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Made-in-Gujarat bricks become star attraction of B'wood celebs' houses

Designer Bricks Find Favour With Temples, HNI Homes Too

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Ahmedabad: Bollywood superstar Hrithik Roshan's weekend villa in Khandala has a Gujarat connect— designer bricks made in Amdavad. Roshan's vacation home, a 22,400 square feet property, has been designed by architect Grigoria Oikonomou.

Talking to TOI, Oikonomou said, "We wanted unique texture, durability and colour for exterior bricks for the Hrithik's vacation home project. They were sourced from Ahmedabad. We used more than 30,000 bricks made in Gujarat for the project." She added that designer bricks from Gujarat are being used in several other prominent projects too.

Capitalizing on the growing trend of designer homes, Gujarat-based construction brick manufacturers have upped their game by producing thousands of varieties of designer, elevated bricks which lend a certain oomph to celeb homes.

Ahmedabad-based Harihar Bricks and Godhra-based Jay Jalaram Bricks whose elevated bricks adorn Roshan's weekend home and actor Surveen Chawla's Mumbai residence said Gujarat is emerging as a hub of designer exposed bricks. "Besides supplying to renowned architects from Mumbai, Delhi and other parts of the country, we have recorded sizeable rise in orders from Eu-



One of the locations where the bricks have been used

ropean countries as well," said Hemal Prajapati, owner, Harihar Bricks.

The company also recently supplied bricks for the construction of Swaminarayan Temple in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The Middle East and Europe in fact have emerged as the biggest export markets for brick makers in Gujarat, whose wares are used to construct iconic buildings. Australia too is a slowly emerging export market for brick manufacturers here.

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'Elevation bricks in high demand'

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Nisarg Prajapati, promoter of Jay Brahmani Brick Works, said, "We make handmade, machine made and press exposed bricks and till now we catered to local demand but now have begun exports to Middle East, Europe and the US. There is huge demand for elevation bricks for high-end bungalows and buildings. Gujarat is emerging as a reliable supplier because of easy availability of raw material and cheap labour cost."

Gujarat is home to at least 1,200 major manufacturers of bricks which manufacture at least 400 crore bricks every year, suggest estimates by Gujarat Bricks Manufacturers' Federation (GBMF). Of these, barely 10 players produce elevation bricks.

Even though the state's

brick-making industry is a far behind states such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Punjab, diversification into elevated brick manufacturing is giving local players an edge over their counterparts.

Gujarat's manufacturers are now giving other players in Punjab and Haryana a run for their money in this segment, suggest industry sources. While regular construction bricks are priced around Rs 7-8, exposed bricks cost around Rs 15. "Smelling an opportunity in the elevation and exposed brick segment local players have been able to command better prices and penetrate niche markets. Bricks help in keeping the heat out and also make for maintenance-free exteriors so demand is increasing," said Mahendra Prajapati, secretary, GBMF.