

In a first-of-its-kind commercial transit, a Rs20-crore arcade in SoBo will have 200 shops

Bhendi Bazaar revamp starts rolling

dna correspondent @dna

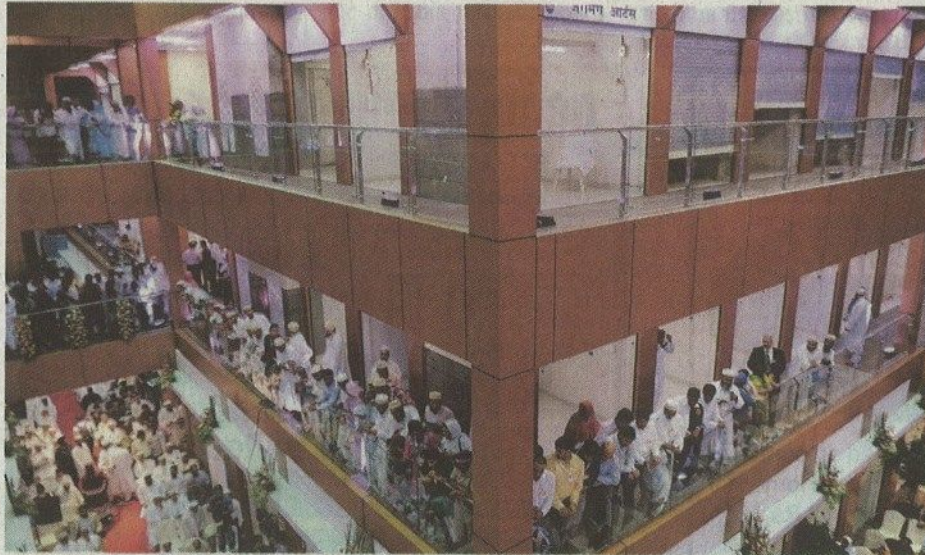
A newly built arcade with 200 commercial units providing basic electricity is another step to make Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment a reality.

In a bid to boost the project, the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT) — which is overseeing the Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment — inaugurated a temporary commercial transit camp on Thursday.

Mufaddal Shopping Arcade was opened in Noor Baug opposite JJ Hospital around 500 metres from the actual commercial units. Built within 90 days with a promise that it will be a “stable and secure structure”, the Rs20-crore arcade aims to give space to the commercial structures of cluster 1 and 3, which will go in for redevelopment first.

The structures in clusters 1 and 3 have 299 commercial units. “Around 60 shops have been allotted. We have given the commercial unit owners two options — either to shift in the transit or opt for rent,” said Shaikh Abdealibhai Bhanpurawala, secretary of the SBUT.

The SBUT officials are hopeful that at least 50% peo-



The first transit shopping complex, Mufaddal Arcade, is designed to temporarily house 200 shops that are part of the Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment project — Rajendra Gawankar/ dna

ple will opt for transit while the rest may go in for rents. “We will have to convince them. We are hopeful that in three to four months we will have shifted all commercial establishments in cluster 1 and 3. The work on clusters 1 and 3 will be completed within the next two to three years,” added Bhanpurawala.

While some shopkeepers have liked the offer, others

were hoping for something better. Salim Merchant, partners of AK Zainuddin & Co, said that despite their commercial premises being bigger than what they are being offered, they were moving in. “We are in the process of shifting our business to that place. Although the space is small, we will be compensated with rent,” said Merchant.

Some like Yusufbhai, who owns Reihan Stores, said he has not finalised anything. “We have asked them if the rent amount they are offering is good enough to run their own homes. There was no response. Who will travel there (Mufaddal Shopping Arcade) when there are shops just across the road? There is a goodwill we have built here,” he added.

The project

The Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust was formed to redevelop the city's most congested area — Bhendi Bazaar.

The project aims to provide better living conditions to people living in the area. It looks to redevelop 16.5 acres of land under 33(9) of the Development Control Regulation.

As per the redevelopment, 3,200 homes in 250 buildings and 1,250 business establishments will be redeveloped. This will benefit 20,000 people.

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— **Shaikh Abdealibhai Bhanpurawala**, secretary of the SBUT