

The Times of India, Mumbai, 05 Apr 2008

2000 cut-off will help 30k Dharavi families

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The state government has got the Supreme Court's nod to extend the cut-off date for the rehabilitation of Dharavi's slum dwellers to 2000.

Appearing for Maharashtra, solicitor general G E Vahanvati told the court that 87,000 families were to be rehabilitated through the scheme, for which global tenders had been floated and bids received. The bids, he said, were to be opened on April 28 and it would create confusion if the bidders were not sure how many families were to be taken care of.

Vahanvati said if the January 1, 1995 cut-off date was to be taken, only 57,000 families would qualify for rehabilitation, leaving 30,000 families out of the purview of the scheme.

Under the amended Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act, all slums which were in existence before January 1, 2000 would be eli-

NO CHANGE IN PLAN'

Mukesh Mehta, the architect of the Dharavi redevelopment scheme, welcomed the Supreme Court decision to extend the cut-off date for rehab of Dharavi slums from 1995 to 2000. "We had planned the project keeping in mind all the structures in the slums. So, extension of the cut-off date does not affect our planning as every hutment has been accounted for," he said. Asked if bids inviting developers will need to be altered due to new rehab deadline, Mehta replied in the negative. "Our planning unit will take care of that. No need to re-tender," he said. But expert Chandrashekhar Prabhu said the bids will have to be called anew as the number of people will go up.)

gible for protection and could be redeveloped into authorised tenements.

With Friday's order, the Vilasrao Deshmukh government is free to go by its decision to extend the cut-off date to 2000.