

The City and the Park
the case of
MUMBAI



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21 October, 2004

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INDIA

Leopard attacks threaten capital city

Mumbai (AsiaNews)- Mumbai is under attack of a different kind. Leopard attacks in the suburbs of the capital killed 2 more people on Monday, bringing the death toll for this month alone to nine persons.



In a small, bare hutment on the slopes of the thickly forested Aarey Colony in Goregaon, a suburb in Mumbai, nineteen-year-old Raju was sleeping when a leopard dragged him out of the shelter in the wee hours Monday morning. A 55-year-old Kashiram of Mulund, another Mumbai suburb, was attacked while sleeping outside a shrine later that morning.

The same day, a leopard was trapped in a housing complex in Borivili, a northern suburb of the capital. It is a cause of grave concern to the citizens of Mumbai, as these suburbs are densely populated areas.

Leopards inhabit the nearby protected zone of the 'Sanjay Gandhi National Park', a wild life sanctuary, which forest officials claim has had massive encroachments in the last years - by both slum dwellers and builders.

Slum dwellers, mainly tribals and Adivasi, who have slowly begun to inhabit the park have no alternative housing arrangements, and have migrated to the city in search of some means of

Case 1

DECCAN HERALD

Monday, June 28, 2004



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Leopards on prowl in Mumbai city

FROM PARAG RABADE

DH NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI:

Mumbai - the commercial capital of India - is facing the most unusual but a deadly menace, which has taken a toll of seven persons over the last few days. The menace is, believe it or not, the black-spotted leopard - one of the four big cats of Genus Panthera. The problem is centred in North Mumbai, especially the areas surrounding Sanjay Gandhi National Park.

Residents of Borivali, which is to the west of the park, Goregaon and Aaray Colony, Powai and its famed IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) campus in the south, Mulund to the east and parts of Thane district to the north, are gripped by fear and panic over the leopard attacks.

Since the beginning of this year, there have been 32 attacks by leopards in Mumbai, out of which in 12 cases, victims have died. Interestingly, Mumbai is the only metropolis in the world which has a huge forest, approximately 106 sq kms in area, which is now causing problems.

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Leopard straying into Raheja Vihar caught

By: PTI
June 28, 2004

Forest authorities and the police captured a leopard that had strayed in Raheja Vihar locality on the outskirts of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park and injured two persons while they were attempting to tranquilise it.

The operation which lasted six and a half hours was completed at around 6.30 pm and the forest authorities took the special cage inside the Park, SGNPC sources said.

The injured identified as Vaibhav Patil, a forest employee, and police constable Suresh Dhamapurkar were admitted to hospital.

Leopards have already killed nine people this year and with the two killings today, six people have fallen prey to the wild cat this month alone.

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WORLD

Leopards prey on people in Mumbai

Wednesday, June 30, 2004 Posted: 0754 GMT (1554 HKT)

MUMBAI, India (AP) -- Leopards from a national park on the edge of Mumbai, India's largest city, have killed 10 people this month -- prompting forest officials to let loose pigs and rabbits to feed the big cats.

The killings are up sharply from previous years, and six of this month's deaths occurred outside the park as leopards extended their range in search of food.

In a bid to stop the killings, traps are being set up outside the park and a low voltage electric fence will be built to prevent the estimated 30 leopards from leaving Sanjay Gandhi National Park, officials said.



A leopard growls in a cage after being trapped by forest officials.

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Last Updated: Tuesday, 29 June, 2004, 10:40 GMT 11:40 UK

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Leopards caught in fearful Bombay

The authorities in India's business capital Bombay (Mumbai) have captured three leopards after a recent upsurge in attacks on humans.



Leopard attacks are on the rise

The big cats have killed 12 people this month alone - and three times that number since the start of 2003.

Residents have been gripped by fear following the attacks, which have taken place in and around a wildlife park.

Officials blame illegal settlements in the sanctuary and a lack of food for the leopards.

Most of the attacks have occurred in the city's Powai area, where the Sanjay Gandhi National Park is situated.

The sprawling urban lung covers 100 square kilometres and is a haven for wildlife - including an estimated 30 leopards.

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Frontline

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CONSERVATION

Leopards in an urban forest

LYLA BAVADAM

in Mumbai

The growing human casualties in attacks by leopards of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Mumbai highlight the increasing urban pressures on the park and the failure of the authorities, despite a court order, to take remedial measures.

PAUL NORONHA





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SPECIALS



Leopard scare: Property prices drop in Powai



NDTV Correspondent

Saturday, December 13, 2003 (Mumbai):

A day after a leopard that had strayed into a colony in Mumbai's Powai suburb was successfully trapped, the residents are still worried.

Not only are they scared of more leopards straying into the area, reports of the leopard attack has led to a sharp fall in property prices.

"I would love to leave the flat and go as it's no longer safe. But the property prices have fallen by 20 per cent," said Mazna, a resident of Raheja Vihar.

Unchecked development

Till a few years back, Powai was a relatively underdeveloped area, surrounded by jungles of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. But skyscrapers have now replaced much of the forest cover.

Local adivasis hold the rapid, unchecked growth responsible for the



Time Line

- Jul 16, 2004: Mumbai leopards face road hazards
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Environmentalists call for relocation of park squatters

TIMES NEWS NETWORK [SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2002 10:03:10 PM]

MUMBAI: In the wake of the recent leopard attacks in areas around the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, city environmentalists last week called for relocating slum-dwellers and tribals within the park to assure their safety. Recently, there have been four leopard attacks, two within the park. Most recently, a 62-year-old woman was killed in Film City, Goregaon, on Sunday evening on the fringes of the park. With seven attacks since March, this is the highest number of attacks in a year.

"The situation is out of control," said wildlife expert Sunjoy Monga at a press conference. Environmentalists emphasised that while the problem



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From mills to malls, the sky is the limit

By Nauzer Bharucha
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The metamorphosis is virtually complete.

The mills of central Mumbai, once the engines of economic growth that employed four lakh people, have long fallen silent. Smoke-stacks have been razed to make way for residential towers, malls, food courts, multiplexes and even a five-star hotel.

As the last of the 40,000-odd jobless mill workers stare into an uncertain future, their former employers are in a rush to tie up with real estate developers waiting to gentrify central Mumbai.

"Lower Parel will become the heart of south Mumbai," predicts Atul Ruia, director of Phoenix Mills at Senapati Bapat Marg. But before it becomes the upmarket destination that it wants to be, something will have to be done about the state of the roads which

are in a pathetic condition. The BMC is in the process of concreting the stretch, where traffic jams are now a regular feature.

Real estate market sources said that new building projects on more than 200 acres of mill land had either commenced or were in the pipeline in Lower Parel, Lalbaug, Byculla, Worli and Dadar. "There are more than 30 mills where about 50 lakh sq ft of land can be developed within the next five years," says Ashok Narang, a leading real estate consultant.

Jaidev Mody of the Piramal Group calls this the "most happening part of town" and praises the quality of construction and nicely designed spaces. "Moreover, the mill belt is centrally located, making it accessible to north and south



The once-thriving mills have now been transformed into entertainment complexes, shopping malls, food courts and multiplexes. Some of the old mill structures are also being demolished to make way for plush residential high-rises.

Mumbai," he adds. According to him, the new developments have become the preferred destination for corporates mainly because real estate prices are cheaper than those in south Mumbai.

Gyansham Seth of Great Eastern Shipping, which constructed one of the first residential towers (Belvedere Court) in the Modern Mills compound, says that they have "clients who sold their Carmichael Road flats to move into Belvedere Court".

The transformation has been rapid. Take for instance crowded Lalbaug, an area whose hallmark is its annual Ganesh mandals and chivda gullies. A 28-storey five-

star hotel, ITC Grand Central, is scheduled to be completed by mid-2004 here. Constructed on land which once housed ITC's tobacco factory, it will be central Mumbai's first five-star hotel.

But the juggernaut of change is clearly the Ruia's Phoenix Mills at Senapati Bapat Marg. Now an entertainment hub with six retail stores, seven restaurants and three

entertainment complexes, it has been rechristened High Street Phoenix, and according to spokesperson Tanya Lowe, attracts close to 50,000 people on weekends and holidays. This causes the traffic to pile up outside, for while the mills have developed infrastructure, the outside hasn't kept pace.

And Phoenix Mills is only half risen from the ashes. The Sky

Zone, a huge shopping complex with international brands and a Designer Floor is coming up in the second phase to be completed by December. Also in the pipeline is a ten-screen multiplex.

Close by in the Morarji Mills compound at Lower Parel, the Piramal Group is setting up an office complex called the Peninsula Corporate Park over a sprawl-



The decline of the mills

In the mid-1920s, the mills were a booming industry with as many as 81 of them in operation. In fact, 70 per cent of the city's labour force was employed by the mills. Today, there are only 52 mills of which 25 are owned by the National Textile Corporation. The 52 mills together cover almost 600 acres of land in central Mumbai, once known as Girangaon, or the 'village of the mills'. The mills are spread over Lalbaug, Parel, Byculla, Naigaum and Dadar, with a few in Kurla.

Until two decades ago, more than 2.5 lakh people were employed in the mills. Now the number has dwindled to less than 50,000. In the year 2000, the state's new textile policy acknowledged that the run of the mills was over, making it easy for mill owners to sell their lands.

ing six lakh square feet. Its boast? The biggest car park in the city, providing space for up to 700 cars.

One of the biggest residential mill-land projects that is expected to shake up the property market in the next few years is the one in the Simplex Mills compound at Saat Raasta where Godrej Properties will construct five 45-storey-high residential towers, comprising more than 400 flats.

But all eyes are on the 13 defunct mills owned by the National Textiles Corporation in central Mumbai. Ask V.K. Tripathi, NTC's managing director, about his plans to redevelop this prime land and he says, "The sky is the limit. We can have all the top brands under one roof. Or an enclave housing all the city's diplomats. Perhaps even a fashion centre or a software park." Anything apart from a mill.

City Report

Real estate available in the mills and factories of central Mumbai

Name of the mill	Location	Approx area available
Morarji Mills	Lower Parel	6 lakh sq ft
Piramal Mills	Lower Parel	3.85 lakh sq ft
Empire Mills	Lower Parel	1 lakh sq ft
Raghuvanshi Mills	Lower Parel	2 lakh sq ft
Matulya Mills	Lower Parel	1.70 lakh sq ft
Phoenix Mills	Lower Parel	1 lakh sq ft
Victoria Mills	Lower Parel	2 lakh sq ft
Bombay Dyeing	Worli	4 lakh sq ft
Metal Box	Worli	2 lakh sq ft
Hindustan Mills	Saat Raasta	5 lakh sq ft
Khatau Mills	Byculla	5 lakh sq ft
Standard Mills	Prabhadevi	6 lakh sq ft

Source: L. Lachhmandas and Company



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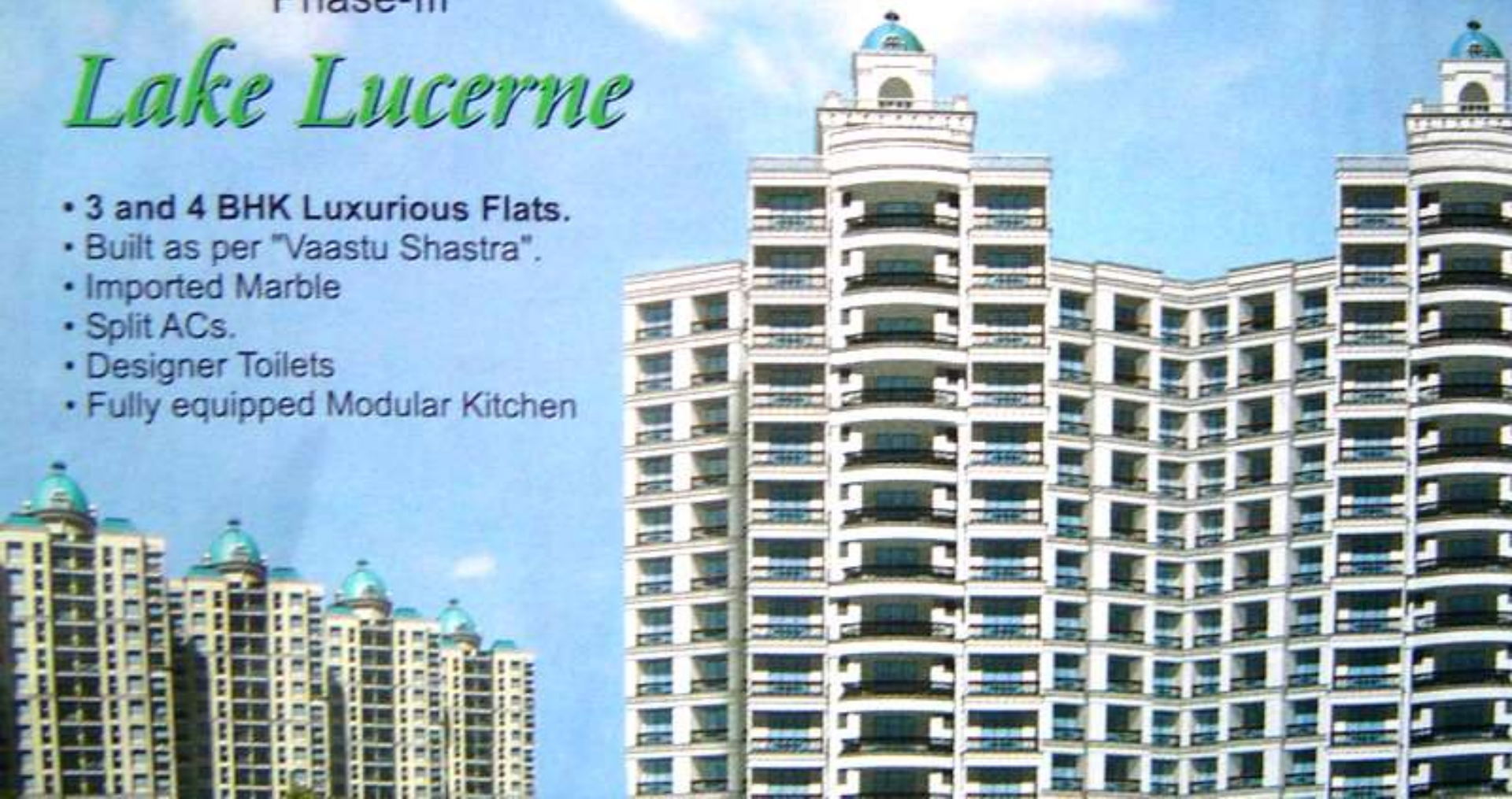
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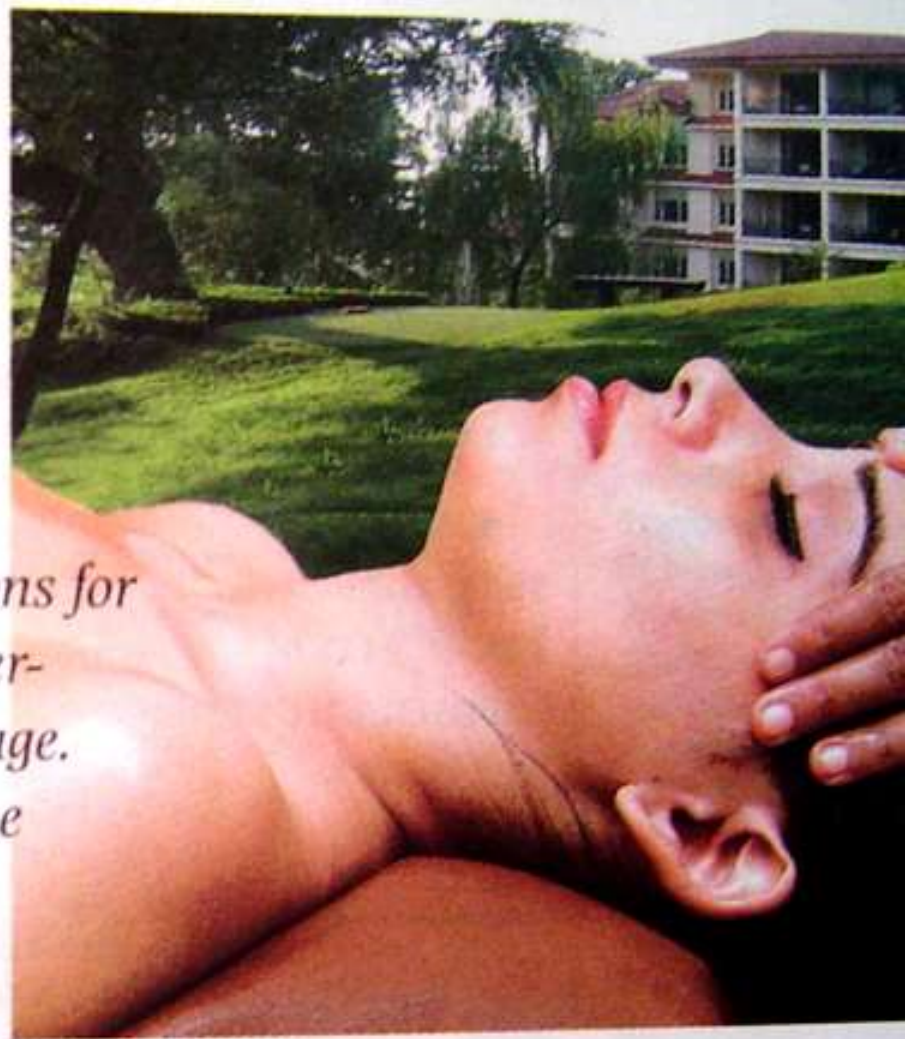
The SPA *India has some hot options for the over-stressed and over-worked. Destination spas are all the rage. So, get ready, light the candle, pack the mud. Nona Walia helps you prepare for the perfect spa holiday*

ANANDA IN THE HIMALAYAS : The *Conde Nast Traveller* has voted it the first runner-up in the category for the Best Overseas Lifestyle Destination Spa 2003. Located 250 km north of Delhi, this spa offers 79 body treatments, integrating ayurveda with the use of

tangerine body wrap, sunburn soother, natural and mud body wrap. **HOW IT WORKS** : The spa embraces the contemporary, holistic and non-clinical tropical garden spa concept. The ayurvedic centre provides treatments including Abhyanga, Sarvangam, Swe-

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The massive deforestation that is on at the national park

■ Kishore Rathod, *Borivali*

SPREAD across an area of 103.09 square kilometres, it is among the world's largest green zones inside an urban area. But thanks to the efforts of the encroaching slum-dwellers, the builder fraternity and a four-decade-long litigation, the size of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj National Park is shrinking by the day.

"Though the actual park area en-

tem of the park is felt across thrice that area due to the abuse of the park forest by the encroachers," says environmental activist Debi Goenka.

Effectively, almost 33 percent of the national park is under threat. And at stake is not only the habitat of the panther, but also the water supply for the 13 million residents of Mumbai city. The city's two main sources of drinking water - the Vi-

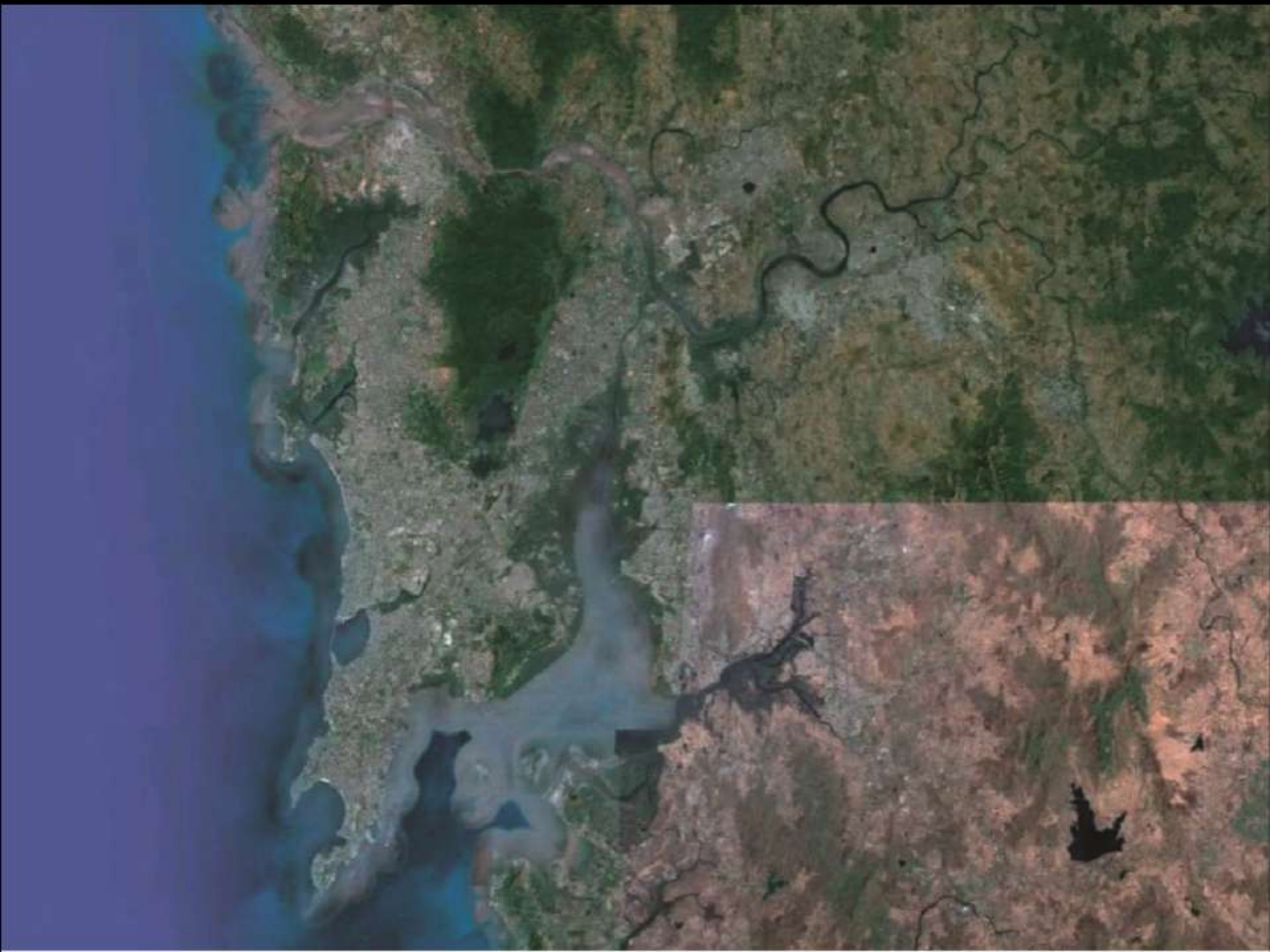


The beautiful Ashoka tree at Chakravarty-As

Say goodbye this tree

— *Chacko, Kandivali*

THE CRISES

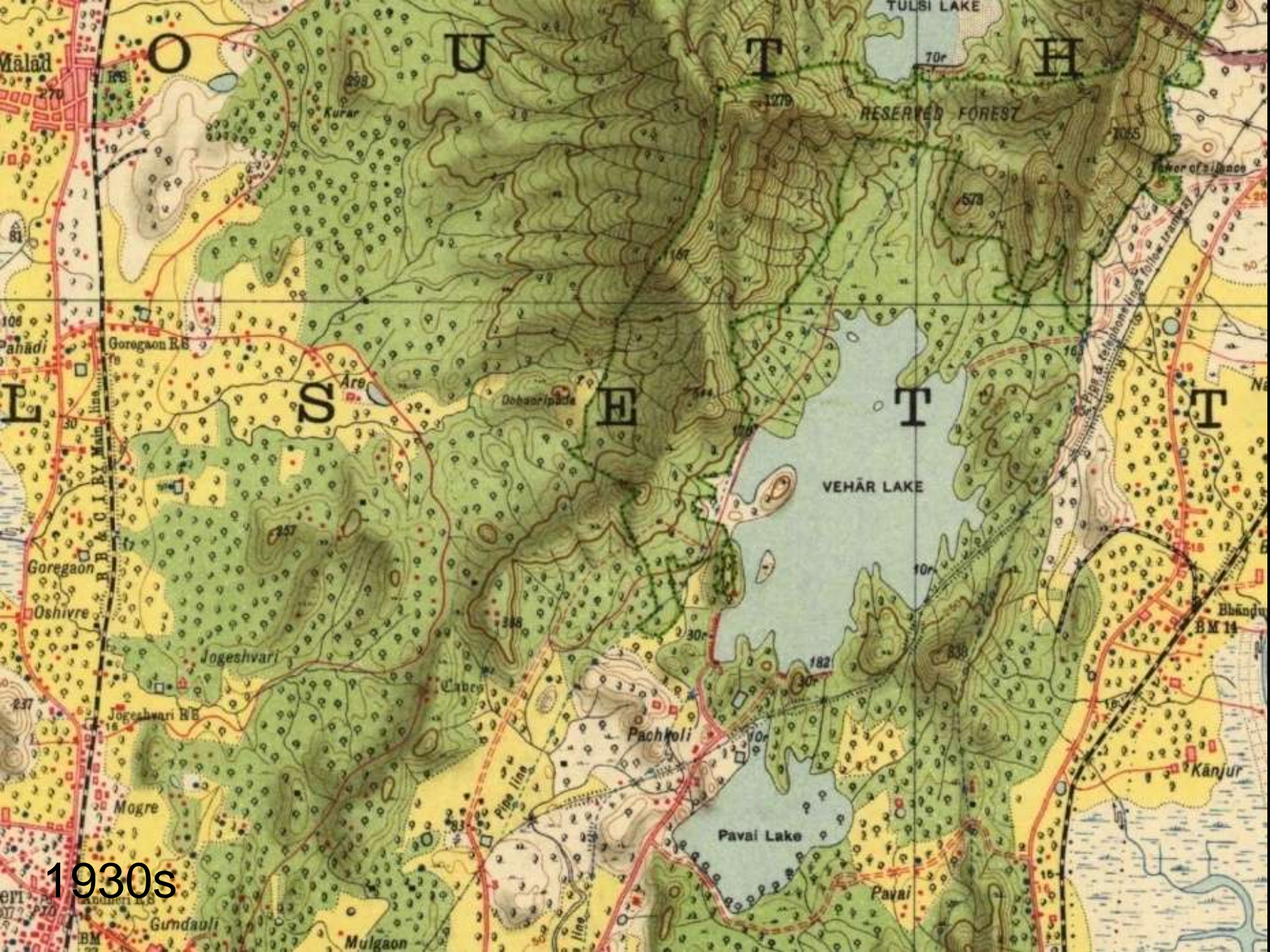


National Park:
103 sq.km





Mumbai:
438 sq.km
About 15m
people



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Arey Colony

PAVAI LAKE

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ADIVASI SETTLEMENT IN SGNP



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MULUND (W)



L-R, RACHANA GARDENS, PANCHSHEEL NAGAR, SGNP, MULUND (W)

Wall-to-wall protection

The only park in the world situated within the municipal boundaries of a major city, the Borivali National Park will now be walled — and fast. **Manoj Nair** takes a close look

AFTER working at a snail's pace on the proposed boundary wall around the Borivali National Park, the state government now says that it will speed up work on the project. The section of the park's boundary along the Aarey Milk Colony in Goregaon is the first priority, the forest department has said. Added A Bharti, deputy conservator of forests, "The boundary along Aarey is most prone to panther incursions. Though there are no encroachments here, most of the attacks have been in this sector," said Bharti.

Money matters

ALTHOUGH there are no details about when the work will begin, it is learnt that funds are not a problem. The state government has received Rs 7.77 crore for the project since 1995 but only Rs 5.2 crore has been used to build a wall 11.85 km in length. The money is yet to be used because though the government has received bids from contractors for the work, the tenders are yet to be awarded.

In shock

BHARTI said that the fence would be topped with solar powered shock producing wires to thwart panthers from venturing outside the park.

Fenced in

A proposal to build a wall around the 103 square kilometre Borivali National Park was first made in 1995. The main purpose of the wall at the time was to keep encroachers out of the park.

The first phase of the proposal envisaged the building of a boundary wall, 22 kilometres in length — mostly along the park's boundary in Kandivli, Malad and Thane. These are the areas that were under most pressure from encroachers. In 1996, just 11.85 kilometres of the 22 kilometres envisaged in the first phase, were completed. The total length of the wall is slated to be 98 kilometres.

Why the delay

THE government says that the wall project has been delayed because of encroachers who had occupied over 200 acres of forestland. It says that the wall could not be constructed without removing the encroachers. But environmentalists say that the government purposely delayed the construction of the wall because it did not want to remove the encroachers, a key vote bank.

Voices

MOST female panthers have cubs, who are completely dependent on their mother for 18 months. If a female is trapped and the cubs are left to fend for themselves, they will not survive.

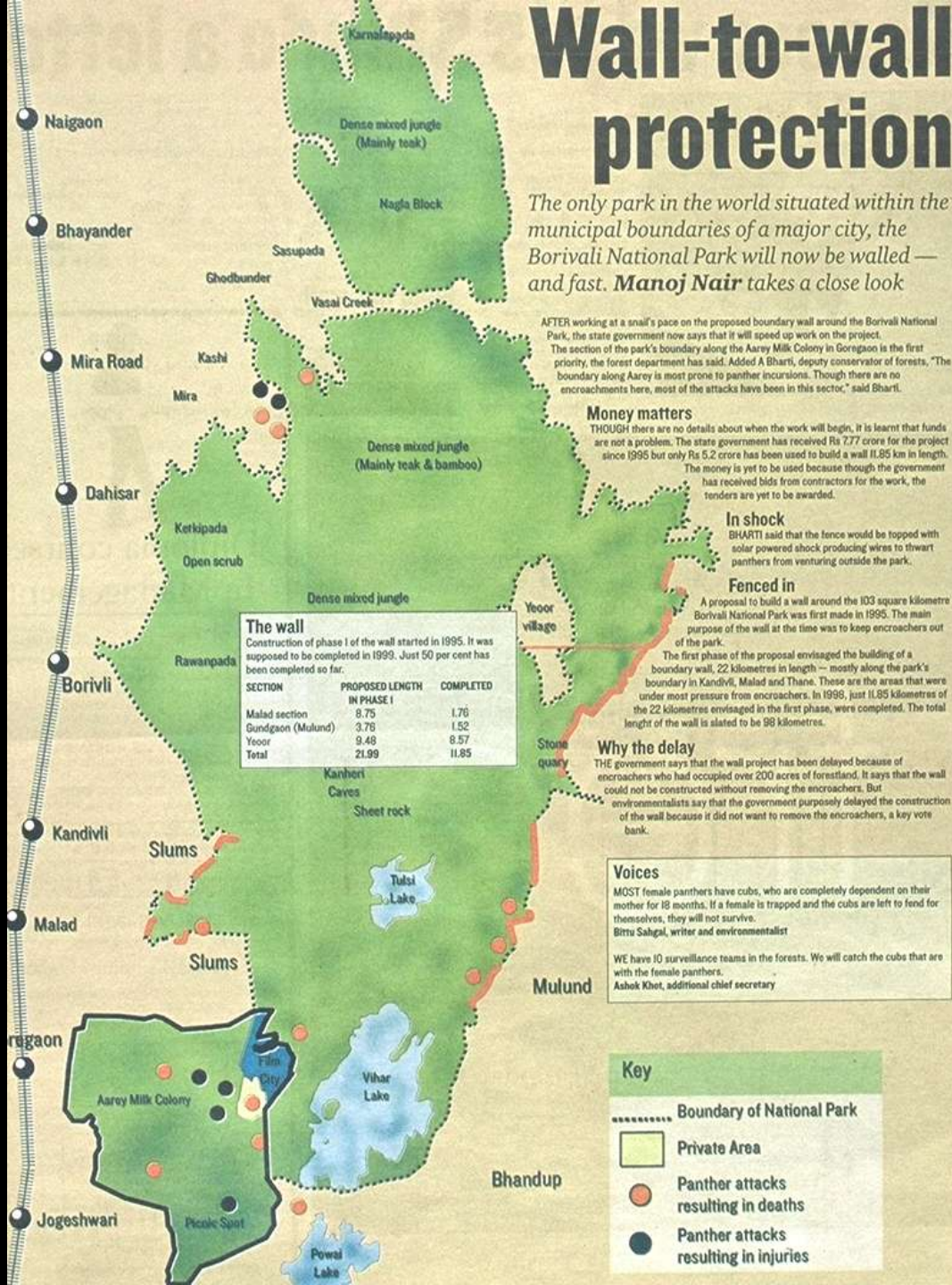
Bitru Sahgal, writer and environmentalist

WE have 10 surveillance teams in the forests. We will catch the cubs that are with the female panthers.

Ashok Khot, additional chief secretary

The wall
Construction of phase I of the wall started in 1995. It was supposed to be completed in 1999. Just 50 per cent has been completed so far.

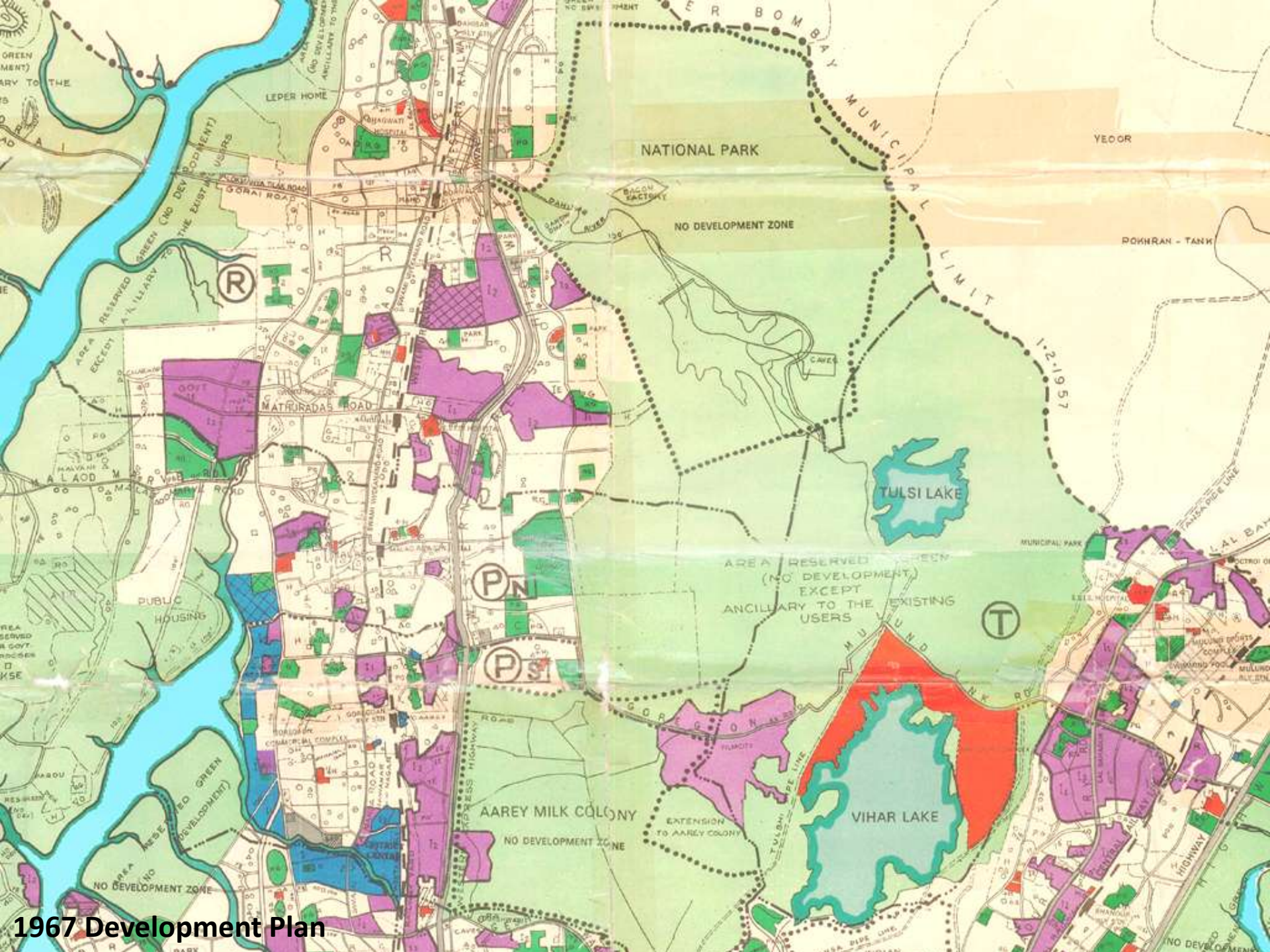
SECTION	PROPOSED LENGTH IN PHASE I	COMPLETED
Malad section	8.75	1.70
Gundgaon (Mulund)	3.76	1.52
Yeoor	9.48	8.57
Total	21.99	11.85



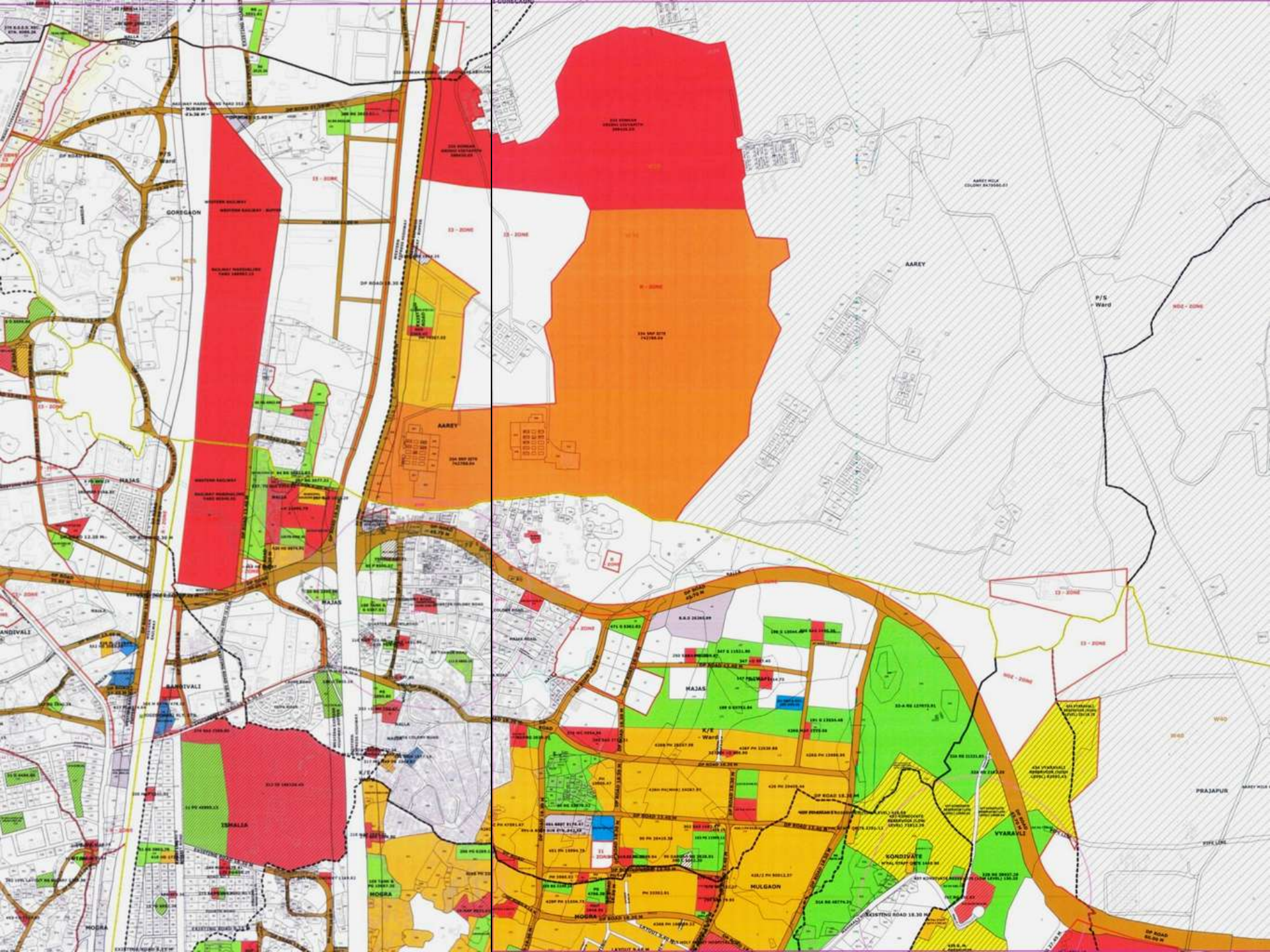
THE PLANNING RESPONSE

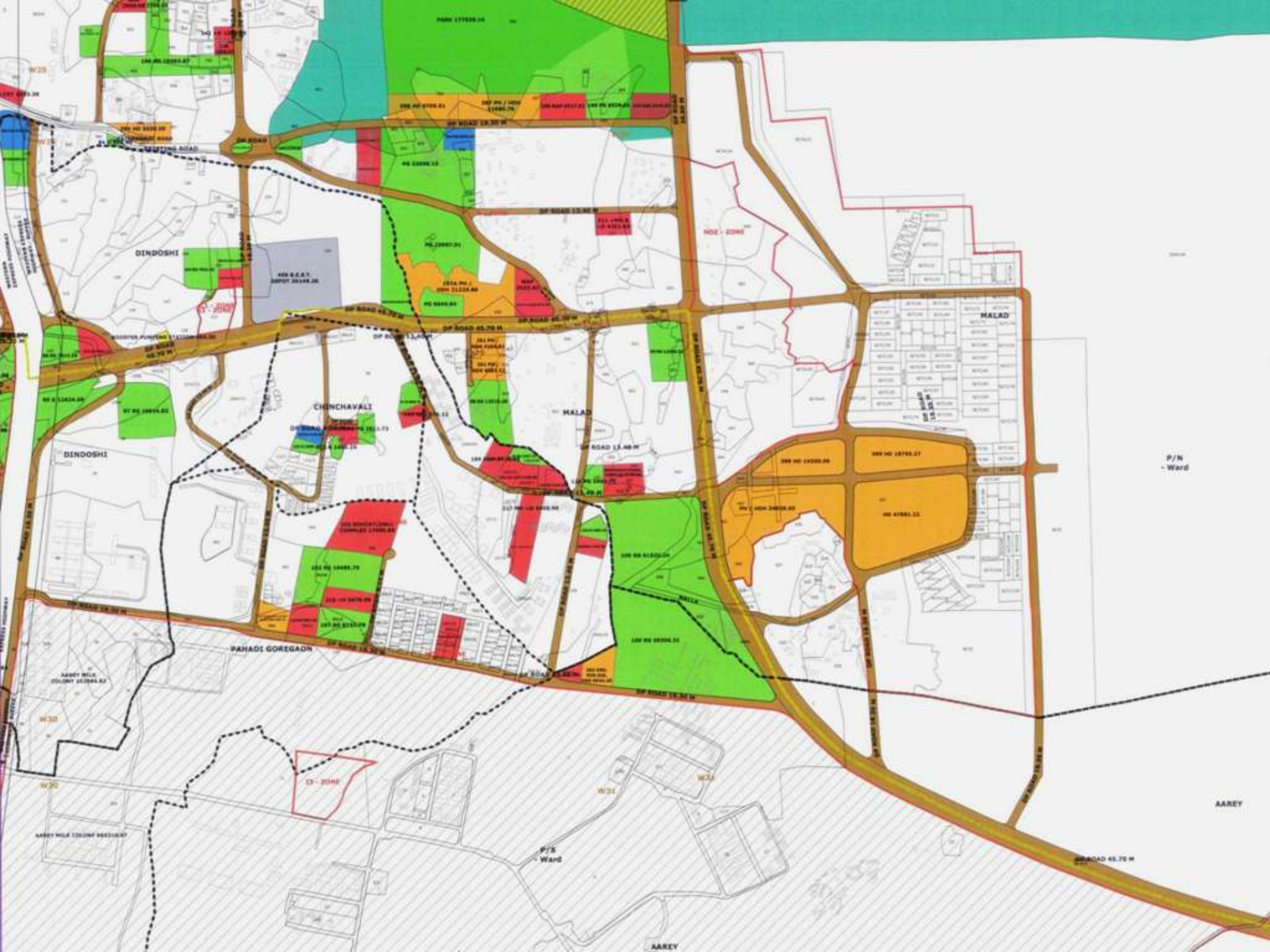
1967 Development Plan



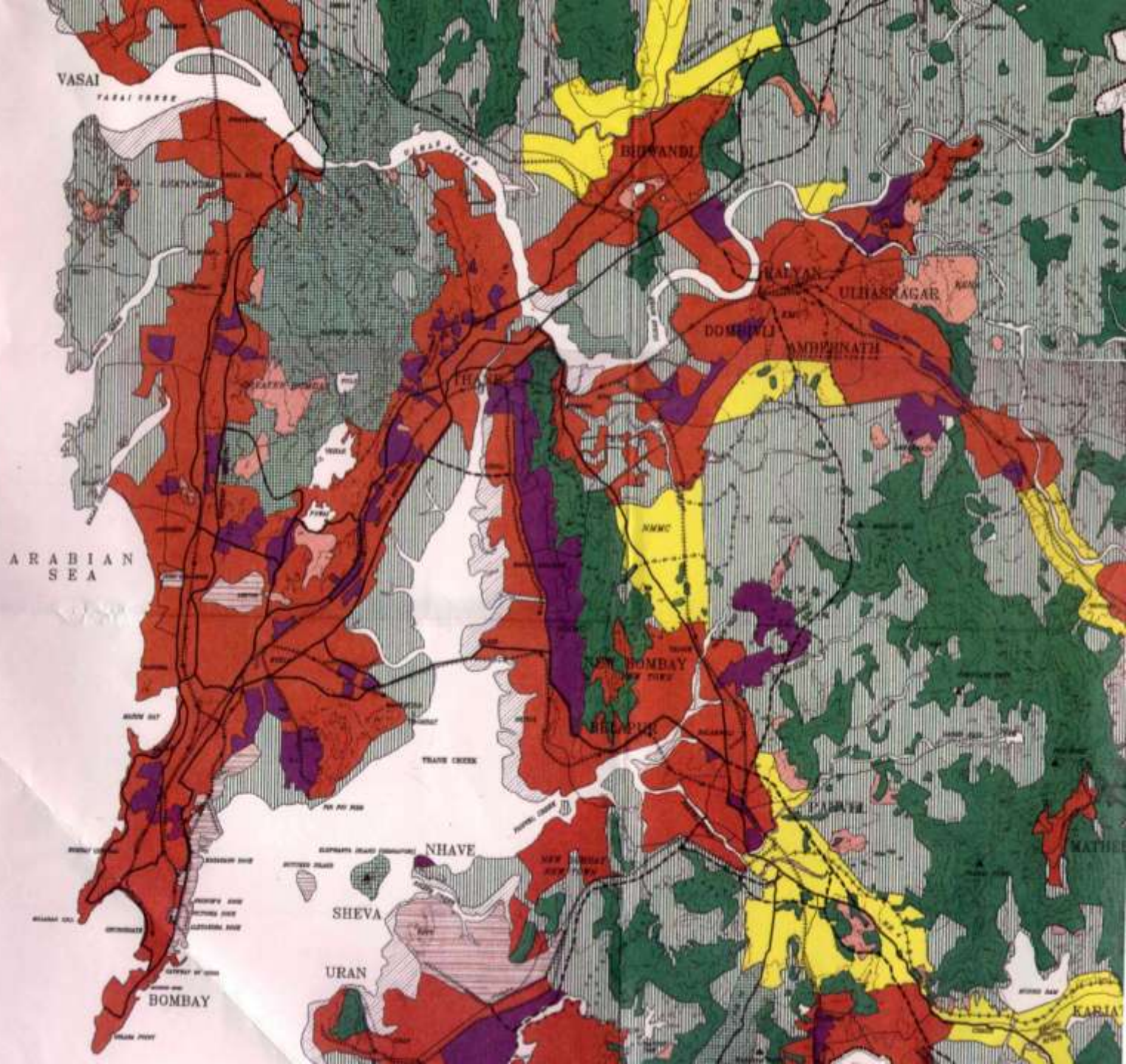


1967 Development Plan





In the regional Plan, demarcation is of a special category – National Park





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The site of the slum rehabilitation project at Chandivali.

Pic: Pradeep Dhivarlt has been touted as the worlds biggest

rehabilitation project at a cost of Rs 500 crore. However, only 5,000

families, who face eviction from the Sanjay Gandhi National Park have signed up for the mega project by the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre (NHWC) at Chandivali.

The proposed township, spread over 85 acres, is coming up on an exhausted quarry site at Chandivali in a joint venture between the Shabana Azmi-backed NHWC, the state government and Sumer Builders under the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme. Architect P K Das, designer of the project, feels interest will pick up as the project progresses. Five thousand families have already signed up for the project, and with the high court order, more have evinced interest. Besides, the site is just 15 minutes from Ghatkopar station and slum dwellers will have to pay just Rs 25,000 for a 225-sq ft apartment in a ground plus four-storey building, he said.

On Monday the Bombay High Court ordered the state government to evict over 70,000 families from the national park within six months. Of these, around 33,000 families pre-1995 slum dwellers are eligible for rehabilitation. With the government rehabilitation project at Kalyan proving to be a no-show, the Chandivali project is now the focus of attention. Environmentalists have been pro-active in protecting the rights of the forests, but no thought has been given to the rehabilitation of the families affected, said architect P K Das, designer of the Chandivali

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Cover Story

The great slum scam

Slum dwellers in collusion with estate agents have been illegally selling rehabilitation flats even before they have been allotted

Bhupen Patel and Akela ★★★★★

Posted On Saturday, May 09, 2009 at 03:08:32 AM

The idea of making Mumbai slum-free will always remain a pipe dream. An undercover operation by Mumbai Mirror revealed that tenements allotted by the government for the rehabilitation of hutment dwellers are now illegally being sold by the beneficiaries.

Over the last few weeks, we found out exactly how slum dwellers - who are part of Asia's largest rehabilitation programme - have illegally been selling their allotments.

In May 2007, the NGO Nivara Hakk Welfare Committee (NHWC), after a highly-publicised 20-year court battle with the state government, received a sanction for the rehabilitation of around 18,000 families living in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park.

Spread across 85 acres, the Chandivali rehabilitation project in Ghatkopar was launched with much fanfare to relocate slum dwellers who lived on the park's borders at Malad, Kandivli and Borivli.



As part of the project, each family had paid Rs 7,000 for a 225-square-foot flat.

While most of the beneficiaries have already been allotted flats under this project, few others hold pautis (receipts) that entitle

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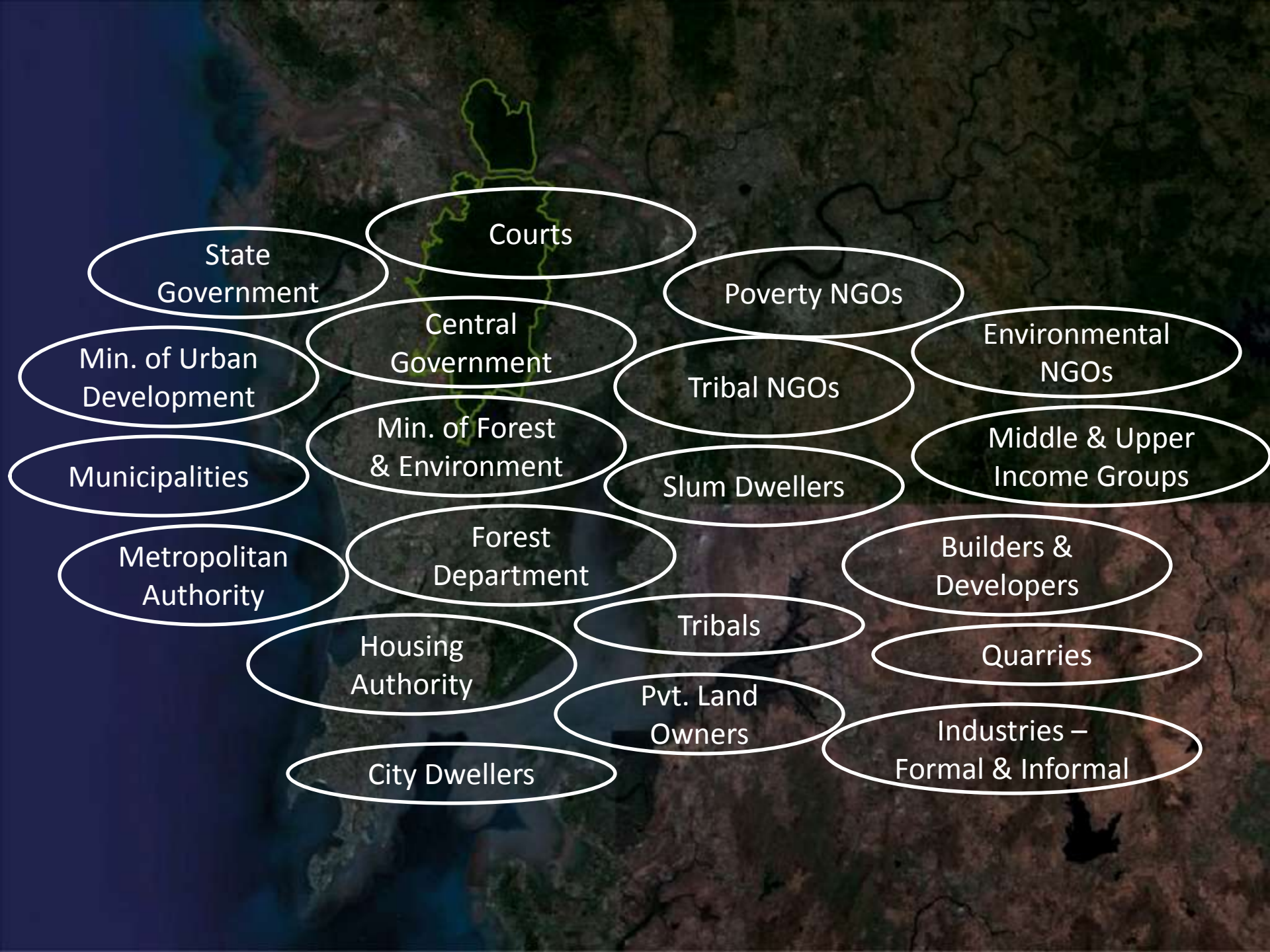
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