

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

Noida and Greater Noida are on their way to becoming global cities. As they do so, they set new benchmarks and surpass a few old ones



(From left) Mr Santosh Kumar, CEO, JLL India; Mr Deepak Agarwal, CEO, GNIDA; Mr Parmit Garg, Project Director, NDMRC Ltd; Mr Neeraj Gulati, MD, Assotech Realty Pvt Ltd; Mr N P Singh, DM, Noida; Mr Dharmendra Kapoor, COO, Birlasoft; Mr Rajat Gupta, MD, Advisory & Transaction Service, CBRE South Asia Pvt Ltd; Mr Salil Kumar, Director, Assotech Realty Pvt Ltd; Mr Mahendra Goel, Director, Assotech Realty Pvt Ltd, and Mr Omkar Bhattacharya, VP, IE



for the Greater Noida region?

Deepak Agarwal: Gion, Oppo, Micromax, Optimus etc are setting up shop in the region. Hence, IT will be the biggest beneficiary. In the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, Greater Noida is the only point where both Eastern and Western Dedicated Freight Corridors intersect. (Western originates and Eastern intersects). GOI & GNIA had formed a Special Purpose Vehicle to develop an Integrated Industrial Township Greater Noida Limited spread over 747.50 acres. Fifty per cent of its land is earmarked for IT & manufacturing activities. This project has two stake holders — 50% is GNIDA & DIPP, and the remaining 50% is GOI. This will be a game-changer for this area. There will be a multi-modal transport hub between GNIA & GOI to provide a one-stop solution for transport needs (sans airport) and a multi-modal logistic app. We have the first commercially run heliport. Finally, GNIA & state government formed the Electronic Manufacturing Cluster for which land has been allotted. Several exemptions are also being given.

IE: Are real estate developers providing the right infrastructure to companies?

Santosh Kumar : Infrastructure required from corporate side is in place now. Two large FDIIs from Blackstone and Brookfield Pvt Ltd, who have bought an IT SEZ. Hence, the future looks bright.

IE: What concerns do the companies face?

Deepak Agarwal: For a city like Greater Noida, the bigger concerns are reduced traffic at night on roads due to apprehensions on the security front. Nevertheless, this situation is changing as the city is growing with time and the perception of insecurity is going down too.

Rajat Gupta: Infrastructure requirements are there and more is going on on that front. The dichotomy between perception and reality is also being challenged. What is needed here is marketing and PR.

Dharmendra Kapoor: It is very critical to create a brand image for the city which that will attract more and more investment. Earlier, Mr Singh pointed out that the role of the media is very critical in creating the perception. In my opinion, the perception is the actual reality in the eyes of the beholder. So, if more and more positive image is created and circulated about the city and it is branded well, a number of corporates would readily flock to this region.

At the same time, as Mr Gupta said, why only an IT hub? To that, I would like to add that the region can be home to a lot of digitisation and we can promote the region calling it a digital hub. This would make us stand apart from Gurgaon, from Bangalore etc. We therefore need to differentiate our positioning in a unique way.

Santosh Kumar: There are several stake holders in the development of this city. CEOs of companies should work towards branding and image-building. The state government and authorities must work with the corporates. Along with that, law and order and police protection for citizens of the state

should be maintained.

Parmit Garg: We have a billion-dollar project going on in Noida and Greater Noida. Our company is working here in addition with tie-ups from China and Germany, but not a single employee has reported any untoward activity. There has not been a single such case of ransom, thrashing or beatings etc. I think, therefore, it is more of a perception issue. Once the Metro comes up, there will be more traffic movement on any given day or time.

N P Singh: For industrial development to take place, what is required is good industrial relationship. Since the past two years, we did not have any strike in any of the industries. It shows that the management is being helped by the labour department to sort out problems that industries face.

To reduce individual crimes, the rural youth is being engaged in various programmes and in constructive activities. The villages I surveyed had 1,548 youth who, despite being trained and educated at ITI polytechnics, were unemployed. I met with various companies, got them to organise a Rozgar Mela and got these youth employment. As many as 1,282 people got employed. This led to a betterment of their situations and they became hopeful about themselves and their future.

Negative marketing is another issue. If real estate developers of another area of the NCR want their properties to be sold, they begin doing negative marketing of the rest of the areas. This will wear the customer market away from some places and lead to their concentration at one particular place. Therefore, the rural youth must be roped in and they must be made to feel that they are the fruit bearers and not the victims. This psychological and sociological problem must be rooted out. We are trying to counsel many villagers, their families and the incidence of crime has come down at those places too.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: City transport is a big issue. How do you plan to solve it?

Parmit Garg: There will be Metro connectivity, which is going to be very useful. We are providing last-mile connectivity. An MoU has been signed between the Authority and the Noida Metro to run low-floor buses that will be on floor shortly. Noida Metro is trying to connect properties vis skywalks. So in about two years, we should wait and see where Noida transportation actually stands. Multi-modal transport ways as seen in Hong Kong and Singapore will be in place in Noida. Metro stations have been planned with solar roofs that will generate 10 megawatt of energy. It will be the first such initiative in the country.

Deepak Agarwal: All land that is lying unutilised will be leased for 30 years for solar plants.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: What is being done about power cuts and to improve the quality of life for people here?

Deepak Agarwal: You must see Noida and Greater Noida as part of UP. In comparison to the state of UP, Noida and Greater Noida are better off. Greater Noida has NPCL, a private distribution company. The power scenario in UP has improved by a quantum leap in the last 4-5 years.

