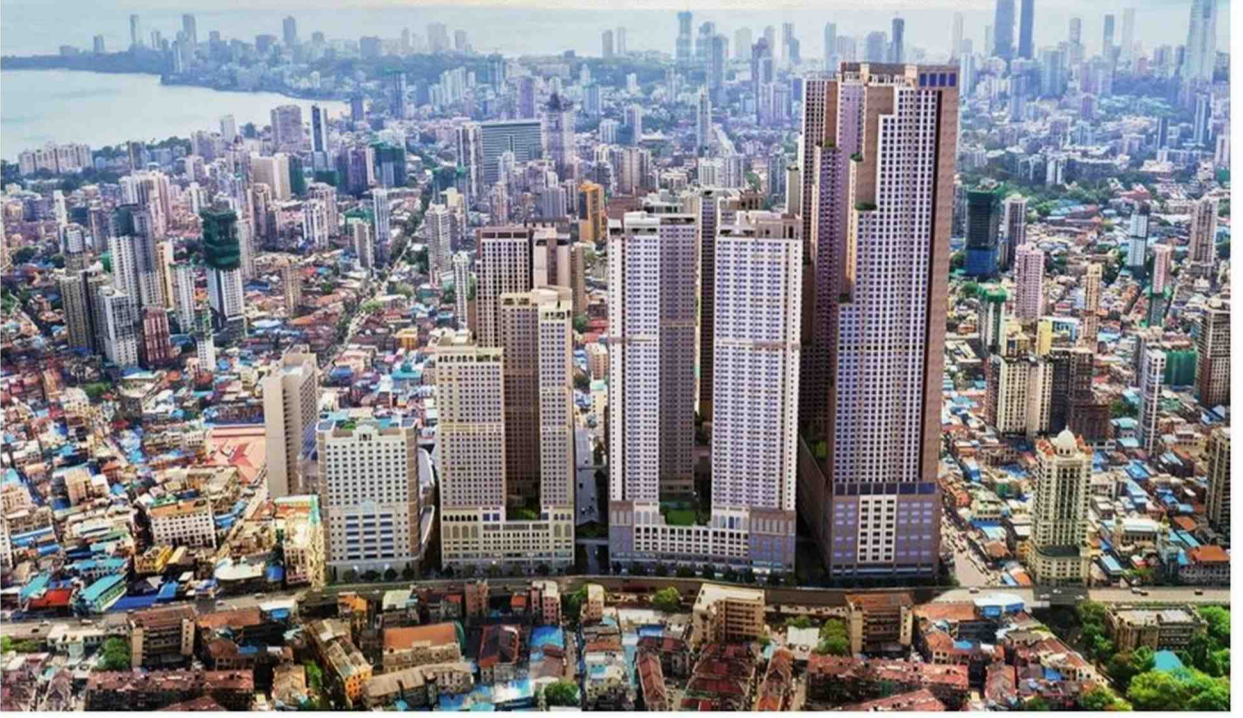


RESHAPING URBAN LANDSCAPE WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



A rendition of the proposed project to upgrade and uplift Mumbai's Bhendi Bazaar. The first phase of the project was completed in 2020. The trust working on the project says that it can be an inspiration to upgrade other similar areas, like Delhi's Chandni Chowk

In the heart of South Bombay, where the streets are teeming with the hustle of daily life and the air is filled with the aroma of Bohri delicacies, Bhendi Bazaar stands as a living testament to tradition. However, this 200-year-old neighbourhood grapples with many challenges — congested streets, century-old buildings on the verge of collapse, and a dearth of modern amenities. However, the landscape of Bhendi Bazaar is changing with the non-profit endeavour by the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT).

In 2009, the leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin stepped in with a vision — a ₹4,000 crore urban renewal project that is transforming the physical landscape of Bhendi Bazaar, “providing owned premises to 3,200 families, 1,250 shops and impacting lives of over 25,000 people living in rented and dilapidated conditions,” says the trust.

Sanjeev Jaiswal, Vice President of Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority, says, “Identified as the National Best Practise Project for inner city redevelopment, the Bhendi Bazaar Project is not only a case study for Mumbai but also provides a blueprint for other such neglected areas in the country that needs a systemic makeover.”

The spokesperson of SBUT says, “The first

'Project focuses on sustainability and effective living conditions'

The redevelopment project also focuses on sustainability and effective living conditions, says the trust. With innovative technology and green techniques, the structures are designed with environmental consciousness. Rainwater harvesting contributes to a 35-50% reduction in local water usage, while solar panels and renewable energy sources are integrated into the infrastructure. The second phase of the project is currently underway which comprises four high-rise towers of over 50 storeys. The Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT) spokesperson added, “Having received part Occupancy Certificate (OC) last month, we have started shifting commercial shop owners to their new premises.”



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— Sanjeev Jaiswal, Vice President, MHADA

phase of the project, named Al-Saadah, was completed in 2020, and stands as a testament to the success of the project. The towers, now home to 610 families and 128 businesses, have replaced the cramped and worn-out structures of the past. The towers now offer stunning views of the Raudat Tahera Mausoleum, the Arabian Sea, and the city, symbolizing a promising future for Bhendi Bazaar.”

Speaking about the initiative, Gulam Zia, Executive Director at Knight Frank, says, “SBUT has focused on genuine rehabilitation of people. They have taken exceptional care of the residents by providing quality apartments and providing make-shift shops during the transition period. The Al-Sa'adah towers offer multiple levels of parking, with the ground and first floor designated for shops. The parking levels extend to seven-eight stories, and from the eighth floor onwards, residences begin. The project prioritizes structural stability, a safe environment from fire and civic amenities such as community spaces above parking, healthcare facilities, reading spaces for kids, and walking tracks.”

Areas such as Bhendi Bazaar, Dharavi and Chandni Chowk with their lively chaos and maze alleys hold a certain beauty that has stood the test of time but have seen tremendous wear and tear, these says, adding, “There's a need to upgrade these alleyways and their structures, where the old charm is retained with new infrastructure that can give more to the hustle and bustle of life in these areas.”



'The initiative can be a catalyst for nationwide urban renewal'

The project in Bhendi Bazaar stands as more than a local endeavour; it emerges as a national exemplar for rejuvenating inner-city areas, says the trust. “By injecting resources and innovative planning into older areas, we have the opportunity to breathe new life into these historic quarters, not only upgrading physical structures but also fostering a sense of community and sustainable urban living. Such initiatives, mirroring the success of Bhendi Bazaar, can serve as a catalyst for nationwide urban renewal, reshaping the urban landscape and setting benchmarks for thoughtful development. The success of Bhendi Bazaar could well be the inspiration needed to turn other dilapidated clusters in different cities into vibrant, sustainable havens for their residents,” they add.

View of Bhendi Bazaar

