

# Soon, helipads on highrises

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HOPING TO build another line of defence against 26/11-like terror attacks and to help during natural disasters, the Union Environment Ministry is amending norms on constructions near the coast to allow helipads on skyscrapers.

On November 26, 2008, the 10 terrorists came to Mumbai via the sea.

The ministry will amend the Coastal Zone Regulation (CRZ), 1991 - rules that govern development in coastal areas - to allow the helipads, provided the structure meets the necessary requirements.

However, helipads for commercial purposes will not be allowed and directions have been issued to ensure that noise levels are within prescribed limits. Government agencies will need permission from local communities before constructing the helipads. The amended rules will also not allow any residents to be relocated.

With the amended CRZ-II, under which cities like Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram fall, the police would be able to have 24x7 aerial surveillance — a third line of defence along the coast. The other two lines of coastal security are the navy and coast guard.

“We decided to alter the regulations after we got a large number of proposals for helipads in coastal areas for security and to tackle natural disasters,” said AV Senthil, additional director, Environment Ministry.

In other parts of coastal India, the ministry will allow helipads as well as other temporary structures for security



## FOR SAFETY

- Helipads on highrises will act as line of defence against 26/11-like terror attacks. These will also be utilised during natural disasters
- Helipads will not be allowed for commercial purposes and directions have been issued to ensure that noise levels are within prescribed limits.
- For such helipads, the Union Environment Ministry will have to amend the Coastal Zone Regulation (CRZ), 1991

and for rescue and relief operations during emergencies like cyclones.

The notification, issued last week, said respective states' Coastal Management Authorities would clear helipads costing less than Rs 5 crore. Environment Ministry clearance would be required for those costing more.