

## Godrej helps preserve Mumbai mangroves

MAMTA SEN MUMBAI | 11th Sep

**A**t a time when Mumbai's mangroves along the Arabian Sea coastline are vanishing, a stretch preserved by the corporate giant Godrej continues to flourish. The mangroves that were once an intrinsic part of coastal suburbs like Bandra, Goregaon, Malad and Kandivali have been swallowed up by highrise apartments. But that is not the case in Vikhroli, where the Godrej Group is taking care of 1,750 acres of mangroves adjoining their industrial, commercial and residential township of Pirojshanagar.



Godrej Group is taking care of 1,750 acres of mangroves in Vikhroli.

Adi Godrej, chairman of the Godrej Group, told The Sunday Guardian that the company has been preserving and protecting these mangroves for over 65 years.

Mangroves being flood buffers help in stabilising the climate by moderating temperature, humidity, wind and even waves. Known to flourish even in poor quality soil, mangroves protect land from the impact of the sea.

The vast mangroves of Pirojshanagar include over 16 species of mangroves and their sub-varieties. They are also home to birds like flamingos, gulls, avocets and curlews, among others. "The wildlife in the mangroves includes jackals, flamingos, snakes and many species of fish and birds," Godrej said.

The Soonabai Pirojsha Godrej Marine Ecology Centre works towards caring for these mangroves. The centre also conducts programmes for mangrove preservation like regular monitoring to keep a check on miscreants and protecting rare species of fauna. The ecological restoration of dead and degraded mangroves is conducted by raising nurseries and through artificial regeneration.

The Godrej Group has set up a Mangrove Interpretation Centre to create awareness through films, seminars, nature camps and exhibitions.

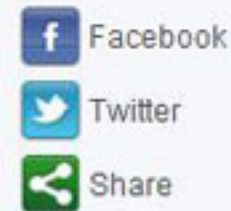
Adi Godrej said that they encourage trips by schoolchildren to view these mangroves and the wildlife.

"The Godrej Group spends about £150,000 per year towards protecting these mangroves," he said. He refused to give his views on the many projects sanctioned by the Centre — mining, thermal and nuclear power projects — that are facing opposition from different sectors because of the harm caused by them to the ecosystem.

These mangroves are known as the second largest green lung of Mumbai. The largest green lung is the Sanjay Gandhi National Park spread over 9,000 hectares in Borivali.



The mangroves are home to birds like flamingos, gulls, avocets and curlews.



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