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That Gudi Padwa is the time to buy a new home, is stating the obvious. Over the last few years, however, the auspicious day has not translated into heavy bookings as expected and the reasons range from sluggish property market to negative buyers' sentiments borne out of general macroeconomic indicators. Thus, developers have learnt that to bring buyers back into the property market, they will have to make additional efforts. Hence, new launches and festivals are seen as the best way to make a touch-point with the home seekers.

Several developers are participating in the MCHI-CREDAI exhibition to be held between April 11-14, 2013, at the Bandra Kurla Complex. While some are ready to launch new projects on this day, others are reinvigorating their sales strategy to make the best of the auspicious spirit.

Krutti Jain, director, Hamar Urban Development, says the sales during festive seasons are always positive and hence, the new launches. Also, the MCHI property expo is there in Mumbai which is a good contact



point with the prospective buyers. "Property exhibitions have been a traction point of getting buyers. I feel Gudi Padwa is the right time for organizing property fests and exhibitions. These exhibitions provide home buyers and developers an opportunity to come under one roof. Buyers get to interact with developers and can buy their dream homes from a plethora of choices available. Holding a property exhibition on Gudi Padwa is a fruitful decision, as most home buyers are looking to realise their dream of buying homes,"

she adds.

Dilipesh Bhagani, executive director, Jaycoo Homes, maintains that property exhibitions revolving around the occasion of Gudi Padwa do manage to attract a lot of home buyers.

"There are numerous benefits for a home buyer to avail, during a property exhibition. When a home buyer purchases a home at a property exhibition, he can be assured of a safe and secure experience. Property exhibitions offer home buyers a plethora of properties to choose from, along with spot

home loan options available at the venue itself. Buyers, instead of running from one place to another, can buy their dream homes in the AC comforts of the exhibition, thus, saving time, effort and money," explains Bhagani.

A section of realty analysts believe that new launches for the projects, depend a lot on the permissions received from the authorities. Once these permissions are received, a developer would not like to wait to launch the project. However, since Gudi Padwa is an auspicious occasion, developers prefer to have the 'bhoomi pujan' on this day. Manoj John, VP, corporate planning and strate-

gy, RNA Corp, points out that "Also, discounts offered at such exhibitions provide the incentive or push for decision making and introduce an element of urgency, since the discounts are offered for a limited period. If the exhibition timing has coincided with the launch of a new property, then there is a possibility of bulk bookings. If the discount offered is substantial, it could result in bookings to cash in on the offer," he adds. Anil Modak, head, Kohinoor City, does foresee new launches slated for Gudi Padwa this year. "Agreeing that property exhibitions have been a traction point for getting buyers, he feels that the buying deci-

sion rests on a number of factors. "Property festivals and exhibitions are held at various locations, at different times of the year, considering vacations and auspicious days. The decision to buy a property is made after exploring various projects and visiting property exhibitions. Once the decision is made, the customer decides to book," he states.

Gudi Padwa is a special occasion for a new beginning and wealth acquisition in Maharashtra and a property exhibition on this day is only going to fuel these property bookings.

(The writer is CEO, Track2 Realty)

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Raj GRANDEUR Akode of Magnificence

DEVELOPERS MAKE TOUCH POINTS WITH BUYERS, ON GUDI PADWA

RAVI SINHA speaks to a cross-section of developers to assess whether the MCHI expo, coinciding with Gudi Padwa, will augur well for the home buyers and why



PHOTO: SAHITHYAM BANG

FAST FACT

■ 2013 HAS BEGUN ON A POSITIVE NOTE WITH NEW DCR IN PLACE AND PERMISSIONS HAVE STARTED COMING IN AND THE RBI IS REDUCING HOME LOAN RATES

The MCHI-CREDAI Property Show is one of the biggest and largely followed property events in the country.

POSITIVE SENTIMENTS MAKE PROPERTY MARKET BULLISH ON GUDI PADWA

RAVI SINHA speaks to a cross-section of industry players, to figure out whether the festive spirit of Gudi Padwa will prove to be a windfall of realty transactions, for the hopeful developers

QUICK BYTES

■ THE OCCASION OF GUDI PADWA THIS YEAR, HAS THUS COME AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME WITH FENCE SITTERS MOST LIKELY TO BUY RATHER THAN PROLONG THEIR WAIT. DEVELOPERS ARE ALSO BEING FLEXIBLE AND ARE READY TO SIT ACROSS THE TABLE AND NEGOTIATE WITH HOME BUYERS.

■ WITH THE NEW DCR IN PLACE, THERE IS MUCH MORE CLARITY FOR THE DEVELOPER AND THE BUYERS ALIKE, IN WHAT IS BEING SOLD AND WHAT IS BEING BOUGHT



A festive spirit only adds to the buyers' sentiments in the property market. It cannot be a catalyst to new sales, if the sentiment in general is low, as has been evident in the property market of Mumbai, in the last three-four years, due to the general slowdown and other macroeconomic subdued indicators. However, if the sentiments are bullish, a festive season can turn out to be a catalyst to market revival as well. That is very much expected in the Mumbai property market this time around, thanks to the change in the overall outlook. An impression is gaining ground in the Mumbai property market that the stalemate witnessed in the property market over the last few quarters, has in fact, created a better understanding between both, the developers and home buyers. The occasion of Gudi Padwa, this year, has thus, come at an appropriate time with fence sitters most likely to buy rather than prolong their wait. Developers are also being flexible and are ready to sit across the table and negotiate with home buyers.

Diipesh Bhagatani, executive director, Jaycee Homes, believes the RBI's decision to reduce the key interest rate is a major positive for a home buyer. Now, with home loans being available at a cheaper rate, an average middle-class home buyer will be able to go ahead with his decision to buy his dream house. Also,



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with the new DCR in place, there is much more clarity for the developer and the buyers alike, in what is being sold and what is being bought. "We are confident that we will see a marked increase in real estate transactions in the near future. The overall sentiments are definitely high for this year's Gudi Padwa, as compared to the last few years. 2012 was quite a stressful period for both, home buyers and developers alike. On the other hand, 2013 has begun on a positive note with the new DCR in place and permissions which have started coming in. Plus, the RBI is reducing home loan rates. All this will ultimately lead to a better business proposition. So, yes, this year's Gudi Padwa will definitely be more eventful for the real estate sector," feels Bhagatani.

Kruti Jain, director, Kumar Urban Development Limited, agrees that there are many positives on this Gudi Padwa, like reduced interest rates, and builders and buyers understanding each others' concerns better. Also, obtaining home loans will be far easier on the back of the RBI's decision to reduce key interest rates. So, these are certainly positive developments which will go a long way in boosting the prospects of the real estate sector, this Gudi Padwa. "Now, it is convenient for middle-class home buyers to buy a house at cheaper rates. One of the positive things that drives a home buyer is

the RBI's decision to reduce the key interest rate. On the occasion of Gudi Padwa, if compared to the past years' Gudi Padwa sales, it has increased by 40-45 per cent," she points out.

Manoj John, VP, corporate planning and strategy, RNA Corp says, "The sector is looking forward to getting a facelift, in terms of policies and regulations, as many important bills have been pending. The easing of liquidity on the back of rate cuts by the RBI, will be a major benefit."

Atul Modak, head, Kohinoor City, on the contrary, does not agree that sentiments are high, this Gudi Padwa, as compared to the last few years. The mindset of the typical buyer has not changed much in recent years. However, with Gudi Padwa just around the corner, the response will speak for itself. "The reduced interest rates play a minuscule role while deciding the purchase of property, hence, it may not have an impact. What is more important to buyers is whether it meets their requirement and whether they like the property. The tax benefit for the property worth less than 25 lakhs will drive buyers into the market to the fringes of the city," he shares. Before the sector does its evaluation and cost-benefit analysis post Gudi Padwa, the indications suggest the auspicious festival has definitely made all the stakeholders bullish for the moment.

(The writer is CEO, Track2Realty)



PIC: RAVI SINHA

GUDI PADWA STILL SIGNIFICANT IN THE MUMBAI PROPERTY MARKET

Will this year's Gudi Padwa also inspire home buyers to go ahead and purchase their dream homes? **RAVI SINHA** tries to get some answers by speaking to the developers who put forth their views on the various positives associated with Gudi Padwa and property buying

QUICK BYTE

■ GUDI PADWA HOLDS MORE SIGNIFICANCE FOR FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS AS IT IS THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR AND EVERYONE CONSIDERS THIS IS AN AUSPICIOUS TIME TO BUY HOMES



Gudi Padwa is considered to be an auspicious occasion as it marks the new beginning of the Hindu new year and brings new hopes to every body's life. People traditionally make important decisions and investments on this day. They believe in luck and prosperity and prefer buying homes during Gudi Padwa. During this period usually, developers come up with new launches, special schemes and discounts. The Mumbai property market always looks forward to bright days on this auspicious festival. Gudi Padwa is specially considered an auspicious day in Maharashtra where it not only signifies new beginnings and is celebrated as the start of the new year but it is considered to be sacred for purchasing

property. Traditionally, home buyers finalise their decisions of purchasing property on this day. Developers maintain their confidence levels when they say that this year's Gudi Padwa would be as good and no different from what it has traditionally been over the years. They anticipate a lot of enquiries and sales from prospective home buyers during this Gudi Padwa. Traditionally, Gudi Padwa means birth of 'bhoomi'. The property market hopes and looks forward to bright days for the real estate sector, with this auspicious festival. The question is, what are the expectations of the real estate fraternity from Gudi Padwa this year? **Atul Modak, head, Kohinoor City, says that the expectations in the property market are obvious on this day. According to him, Gudi Padwa being an auspicious day, developers expect it**

to be a revival for them. This is one of the days in the year, when people are keen on starting a new venture or investing in property. It marks the beginning of the Hindu new year and the sentiment is that if a good beginning is made, the whole year too will go off well. On being asked whether he thinks the revival indicators will translate into actual sales on the auspicious day, Modak answers that "Although most of the customers today, are into the wait and watch situation, the sentiment on such an auspicious day is high. Therefore, those who have already made up their minds, will look to buy their dream home on Gudi Padwa." Many believe that Gudi Padwa has held its charm over the years even though now the buyers are more pragmatic to not get affected by mere sentiments. It is generally accepted in Maharashtra that people have

auspicious time to buy homes. Some of them wait till such a day to come around, to shift into their new homes," explains Jain.

Dilipesh Bhagant, executive director, Jaycee Homes, agrees that it is probably the best time for home buyers to buy their dream homes. With property prices being stable over the last few quarters, developers are willing to negotiate with home buyers. "I think buyers should take advantage of the current market sentiments and buy instead of waiting for a further fall in prices that may never happen. Home loans will now be easily available and accessible to the prospective buyers. So yes, this year's Gudi Padwa will usher in positive sentiments for one and all in the real estate sector," he asserts. Manoj John, VP, corporate planning and strategy, RNA Corp, believes that developers go out of their way



PIC: HELMANT SHIBDOKAR

strong religious sentiments and believe in looking for a good 'mahurat' for occasions like marriages, starting a business or purchasing a flat. Kruti Jain, director, Kumar Urban Development Limited asserts that the revival indicators will translate into actual sales on auspicious days. She believes that 2013 has started off on a good note, wherein the government has proposed various reforms for the real estate sector. Also, the RBI has reduced key interest rates. "These developments will augur well for the sector. There will definitely be an increase in sales on Gudi Padwa this year. "Yes, Gudi Padwa has its own unique charm for those who believe in luck and prosperity for buying homes. Most people prefer to shift into their new houses or sign purchase agreements or perform 'poojas' at their new homes, on Gudi Padwa. Gudi Padwa holds more significance for first-time home buyers, as it is the beginning of the new year and everyone considers this as an

to make it an ideal time for the buyers. "As for common people in India, a home is a priced possession and they do not sell and buy residential properties often. They wait for an auspicious date for such transactions. During the festive season, realtors put together the properties with attractive discounts and freebies. However, with these factors only, nobody can lure customers today. They are more oriented towards the location of the property, the pricing and the quality of construction," he points out. Property analysts maintain that traditions still prevail in our society. Today, the new generation of home buyers is more knowledgeable and practical about property matters than the buyers of yester years. They make a detailed study about the market before taking a final decision. However, at the same time, buyers, both young and old, are definitely influenced by a traditional festival like Gudi Padwa.