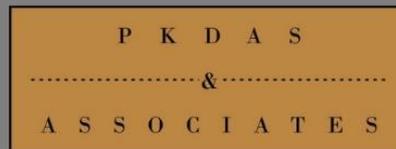


**GLOBAL TALK AT  
T. U DELFT**

**ARCHITECT & ACTIVIST –  
Walking the thin line between professional practice and  
social & environmental outreach**



**28<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

HE CHANGED THE WAY MUMBAI LIVES

# The city is his workshop

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

**A** YEAR AGO, Carter Road was a non-descript sea-facing street in Bandra. It had one lane, with a ribbon of litter 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.

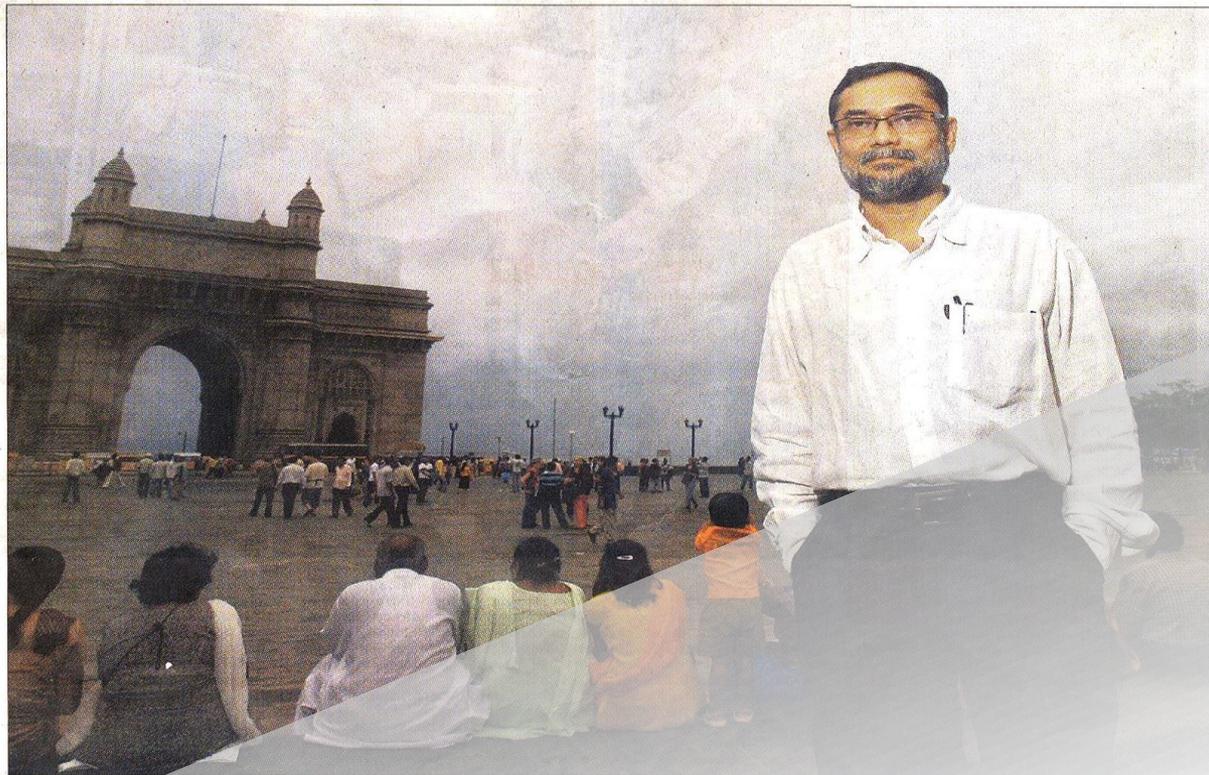
That might not seem like asking for much, but in a city that has just 3 per cent of an acre of open space for every 1,000 residents, as opposed the 4 acres per 1,000 residents that international guidelines say are needed for healthy living, it is a huge improvement.

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 actress 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 promenade, the gardens along the Dadar-Prabhadevi beach, the fort at Bandra land's end, the redevelopment of Juhu beach, the beautification of Gateway of India — all these projects followed, with Das's ideas appealing to both citizens and administrative agencies. The 150 civic projects he has to his credit, apart from a few 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 my workshop," 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. Das first came from Bhubaneswar 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 characterised the city. He himself moved between the worlds of wealth and poverty — he studied in tony south Mumbai, while his hostel was sandwiched in between the slums in Bandra's Kala Nagar.


**P.K. DAS**

AGE: 53

OCCUPATION: Architect, housing activist

DESIGNATION: Proprietor, P.K. Das &amp; Associates, Architects

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

- **Dadar-Prabhadevi beach gardens:** These two gardens along the Dadar beachfront belong to the civic body. They used to be filled with garbage until they got revamped this year. Along with the municipal corporation, Das developed the Sant Dnyaneshwar Udyan and the Bajji Prabhu Udyan by lining each garden with a promenade, walking track and amphitheatre.

- **Gateway 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 envisions constructing a food plaza and several toilets in the area. The next phase includes developing the seatment area from Radio Club to Pappa Cinema.

- **The Rs 1.5 crore Juhu Beach redevelopment plan** is an initiative led by the Juhu Citizens Welfare Trust and envisioned by Das. The plan includes creating a public space with a promenade, walking track and amphitheatre.

Das 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 Jaffar Baba slums in Bandra, one of the first public slum rehabilitation projects in the city.

Today, he is engaged in some of the world's largest slum rehabilitation projects. One, with the Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti, a housing rights group, is for

more than 20,000 families from the Borivli National Park slums; another is for 80,000 families in slums near the airport.

He is also involved in planning the housing for more than 27,000 conservancy staff — the lowest-paid municipal employees in Mumbai.

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 larger civic 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 carrying 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 of the beginning in a life dedicated to create a more habitable city for all.

# Juhu's green lung back after 8-yr fight

BMC has taken over a 3.5-acre plot in Gulmohar locality that was given to Ronson Foundation for construction of a club

Goeta Desai  
@timesgroup.com

Juhu residents have scored a major victory in their fight to protect open spaces. Following sustained pressure from citizens, the BMC on Monday took over a 3.5-acre plot in the area's Gulmohar locality from a private entity. The plot, termed a green zone, stretches from Kafil Azmi Park to 5th Road.

It was given to Ronson Foundation for development and maintenance. Now, however, the city administration will be responsible for the upkeep of the space, which was originally reserved as a park and a playground.

Encouraged by the success of their efforts, residents said that they would provide security for the plot. "This is the most important green lung of the area, which is otherwise quite congested. We left no stone unturned to fight our case," film-maker Ashoke Pandit said.

Pandit was one of the members in the forefront of the fight with civic officials. "Today (Monday), we realised that when common people take up an issue strongly, authorities are compelled to listen to them," he said, adding that Monday's victory was an example of citizens' power.

The 3.5-acre plot once had 1,300 trees. Eight years ago, the civic body asked Ronson Foundation to look after the plot under the caretaker policy. Several trees were hacked overnight to make room for a club with a bar and card rooms. Residents then remonstrated with the BMC, alleging that they were being denied access to the public space.

On Monday, Umesh Bodke, K-West Ward's assistant engineer (maintenance), and his team demolished



The BMC demolished structures that had come up on the spot. Two structures remain, but they have been locked up by officials

delighted with the result of their efforts to reclaim the piece of land. "When the civic body was taking down structures on the plot, we felt proud citizens of the city, who had proved an important point through their eight-year fight," she said.

Bajpai said that members wanted to now level the ground, and plant trees. "We will develop it as a green belt with fruit and flower bearing trees. The plot will be used for community functions," she said.



## RESIDENTS SPEAK

At last, we have got our open space back. It's a big victory for us.



SANGITA BAJPAI

When the BMC was taking down unauthorised structures on the plot, we felt proud to be citizens of the city



NITA BAJPAI

We fought an 8-year battle to reclaim our open

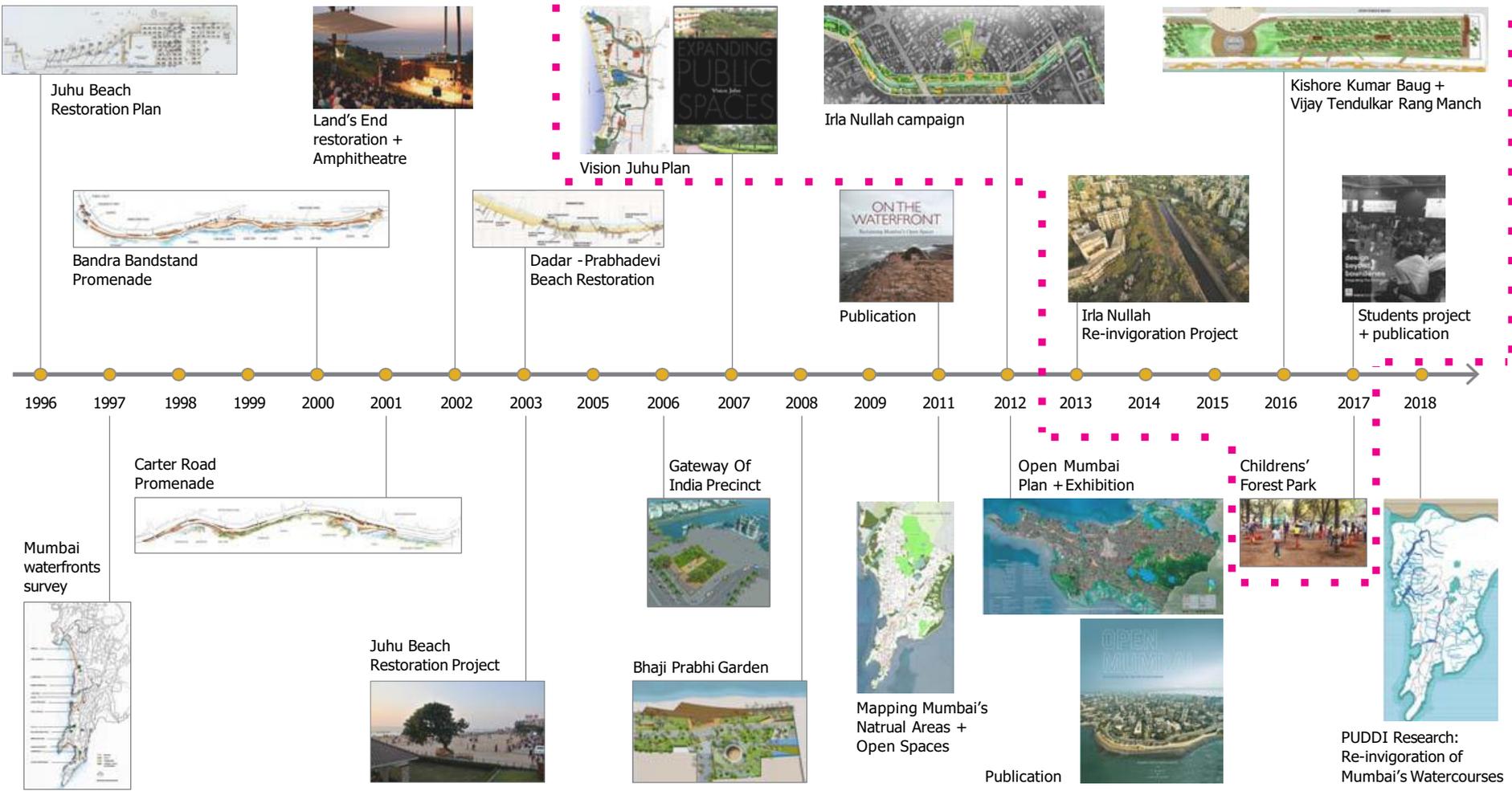


# THE MOVEMENT TO RECLAIM PUBLIC SPACES IN MUMBAI

22 years and continuing

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

-  Clearwater Citizens Award to PK Das & Assoc. by Waterfronts Center, Washington, 2002
-  The Urban Age Award by The Deutsche Bank, 2007
-  Changemakers of Mumbai Award to PK Das by Hindustan Times, 2013
-  The International Jane Jacobs Medal to PK Das by Rockefeller Center, 2016



## NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECTS TO A CITY-WIDE MOVEMENT 22 years and continuing







# THE IRLA NULLAH RE-INVIGORATION MOVEMENT





Aerial Image of the Irla Nullah taken in 2006

# RE-INVIGORATION OF MUMBAI'S D WATER COURSES



Mumbai' watercourses map. Image courtesy MCGM

Major Nullahs - 300 kms

Minor Nullahs - 400kms

## RIVERS

MITHI - 18 kms

OSHIWARA - 7kms

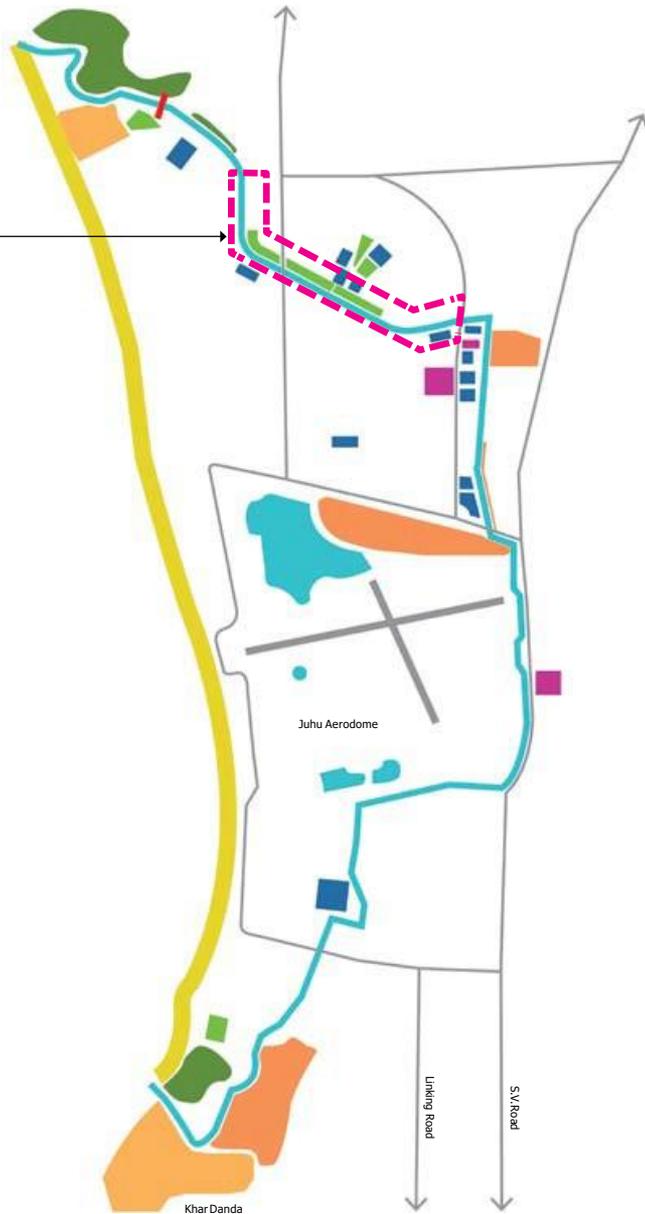
DAHISAR - 12kms

POISAR - 3kms

**PHASE 1:  
1.5 kms**

Map of Irla Nullah flowing through the Juhu neighborhood

- Waterbodies
- Mangroves
- Parks
- Kolivadas
- Institutions
- Hospitals
- Notified Slums
- Beach
- Roads



The Irla Nullah runs through the western suburb of Juhu with a total length of 7.5 kms. Owing to its geographical footprint, most areas of the neighbourhood have direct access or are in close proximity to this water body.

A host of public institutions and amenities are found adjacent to this nullah. The re-invigoration proposal looks to interconnect these amenities and open spaces to the nullah in order to increase participation and thereby improve vigilance of these public spaces.



the  
vision juhu  
plan

## THE IRLA NULLAH RE-INVIGORATION PLAN

Importantly, this movement and the project are a unique example of the need for waging citizens' struggles for exercising their Right to the City and in scripting its current and future growth and take on several challenges.

A plan that networks and integrates the nullah into the neighbourhood as well as with the multiple amenities and institutions in the precinct through green streets and roads that promote a walking culture along the nullah as well as within the Irla precinct.

These include the conservation of a vital natural asset; its integration with the neighborhood and the city; expanding public spaces -- both in physical and democratic terms; popularising and demystifying the planning process for effective participation in conceptualisation and implementation process, primarily effecting a paradigm shift in understanding of sustainable ecology and building with nature and its benefits to the quality of life and environment.

Phase 1 of the project includes the development of three citizens' parks namely the Kishore Kumar baug, Kaifi Azmi Park and the Childrens' Forest Park; a public, open air amphitheatre - the Vijay Tendulkar Rang Manch; walking and cycling tracks along the nullah complete with lighting and landscaping, and most importantly the cleaning of the waters in the nullah itself.



# WALKING & CYCLING TRACK, IRLA NULLA

BEFORE



AFTER







# 1

**Evolving a plan for transformative,  
citywide change:**



# OPEN MUMBAI

## WHAT WE DON'T SEE AND REALIZE AS OUR PUBLIC SPACES ASSETS:

482 SQ KMS OF TOTAL AREA

149 KMS OF COASTLINE

16 KMS OF BEACHES

40.7 KMS OF RIVERS COVERING 1.5 SQ KMS

09.25 SQ KMS OF CREEKS

48 KMS OF 'NULLAHS'

305 KMS OF POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN AVENUES ALONG ROADS

64.31 SQ KMS OF FORESTS AND HILLS

155 ACRES OF 51 RAILWAY STATIONS

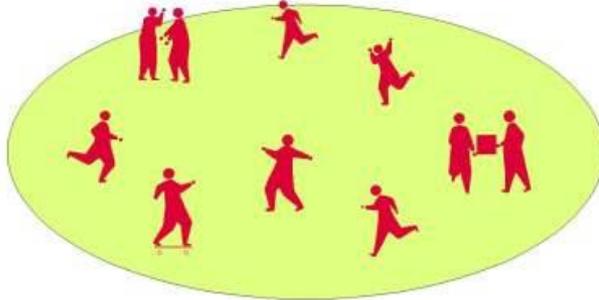
# The Open Mumbai Plan



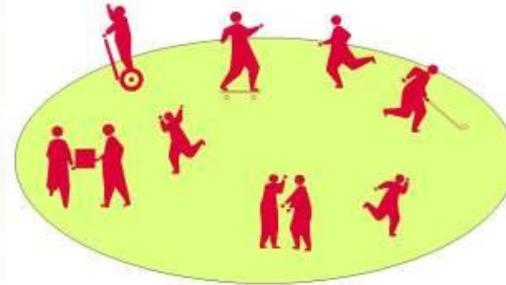
A plan that aims to create non-barricaded, non-exclusive, non-elitist spaces that provides access to all our citizens for leisure. A plan that ensures open space is not only available but is geographically and culturally integral to neighbourhoods and a participatory community life.

A plan that we hope will be the beginning of a dialogue to create a truly representative 'Peoples' Plan' for the city.

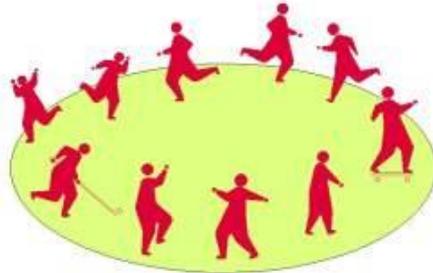
## Open space ratio comparison between major cities of the world in 2000



**LONDON:**  
31.68 sq.m/person



**NEW YORK:**  
26.4 sq.m/person



**CHICAGO:**  
17.6 sq.m/person



**TOKYO:**  
3.96 sq.m/person



**MUMBAI:**  
1.1 sq.m/person







# 2

## Neighborhood Based City Planning:

## VISION JUHU - EXPANDING PUBLIC SPACES

Juhu is a residential suburb in the western part of Mumbai, synonymous with glamorous bungalows of movie stars and one that houses one of the most popular public spaces in the city - the iconic Juhu beach.

Vision Juhu has evolved keeping the larger issues of the city in mind. It includes conserving reserved open spaces and creating new ones, pedestrianisation, significant solutions to flooding in Juhu, development of the Irla nullah, improvement in transport infrastructure by skillfully integrating the proposed Metro rail and re-planning traffic flow, opening up of several accesses to the beach, appraisal of social amenities like educational and health facilities and making them accessible to all, improvement in the standard of living in slums and gaothans (urban villages), provision of space and security to hawkers and most importantly- networking this public realm.



EXPANDING PUBLIC SPACES VISION JUHU

EXPANDING  
PUBLIC  
VISION Juhu  
SPACES



## BANDRA BANDSTAND PROMENADE

A product of a strong citizen's movement in the area, this promenade meanders along the water's edge of Bandra creating a contiguous open space where people can walk, relax and experience the vast beauty of the seascape.

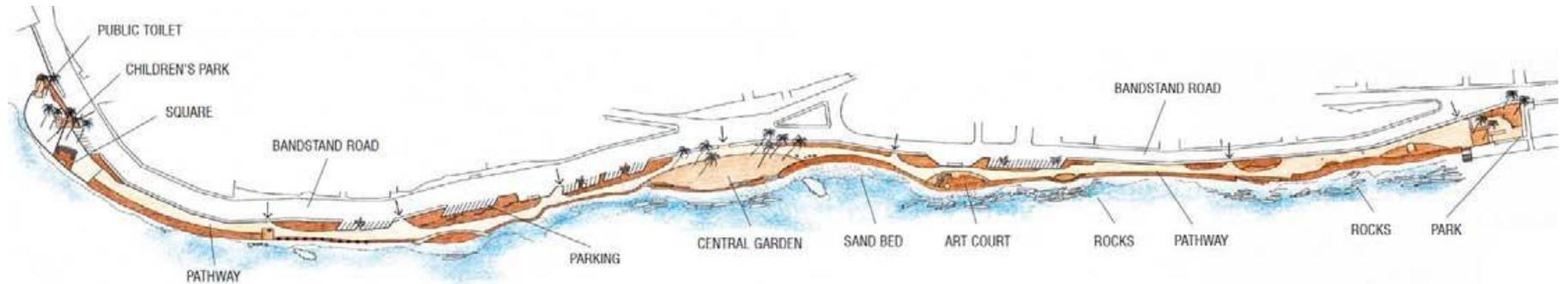
Project undertaken by Bandra Bandstand Residents' Trust in association with social activist and actor Shabana Azmi, and architect P.K.Das.

Funding: Shabana Azmi (MPLAD Fund)  
Water front length: 1.2km  
Cost: Rs.140 lacs.  
Period of construction: 2001-02.  
Structures and restoration: Arup Sarbadhikary

BEFORE



AFTER



## CARTER ROAD PROMENADE, BANDRA

This project too was part of the larger movement in the city to reclaim public spaces and to protect Mumbai's coastline. The development at the Carter Road seafront regenerated the mangroves, hitherto abused as a dumping ground, and their lush greenery has greatly added to the beauty of the waterfront. The mangroves formed the central point of interest at the Carter Road seafront. Our development meanders around it. Patches of grass, planned adjacent to the mangroves, extend the lush green expanse.

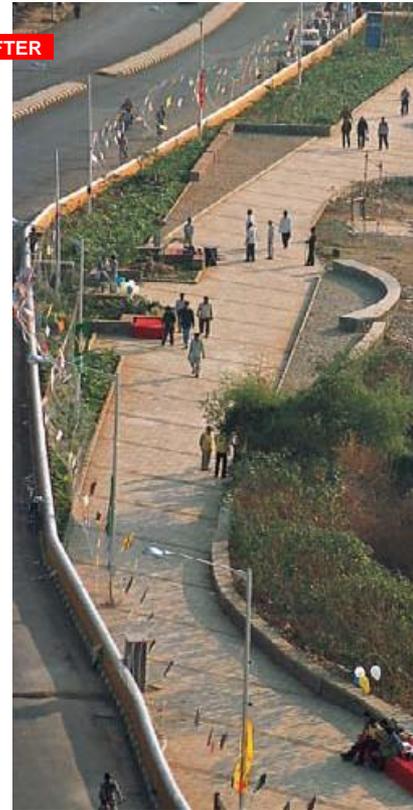
Project undertaken by Bandra West Residents' Association with social activist and actor Shabana Azmi, and architect P.K.Das.

Funding: Shabana Azmi (MPLAD Fund)  
Water front length: 1.25km  
Cost: Rs.150 lacs.  
Period of construction: 2001-02.

BEFORE



AFTER



## LAND'S END AMPHITHEATRE, BANDRA

The project includes restoration of the hill slope and its contours, which had been dug up mindlessly by a hotel to create a garden that has no relevance to the immediate natural and historical environment. The project includes plans to conserve, restore and develop appropriately the existing ruins and to regenerate the palm forest that once stretched over its slopes.

Project under taken by Bandra Bandra Bandstand Residents' Trust with social activist and actor Shabana Azmi, and architect P.K.Das.

Funding: Shabana Azmi (MPLAD Fund)

Area: 18,000 sq.ft.

Cost: Rs.90 lacs.

Period of construction: 2002-03



## GATEWAY OF INDIA PRECINCT REFURBISHMENT

The Gateway of India, located in south Mumbai is a historic monument looming majestically against the backdrop of the Arabian Sea. A must-see on every tourist's itinerary and a favourite waterfront of the locals, this public space is visited daily by thousands of people. But sadly this plaza, one of the largest of all the waterfronts in the city, was a clutter of disparate structures and unplanned activities with no cohesive design holding them together.

Our redesigned precinct both extends the plaza and relocates the activities at the farther end, re-organized to skirt the rear end of the central garden. This gives the historic monument a breathing space in front and provides the visitors a panoramic view of the monument, the sea and the other landmark structures and statues around. The plan also organizes the commercial and other activities at one location and ensures that they do not encroach on the plaza and clutter it.

Project undertaken by Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai along with support from architect PK Das & Associates and INTACH: Greater Mumbai Chapter.

Area: 1,20,000 sq.ft.  
Cost: Rs. 450 lacs.  
Period of construction: 2007-09

AFTER



BEFORE



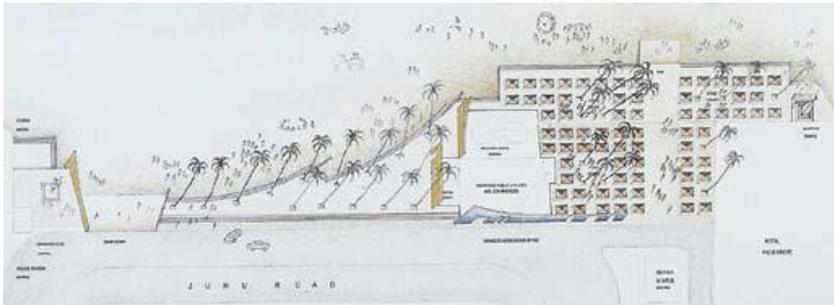
## JUHU BEACH RESTORATION AND TOURISM PLAN

Restoration of Juhu Beach is the third project in this movement to restore Mumbai's waterfronts. It is one of Mumbai's most largely visited public spaces. It is a place to unwind, relax and take in the sea air. Unfortunately, ad hoc, unplanned commercialization, without a cohesive and comprehensive vision, had destroyed its natural environment considerably.

Our proposal covered the entire length of the main beach and promenade from the koliwada (fishing village) of Khar at the southern tip to Moragaon at the northern end - a length of nearly three kilometres.

As the plan shows, it covers the whole spectrum of activities along the stretch, both on and off the beach and its immediate surroundings. The already existing stalls and podia have been incorporated into the plan. Its salient features include proposals to reduce traffic congestion, generate substantial new parking spaces, pedestrian crossings and islands.

The plan also addresses the access points to the beach and focusses on integration of this natural asset with the communities living along the beach. After a long struggle over 10 years, which included several court cases against owners of the stalls on the beach, the plan was approved by the High Court and the plan was implemented with tremendous support of the local area citizens



# WETLAND AT SEWRI



PROPOSED BOARDWALKS & AVENUES

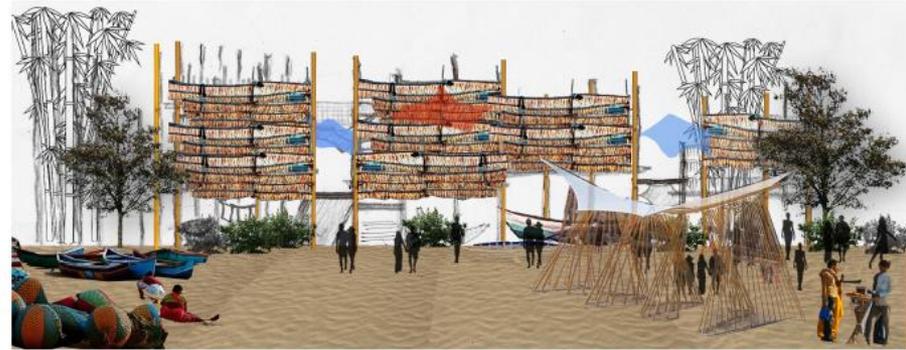
BEFORE



AFTER



# VERSOVA BEACH DEVELOPMENT



# WALKING & CYCLING TRACK, IRLA NULLA

AFTER



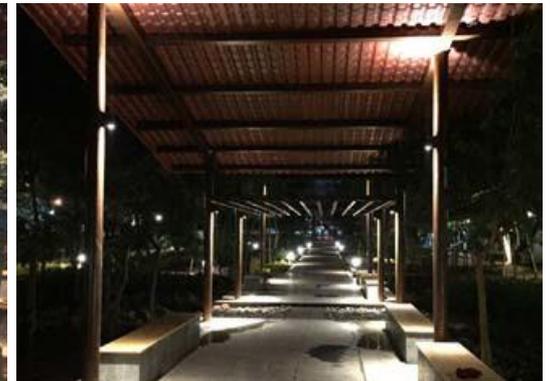


The chain of public parks along Irla Nullah in the form of the Kaifi Azmi Park, Kishore Kumar Baug and the Childrens' Forest Park form an immaculate 'city forest' within a dense urban setting.

# KAIFI AZMI UDYAN



# KISHORE KUMAR BAUG + VIJAY TENDULKAR RANG MANCH







# **Collective Mapping & Open Data:**

# 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%	
<b>TOTAL AREA</b>		<b>257.31 (B)</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	
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%	

# MUMBAI'S OPEN SPACES

Maps & A Preliminary Listing Document

Prepared by

PK DAS	ARCHITECTS	GENERAL	1000 1000	1000 1000
ASSOCIATES	1000 1000	1000 1000	1000 1000	1000 1000

# CHASING THE AFFORDABLE DREAM

A Plan to House Mumbai's Millions

PK DAS | GURBIR SINGH | RITU DEWAN | KABIR AGARWAL

# **4** Influencing the Development Plan (DP) of the City:

## Draft DP proposes mangrove safaris

TNN | May 29, 2016, 11:05 PM IST

Mumbai: The revised draft development plan (DP-34) has proposed mangrove safaris in environmentally sensitive areas and jogging tracks running parallel to rivers (nullahs) and creeks in two decades.

Anticipating public opposition for disturbing eco-sensitive areas, municipal chief Ajoy Mehta stated that it will be done only after securing environment clearances and detailed impact studies of the areas are done. Civic officials said the plans were to keep encroachers away from such areas and help citizens to see the biodiversity of mangroves in natural habitats.

"It's a good idea to make such areas accessible to the public as it will ensure the area is safe and free of encroachments. Jogging tracks along rivers in the city is also a positive step. Mhada is making it possible at Juhu with our assistance. There will be a mechanism to keep the water clean. The government agency had completed half the work," said film-maker and activist Ashoke Pandit. He is also the point person to bring 15 citizen groups together—Apna Mumbai Abhiyan—to fight against the civic authorities' other proposal to disturb mangroves and greenery at Aarey Colony and mangroves for a Metro car-shed.

## DP will be a disaster for Mumbai, increase social disparities

TNN | Feb 21, 2015, 01:06 AM IST

By PK Das

The new Development Plan for Mumbai ridicules sustainable growth principles and actively undermines the city's most important needs — affordable housing and public open spaces. With its proposal to increase floor space index (FSI), the plan focuses on quantity over quality and perpetuates the bluff that increasing volumes of construction will automatically solve the problems of the city — when in fact it will only further increase social disparities.

First let's look at affordable housing. The new draft DP is not only silent on this issue but actively undermines the sector. Many organizations have demanded that slum-occupied lands be reserved for affordable housing, which would enable the rehabilitation of existing slum-dwellers as well as create an equal number of affordable housing units. They have also demanded reservations for social amenities on this slum land. The new DP, on the other hand, perpetuates the current failed SRA policy of allowing slum lands to be taken over for commercial development. In fact, to please developers, the plan promises to do away with the reservations that allegedly are holding up slum redevelopment. We have all seen how this SRA policy of incentivizing the market to build affordable housing has only led to more "slumification" of the city, producing vertical slums without amenities side by side with luxury high-rises. The past decade has shown us that affordable housing cannot be left to the market forces.

# SUGGESTIONS FOR THE REVISED DRAFT OF MUMBAI'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2014 - 2034



GULMOHAR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION  
MUMBAI WATERFRONTS CENTRE  
BANDRA WEST RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

# MAPPING OF SLUMS, MUMBAI



## MUMBAI'S SLUMS MAP - 1

### INDEX

	AREA-SQKM	%	SIGN
GREATER MUMBAI BOUNDARY	482.74	100.00%	
WARD BOUNDARY			
LAND AREA RESERVED FOR HOUSING (as per D.P.)	102.17	21.17%	
<b>TOTAL SLUMS LAND AREA</b>	<b>42.28</b>	<b>8.75%</b>	
MUMBAI'S POPULATION (as per 2011 census)	12.43 mn	100.00%	
SLUM- DWELLERS POPULATION (as per 2011 census)	06.53 mn	52.50%	

Not to scale. Various reservations are as per the Development Plan. Population figures are approximate.  
This map to be read together with 'Mumbai's Slums Map -2 D.P. Reservations'



**Access: How many people live within 0.5km of a 5 x 0.5km linear park?**

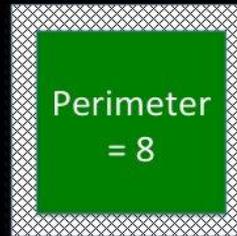


Data source: <http://www.citymayors.com/statistics/largest-cities-density-125.html>

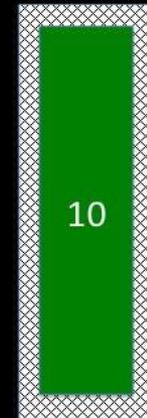
City	Mumbai	New York	Seoul	Rio	Bogotá
Population (millions)	14.3	8.4	17.5	10.8	7
Size (km <sup>2</sup> )	484	1,200	1,049	1,580	518
Density (people/km <sup>2</sup> )	29,650	7,000	16,700	6,850	13,500
People served by a 2.5km <sup>2</sup> linear park (5 x 0.5km) (people within 0.5km)	177,900	42,000	100,200	41,100	81,000

To serve that many with a square park **12.25 km<sup>2</sup> park (3+ km per side) ... 1,225 hectares**

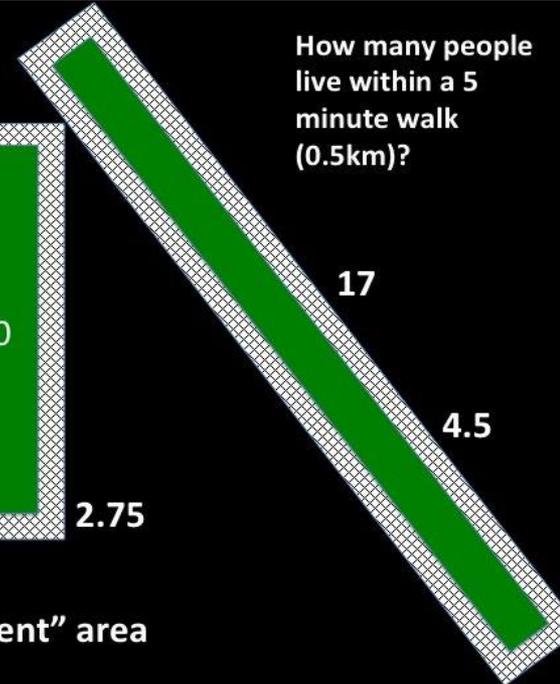
Perimeters of four equal-area (=4) shapes



Catchment area = 2.5



2.75



How many people live within a 5 minute walk (0.5km)?

The people "catchment" area

# 5

**Urban Planning and Design as A Right:**

## VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE MOVEMENT FOR RECLAIMING PUBLIC SPACES IN MUMBAI

These publications have been outcomes of the effort to popularise and publicise the on going struggle and movement for the right to public spaces within the city of Mumbai and the re-invigoration and integration with the city of the 140 sq. km. natural areas.

### 1. Vision Juhu - Expanding Public Spaces,

Published by PK Das & Associates, 2007

In collaboration with the design cell of Kamla Raheja Vidyaniidhi College of Architecture and Environmental Studies, KRVI A.

This book is based on an extensive survey and documentation of Juhu the coastal suburb of Mumbai. It includes mapping of the open spaces, the iconic Juhu beach, the Irla nullah, mangroves, along with a survey of the various activities and settlements, proposing a comprehensive and all compassing Vision Juhu Plan with neighborhood based city planning as its main argument.

### 2. On the Waterfront - Reclaiming Mumbai's Open Spaces,

Published by PK Das & Associates and Mumbai Waterfronts Center, 2011

Through two actual case studies, the book demonstrates how the two waterfronts in Bandra-- another coastal suburban neighborhood in Mumbai, have been reclaimed for its citizens and by design have been turned into democratic spaces.

### 3. Mumbai's Open Spaces - Maps & a Preliminary Listing Document,

Published by Mumbai Waterfronts Center and PK Das & Associates, 2011

This is a comprehensive listing with the locations and areas of all the reserved open spaces as per the Development Plan of Mumbai, ward-wise has been published. This listing also records the actual available open space on the ground and their user status.

### 4. Open Mumbai - Re-envisioning the city and its open spaces,

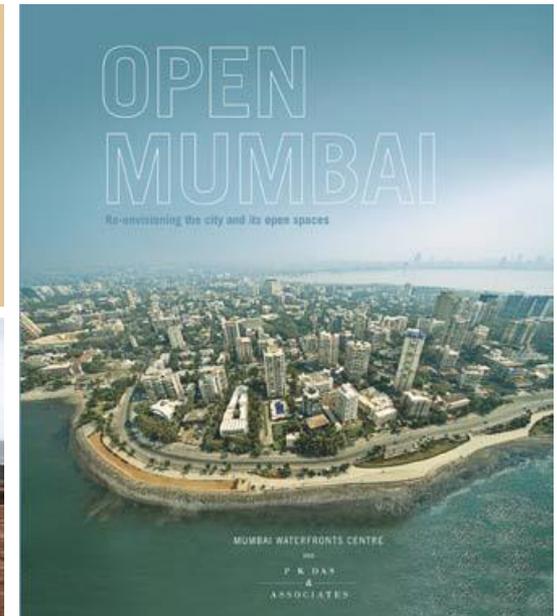
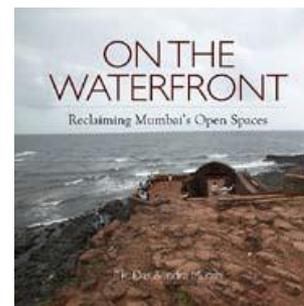
Published by Mumbai Waterfronts Center and PK Das & Associates, 2012

This is the first time ever a mapping of the open spaces in Mumbai and the vast extent of the natural areas-- creeks, wetlands, rivers, watercourses, hills, forests, beaches, have been undertaken. The book also provides examples of the various projects undertaken through citizens effort in reclaiming the waterfronts and open spaces in the city. Also, an Open Mumbai plan has been presented illustrating the idea of the networking and integration of all the open spaces and the natural areas with an objective of achieving a sustainable future.

### 5. Design Beyond Boundaries- Integrating the backyards,

Published by PUDDI, 2018

A four month design studio with final year students at KRVI A focussed on backyards of development that the city produces with its growth, and how these spaces needed integration and improvement. The Irla Nullah was the protagonist of the studio with students exploring various avenues through which its improvement can be envisioned at a larger neighbourhood scale.



\* These publications can be found online on PK Das & Associates' website: [www.pkdas.com](http://www.pkdas.com)

# WALKING, CYCLING AND A FOREST

## 'WALKING, CYCLING AND A FOREST' -VISION JUHU PLAN

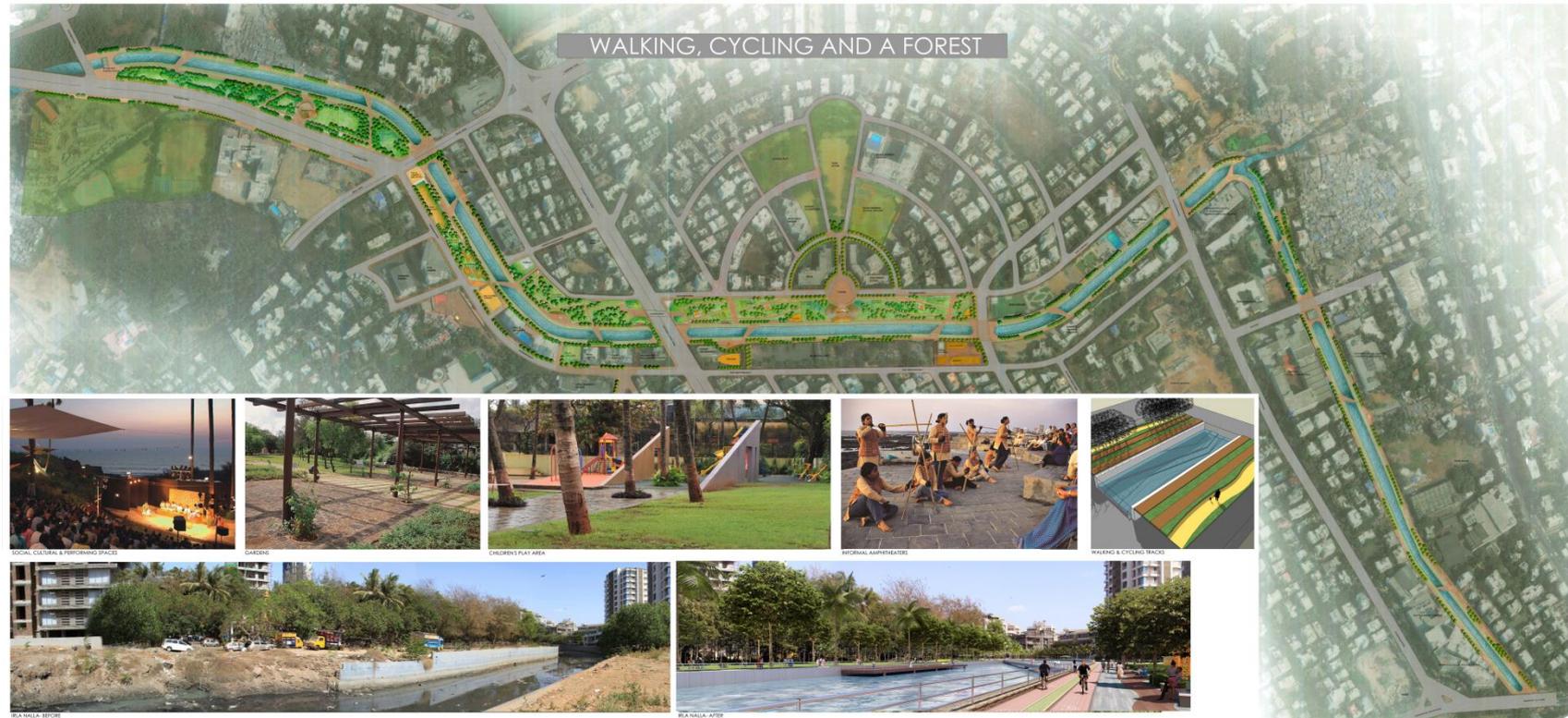
**Our central objective is to bring Juhu together.** Connecting and networking the various isolated, disparate and fragmented spaces and activities is a means to achieving this objective. These spaces include the open spaces, the Ila nallah, gardens, parks, playgrounds, various public institutions like colleges, schools, training centers, music, dance and art centers, markets, health-care centers, etc. These connected spaces would be further networked with neighborhood streets for further integration and accessibility. This effort would nourish community life, neighborhood engagements and participation, truly symbolizing our democratic aspirations.

**Through this plan, we will generate an active and pulsating system of public spaces that would form the heart of Juhu.** This will also provide a distinct identity to our neighborhood and all our people. Women, children, the old, the young, will all find an opportunity to work, cycle, play and intermingle in these areas. Groups will have opportunities to organize spontaneous and formal activities like meetings, music and dance programs, art festivals, get-togethers, games for children, sports, therapy activities, theatre and many such events. Colleges and schools in our area may organize events both for their students and for the neighborhood.

On both sides of Ila nallah that runs for nearly five kilometers along the length of Juhu, we will be able to walk and cycle on well-built tracks. Keeping with the original idea of the Municipal Corporation for building a 'City Forest' on land along the Ila nallah, launched way back in 19-- we will grow many more trees and a forest in all these areas. **Walking, Cycling and a Forest is thus our metaphor for the integration and expansion of our social, cultural and political life in Juhu.** This we believe will enormously enrich our lives and we all will be proud of our neighborhood and place.

Through this project, we will demonstrate the need and importance of planning and developing neighborhoods and their identity in this fast growing metropolis. We will also demonstrate the significance of preparing comprehensive area redevelopment plans as a way forward in the preparation of a dynamic city redevelopment plan. Planning for Mumbai would then be a bottom-up process with participation of all the people. Neighborhood and area plans create easy and effective participation. Ideas about democratization of public spaces and planning is well reflected in this endeavor. Above all, this project is also about a right and a romance for achieving better quality of life that all the citizens deserve and aspire for themselves, their families and communities.

- P K DAS Architect



**Vision Juhu**  
P.K.Das and Associates - Planners, Architects & Engineers  
Research & Design Cell - Centre National Organisme Urbain de Recherche (CNOUR)  
The Mumbai Waterfront Centre  
In consultation with the Residents of Juhu

## A CITIZENS' VICTORY PARK

GULMOHAR AREA SOCIETIES WELFARE GROUP - SAVE OPEN SPACES (SOS)



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## A CITIZENS' VICTORY PARK

GULMOHAR AREA SOCIETIES WELFARE GROUP - SAVE OPEN SPACES (SOS) ARCHITECTS - P. K. DAS & ASSOCIATES

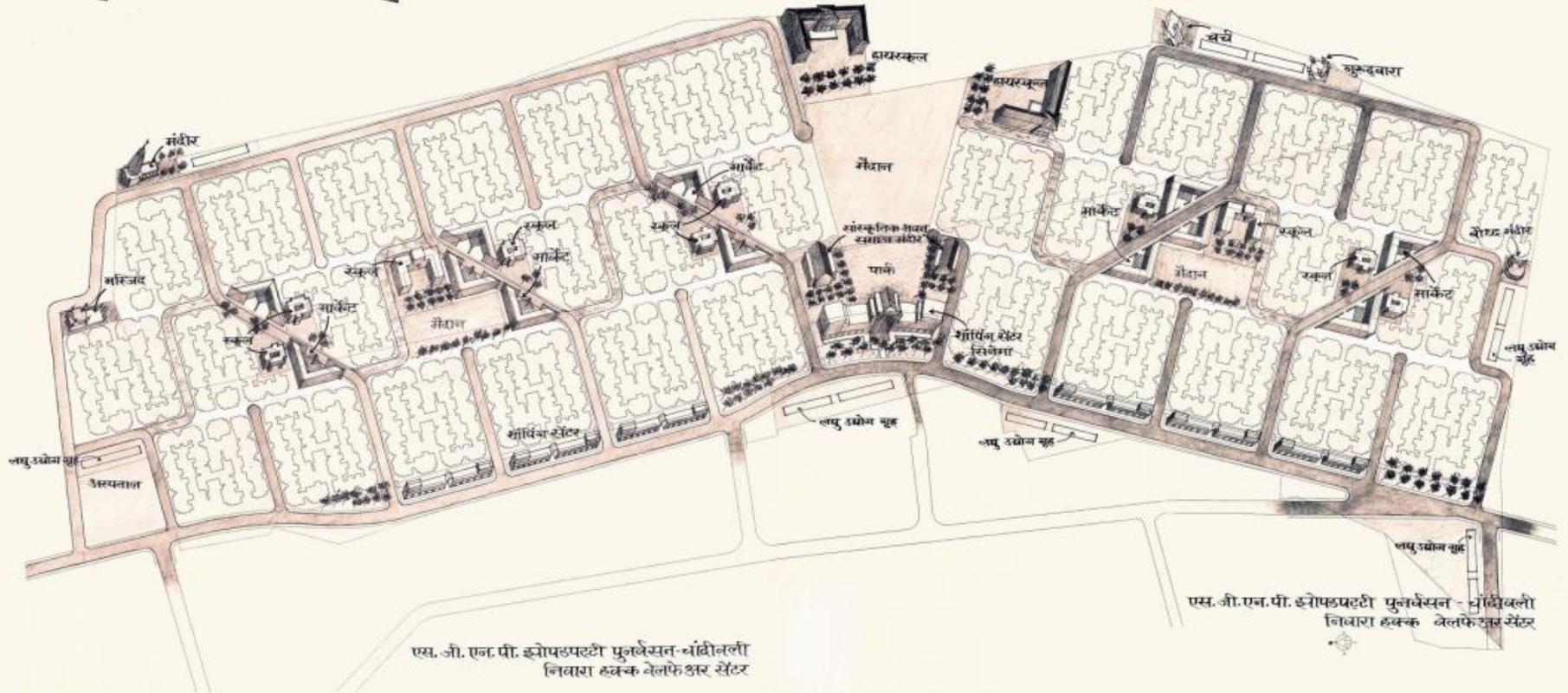


यहाँ हमारे अपने घरों के साथ-साथ खुले मैदान और कई सामाजिक सुविधाएँ होंगी।

- वाडीकी रचना परिचित समूहों और सोसायटियों को कायम रखेगी।
- सार्वजनिक सहभाग और व्यवस्थापन नियंत्रण इस रचना का मुख्य हेतु रहेगा।
- इमारतें सिर्फ पाँच मंजिली होंगी।

- एक बड़ा चार एकर क्षेत्र का मैदान शहर का केंद्रबिंदू होगा, इस के व्यतिरिक्त एक एकर के दो और खेल मैदान और हर वाडी में दो चौक होंगे।
- कुल सोलह स्कूल होंगे, जिसमें दो हायरस्कूल, चार सेकेंडरी स्कूल और दस प्राथमरी स्कूल होंगे।
- दो अस्पताल और कई छोटे क्लिनिक और दवाखाने आरोग्य विषयक हर जरूरतों को पूरा करेंगे।
- दो बड़े सांस्कृतिक भवन और कई धार्मिक स्थल सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों को बढ़ावा देंगे।
- रोजगार उपलब्धी के लिए हमारे शहर में 250 लघु उद्योग गृह बनाये जायेंगे।

## हमारा नया शहर.....



एस. जी. एन. पी. इन्फोपट्टी पुनर्वसन-चांदीवली  
निवासा हक्क वेलफेअर सेंटर

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निवासा हक्क वेलफेअर सेंटर



# 6

**Ecology, Environment & Political Movement:**

# Urbanisation of Cities:



# Picture-perfect plan for Irla

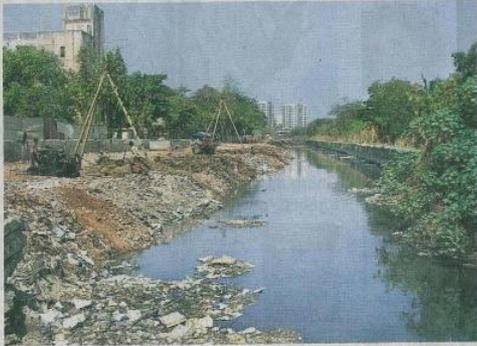
Linah Balga

Forget cars and other vehicles belching fumes. Forget the congestion and the pollution. Instead, stretching for 10km on either side of the Irla nullah in Juhu, there will be an integrated network of lush green open spaces, a garden, a cycling track and a pedestrian pathway.

No midsummer night's dream. This is what the first phase of Vision Andheri envisages. The BMC standing committee has given it the green signal, sanctioning Rs5 crore for the cycling track and the pedestrian pathway. Work on the project is expected to begin after the assembly polls.

The pathway will link fragmented open spaces, as well as the educational institutions in the vicinity — Mithibai College, NM College, Bhagubhai Engineering College, Ruthambara College, and Kamala Raheja Vidyamithi Institute for Architecture (KVIA). There will be a garden where students of these colleges could hang out. The green space would also be of use to fitness freaks and senior citizens.

The project has been designed by architect PK Das, the KVIA students, and the Mumbai Waterfront Centre. "Work will begin once the BMC is through with clearing the encroachments. A 200-metre stretch, from Shopper's Stop to Amruth Bachchan's building has already been cleared," said Das. The Brinsford-street will



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) The Irla nullah at present; an artist's impression of the proposed beautification; a map showing the route of the nullah. Mangrove conservation will be done near Juhu Koliwada and the Seven Bungalows-Versova region

## top story

clear two 20-foot wide stretches on either side of the Irla nullah. The civic body had initially thought of using these to build carriageways for service vehicles and maintenance machineries.

"The BMC was thinking of concreting the nullah, but it would have prevented rainwater from seeping into the non-porous edges," said Anurudh Padi, director, KVIA. "We gave it an alternative plan, in which the open spaces would serve as floodplains during the monsoon months, and could be used for recreational activities in the dry seasons."

The second phase of Vision Andheri will cover Seven Bungalows in Andheri (West) and parts of Jogeshwar. It will involve a similar attempt to integrate fragmented open spaces with colleges, public health facilities, Metro Rail realignment, and slum redevelopment. Also, a plan has been chalked out to revitalise the Gilbert Hill precinct, near Andheri station, which is surrounded by slums. "Like the Irla nullah, the Veera Desai Road nullah will be freed of encroachments to reduce flooding. There will be a pedestrian pathway along it, which will link up with the first-phase pathway," said Das.

# Irla Nalla set to undergo starry makeover



## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

We have claimed six metres of space on either side of the Irla Nalla, which the BMC marked as a flood zone after the floods in 2005. We are now developing it for walking and cycling and also creating a Walk of Fame."

Activist Ashoke Pandit, who has been working with the local citizen bodies on the project, says, "The beautification of the nalla should set an example because we have so many of them in the city. Through such projects, you not only reclaim an open space, but also free a water body of its odour and filth. People will eventually stop treating these bodies as drains. Nallas will stop being nallas."

## MONEY MATTERS

However, buzz is that there is a shortage of funds to get the statues sculpted. Ashoke says that lyricist Javed Akhtar, who is also a Rajya Sabha member, has utilised ₹30 crore of his

Local Area Development fund for the project. Plan is to loop in other star MPs like Shatrughan Sinha, Rekha and Paresh Rawal too, to raise funds.

He adds, "We might even seek help from industrialists. We've already finished working on the green belt, which runs adjacent to the nalla's walking track and Walk Of Fame. We're positive we will open the doors of the Walk Of Fame to the public in six months."

## RECLAIMING OPEN SPACES

Apart from beautifying the stinky nalla and reclaiming patches of land attached to it, the local residents' bodies also reclaimed a vast open space that has now been turned into a pleasant and green walking park. Called the Kishore Kumar Udyan (proposed title), it houses an amphitheatre in Vijay



The amphitheatre in Kishore Kumar Udyan

People have fought for this land with several private parties and even the government bodies. Open spaces are a must in this concrete jungle that we call our home

Tendulkar's name (also proposed), Kaffi Azmi Park says, "I opened to public only a month ago. The park is interconnected with the Kaffi Azmi Park, and with the help of an underground arrangement, will be connected to a children's park across the road, near Amitabh Bachchan's residence, Pratiksha. Over the next few months, the plan is to interlink more parks along the way to form a seamless green patch running into a few kilometres in the heart of Juhu."

## THE ROAD AHEAD

Beautification of nallas doesn't stop with the one at Irla. Das points out that there are 300 kilometres of water-bodies all over Mumbai. The master plan is to create greenery around all of them and interconnect them. "These nallas are not actually drains. They are narrow streams and are present in almost all the neighbourhoods. People have forgotten that Mumbai had four rivers. We have to revive them and give the city a contiguous space for walking, cycling and interacting," Das sums up.

# Citizens inspire Bandra face-lift

Nasser Lalljee

On this waterfront, there is certainly no Marlon Brando, but the people of Bandra Bandstand certainly have their own heroes.

It is to the credit of these heroes who set about saving a coastline that had been endangered by indiscriminate dumping. The movement took off with the Mohalla committee, which was formed in 1993, when a group of people started taking an interest in civic problems. They formed the Bandra Bandstand Residents Association in 1996, which was later converted to a trust in 2000.

The blatant dumping of rubbish along their precious coastline outraged the sensibilities of the local residents who had earlier fought it out in the court and got 1,500 trucks of debris removed from the area facing the Bandstand Fort. Once this was done the group moved ahead to try and reclaim whatever was left of the coastline. The idea was to prevent further encroachments, particularly those that had come up in the area around the Searcher hotel.

The construction started in May 1999. Exactly one year later May 2000 saw the Naval Police Band inaugurate the promenade at bandstand. Then came the Art fair on November 27, 2000. This was followed by a party for the under-privileged children in December 2000. An interactive play to highlight the problems of the common man was held next on the May 6, 2001.

The variety of events held at the promenade has brought the citizens closer to each other and there is a growing sense of camaraderie among all those who come here. They voluntarily stop people from creating nuisance, throwing rubbish as they have developed a sense of ownership.

The promenade is now almost complete, and a 1.6 km stretch of reclaimed land, from Bandstand to St. Andrew's Church corner, has been saved from certain disaster. Encroachment and other such nuisances would have certainly destroyed the entire already endangered coastline.

"The people have developed a good trust and funds are slowly trickling in." The association and locals are appealing to every flat-owner in Bandstand to pay Rs 20 per month. Apart from this certain sponsors have taken a keen interest and have contributed towards the development of gardens and other features.

If this example is emulated, a number of public spaces will be reclaimed by the people, for the people.



proceeding, and the effort being poured by the locals, more money was

# 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



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

Sushesha Chatterjee @susheshac

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 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.



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."

"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 281 kilometres of rivers and streams 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 Aven Gupta says, "In the success of this project. If this clicks, we will beautify service roads along the drain. I've decided to dedicate my MP Local Area Development Fund for the project."

Speaking to Mumbai Mirror, architect PK Das from PK Das & Associates, which has designed the project, said,



THANK YOU

P K D A S

&

A S S O C I A T E S