

SMART CITY EXPO WORLD CONGRESS

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Participation and the role of Green and Open Space in Cities

Towards a Democratic Ecology of Cities

PKDAS

Architect - Activist

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**Open spaces
must form the basis of
city planning**

2

Placing natural assets in public domain



INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES



Dartmouth, Nova Scotia



Boardwalks at Miami



Vermilion County wetland, Illinois

BANDRA BANDSTAND

SEWRI WETLANDS



CITY FOREST MAHIM

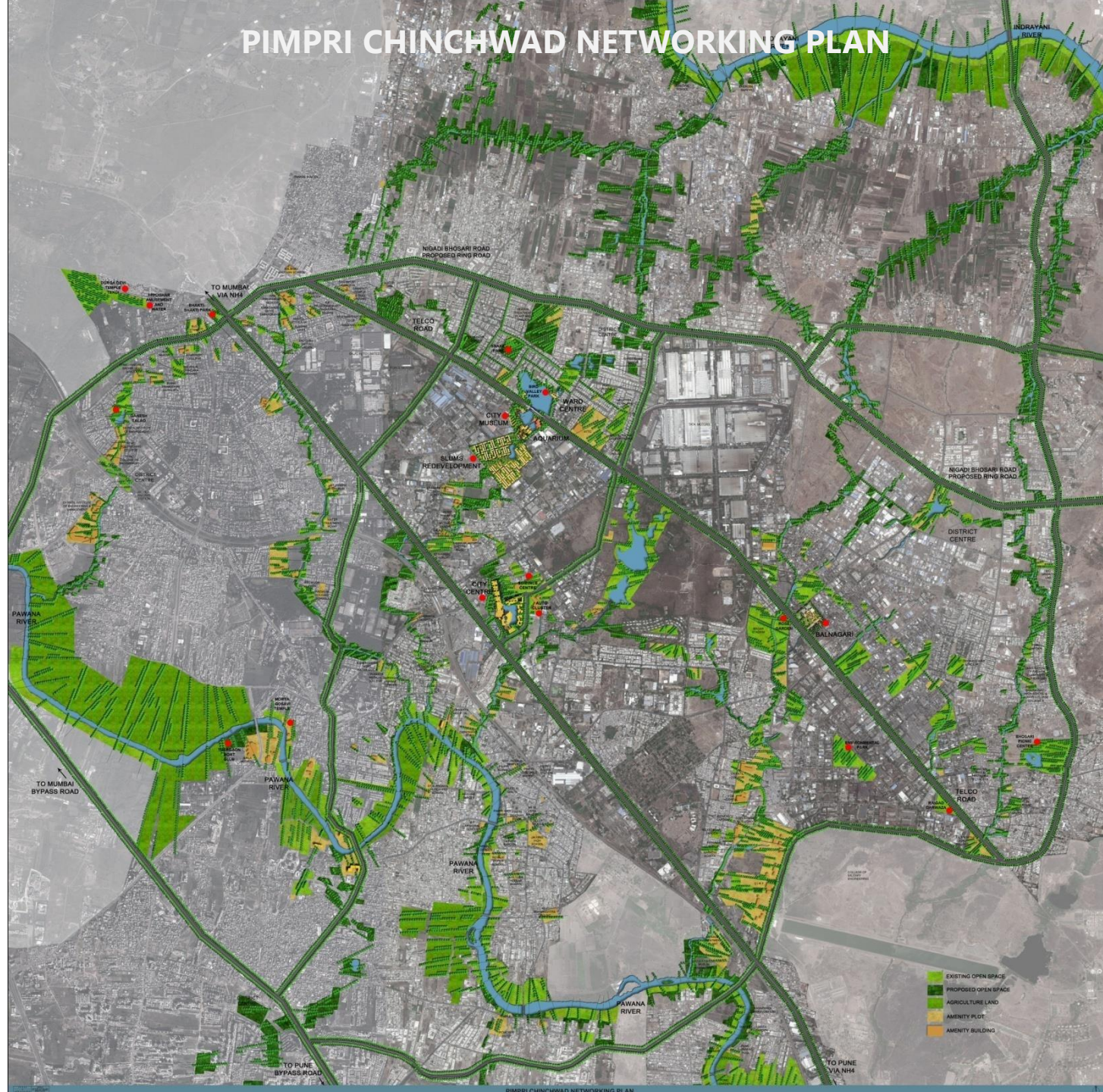


LAND'S END

3

Developing green connectors

PIMPRI CHINCHWAD NETWORKING PLAN



4

**Open spaces planning
as an effective
democratic instrument**

A community effort scripts a success story

THE development of the seafront at Carter Road and Bandra Bandstand has won international recognition, with the receipt of this year's award instituted by the Washington-based Waterfront Centre for 'Waterfront Development Projects. Selected among entries from all over the world, the award recognises the efforts of an entire community to 'retrieve its waterfront for the public'.

A few years ago, the 4.5-km stretch of the Bandra seafront was little more than a dumping ground, sewage disposal area and thickly peopled by encroachers. It was P K Das, an architect by profession and also among the architects of the save-the-waterfront scheme, who took up the cause of the depleting open spaces in Mumbai and conducted an extensive study of Mumbai's waterfronts. Soon, the Bandra West Residents' Association (BWRA), the Bandra Bandstand Residents Trust (BBRT), P K Das & Associates and Member of Parliament Shabana Azmi came together to save the Bandra seafront. What



Bandra Bandstand after the redevelopment work

followed is a classic success story of citizens' civic efforts.

"We felt we needed to do something to protect our water-fronts," says Darryl D'Monte, president of BWRA and noted environmental activist. "So we got together and forged a partnership." Das handled the architectural inputs. Shabana

Azmi contributed nearly Rs 1 crore from her MP's (local area development) funds and the residents took up the cause as one they all held dear.

That was perhaps when the mission's success was assured — For the first time, different organisations pitched in together. The govern-

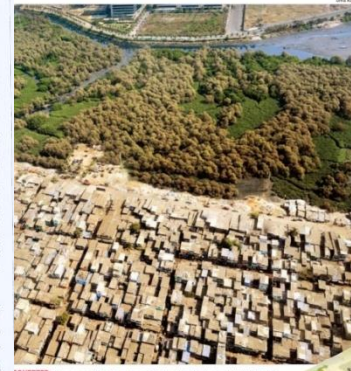
ment in the shape of the MHADA and the private citizens' forums worked in co-ordination to restore the picturesque coastline at Bandstand and Carter Road. The results of the redevelopment efforts are in plain sight — palm trees, amphitheatres, a children's park, an art court.

Having re-designed the facade, there was still the question of maintenance. That's where Harsh Mariwalla of Marico Industries has so far spent almost Rs 25 lakh towards the beautification drive and planted more than 30 species of palm trees. That's where the name Palm Promenade at Carter Road comes from. Another corporate, U S Vitamins, contributes to the maintenance of Bandstand.

The seafront has gradually grown into a buzzing cultural centre, where concerts, yoga and tai-chi sessions and plays are held. "There's a play every Friday, and in January 2003 we will be organising a major concert and a carnival too," says D'Monte.

— UJJAYINI DAS

Vigilant citizens battle to PROTECT THE PROTECTORs



calcs go green: Some titles won, others lost

Protected by Law
The state and local departments can act against encroachment under the Maharashtra Tree Felling and Land Development Act and Environment Protection Act. The Bombay High Court ruled mangrove destruction in 2000 and set an order to the state government to protect mangroves within 90 days of the order.

Mangrove Panels
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Mapping the Mangroves
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WINNING BACK JUHU BUT BATTLE TO SAVE BEACH NEVER ENDS

Mumbai's natural assets include four rivers that, among other functions, serve as natural drains for rainwater. Years of neglect and misuse have narrowed them into stinking nullahs. Is another disaster, like 26/7, waiting to happen?

We need to rescue our rivers now



WINNING BACK JUHU BUT BATTLE TO SAVE BEACH NEVER ENDS

Winds of change sweep across Mumbai's vandalised waterfronts

By Gunwanthi Balam

MUMBAI: "In a city gasping for breath, it is quite dreadful," observes British architect and 'Bombay boy' Pierre d'Avoine, "that Mumbai's greatest open spaces, its waterfronts, are being so vandalised that its people can derive little benefit from them." Treated as dumping grounds for debris, garbage and sewage, or as free sites for encroachment, several of Mumbai's waterfronts are actually snatched by its residents. So, it is heartening to find some citizens' groups and architects launching joint initiatives to nurse their bit of waterfront back to life—as in Bandra, for instance.

Walk along the Bandra waterfront now, and you will find that the dramatic black rocks along the old Bandra beach are rising from the debris, as it were, as are the mangroves off Carter Road. What's more, a new promenade is being constructed along these contours of seafront so people can take a brisk walk and get a breath of fresh air.



CITIZENS' WALK: The landscaped promenade at Bandra Bandstand, master-planned by a local architect, will involve citizens' participation in its execution and maintenance

To begin with, he is sensibly tackling public spaces. These include 14 independent schemes estimated to cost about Rs 1 crore each to execute. Committed to the rules of the coastal regulation zone, the architect is anti-reclamation and believes instead that "it is important to stop the abuse of our existing waterfronts and work within the existing realities to progressively restore and preserve their natural beauty".

His restoration projects envisage the creation of landscaped walkway, edestrianisation, seating, lighting, security, drainage, planting of suitable trees and shrubs and the installation of plaques on the history of the waterfront/ neighbourhood. "Above all, they involve citizens' participation in execution and maintenance."

The Bandra scheme is being executed under the supervision of a team of local residents' associations with an initial grant from Rajya Sabha MP and actress Shabana Azmi. She has donated Rs one crore from her MP's constituency development fund to the Bandra-Juhu waterfront development programme—Rs 30 lakhs each for Carter Road and Band Stand and Rs 40 lakhs for Juhu.

"We will mobilise donations to carry on the upgradation work, and collect a small monthly maintenance fee from our 1,200 members to maintain the promenade. There will be no entry fee and everybody is welcome to use the promenade," says Arup Sarbadikary and Kamalesh Soni of the Bandra Bandstand Residents' Association. "Impressed by the work so far, new sponsors are coming forward," adds a Carter Road resident.

"I'm thrilled, my faith in the abilities of the local citizens' groups and the architect of the scheme has been vindicated," says Shabana Azmi. "Such localised initiatives are the best alternative to large grandiose plans which move away from citizens rather than draw them in. They also cut across class barriers," maintains the MP, adding that she intends to continue to support them in every way she can.

Work on the Juhu project will commence next month, according to Ms Azmi. It envisages sprucing up the beach as well as the 'influence areas', i.e. the Juhu-Tara Road and the seven axis roads leading to the beach, and creating a plaza around the Shivaji statue with proper sanitation facilities for both hawkers and visitors.

Several agencies, including the traffic police, the taxmen's and hawkers' unions, residents' groups and the National Airport Authority have been consulted on the issue and have agreed to cooperate in the Rs 2.4 crore project, adds Mr Das.

The plans for the Dadar-Prabhadevi waterfront have also been cleared by the BMC, and the architect and local citizens' groups are discussing how best to implement the programme. "Hopefully, it will all come together. It's hard work, but very rewarding," he says.

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Dynamic ecology of cities





6

Democratizing ecology of cities



3 RIGHT ANGLE: Yoga had many takers, with everyone from children to senior citizens signing up for sessions on breathing, asanas and the philosophy of the discipline

7

Times News Network

The Equal Street movement is the culmination of ef-

Bandra resident Dr Pinto says that the idea of having a car-free zone is brilliant. "Bandra, like the rest of Mumbai, has become a complete mess. It is a relief to have an area where there is

When you make your way to Linking Road bright and early this Sunday, remember to leave your car at home. With parking space along the Bandra-Santa Cruz stretch being limited, using public transport or walking over in case you live nearby, would be the most convenient options. Not having a vehicle to worry about ensures you get the most out of the car-free hours this Sunday.

People like to be seen doing things, says Raksh Hegde, who runs a community initiative called Formless which pushes people to do yoga and fun things outdoors. "They like an initiative that sends out a happy vibe and not a preachy one," says Hegde, who recently organised two such events in the city, 106 Surya Namaskars at Juhu Beach and Cycles To Secret Yoga Class in Marine Drive. "The more you tap into people in groups, the more enthusiasm they have for it," she says. An earmarked space works well for her cause. "Bandra has a very

To Palsal Thakur, avid cyclist and owner of ProB Bicycle Studio, children and adults will have a great time at something like this. "It is increasingly getting difficult for children to be able to move and play freely now. I'd love to have it happen every Sunday, and am excited to attend it," he says.

and opportunity. The initiative, where no traffic is allowed for four hours, was brought to Alumbani by NGOs, think tanks, citizens' associations and cycling groups. A similar event had tasted success in New Del-

Many also enjoyed the opportunity to do something different. Kandivil resident Sylvio Lobo watched while his band Zorden Lobo played pickle ball, a mini-version of pickleball, at some 200 participants. "We like doing something different on Sundays. Today we will play some games and go to mass in Santacruz," said Lobo.

By fun, the Yoga Institute at SV Road had already had 90 visitors. Four circles had formed outside the stall for suryanamaskars, breathing exercises, senior citizens and yoga philosophy. "The experience

LEAP OF FAITH: Audience members volunteered to be part of BMX stunts by the Sharp Tune group

“This is exciting. And as a Bandraite, am a the happier that it is happening here. Mumbai Police supports this initiative

Rakesh Maria |
POLICE COMMISSIONER

“I have never seen people in this part of the city so enthusiastic. We need this not only on weekends, but throughout the year”

Ashish Shelar | **USA**

“I congratulate the organizers for the initiative and TOI for supporting it

Sitaram Kurte |
MUNICIPAL
COMMISSIONER

Marathi folk and derims
ceased to be unlikely



**equal
streets**
A Citizens' Movement

