

## **Adi Godrej: The passionate philanthropist**

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Since the days of the founders nature has been close to the heart of every Godrej. Through associations with conservation groups, the Godrej Group has worked towards creating an eco-friendly sustainable business model. One of their priced projects is the Mangrove Forest in Mumbai. The western bank of the Thane creek is Mumbai's single largest mangrove belt and a large track of the adjoining Phirozshah Nagar Township. The Godrej Foundation has maintained this Mangrove area since 1985.

The second lung of the city after the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, the mangrove area is a shining example of industry and nature co-existing. The Godrej Mangrove forest with over 15 types of plants and trees and almost 300 species of birds, animals and butterflies is a heaven for a variety of flora and fauna. Every year around 10,000 visitors come to these mangroves.

**Question:** This is the largest privately managed mangrove in Mumbai. If at all the regulations were to permit you to construct here would you do it? Would you consider it?

**Answer:** No, we would like to keep it as the lung of Mumbai. Children learn a lot when they come here. We want to encourage children, especially to believe in preserving natural environments and they have tremendous advantages.

**Question:** So commercial temptations are going to be resisted?

**Answer:** No. We have enough commercial development to do and we will do it there.

**Question:** But is this part of your corporate social responsibility efforts as well?

**Answer:** Very much so. It not only helps the city. The number of children who come here and learn from it is tremendous. They learn to respect nature. They learn to protect nature and this is how the country should develop.

**Question:** Since the environment is going to be so much of a focus as far as your CSR activities are concerned, how is it really tying in with everything that Godrej Properties is doing because it fits in strategically with what you are trying to do as far as properties is concerned?

**Answer:** Very much so. We have very many green projects coming up in Godrej Properties, especially residential projects and commercial too—save on electricity, save on resources. In fact, you can build buildings, which are carbon neutral. A very large project of ours in Ahmedabad is going to be extremely green.

**Question:** So when do you say that 'business of business' is not just business anymore and you need to cater to not just your shareholders but also to your stakeholders for you who would be your stakeholders at this point in time?

**Answer:** The stakeholders would be employees, it would be society, it would be government, it would be the country. Basically the country is a stakeholder in the businesses in the country and the whole point is that you don't do it because it's the right thing to do, you do it because it's a good thing to do. So, being environmentally friendly is good for the business ultimately if properly done.