

BACKWARDS IS BEST!



A concept known as backward integration has been brought into India's real estate market by one of the largest realty players in the country, Sobha Developers Ltd. Since its inception in 1995, Sobha Developers has focused primarily on residential and contractual projects.

The residential projects include villas, row houses, super luxury apartments, luxury apartments, semi-luxury apartments and plotted development. Many of the projects also feature clubhouses, swimming pools and shopping complexes. In all its residential projects, the developer emphasises environment management, water harvesting and high safety standards.

On the contractual side, Sobha has built a variety of structures for corporates including corporate offices, convention centres, software development blocks, multiplex theatres, hostel facilities, guesthouses, food courts, restaurants, research centres and clubhouses. Some of these include projects for Infosys, the Taj Group, Dell, Mico, HP, Timken, Biocon, Institute of Public Enterprises (IPE), Bosch, Hotel Leela Ventures and others.

Sobha has completed 71 residential projects and 191 contractual projects covering about 42.68 million square feet. There are also 23 ongoing residential projects encompassing nearly 7 million square feet, and 38 ongoing contractual projects totalling 7.4 million square feet, all spread over 20 cities and 12 states across India.

The backward integration model is one of Sobha's key competitive strengths. This means that the company has all the competencies and in-house resources to deliver a project from conceptualization to completion. Backward integration includes an interiors division with one of India's largest woodwork factories, a metalworks and glazing factory, and a concrete products factory. The interiors division is engaged in woodwork and manufacturing wood or wood-based products of international quality, superlative finish and incredible durability. The products include doors and windows, wooden floorings, ceilings, panels, pillars and staircases, and custom-built furniture for commercial and residential use. In addition, this division also includes an in-house woodworking design studio, and a dedicated design team that provides interior design plans and production-specific drawings.

The glazing and metalworks division handles metal fabrication work such as aluminium windows and doors, structural work, and architectural glazing. The fabrication activities are carried out at the factory premises, whereas the assembly and installation are carried out at the project sites. The concrete block making division manufactures concrete blocks, pavers, kerbs, water drainage channels, paving slabs and related landscape products. All the factories are state of the art and have a built up area of over 600,000 square feet. Leveraging their expertise in manufacturing capabilities, the in-house initiative brings to the table a formidable resource that adheres to world class performance parameters.

Sobha uses the latest technology, tools and machinery to execute projects with seamless construction quality. Technologically advanced tools are sourced from international markets like Germany and the UK, and processes are followed to monitor and ensure quality at each stage of construction. The manufacturing plants are fully automated and are imported from the best across the world. The focus on technology and processes is aimed at reducing project timelines and cost, thus maximising value.

Sobha has its own tower cranes and batching plants, which not only ensures the highest quality, but also saves time and dependence on third-party agencies. Another integrated feature is the centralised maintenance and repair workshop manned by specialised staff to immediately attend to any issues with machinery across construction sites.

Architectural design expertise at Sobha revolves around developing structures that are functionally efficient, aesthetically appealing and inline with the highest engineering standards. It integrates exemplary architecture with electrical, mechanical and structural engineering.

Attention to detail, exquisite proportions, designer landscaping, exciting spatial solutions, better ventilation, natural lighting systems and a high level of finishing are evident in all the projects, whether residential, commercial, IT campuses, integrated townships or hotels. The designs also focus on reducing energy usage and saving scarce environmental resources. In all Sobha projects, emphasis on good natural light and ventilation is reflected in the size and position of fenestration. Stress on open spaces at the ground level is evident in the fact that in most of the projects, open spaces exceed 60% and in some, even 75%. The efficiency of the floor plate, wherein the philosophy of maximising the value of design per square foot is very clearly established, is the ratio of built up area to the common area.



All projects incorporate international standards in terms of the size of car parks, number of elevators and staircases, driveway width and curves, lighting in open and common areas, and even display boards. There is a constant endeavour to engage in sustainable designs, which are durable and in synergy with the environment. Extensive landscaping is done in some of the projects, creating virtual forests and large water bodies. At one of Sobha's iconic projects, Sobha Lifestyle in Bangalore, 85% of the open area comprises dense landscape and a large water harvesting tank. In Sobha City, an integrated township project at Thrissur in Kerala, a large man-made lake is spread out over an area of six acres. As a conscious step, in sync with international initiatives, future township projects are designed for accreditation with the Indian Green Building Council.

Sobha's environment-friendly philosophy is reinforced by features like water harvesting, extensive plantation and effective utilisation of non-conventional energy sources that are integrated into the designs. They ensure that all the intended benefits that customers receive are delivered with maximum efficiency. - Pallavi

