



Visitors at Realty India Expo 2016 in Dubai on Friday. The event concludes today. — Photos by Juidin Bernard

NRI's keen on investing in real estate back home

Rs1 billion worth of business witnessed at Realty India Expo

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DUBAI — Indian expats in the UAE always look for investing in property back home.

The last six months were sluggish for the real estate sector in India, as unsold stock and slow-down has taken a toll on the growth of the industry. But now there are positive sentiments floating in since the Modi government has started working on the concept of smart cities and the "Make in India" campaign.

Relations between India and the UAE are centuries old and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the UAE has taken it to a different tangent altogether.

Speaking at Realty India Expo 2016 in Dubai on Friday, Paras Shahdarpuri, chairman of Nikai Group of companies, said: "The smart city concept will take some time but metro cities like NCR, Mumbai and Pune are hot favourites for investors in Dubai as return on investments are high there."

More than 50 builders across India are participating at the expo. The show opened with a huge response; people came to grab offers from builders, who offered special discounts on Friday.

"We had around 2,000 families who came to buy their dream



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Paras Shahdarpuri, Chairman of Nikai Group of companies

home," a statement from the event said.

All 50 builders present have done brisk business, with business touching Rs1 billion. There are more than 75 builders from pan-India and over Rs20 billion worth projects being showcased.

For NRI investors, tier-one cities like Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad have been the safest bets, but now the property markets of smaller cities like Lucknow,

Dehradun, Ahmedabad and Chandigarh are picking up. "We are conducting this exhibition for the prospective buyers of Indian property in Dubai. It gives an insight to the investors as well as for the expats who want to shift back to India," said M.I. Sait, CMD of Mindscape.

Participating at the event is one of the biggest builders from India. Lodha Group has marked its presence in Dubai for the last 3-1/2 years and they are showcasing property ranging from Rs4 million to Rs600 million-Rs700 million.

Shashank Bajpai, deputy manager for international sales at Lodha Group, said: "If we talk about NRI sales it was around Rs8 billion and most of the investments happen from Dubai followed by places like the US and Singapore. We are good getting good response so far; it's the first day at the expo and we already had more than 20 walk-in consumers."

Over the years, property prices have elevated and are now stagnant in most of the cities. Home loan lending rates have been reduced with special rates for women homebuyers. Above all, there is no differential pricing for projects whether sold in India or abroad for those NRIs holding land parcels or inherited properties in cities, they can enter into real estate development. Moreover, joint venture agree-

ments with leading developers would enable them to convert their land into productive and income generating assets.

The real estate sector is one of the most globally-recognised sectors. In India, real estate is the second-largest employer after agriculture and is slated to grow at 30 per cent over the next decade. The Indian real estate market has become one of the most preferred destinations in the Asia-Pacific as overseas funds accounted for more than 50 per cent of all investment activity in India in 2014, compared with just 26 per cent in 2013.

The real estate sector comprises four sub sectors — housing, retail, hospitality and commercial. The growth of this sector is well complemented by the growth of the corporate environment and the demand for office space as well as urban and semi-urban accommodations.

The construction industry ranks third among the 14 major sectors in terms of direct, indirect and induced effects in all sectors of the economy. It is also expected that this sector will incur more NRI investments in both the short and long term.

The exhibition is organised by Mindscape Exhibitions Dubai, and will conclude today.

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