

# Living life pint size: Tiny doesn't equal boring for flat purchasers

Mohua.Das@timesgroup.com

Pics: Uma Kadam

Mumbai: Most of the buyers of the nano apartments that are currently on offer in the city are young professionals or those who earn a moderate income.

TOI mapped five out of the 59 tiniest residences currently under construction in the city. The smallest measures 189 sq ft and the largest not more than 320, which is close to the minimum size guaranteed even under the SRA scheme. The cheapest ones cost Rs 53 lakh. A furnished unit starts at Rs 61 lakh for 189 sq ft and a larger, unfurnished flat costs Rs 86 lakh for 309 sq ft. Not outrageous by Mumbai standards, where anything under Rs 1 crore feels like a steal, but high considering the size.

At the six-tower, 2,500-unit project coming up alongside the Eastern Express Highway dubbed Chembur Central, a walk from one end of the 189 sq ft apartment to the other will take you about five seconds. But the design is surprisingly functional, with a space-saving folding murphy bed, a wall panel that can be raised to a desk or extended to a dining table, a step ladder that allows one to reach the loft and ceiling-high cupboards.

Oversized windows, higher-than-usual ceilings and mirrors on the wall create an illusion of space. If the sample flats are anything to go by, tiny does not equal boring. If the apartments at Ruparel Optima in Kandivli are android-enabled, letting you control the coffee maker to the fan, Aarambh in Malad comes with a mezzanine loft that can double up as a study while some of the bedrooms in Chembur Central rest on a platform with a pull-out bed underneath. Swish interiors, pretty tiles, wooden flooring, and modern bath fittings add to the appeal.

But there are compromises. The bathroom would fit on an aircraft. The bed or ladder, if not raised back into the space. Putting them away

## MAXIMUM CITY MICRO SPACE

LOCATION-WISE NUMBER OF PROJECTS OFFERING APARTMENTS <325 SQ FT IN CENTRAL & WESTERN SUBURBS

Location	No. of projects
Malad (W)	13
Andheri (E)	8
Andheri (W)	7
Bhandup (W)	7
Malad (E)	7
Chembur (E)	5
Kandivli (W)	5
Mulund (W)	5
Ghatkopar (E)	2

Source: Lias Foras

### PRICE RANGE

₹53 lakh for an unfurnished 189 sq ft flat and ₹97 lakh for a furnished 309 sq ft flat in Chembur; ₹66 lakh for a 320 sq ft furnished flat in Kandivli; ₹60 lakh for a furnished 247 sq ft flat in Malad



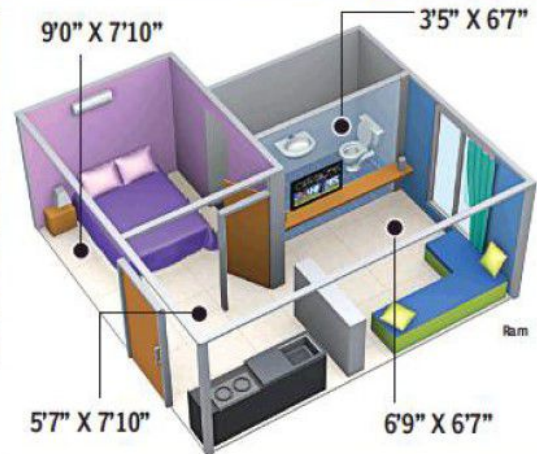
**COMPRISES** One bedroom, a living room, a kitchenette, a bathroom and storage space

### SIZE RANGE

189 sq ft to 320 sq ft



(Clockwise from top) Shraavan Gupta & his family, who currently live in a slum, at their 247sq ft show flat in Malad; Mahek Bhatt, 25 at her 320 sq ft flat in Kandivli; floor plan for the 189 sq ft flat in Chembur



CARPET AREA 189 sq ft | 1754 sq m

will get you your upper body workout every day. In case it starts to feel a little claustrophobic, the much-touted "in-house amenities" such as swimming pools, gyms, cafes, game rooms, yoga studios, gardens, and even a social club, are meant to make up for the lack of actual apartment space.

These capsule-sized living units, which are known to be common in Japan, Hong Kong, New York and London, are no affordable housing utopia either.

Ramesh Nair, CEO and country head of real estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle, says, "Micro apartments have started to see traction in Mumbai with ma-

“Developers are coming up with projects that address the residential needs of moderate-income buyers (annual income of Rs 10 lakh and below). Compact houses are budget-friendly, easy to rent and have quick turnaround in terms of sales. Their central location with good connectivity and easy access make them a draw. Under the current policy regime, these also come with fiscal benefits.”

**Tanvi Goyal** | LIASES FORAS, A REAL ESTATE RATING AND RESEARCH FIRM

ny large and mid-sized players looking at creating such projects that help them make money faster." Tanvi Goyal of Lias Foras, a real estate rating and research firm, says that the central location with good connectivity and easy access is what make these apartments a big draw. She explains why developers are coming up with projects that

address the residential needs of moderate-income buyers (annual income of Rs 10 lakh and below). "Compact houses are budget-friendly, easy to rent and have quick turnaround in terms of sales. Under the current policy regime, these also come with fiscal benefits," says Goyal.

For Pramod Tarware, 29 who is selling off his 400 sq ft

apartment in Naigaon to live in a 247 sq ft flat he has recently booked at Aarambh, it was about the coveted "Mumbai pin code".

Downsizing from a 500 sq ft shared apartment to a 320 sq ft furnished home at Optima wasn't an issue for Meghna, 25, either. Having given away large chunks of her salary in rent after she moved from Meghalaya to Mumbai on work, Meghna is thrilled to have a house of her own where she can entertain friends, live close to her workplace, and stay in shape at the in-house fitness centre. "I can pay off my loan with my rent money now and build my own library too!" Meghna says.