

Center for introspection & enlightenment

www.ci-e.com

email rk@ci-e.com

TIMES OF INDIA- September 12th, 2009 – Housing for slumdweller

62 million slumdweller, but India will be slum free: Selja

Vote 0 62 million slumdweller, but India will be slum free: Selja Ians September 12th, 2009

NEW DELHI – India has a whopping 62 million slumdweller but it aims to be free of shanties through a slew of schemes such as earmarking of 20 percent of developed land in all housing projects for this category, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Minister Kumari Selja said here Saturday. “When our government first came to power in 2004, we had set out as our priority to cater to the needs of the urban poor. I am satisfied that states have now recognised that they need to plan for them,” Selja said while listing out the achievements of the ministry in the last 100 days. “It is in the interest of all that the country is slum free.” “We will fail them if we don’t plan for them. Earlier there was no planning, that’s why slums came up without water or proper sanitation,” she told reporters here. With the aim of moving towards slum free status, she said they have launched the Rajiv Awas Yojna that aims to provide incentives to states that want to make their cities slum free. Under the scheme, slum dwellers will be given property rights. “We have received clearance from the Planning Commission recently on this,” the minister said. According to a 2001 survey, there are 62 million slumdweller in India, she said. Selja, who also holds the tourism ministry portfolio, said about 16 states have issued directives to reserve more than 20 percent of developed land in both public and private housing projects for the urban poor. She said 500,000 houses for slumdweller are in the process of completion. “About 48 cities in 21 states have undertaken earmarking of funds for the urban poor in their cities,” she said. Highlighting the ministry’s achievements, she said the Planning Commission has enhanced their allocation by Rs.5,043 crore. The ministry has also launched a new scheme of affordable housing in partnership, with an outlay of Rs.5,000 crore for construction of one million houses for the economically weaker sections. The scheme, part of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), aims at partnership between various agencies. The JNNURM, which was launched in 2005, aims to address the infrastructure shortage and basic amenities of the urban poor living in slums in urban areas. “I can say we have achieved some success in moving towards our goal. But we have much more to do. We have a long way to go,” she said