

## **Sabarmati River Front Development Project**

### **Why in news?**

Recently Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation set aside Rs 1,050 crore for the phase-2 of the Sabarmati River Front Development project (SRFD).

### **How much land has been reclaimed for the development?**

- In the first phase of the project, 204 hectares have been reclaimed along the 11-km stretch of the Sabarmati Riverfront.
- This land excludes the Central Business District (CBD) area of 126 hectares and the reclaimed land includes road and the land to be developed.
- The main considerations in allocating the reclaimed land are the use of existing land along the river, location and configuration of land available, its potential for development.
- The development will witness pedestrian-friendly roads by requiring buildings to align with the road side.

### **How will Sabarmati Riverfront Development (SRFD) act as a catalyst for the CBD?**

- The SRFD offers incentive of a higher (three times more) Floor Space Index (FSI) that will change the skyline of the city.
- The plots under SRFD phase 1 will permit buildings from 6 to 22 floors that will offer a total of 16.4 lakh square metre of saleable area in phases.
- But the permissible height of buildings in the CBD would depend upon the road width.
- The Local Area Plan proposes to revive this central area by leveraging citywide connectivity through Bus rapid Transit System, proposed Metro and the development of the SRFD.
- Further, with increased street connectivity, the public transportation coverage is expected to double from the existing 25%.
- The green cover will also be doubled from 20 % to 40%.

### **Which part of the Riverfront is the Central Business District?**

- The 5-6 km stretch along Ashram Road from Usmanpura to Ellis bridge on the west bank and the east bank from Gandhi bridge to Dadhichi bridge will become new commercial hub.

- Out of the 204 hectares reclaimed land, 85 % will be for public amenities and 14% will be for commercial development which will be done through auctioning.
- The project will be self-financing in nature where the resources are recovered through the portion of the reclaimed land which then will be sold for commercial development.
- The private development on the riverfront will be in harmonious with environment.

### **How far the phase 1 fared in terms of commercial development from private players?**

- In May 2017, the tenders were floated for only two plots but they were withdrawn because the market was low due to demonetisation.
- There were also fears of flooding in the event of heavy rains but SRFDCL claims the project will sustain flood levels of 4.75 lac cusecs without spillage into the city.
- For the phase 2, the response from the Expression of Interest was positive and monetising the land would depend upon existing real estate market.

### **How will the Sabarmati be different from riverfronts abroad (Austin, Singapore, S Korea)?**

- Sabarmati being a rain-fed river which dries for most of the year hence the banks provide huge canvas to developers.
- The river front has spaces for the traditional activities - dhobi ghat and Gujri bazaar -which are lifelines for hundreds of city dwellers.
- To keep the river along the riverfront flowing with water, the Gujarat government feeds it waters of the Narmada river.
- The government is also working on a more sustainable alternative to divert the treated sewage from the treatment plants into the Sabarmati river.

**Source: The Indian Express**