



## Residential colony for elderly in US

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Posted online: Jan 25, 2009 at 2300 hrs

**Pune :** This could be the ultimate dream of young non-resident Indians (NRIs) who have been worrying about the welfare of their parents but not in a position keep them in their US homes. Brihan Maharashtra Mandal (BMM) is planning a residential colony for senior citizens in the US on the lines on Paranjpe Schemes Athashri project in Pune.

The locations being considered for such homes are California, Florida, New Jersey and North Carolina. The US has around three million NRIs.

A final shape to the project is expected to emerge at the four-day annual convention of BMM slated in Philadelphia during the first week of July.

Says Girish Thakar, president of BMM: "These four cities have the best climate in the US. I expect around 200-250 NRIs and investors to turn up for the Philadelphia meet."

"The project will initially be implemented on pilot basis with about 150-200 apartments. It is expected to cost about Rs 1.5-2 crore per apartment, including the amenities," he said.

Thakar admits it would be more expensive than keeping the parents of NRIs in India, but said, "The cost will further come down once the project is implemented on a large scale. Moreover, I do not think that NRIs will hang on to the cost part if it means their parents will be able to stay near them, in the US."

Surabhi Abhyankar, who stays in Toronto, said: "It will be a double bonanza if we can get our parents to the US. Though they keep coming for short visits, I find it risky to leave them alone at my home in Toronto. I would rather keep them in Pune. However, if a project like Athashri that promises amenities for senior citizens comes up in the US, I would be happy."

But there were those who looked at the concept with some scepticism. Suryakant Warik, a former NRI based in US and presently a resident of Athashri, expressed doubts about the quality of the US project. "I would not like to shift though both of my daughters are staying there. I am not sure whether they will be able to maintain the standard as they are promising. My experience tells me that people forget their promises when money comes into picture," he said.

Meena Tirodkar, another resident of Athashri, also rejected the idea of shifting to a similar project in the US. "My husband Atmaram and I had been to Germany and the US. However, I am comfortable in India and would like to stay here," she said.