

COVER STORY

UNLOCK 6.0

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

With construction resuming across projects, real estate developers are sparing no efforts to ensure compliance to safety norms, adoption of technology, and heaping discounts to continue the sales momentum

BY JAYASHREE KINI MENDES

Developers that have several prestigious ongoing projects are more worried. Their list of safety measures appears endless. **V Gopal, executive director, projects & planning, Prestige Group,** says, "The safety measures at our sites include thermal scanning and sanitisation at all entry points; disinfection tunnels at entry points; entry only to people in face masks; maintaining social distancing; availability of clean water at site; rigorous disinfection processes at regular intervals; covid stewards at site for constant monitoring; and compliance reports to be submitted."

With construction activities picking up pace, developers are adhering to the stringent norms. "We regularly disinfect office areas and worker camps at every project site. All visitors are required to submit a declaration of their travel history last one week. We also have a doctor visiting our sites to check on the health of onsite workers staying at the camps. Awareness sessions are conducted regularly," says **Amit Pal, chief projects officer, Mahindra Happinest.**

Then there are those who are making the contractor liable. "We have re-defined certain rules and guidelines with our



▲ Developers insist that workers adhere to safety norms.



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PK MISHRA



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V GOPAL

sub-contractors and other stakeholders to protect the larger interests of everyone. The contractor is liable to take insurance for his staff and workers for covid-19," says **Mukesh Jaitley, director projects, The Wadhwa Group.**

Offering a different take, **Manju Yagnik, VCP, Nahar Group, and sr VP, Naredco (Maharashtra),** says, "The sales momentum reflects the much-needed economic confidence for the continuation of buying. Sustaining this next few quarters will depend upon several indicators, including the liquidity scenario. Another supportive decision by the government for first-time homebuyers to get income tax relief will buoy people to buy homes. Continuing of sops,



▲ With public places opening up slowly, its owners are taking no chances with sanitisation and hygiene matters.



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duty cuts, reduced ready reckoner and bank interest rates clubbed with developer offers and schemes will continue the sales momentum.”

MAKING NEW MOVES

Many developers believe that the first step is to treat all human beings equally, and safety precautions have been prescribed for all. But some are going the extra mile. So obviously, use of technology is going to gather momentum. Investments that were earlier deferred will now be quickly raised. **Niranjan Hiranandani, co-founder & MD, Hiranandani Group**, says, “Technology has been a part of construction sites; the pandemic only enhanced its importance. Labour shortage, especially the migrant category, has created a platform for construction technology and mechanisation to be a viable alternative. Most of our projects are integrated townships with high-rise structures, so technology has been an important component at our sites. Technology is the ‘new fuel’ and companies have to increase technology adoption to stay industry relevant, competitive and effective.”

Information technology has emerged as an important part of planning, architecture and designing and also quality control. Construction cranes, reusable aluminium shuttering, use of precast or prefab walls – all of these, and other similar measures, will lead to construction that is sustainable, quicker, safe and precise.

With an approach of ‘better late than later’, real estate developers have gradually started to utilise new technology at construction sites. **Chintan Sheth, director, Ashwin Sheth Group**, says, “Adopting construction technology helps