

# Not ashamed of this address, now

As politicians dangle the carrot before pagadi tenants to make them owners, the Bhendi Bazaar Redevelopment project, which won the Smart City Project 2016 award, is making that possible for its residents

**MALEEVA REBELLO**

maleeva.rebello@mid-day.com

AT the Maharashtra Housing and Development Authority (MHADA) complex in Ghodapdeo (Byculla), Bhendi Bazaar residents live in 1100 rooms in four buildings provided by the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT).

This is going to be their home, till the mammoth Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment project is over. The transit accommodation, which has all amenities is a small hardship to bear. Post the redevelopment, slated to be over by 2019, residents will catapult from tenancy status to ownership.

Yoga teacher, Zahra Petiwala (45) lives with her son and daughter in this complex. She says, "I lived for almost 23 years in Bhendi Bazaar, since I got married. We had rats, and cockroaches for company! The toilets were outside our homes. We could not afford a new house, but now, we will be proud owners of a redeveloped house and our standard of living will improve when the building is ready."

The family moved to Ghodapdeo in 2012. The family moved to Ghodapdeo in 2012. Zahra Petiwala, who recently lost her husband, recalls, "My husband and I were happier here than there. He was very excited about the new house we would move into. Unfortunately, that was not to be," she adds with a twinge.

Out of the 20,000 residents living in Bhendi Bazaar, 70 per cent live as tenants in an area of less than 300 sq ft each. The area has no greenery and most buildings have been declared dilapidated and unfit for living by the MHADA.

The late Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin, the Dawoodi Bohra community's spiritual leader, was disheartened to see these living conditions and decided to give a new lease of life to its inhabitants. "The redevelopment endeavour will provide its residents with ownership



The Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment, phase 1 and 3 is currently on

homes," said Murtaza Sadrwala, of the SBUT. Hakimuddin Bootwala (72) who has a stationery business at Lamington Road, says, "Living in Bhendi Bazaar meant key destinations were more accessible, but here, we have lifts, toilets in our houses and there is more privacy. Our children have more place to play, which is such a huge plus. Our new Bhendi Bazaar will also be like this and I am impatient to get there soon."

Boxing coach Parvez Khan who teaches at the Nagpada Neighbourhood House (NNH), and trained Priyanka Chopra for the movie, 'Mary Kom' is also a Bhendi Bazaar resident, who now lives in Byculla. He lives with his wife, son and two daughters.

Khan says, "My daughter Nausheen is studying in her third year Bachelor of Commerce

(B.Com). She has been able to study more peacefully as compared to my older children could. Here, everyone keeps to themselves, unlike in Bhendi Bazaar, which was very noisy; it is nice and calm here."

Nausheen encapsulates how aspirational residents are, "I can't wait for the new Bhendi Bazaar to be ready. The swimming pool and gym will be a different experience as will the parking space. My friends are excited about our new home. Earlier, I was ashamed to get them home because of the area, now I think they will all love coming home."

The new Bhendi Bazaar will see 17 towers house 3,200 residential units and 1,250 commercial units. The project has been divided into nine sub-clusters and work on cluster 1 and 3 is currently on.



Hakimuddin Bootwala with his wife at the transit home



Zahra Petiwala, happy to be an owner  
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Boxing coach Parvez Khan with his daughter Nausheen