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DDA goes ahead with Kathputli Colony plan

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NEW DELHI, 24/02/2014: (To go with Sowmiyaâs story): Residents of Kathputli Colony shout slogans during a dharna at Kathputli Colony, Shadipur Depot in West Delhi on Monday, demand justice and land rights. February 24, 2014. Photo: Shiv Kumar Pushpakar.

Despite protests by the residents of Kathputli Colony against their eviction and being shifted to a transit camp at Anand Parbat, the Delhi Development Authority on Monday decided to go ahead with the same for redevelopment of the colony.

The issue was discussed at the DDA Board meeting chaired by Lieutenant-Governor



of the upper floors in the slum cluster who figured in the survey list of 2010-2011 for allotment and getting accommodated in transit camp.

The DDA also decided to consider those residents whose names were not found in the survey list but who could prove that they had been living in the Kathputli Colony prior to the date of closure of the survey and had documents to support their claims. “The developer has also been permitted to utilise unused FAR to construct more flats for the purpose, if required,” a DDA statement said.

The L-G has also reportedly directed the DDA officials to ensure that shifting is done amicably causing no inconvenience to the residents. He also directed them to ensure sufficient back-up services, as required in multi-storey buildings, were provided in all the flats at Kathputli Colony.

Even as the L-G directed the eviction, the residents protested against the order and demanded plots instead of *in-situ* development. The residents’ representatives, who met Mr. Jung after the Delhi High Court refused to stay the eviction process on Monday, also claimed that he assured them that nobody would be evicted till the end of next month.

“The residents are against moving into multi-storeyed buildings and are demanding plots in the colony itself. We had put forth two alternative proposals before the L-G. The DDA could allot us plots at the Kathputli Colony, or else at a vacant land close by. Plots can be allotted even in the transit camp land,” said Dunu Roy, the Hazard Centre director, who met the L-G on behalf of the residents.

“While the L-G assured us that nobody would be evicted till March 31, he asked us to come up with a proposal that is within the legal framework, and which is acceptable to all the residents of the colony,” he added.

Earlier, a group of residents moved the Delhi High Court submitting that they were ready to pay the land costs equal to the amount paid by the Raheja Builders – the real estate firm roped in by the DDA for *in-situ* development at the colony. The total land involved is 5.2 hectares, of which 0.97 hectare has been given to the Rahejas to construct apartments to be sold at the market rate. The developer would construct flats



According to the lawyer of the petitioners Bhule Bisre Kalalakar Co-operative Industrial Production Society Limited, Sarin Naved, the matter was adjourned for March 11 without any interim order on staying the eviction process. The petitioners alleged that the DDA did not carry out a proper survey. Several beneficiaries of the re-development plan have been left out of the scheme. While the actual number of property owners is 3,200, the residents claimed that the agency planned to allot flats to 2,754 families only.

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