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Mhada to build 2 lakh houses

Yogesh Naik | TNN

Mumbai: It has constructed 2.5 lakh houses since its inception in 1949. Now, the state-owned Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (Mhada) plans to build nearly 2 lakh houses for middle and lower income groups in Mumbai and surrounding areas in the next 4-5 years.

"These days, most builders are constructing houses for the upper middle class and the rich. The needs of lower income groups and the middle class are not looked after. The middle class cannot stay in slums and neither can they afford the high rates," said Mhada vice-president T Chandrashekar. "We are planning

to construct 2 lakh houses in Mumbai and adjacent areas for the middle and lower classes in the next 4-5 years. Mhada has started looking for land in Mumbai, Thane, Kalyan, Ambernath, Badlapur, Vasai, Virar and Panvel."

Recent studies by Mhada have shown that there is a demand for 5 lakh houses for the middle and lower classes in Mumbai. The agency had constructed most of its colonies in the 1960s and 70s. Over the years, its land bank has dried up. Mhada has just 75 acres of land left in Mumbai. Many of its plots have been encroached upon and there are slums on 70 pockets of the agency's land.

Now, the state-owned cor-

The city's private builders welcomed the state-run agency's decision to build 2 lakh houses for those in the lower and middle income groups

poration has asked the government to hand over land acquired under the Urban Land Ceiling Act, 1976, to Mhada.

"Over the last few months, the state government has acquired over 400 acres of land in Mumbai and 580 acres in Thane city and district. The government had started the ULC for mass housing. We

will ask those concerned to hand over the land to us," said a Mhada official.

Mhada has enough land in Thane and Raigad—around 177.5 acres in the two districts—to build houses.

Private builders seemed happy with the plan. "The idea of setting up Mhada was to cater to the needs of the middle and lower middle classes. But in the last few years, Mhada did not construct enough houses. Now, they seem to have woken up to the reality," said builder Niranjan Hiranandani.

Anil Agarwal of RNA (AA) Constructions, said, "We need flats for all classes. I support Mhada in this move."