

Preface

The present Report contains the findings of the examination by audit of the Adarsh Co-operative Housing Society. The Report emanates from the scrutiny of files and documents pertaining to the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Defence Estates and Local Military Authorities of Mumbai and Departments and Agencies of Government of Maharashtra. Audit is neither equipped nor empowered to investigate from a criminal or forensic point of view.

The episode of Adarsh Co-operative Housing Society reveals how a group of select officials, placed in key posts, could subvert rules and regulations in order to grab prime government land- a public property- for personal benefit. They resorted to falsification of records, suppression of facts, ruse of welfare of servicemen and their widows and children, flouting of acts and rules. The case is particularly alarming as individuals across the governance system at many levels have participated in this deceit and benefitted from it. These public servants have been trusted by public to safeguard its interests but there is enough evidence that they betrayed the fiduciary trust and acted against all norms of public interest and probity. The entire process of allocation of land to the Society, obtaining no objection from the Army, obtaining modification to the MMRDA development plan, getting an NOC for residential development in Coastal Regulation Zone, obtaining NOC from BEST for transfer of developmental rights of the adjoining land, getting additional Floor Space Index, raising height of the building was riddled with instances of decisions being taken by those who exploited their official capacity for personal benefit.

The episode poses serious questions of probity, integrity and ethics in public life and among public servants, which need to be addressed by the Polity. It displays failure at all levels of governance. The Report has been prepared for submission to the President under Article 151 of the Constitution.