and waterfronts, reflects an authoritarian, feudal and undemocratic attitude. In the case of the Marine-outfall, the BMC had promised to constitute a public committee to monitor the implementation of the programme. The public address was probably a clever move to calm down any opposition before the approval was received from the Ministry of the Environment. Since the approval has been received, the authorities have forgotten their promise.

SAVE MUMBAI'S waterfronts

P K Das: Architect/activist

ULTIMATELY, due to lack of public control, apathy and growing detachments leading to environmental degradation, vital open spaces in the city and the waterfronts are being invaded and made inaccessible to public. This adversely affects the social, cultural and environmental aspirations of the majority of the population. Therefore, radical interventions are required to restore and develop our waterfronts and public-spaces. These interventions suggest the following actions:

- Declare the waterfronts as conservation and restoration zone. A comprehensive development policy for the waterfronts be formulated.
- The waterfronts must be primarily considered as public open spaces and not allowed for any restricted use and activities. These must remain the collective asset of the city and all its people.
- Surveys must be carried out to record all existing activities and occupations.
- Public participation should take lead in constituting people's forums in various parts of the city. These forums would co-ordinate and monitor restoration programmes and participate in the decision making process. Also campaigns must be carried out disseminating information for public awareness and to encourage people's participation.
- Adequate sewerage, sanitation and garbage disposal systems must be implemented. Also it is important to install pollution fighting in public spaces for security.
- Traffic movement to and around these areas must be reviewed and alternate routes and adequate public transport connections developed.
- Landscaping that includes, horticulture, parkings, edge walls and erosion protection, lighting, convenience such as drinking water, toilets and phones must be developed along the waterfronts.
- To declare Koli settlements as protected areas and to prepare and carry out conservation and development plans.
- Design as a generator: It is necessary to prepare designs for the restoration of waterfronts in different points in the city. Design proposals will lead to discussions and public campaigns and provide a planned basis

hindustantimes FIRST
CELEBRATING OUR 4TH ANNIVERSARY

HE CHANGED THE WAY MUMBAI LIVES

The city is his workshop

THROUGH HIS SLUM redevelopments and revamping various public spaces he hopes to make the city more habitable for all, P.K. Das tells **Sayli Udas Mankikar**

P.K. DAS
AGE: 53
OCCUPATION: Architect, housing activist
DESIGNATION: Proprietor, P.K. Das & Associates, Architects

HOW P.K. DAS CHANGED MUMBAI'S OPEN SPACES

- The Dadar Chowpatty beach gardens: three beach gardens along the Dadar beachfront belonging to the civic body. They used to be public toilet complexes until they got renovated this year. Along with the open-space conversion, Das developed the Sant Dnyaneshwar Garden, which houses the Vithaba Udyan by linking each garden with a promenade, seating areas, and amphitheatre.
- Beginning of India redevelopment: The Rs 5-crore project is meant to revamp the three-acre spread around the monument by opening up the plaza area. It also envisages constructing a food plaza and several toilets in the area. The next phase involves revamping the central area from Radio Club to Regal Cinema.
- The Rs 15 crore Juhu Juhu Juhu beach redevelopment plan is an initiative floated by The Juhu Citizens Welfare Group and envisioned by Das. Some of its plans include recycling the garbage being generated by beach-side huts, introducing a beach cleaning mechanism. About three-fourths of the project has been completed.

My quest has been for collective, inclusive spaces that are used by all sections of society.
P. K. DAS, architect

A YEAR AGO, Carter Road was a non-descript sea-facing street in Bandra. It had one lane, with a ribbon of *kitar* running alongside. Today, it is a beautiful promenade that has changed the look and feel of the locality, which is home to a range of people, from Bollywood stars to fishermen. It attracts joggers, youngsters and anyone looking for a pleasant place to take an evening stroll.

That might not seem like asking for much, but in a city that has just 2 per cent of its area of open space for every 1,000 residents, as opposed the 4 acres per 1,000 residents that international guidelines say are needed for healthy living, it is a huge improvement.

P.K. Das is the man behind the new boulevard. This architect took the idea of re-developing the promenade to the Carter Road Residents' Association, which was enthusiastic about his vision. He then obtained funds from across and parliamentarian Shabana Azmi's MP fund. The 53-year-old Das has been continuously using his architectural expertise and working with citizens' groups and civic agencies to convert neglected areas into open public spaces.

The Bandstand project was the prelude to this. Its Bandra-Dubai-Dubai beach, the fort at Bandra (Lesh's end), the redevelopment of Juhu beach, the beautification of Carter Road — India — all are projects followed, with Das's ideas appealing to both citizens and administrative agencies. The 180 civic projects he has to his credit, apart from his commercial ones that help him earn his daily bread, include slum re-housing projects, re-doing a stadium and even a museum. "The city is neglected," he said.

But all along, his quest has been for "collective", "inclusive" development, he says. Development by and for all sections of society.

This impulse comes from his early days. He first came from Bhubaneshwar to Mumbai in 1972 to study architecture at the JJ School of Arts. Then a 17-year-old middle-class lad, he was deeply troubled by the huge contrasts in wealth that confronted him in the city. He himself moved between the worlds of wealth and poverty — he studied in tony south Mumbai, while his hostel was nondescript in between the slums in Bandra's Kala Nagar.

This could not stomach the abysmal living conditions of millions of people and wanted to do something about it.

To start with, he became informally associated with a self-help project, the redevelopment of Jaffer Baha slums in Bandra, one of the first public slum rehabilitation projects in the city.

Das has simultaneously extended the purview of his vision to comprehensive area-planning projects. He has put forth a plan for developing the Juhu area and Nariman Point, which are both under consideration by the civic authorities. The idea is to survey and study the areas and re-work the existing area plan while keeping the character of the place in mind. The aim is to make more space available to the public.

His involvement in these large-scale projects has also put him on a committee that is preparing the so-called 'Mumbai Concept Plan', an initiative of the government of Maharashtra. Among other things, the plan will look at the surveying capacity of each area in the city and consider whether it can be further developed.

But for Das, who calls himself 50 per cent urban architect and 50 per cent city activist, this is not the end. It is the beginning in a long journey to create a more habitable Mumbai for all.

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ht for mumbai AWARDS 2013
Celebrating changemakers

For the award, HT's panel of judges whittled down a longlist of nominees to six finalists in two categories, 'Individuals' and 'Organisations'. Here, every day, you will find the profile of each one. Today, we profile PK Das, an urban designer who has relentlessly campaigned for housing for the poor

CATEGORY >> INDIVIDUAL NOMINEE >> PK DAS

Architect of Mumbai's affordable dreams

CRUSADER From building picturesque beachfronts to rehabilitating slumdwellers, activist PK Das has his pulse on city's urban geography

Dharmendra Jore
dharmendra.jore@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: Nothing could have been more conducive than the air of revolt that was thrumming in the air during the Emergency in making this young student architect look beyond his profession. PK Das, then in his early twenties, was deeply pained by the miserable living conditions of Mumbai's poor, and was angry at the rampant corruption in the Mumbai (then Bombay) university.

"As a student of JJ School of Architecture, I used to walk to visit Mumbai's every nook and corner. The city was just a black and white spot for me. It was glamorous on one side and on the other, it was extreme injustice on the other. People lived in filth and did not have access to social infrastructure," says Das, now 58.

Over many decades, his endeavour to social activism, which he has combined with his professional expertise, has managed to influence government policy significantly. Unlike many of his counterparts, Das, who practises as an independent, believes activism cannot beat grass without the government's active engagement.

"We have to make policy making accessible to people through creative planning and design. Private entities can help only when they see profits or any turnover gains," he says. Das primarily works in Dharavi and all walks of life. "I did not feel that we need much density and got the government to understand that slum rehabilitation was not an uphill task," said Singh.

"He also made the government understand that it can build high-rise buildings, proving that even shorter structures, if planned properly, could house all of the slum dwellers."

Apart from his architecture, Das has also focused on open spaces in Mumbai. His recent standalone exhibition Open Mumbai made Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan form a public committee under the municipal commissioner to identify open spaces for public use.

He is eyeing a victory of sorts in ensuring that Mumbai's public spaces finds a place in the city's development plan.

Das believes in protecting and developing public spaces which are disappearing because of rapid and unscrupulous development. Das's work in Dharavi, Versova, Bandra, Dadar beach and redesigning of the Gaosway of India.' The and D'Monte took the initiative to form the Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti (Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti) with Shabana Azmi, journalist Cyntia Shah, documentary filmmaker Anand Patwardhan and Anna Karian. Their combined efforts — Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti's most recent success when they are the government to allot an enhanced zone quarry in Goregaon for slum rehabilitation.

Das is the founder of the organisation that has given homes to 60,000 families, 40% of the total rehabilitation carried out by government agencies in Mumbai.

"Das proved that slums did not have much density and got the government to understand that slum rehabilitation was not an uphill task," said Singh.

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Architect and activist PK Das has been campaigning for affordable housing for decades. MALIKA PATHAKUTTY

DAS' PROJECTS

- PK Das has been actively involved in the creation of affordable housing, slum rehabilitation, as well as makeover spaces such as the restoration and renovation of Lesh's End, Bandstand seafront
- He has also endeared landmark locations of the city such as Lesh's End, Sassoon, Carter Road Seafront, Juhu Chowpatty, Dadar Pradhanchi Chowpatty
- He has been the driving force behind the MMR River Front development, staff housing for 25,000 civic conservancy workers and the Gaosway of India initiative at Jogeshwari
- Other than public housing, Das has also focused on open spaces in Mumbai. His recent exhibition Open Mumbai, Principal Chief Engineer Prithviraj Chavan appointed a committee under the municipal commissioner to identify open spaces for public use

THE AWARDS

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YOUR FAVOURITE
You, the reader, can select the winner in the category HT for Mumbai Awards. Just vote in either category HT for Mumbai Awards and vote in either category HT for Mumbai Awards at 10pm on Nov 26. To vote for PK Das, send an SMS with 'HTMUM DF' to 54242. You should get an SMS in response. You can also vote online. The microsite for the HT for Mumbai awards is at www.htformumbaiawards.com

But big when all its residents, enjoy easy access to benefits of development in basic needs, education, housing and jobs. My immediate goal is to ensure these benefits for all.

Of the six finalists, suspects his contribution to the city's development seem Samarth, 36, to join forces very soon. The student of Colombia University is part of a 10-member team that is working on a plan to build to design projects in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

> HE IS THE BEST EXAMPLE OF AN URBAN DESIGNER WHO MADE A SEMINAL CONTRIBUTION TO MUMBAI. HIS WORK HAS MADE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE.
> DARRYL D'MONTE, author and former editor

> THE CITY HAS OPEN PLACES NEAR THE SEA. HE HAS RECLAIMED THEM, ALLOWING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE CITY'S COAST.
> ADAM NATHAN JAMES, conservation architect

TOMORROW: Studio

HT CAMPAIGN HT-AKSHARA ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE

Blueprint to make Mumbai safer

SOLUTIONS Gender assessment and clearance of infra projects, index to measure adequate lighting across the city, more inclusiveness in built environments – Mumbai's top planners, architects and analysts offered many action points at the conference

Nandini Mehta
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(From left) Smruti Koppikar, editor (special assignments), HT, moderated the session which included Dr Anita Shah, Dr Nandini Shah, Dr Rita Devan, Neera Adarkar, Ashok Datar and PK Das. The session was held at Hindustan Times' office premises on January 17. SANJAY KUMAR SHARMA

HT COVERAGE Over the past two months, HT and Akshara have conducted several audits of public spaces in the city such as a gardens and beaches, to ascertain how safe they are for women.

DECEMBER 6, 2013 — Lesh's with little lady amenities
DECEMBER 16, 2013 — This dhobi ghat was once a pond
DECEMBER 24, 2013 — Dadar Chowpatty: Darkness curtains women's safety
JANUARY 7, 2014 — Cops and bikes will turn the tide

KEY IDEAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Make pre-paid taxis more economical and clearance mechanism from a single for this.
- Have a hermaphrodite toilet that ensures privacy and safety, conduct annual audits to enhance this.
- Include public amenities in public spaces and connect public spaces to transport sharing and mixed-use of open spaces.
- Introduce standard lighting parameters and information boards with helpline and police numbers in all areas.
- Address women's safety issues as a factor in the city's social fabric; make sites safer by adding more shops, toilets and benches.
- Create more access points to the waterfront and make it safer so that they become a part of the city.
- Ensure movement and safety platforms at the edge platforms 1 and 2 at the Dadar station.
- Address the issue of sanitation and provide a fee-a-leaving on safety.
- Introduce a scheme for a comprehensive urban design so that public amenities are accessible, inclusive and meet the needs of people.
- Issue special, affordable passes to women, and possibly to other vulnerable groups.
- Provide urban data systems about gender-specific mobility patterns and enable and knowledge about good safety practices.
- Address the issue of sanitation and provide a fee-a-leaving on safety.

INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

As Mumbai sports more gated communities and more people are moving into public spaces, public spaces are becoming less populated, less inclusive and therefore, less safe, observed Dr Dias. "Infrastructure is now limited to being conveyor belts for cars with high walls protecting the occupants from the city. The city should be made more inclusive, more public, more democratic and more equitable. Let people use the more open spaces and accessible it is, the safer it will be," said Dr Dias.

Dr Dias proposes a system to interlink public spaces wherever possible and convert streets into a network of open spaces, with fewer barriers. Streets should be made safer for pedestrians walking or cycling tracks, we can bring back streets into the suburban the roads safer," he said. Dias said there are structural and non-structural measures making the city safer and all have to be implemented simultaneously. "We should plan for more inclusive spaces, instead of segregating the industrial areas, the residential and creating further divisions," said Dr Dias. Dr Dias said it is a fallacy or too much crowd up where it is safety hazard for women, she said. Dr Dias said some areas are safer because women and transport nodes that are in the vicinity of these areas which means we are also creating 'non-places' such as the edges of the city, the red color zones or pockets that are neglected and unsuitable for women where women's safety will be a major issue. Dr Dias said that the city should be made safer for women.

ACCOUNTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Dr Dias said that the government transport bus, lighting and signage system that could greatly help women's safety tools in the city. "It is important to have quantitative measures that can be measured. We know lighting is a factor in safety but we do not have a benchmark for lighting in public spaces – a standard measure that denotes optimum lighting levels for various areas and a system of accountability where there," Dias suggested.

Both Dear and Hinde said that there should be a clear system and audits data about the city's infrastructure and the city's safety indices, which "at the moment, is non-existent".

"We also need to make sure that the government includes women's safety issues, that we need to have better or pedestrian, bridges and other facilities," said Hinde. Adarkar said that merely powerful lighting does not automatically mean safety and cited the highly lit Grayson Road in Kolkata as an example of a place where women feel unsafe because they are so visible under the lights. "The powers-that-be should change depending on the need and the terrain," said Adarkar.

Signages are also a crucial aspect of women's safety, the panelists agreed. Dr Nandini Shah pointed out the example of the Dhobi women being raped in the Dhobi Ghat because there was no signage to inform them of the forest area of Bandra. Dear said that women should be given carry a map with detailed and identified information about safety and other information points and areas.

experts say

NEERA ADARKAR
Architect and urban researcher

"We need a comprehensive approach to lighting in public spaces!
1. The state government and the MMRDA each should have a policy on lighting in public spaces. Both policies should be tested at Dharavi in greater Juhu. Planners need to understand that men and women are and use open differently and provide facilities according to that.

PK DAS
Urban planner and architect

"There is need to bring design into urban development – before signage, design for the interpretive spaces and those functional spaces and public pockets. There is need to publicise the city, to populate areas and integrate rather than segregate areas. For example, Bandra Bandstand, Juhu and Versova each, we have to find ways to make walking safe."

NANDINI DHEDE
Head, centre for urban governance, TISS

"Safety is not deemed only by the number of people in a place. Women's presence, it is a product of our social fabric and perceptions. Ask whether the black ass are creating dependence or independence. Ask if all its citizens, in general, agree on an area, make it viewed and used by women and people and, we have to find ways to make walking safe."

DR. RITU DEWAN
Associate professor, Jamia Millia Islamia, University of Montreal

"Women want to be certain that facilities are available, accessible and affordable. Women are the initiators, the people who make land have basic needs. Women are the ones who are the most hard during these hours, when lot happens."

ASHOK DATAR
Transport analyst

"If we organise banking at the grassroots level, we can have decentralised loans, we can use them as years to each over the period of time, we can consolidate small. We need to have a system that is quantifiable and have equal audits."

DR. NANDINI SHAH
co-director, Akshara

"We need an institutional mechanism that will take these recommendations. We need to have a system in place for us to come up with such a mechanism. Women's safety in Mumbai will remain only an issue"

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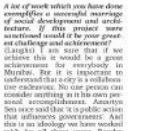

PK Das, chairperson, Mumbai Waterfronts Centre, at his Prabhadevi office with a vision plan for Juhu that will be part of the exhibition, 'ACCLAMATION MAGNIFICENT'

'A CITY IS A COLLABORATIVE ENDEAVOUR'

SANJIV NAIR
sinair@mid-day.com

Open Mumbai: Let's Expand Public Spaces, is a series of vision plans for a cleaner, greener, better planned Mumbai, mounted by architecture firm P K Das & Associates and the Mumbai Waterfronts Centre, currently on display at a city gallery. Das, Chairperson of the MWC, talks to what it will mean to you if the plans are ever

What inspired the vision plan for Open Mumbai and the exposed public spaces? Have long have you been thinking about this idea?

How has the Government responded to your vision?

How long would a project of this magnitude take to get executed?

implemented — Juhu Beach, Carter Road, Bandra Bandstand and Gateway of India — and our learnings from these projects. Nearly 50 per cent of the environment plan therefore has already been completed. Part 2 of the projects is built on the strength of these learnings. The second phase proposes similar pilot ideas that can be executed in other areas. These incorporate projects which are grounded in reality.

What is the fundamental guiding principle for the project?

The basis of the project is conservation, renovation, recycling and replanting. It is important to understand that we are speaking of invigorating the project within the existing realities of the city. It is not a mega project, but a multitude of small and doable projects. The attempt is to double up on public spaces. We are attempting to create nearly 500 kilometres of public spaces, which will be utilised as walking and cycling tracks. These spaces will be dotted with gardens and amenities. These spaces will not operate in a silo; they will all be connected to a network of public spaces, a network of green open spaces which will connect from Versova to Cheembur, from Mahim to Colaba. It will connect all parts of the city and will facilitate social networking in the real world. This extends to how people enjoy and truly identify with the city. It is important to demonstrate Mumbai's open spaces.

The plan we have put together does not displace. It does you call for major replacement of population. It just requires small reconfigurations in the plans of certain city pockets. At the exhibition you can see a model of a similar reconfiguration in the Juhu area plan we have proposed. We do not look at projects from a top-down perspective. We look at them from the bottom up, where each area plan reflects the identity and need of its residents. Over the years each neighbourhood in Mumbai has developed its own identity. Our aim is to preserve this individuality. Therefore the plan necessitates the need for personalisation of neighbourhoods.

How has the Government responded to your vision?

They have been extremely supportive. Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan was extremely moved, especially when he saw the first slum in Mumbai: the way we see it. Some important issues were raised during the inauguration and he had an immediate discussion with them on how they can take it forward. Gulchar Thackeray has also brought together corporators to take this up with group planning challenged out, replete with deadlines. We are very hopeful that we will be able to move forward.

How long would a project of this magnitude take to get executed?

about 10 years.

A lot of work which you have done exemplifies a successful marriage of social development and architecture. Is this project more aspirational would it be your greatest challenge and achievement?

(Laughs) I am sure that if we achieve this it would be a great lark as citizen from the beginning. In Mumbai. For it is important to differentiate the city. It is a collective endeavour. No one person can consider anything as the sum personal accomplishment. Amartya Sen once said that it is public action that influences governments. And this is an ideology we have worked with for all these years. Bandra Bandstand's redevelopment was a prime example. It was started without the government's support. Over the last couple of years, the city's population has dropped from 12.5 crore to 11.8. I hope it is a blip in the pan as I don't want population to decline. I want it to be a stable. I would never want to have people leave the city thinking they would be better off elsewhere.

AT: NCMA, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Near Regal Cinema, Fort
WHEN: Saturday, April 7, 11 am to Sunday, from 11am to 6pm
TICKETS: Indians — Rs 10; Foreign Nationals — Rs 250; Students/Children — Rs 5

Thank You
All