

Mahim is a bay, gets nod for SRA scheme

The state coastal zone body has declared the Mahim sea front as a bay and given the go-ahead for a slum redevelopment scheme. P 2

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CRZ body calls Mahim a bay, okays SRA scheme

Pic: Sanjay Hadkar

Decision Can Lead To Coastal Constructions

Clara Lewis | TNN

In what could set a precedent for construction along bays that are like open sea fronts, the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) has given the go-ahead for a slum redevelopment scheme close to the Mahim Bay. The MCZMA took the decision after the Bombay high court directed it to form an opinion on the matter.

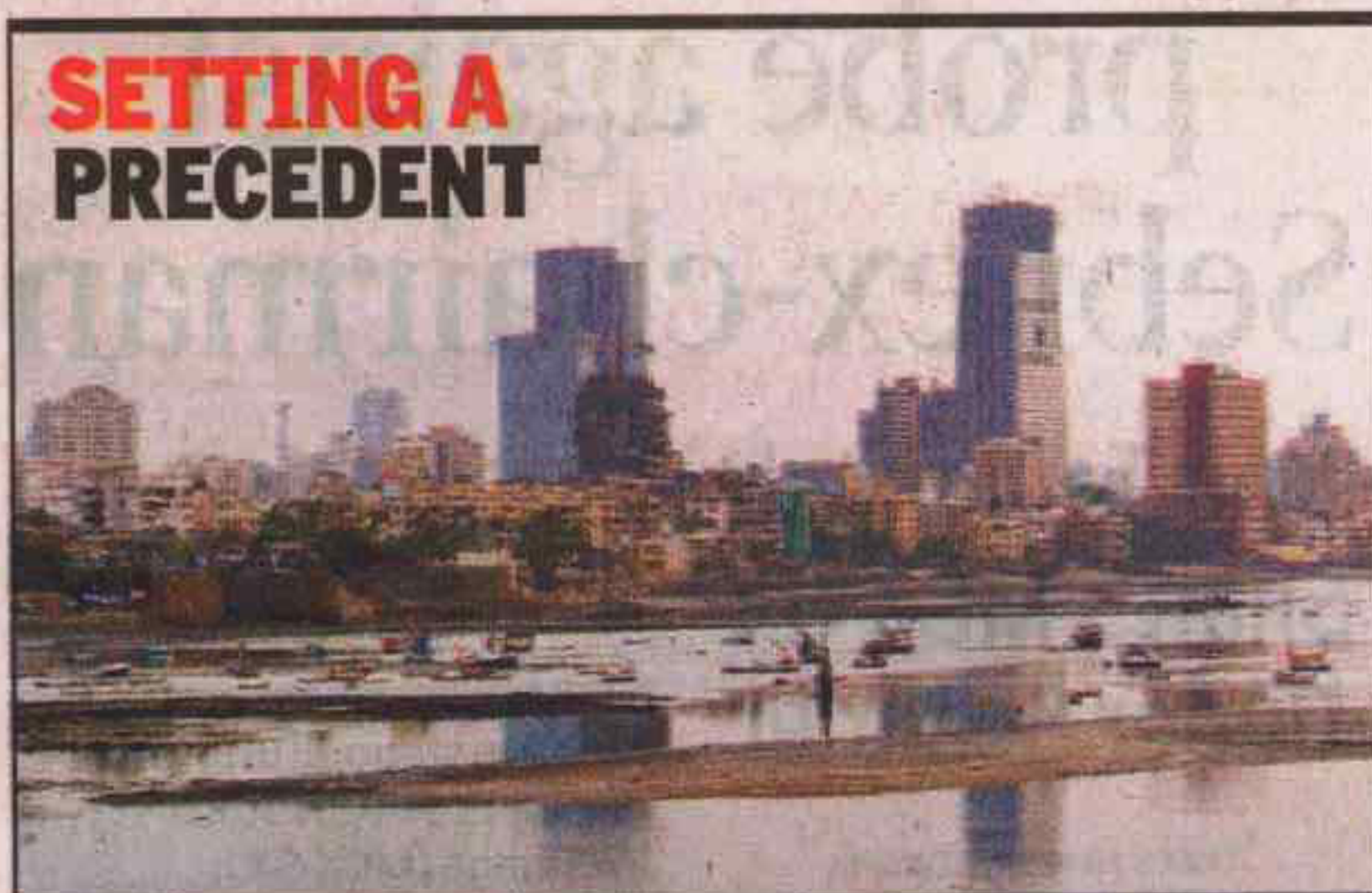
When the proposal for the redevelopment of the M N Koli slum first came up before the MCZMA, it asked the Union environment ministry (MoEF) to define what constituted a bay. The issue was critical, since geomorphologically (geomorphology is the scientific study of landforms and the processes that shape them), large parts of the coast of Maharashtra, Goa and north Karnataka are bays. The 2011 notification reduced the effective protection for these parts to merely 100 metres. As for the country's eastern coastline, all of it is along a bay—the Bay of Bengal.

A bay by definition is a protected cove, but in Maharashtra and large parts of the country, it is often an open shore. Officials said the 1991 CRZ notification stipulated at least 500 metres from the shoreline as CRZ area for both bays and seafronts. The MCZMA's coastal zone management plan was approved by the MoEF in 2000 going by this specification.

The 2011 notification changed it all. So, the MCZMA sought a clarification in the matter as most of the state's coastal area is either along bays or creeks.

The slum redevelopment scheme was submitted in 1984-85 and approved in 1990 as per the Development Control Regulations of 1967. Construction started almost immediately. The project was stalled when the 1991 CRZ notification came into force. First the land got tagged as CRZ-I and then CRZ-II.

As per the 2000 coastal zone plan, Mahim Bay is in



SETTING A PRECEDENT

BUILDING RULES FOR BAY AND OPEN SHORE

The Centre's 2011 CRZ notification, which defines the scope of coastal conservation, stipulates different treatments for bays and seafronts (open shores)

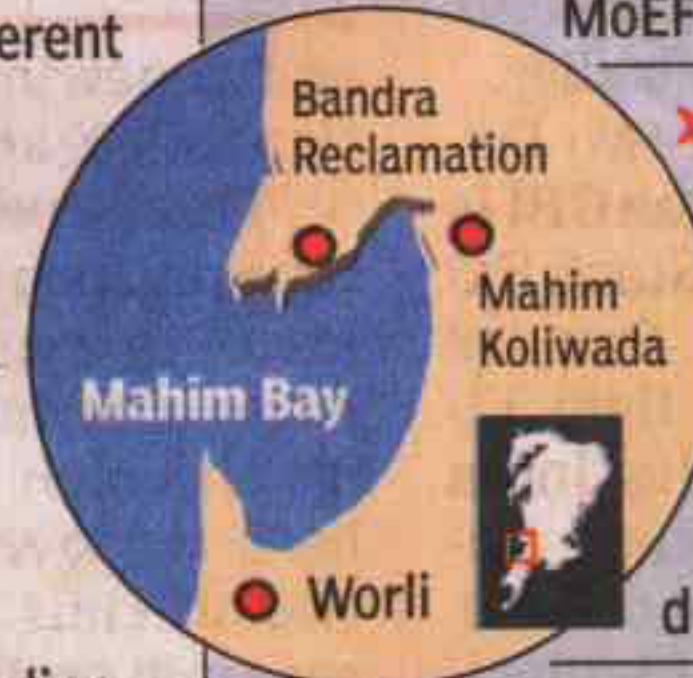
SEAFRONT | Construction prohibited up to 500 metres from high tide line

BAY | No construction up to 100 metres landward or till a distance equalling the bay's width, whichever less

LACK OF CLARITY

Importantly, the notification does not define less-protected bays

Last year, the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) sought the definition of bay from the Union environment ministry. MoEF has not yet replied



The MCZMA had sought the clarification as Mahim Bay is like an open shore and not a protected cove, as a bay is defined

The issue is critical, since large parts of the coast in Maharashtra, Goa and north Karnataka are bays. The notification reduces effective protection in these areas to a mere 100 metres. Of course, the country's eastern coast sits by a bay—the Bay of Bengal

SRA PROJECT

REDEVELOPMENT OF M N KOLI SLUM

PLOT
43,740 sq ft

SLUM-DWELLERS TO BE REHABILITATED
348

FREE SALE COMPONENT
Residential building. Details not ready



The developer, weeks

Deepak Rao, proprietor of Accanoor Associates, sought the HC's intervention to approve the project as the distance would be 200 metres from Mahim Bay

In November, the court directed the MCZMA to decide on the matter within 12

This week, the MCZMA informed the high court that the waterbody at Mahim is a bay. It based this on a clarification from the National Hydrographic Office, Dehradun, that Mahim Bay is depicted as a bay on official navigational charts

front of the slum plot; on the side is a creek. The distance of the plot from the bay and the creek is over 200 metres.

After the 2011 CRZ notification, the plot's developer, Deepak Rao of Accanoor Associates, moved court, claiming the water body at Mahim to be a bay. He asked for a 100-metre CRZ line to be demarcated as per the notifi-

cation. He also argued that since the plot was beyond the 100-metre line, it was out of CRZ purview.

Accanoor's director (operations) Mohammed Raza said the firm would approach the Slum Rehabilitation Authority for further approvals. "We plan to build two buildings, one rehab and the other for sale."