

Planning and Development Works

‘Sangharsh Nagar’ – Slum Rehabilitation Chandivali, Mumbai

Source: www.pkdas.com

The project involves the rehabilitation of slum-dwellers evicted from the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. The rehabilitation site at Chandivali, measuring about 34 hectares, will constitute a comprehensive and all-inclusive new town. The town, with 18,362 houses, includes a large, 1.6- hectare maidan as its central, social space. Two more playgrounds and over 60 community open spaces enliven its outdoors. More than 14 schools, medical facilities, including two hospitals, two large community halls and religious institutions, constitute its social infrastructure. Schools and community halls are annexed to these open spaces and playgrounds.

Each 22.5-square-metre, well-lit and adequately ventilated house comprises a room and kitchen with a balcony and toilet.

Each pada (cluster) comprises two societies with 550 houses and 16 common units for balwadis, society offices, crèches, a women's centre and other common facilities. A central court provides openness, light and ventilation. The common units about this court. The entrance to each building is marked by a baithak, a meeting place alongside the central open space.

Every three clusters form a wadi (sector), which is serviced by a marketplace that houses shops, banks, post offices and other commercial establishments. Two primary schools are alongside such marketplaces, and their playgrounds provide relief to the crowds that gather there.

Low-rise (ground plus four stories) clusters evolve into small, familiar neighbourhoods and involve the people in the control, management and maintenance of their township.

A network of internal pedestrian streets connects the groups of houses to their markets, facilities and common recreation spaces and the gateways to the houses are on these streets. Walkacross pathways, shaded by pergolas, intersperse the clusters. These promote a sense of unity between the different parts of the development.

The tragedy of the slum-dwellers evicted from Sanjay Gandhi National Park defies imagination. They have suffered untold misery ever since the Bombay High Court ordered demolition of the hutments on forest land on May 7, 1995. The last nine years have been a history of bloodshed and brutal repression by bulldozers and the police. Four of our brethren have been killed in repeated waves of demolition.

Countless children have died due to lack of shelter. People have been beaten and loss of property incurred by forest and police personnel.

While the environmentalists and courts have been so active in protecting the forests, no one has shed a tear for the plight of nearly 33,000 recognized families who, today, are without a roof over their heads.

The Government of Maharashtra and Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre Rehabilitation plan at Chandivali is the largest rehabilitation project for the urban poor in India, with an investment of Rs.450 crores. What is noteworthy is that this scheme is a comprehensive development, including 14 schools, two medical centres, 180 balwadis, 180 welfare centres, 800 shops, two community halls, four religious institutions, several playgrounds, open spaces, a maidan, roads, lighting and other services.

Promoter: Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre.

Developer: Sumer Corporation.

Area: 450,000 sqmt.

Cost: Rs.40,000 lac.

Consultants: Mahimtura Consultants Pvt. Ltd., Hydro-mechanical Consultants.

Period of construction: 2002-2005

Supporting architects: Sanjeev Karekar (associate), Mohammed Ali Momin, Suwendu Das,

Shishir Tiwari, Manasi Guruji.

