

# 'Goa market shown impressive results in residential real estate demand'

Bengaluru based property developer Salarpuria Sattva Group, recently completed its first a residential project in the state. The luxurious residential project, Water's Edge, Sancoale, comprising of 2 and 3-BHK apartments received overwhelming response, according to the company. Here **Bijay Agarwal**, managing director, Salarpuria Sattva Group, talks of his company's plans. He says to **Shoma Patnaik** that, the group is looking forward to doing more quality work in the state.

## What makes Goa an attractive market for developers from metro cities?

Goa is not just an attractive for real estate developers. It is the most favoured vacationer spot for both local and foreign visitors. Owning a property in this western coast paradise of the country has lately emerged as a popular destination among consumers as a holiday home and second homes. The market offers unique history, rich culture, enticing climate and splendid beaches. Investors are paying attention to lifestyle themed projects including sea-view restaurants, landscaped gardens, clubhouses, multiple games facilities and party halls. Over the years, the Goa market has shown impressive results in terms of demand in the residential sector.

## What differentiates your company from other outside developers in the state?

Salarpuria Sattva group is one of the most preferred brands in the country today. It is built on trust, innovation, and knowledge leadership. We have always considered what our customers need in the projects and innovated accordingly. Being transparent in our dealings, setting the right expectations and promoting strong relationships sets us apart from our peers.

## What is your view on the housing demand in the state?

The pandemic has blurred the lines between



The company's first residential project in Sancoale

our workspace and homes. Various factors are driving the growth of the Goa market. Geography is no longer a constraint. Hence the need for a perfect work-life balance has fueled the concept recently. The market has seen an influx of multiple start-ups following the announcement of the Goa-Startup Policy in 2018. The market has tremendous potential. Moreover, the spike in cost and shortage of hotel rooms during the season will further fuel the demand for holiday villas, row houses, second homes and apartments in Goa. Attractive interest rates on home loans have played a major factor for consumers who want to invest in real estate. Demand for ready-to-move-in apartments is high. As a result, demand for residential properties has increased not just in Goa but overall in the country.

## Is the COVID second wave impacting customer sentiments in real estate?

Consumer's outlook towards lifestyle and the idea of owning a house has tremendously changed in this span of one and a half years.

This has led to a clear shift in housing sales demand across the country. One interesting trend observed in the sector is the shift in demography of consumers indulging in real estate. With the present emphasis on remote working, the value of owning a home has been re-established as a secure and necessary investment. The outlook of millennials towards residential sector has also changed. Today they are more invested in the thought of owning a property than renting one.

## How much of housing sales is taking place online?

The pandemic revitalized the virtual world across the country. It became imperative for real estate industries to adapt new technologies to ease the entire home buying process for consumers. Before the onset of the pandemic, online property buying was at nascent stage as compared to buying movie tickets, ordering food, clothes or electronic items. However, with the tech savvy consumers today, the trend of buying a home online has finally



Bijay Agarwal

tipped the scales.

From offering property bookings online to virtual reality (VR) tours of the properties, the digital footprint of the real estate industry has come a long way. This trend has re-affirmed our belief that the consumers today, have adapted to online home purchase as easily as any other categories.

At Salarpuria Sattva, we realigned ourselves to make home buying completely digital and safe for our customers. So smooth was the digital home buying process, that a number of customers bought their homes, without even a single site visit. In fact, sales for ready-to-move-in apartments have shown a rise compared to pre-COVID times.

## After 2020 which was the pandemic year how do you see 2021 panning out for the industry?

The year 2020 changed everything for industries across the country. In 2021 these changes have become the 'new normal'. This new normal in real estate industry brought new dynamics of growth, innovation, and investment with it.

In the commercial segment, the increasing

demand from industries such as e-commerce, healthcare, FMCG, and the growing presence of institutional investors will continue to drive the commercial market in 2021.

Similarly with migrant consumers moving back to their hometowns, the residential sector observed an upward swing and opened doors of opportunities, new markets to discover and expand for developers and for buyers to own a property in their hometowns. This trend has led to an exponential increase in demand for townships as well as commercial projects in tier 2/ tier 3 cities.

At Salarpuria Sattva, we witnessed the sales of residential units doing even better, than in pre-COVID times. The sales were up 20 per cent as compared to 2019 and showed a dramatic upward curve of 25 per cent from June of 2020 when compared to the pre-COVID year. The Group's thriving flex spaces vertical, simpliwork, which is based on the built-to-suit model managed to not only retain 100 per cent of its existing clientele, but also secured new leasing during the pandemic.

## How much are the government measures to provide relief helping the industry?

The real estate market in India is the second-highest employment generator in the country after agriculture. The government came forward to aid the industry by way of the finance minister's economic package, the force majeure clause during the COVID-19 period along with an extension of the registration and completion date by six months for all registered projects to infuse growth into the real estate industry. Further, the RBI took additional steps to help the sector by including a one-year extension to start commercial operations (DCCO) of project loans for projects which are delayed for reasons beyond the control of promoters.

These initiatives are expected to provide relief to the real estate sector. Moreover, the center directed states to use the Rs 31,000-crore welfare fund for construction workers to help them meet their own needs and the needs of their families in these testing times.