News update

E-Registration for property agreements begins

The Inspector General of Registration (IGR), Maharashtra, in association with the Department of Registration & Stamps, has officially launched the Online E-Registration of Property Agreements. The launch event was held at Hiranandani Fortune City, Panvel, which became the first real estate project in Maharashtra to implement this progressive system. This innovative digital framework allows for the complete online registration of property agreements—removing the need for physical visits to Sub-Registrar Offices (SROs). Under the new system, all key steps such as agreement drafting, Aadhaar-based e-KYC, biometric verification, payment of stamp duty and registration charges, and final agreement registration are executed securely through a digital platform.

Insights by Equirus Capital

The Indian real estate sector is witnessing growth across segments according to Equirus Capital, the investment banking firm. Residential, commercial, retail, hospitality, and SEZ spaces are witnessing strong demand, backed by urbanization, and rising investments. India has emerged as a high growth, cost-effective office space destination. The office rentals, as of Q3CY24 for Mumbai and Bengaluru were the most competitive among global cities.

hansgrohe presents Raindance Alive

Raindance Alive, a new offering from the house of hansgrohe combines architectural design, wellness, and ecological innovation. With three spray modes it merges hansgrohe's globally trusted performance with its commitment to sustainable water use.

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Consulting Editor: **Vijay Pandya**

Connect with nature via biophilic design

Leveraging this approach reduces stress by harnessing the benefits provided by natural light, greenery, and open spaces

Dr. Malini Saba

Life in Mumbai and the extended Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) doesn't stop. Described as the 'city that never sleeps,' it more than lives up to that description, which has spread outwards covering all its peripheral areas as well. Visit any part of the MMR, the streets roar all day. The public transport facilities, be they local trains or buses are packed.

There are certain locations where the rising buildings come up so close adjacent to each other that it feels as if you can almost touch the next one by extending a hand outside the window. Walking outside, sometimes it feels like Mumbai the city and the MMR are pressing in from every side.

Step inside your home or office and the first thing you need is a moment to breathe. A slice of sunlight when you wake up in the morning after a late night at work. A plant on the balcony to soothe your tired eyes. A deck or mini terrace where you can step out and just stand for a minute.

These little things change how you feel, really. Biophilic design isn't about fancy gardens or Instagram corners. It's about small touches that make life softer, calmer, and more human.

Differentiator

Light makes a difference. Sunlight wakes you up. Not just your eyes, your whole body. Even a small window in a cramped apartment can make the space feel alive. A patch of sun on the floor in the morning, warm and shifting as you sip your chai, can change your mood for the day.

Offices feel it too: a bright corner in a meeting room, sunlight spilling into a lounge. People sit straighter. They smile. Something as simple as light can lift spirits without anyone saying a word.

Greenery

Plants slow you down; a vine climbing a wall, herbs on a windowsill, a potted tree on a terrace, even a tiny courtyard with a few plants in an apartment complex makes a difference. Mumbai is concrete-heavy, so any bit of green is a relief.

Shared terraces, small rooftop gardens, even a single planter in a hallway – it's enough to make people pause, breathe, and smile. You don't need a huge garden. Just life showing up where it usually doesn't.

Spaces

Space is rare in Mumbai. And yet, it's everything. Courtyards, terraces, and jogging tracks – they let people move, meet neighbours, or just take a quiet moment. Offices with terraces or open layouts feel lighter. Less boxed in and more alive.

Even a simple bench under a tree can become a little sanctuary. Kids run. Adults chat. People watch the sky. It's calm in a city that rarely slows down.

Planning

Biophilic design isn't sprinkling plants randomly. It's thinking ahead. Where does sunlight fall? How does air move? How will people actually use the space? A tree near a bench. A fountain on a terrace. A corner seat by the window. Small touches make a huge difference.

Mumbai is tricky: narrow streets, heavy monsoons, and high density. A tiny courtyard can feel open and calm if designed with care. That thoughtfulness is everything.

Advantages

Homes and offices with sunlight, air, and greenery are not just nice; they're in demand. People will pay for them. Developers benefit too: places feel inviting, sell faster, and communities come alive. Everyone wins when buildings respect the people inside them.

Balance

Mumbai doesn't have to feel like a concrete jungle. A sunny corner in the living room. A few plants on the balcony. A shared terrace to walk through. Tiny, simple pauses. They make a world of difference.

Sunlight, green plants, a place to stand and just breathe – these aren't luxuries. In a city that never stops, they are necessities that can rejuvenate you. Your home becomes a safe haven where you can switch off, relax and recharge.

The writer is a self-made businesswoman, philanthropist, psychologist, fitness enthusiast, author, environmentalist, passionate culinarian, and a global advocate for women, girls, and human rights, with a keen interest in real estate, business innovation, and women's empowerment.

Cementing long-term real estate growth

The recent announcements on GST have positive implications for home seekers; real estate analysts explain the benefits

Prerna Mistry

As Dussehra draws near, home seekers have brighter smiles and greater expectations for booking their dream home this year. The peak festive season phase is all set to offer them a sweeter deal thanks to some of the decisions taken at the 56th meeting of the GST Council held on September 3, 2025. Let's examine some of the benefits we can look forward to, as shared by real estate analysts and association heads.

Dr. Samantak Das, Chief Economist and Head of Research & REIS, India, JLL, explaining the significance of the announcement, said, "In India, developers do not get the full benefit of Input Tax Credit (ITC) in real estate and hence the high GST rate on cement, currently at 28%, adds to the final apartment cost. The government's decision to bring down the GST rate to 18% is a welcome move. The impact of this reduction in rate will vary across different segments of the real estate market"

According to him, the residential segment being a strong driver of Indian real estate, understanding of the impact on home price is important. "From our ground level data pertaining to live projects, we believe the reduction of home price may range between 1-1.5%, considering various types of residential projects and effective cement cost reduction considering the cascading and base price adjustments. This is with the assumption that developers would transmit the entire benefit to the customer."

Dr Niranjan Hiranandani, Chairman, Hiranandani and NAREDCO National, opined, "The GST rationalization is a festive bonanza for Indian consumers and a strategic boost for the economy. For the real estate and infrastructure sectors, the reduction of GST on critical construction materials like cement and steel from 28% to 18% is a landmark reform. This will significantly ease input costs, improve project viability, and accelerate infrastructure development across the country. Affordable housing, in particular, stands to gain as reduced construction costs can be passed on to home buyers, making homes more accessible while supporting the government's Housing for All vision. This rationalization is not just a boost for developers—it is a win-win for consumers, the housing sector, and India's long-term growth story."

G Hari Babu, National President of NAREDCO, emphasised, "Lower GST on key materials like cement and steel will directly reduce costs. Projects will become more viable and progress faster. Affordable housing will gain the most, as reduced construction costs can be passed on to home buyers. Announced during the festive season, it will lift consumer sentiment and create fresh demand. This is a win-win for consumers, the real estate sector, and the nation's growth story."

Vikas Jain, President, NAREDCO Maharashtra NextGen, said, "Simplifying tax slabs also brings much-needed clarity and predictability—essential for innovation in design, sustainable developments, and faster deliveries. If suppliers pass on these savings, home buyers stand to benefit considerably."

The stage is set for a fabulous 2025 festive season with hopes of concrete expectations coming true.

IGBC hosts Green Mumbai Summit 2025

The one-day focused event paved the way for a climate-resilient and sustainable city

SheetalS Patil

The Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), part of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), hosted the second edition of the Green Mumbai Summit 2025 at Mumbai. This year's summit revolved around the theme, "Advancing Climate Resilience: Decarbonizing the Built Environment," reflecting the need to create a sustainable, low-carbon, and climate-resilient Mumbai amid mounting environmental challenges.

The summit convened a diverse group of stakeholders including policymakers, urban planners, architects, real estate developers, industry leaders, academia, and sustainability advocates. The discussions centred on how Mumbai can accelerate its efforts to decarbonize its built environment to meet India's Net Zero mission by 2070 under the Panchamrit Abhiyan, focusing on innovative urban planning, green construction, and integrated climate strategies.

A strong collaboration and participation from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation (KDMC) was the event's highlight. This partnership showcased shared commitments to implementing green infrastructure projects, renewable energy integration, sustainable waste management, and nature-positive urban planning across the Mumbai metropolitan region. Both municipal bodies presented concrete steps toward embedding climate resilience into city governance and operations, highlighting a metropolitan-wide approach to achieving sustainability goals through coordinated local action.

The summit's inauguration witnessed Avinash Kate, Dy. Municipal Commissioner, BMC and Krunal Negandhi, Member CM's Task Force on Environment and Climate Change along with Thomas Fritzsche, Founder and Head of Design, Thomas Fritzsche Architects; Dr. Mala Singh, Chairperson, IGBC Mumbai Chapter; Chitranjan Kaushik, Co-Chair of IGBC Mumbai Chapter; and M Anand, Deputy Executive Director, Indian Green Building Council who set the context.

Elaborating on the BMC's Vision for Sustainable Urban Planning and Greening Mumbai, Avinash Kate, emphasised that "At BMC, our vision for Greening Mumbai is rooted in making sustainable urban planning a reality. We recognize that buildings and real estate contribute significantly to emissions and transforming the new buildings while retrofitting the existing buildings is key to achieving our net zero goals. With the support of IGBC, we are committed to driving low-carbon design, innovative materials, and future-ready development practices, ensuring that Mumbai grows as a greener, healthier, and more liveable city for generations to come."

Dr. Mala Singh, Chairperson, IGBC Mumbai Chapter, emphasized the Indian Green Building Council's commitment to green Mumbai and accelerating the green building adoption across the country in the coming years.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's G/South Ward Office was conferred the IGBC Gold Certification under the Green Existing Buildings Rating System. It achieved this distinction through sustainable measures such as installing water-efficient fixtures that saved 48% potable water, implementing a 10 KLD on-site Sewage Treatment Plant that treated all wastewater, and harvesting 100% of available run-off.

Micro moves retain mega value

Maintaining facilities and ensuring preparedness in safety measures can enhance resale values

Ar. Amish Mistry

In my previous article titled "Making Mumbai Future-Ready," we explored how the city thrives as a network of living ecosystems—Economic Activity, Culture, Innovation, and Human Potential. Now, let's zoom in on the foundational layer that keeps these ecosystems strong, while simultaneously enhancing their value: our apartments and the project in which they are situated.

The resilience of a city begins at the residential project level. With nearly 80–85% of property registrations in Mumbai being residential, apartment projects form the largest slice of the city's built environment. From emergency drills and rainwater harvesting to shared health resources and sustainable practices, what you do at the apartment level ripples outwards. Not only does it help in strengthening neighbourhoods, and creating collective security, but also goes a long way in enhancing property values. As one Mumbai realtor put it, "Preparedness ensures peace of mind—and peace of mind always fetches a premium."

As Warren Buffett wisely put it, "Price is what you pay. Value is what you get." Preparedness ensures that an apartment delivers lasting value—something buyers instinctively recognize and are willing to pay a premium for.

Most of the apartment projects in Mumbai are constructed by reputed corporates and builders, who ensure that the premises are retrofitted with crucial amenities like dedicated security systems, rainwater harvesting, proper segregated waste disposal and even renewable energy generation through solar and micro wind turbines for a substantial amount of onsite energy requirements.

Add healthcare, urban farming, safety drills, and other proactive practices to the basic mix of ready amenities, and you have the perfect recipe for a future-proof living habitat—a self-sufficient mini-community that is decentralized to a certain extent by considerably meeting its basic needs for food, water, energy, and security. Needless to say, the more future-prepared an apartment, the more premium it fetches.

Preparedness

Historical events, such as the Chennai floods of 2015, demonstrate that communities with emergency supplies were able to support themselves and neighbouring areas.

Emergency Kits: Stock torches, medicines, dry food, and portable chargers.

Evacuation Drills: Ensure all residents, including children and the elderly, know fire or earthquake protocols.

Rainwater Harvesting: Collecting and recharging rainwater reduces flooding and improves citywide water security.

Case Study: Bengaluru's Rainbow Drive Layout uses rainwater harvesting and recharge wells to sustainably meet its water needs. Apartments with such infrastructure are viewed as forward-thinking, resilient investments, boosting market value.

As three-time Indianapolis 500 champion Bobby Unser once remarked, "Success is where preparation and opportunity meet." Though he spoke of racing, his words capture the essence of community resilience—victory belongs to those who prepare before the challenge arrives.

Preparedness is the first step toward property resilience and market desirability.

Conversion

Resilience sells and enables transforming readiness into value. Preparedness is more than survival—it's a strategy to thrive. Communities that plan and practice readiness act like well-coordinated teams: resources are organized, roles are clear, and responses are swift.

The ancient strategist Sun Tzu noted, "In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity." For apartments, this means that what begins as a safety measure—emergency kits, evacuation drills, or secure infrastructure—becomes a market opportunity, raising property desirability and resale value.

Benefits that increase property value:

- Transform fear into readiness
- Turn isolation into togetherness
- Convert uncertainty into opportunity

Preparedness builds trust, confidence, and long-term well-being, making such apartment projects highly sought-after in the market.

Teamwork

When residents plan and act collectively, collaboration becomes second nature. Apartment drills, shared resource management, and residents' skills directories transform neighbours into active contributors. A society that works as a team is not only safer but also more marketable to potential buyers.

Safety

Secure apartments attract buyers. Well-maintained fire extinguishers, monitored CCTV, and resident-led neighbourhood watches are assets, not luxuries. For example, a society in Pune reduced petty thefts by 70% with a resident-led watch backed by technology. Safety like this directly enhances property value, creating peace of mind for residents and buyers alike.

Sustainability

Preparedness extends to smart, eco-conscious living:

1. Waste Segregation and Composting: Creates zero-waste communities

2. Solar Panels and Micro Wind Turbines: Lower electricity costs and carbon footprints

3. Urban Farming: Turns terraces or podiums into fresh food sources and social hubs

Apartments that adopt rainwater harvesting, renewable energy, and urban farming are clearly choosing the path of lower risk and higher returns—financially, socially, and environmentally. Communities with visible sustainability measures are premium investments because they signal foresight and reduced running costs.

Wellbeing

Healthy communities are attractive communities. Apartments can foster well-being through:

- Medical directories of nearby hospitals, doctors, and pharmacies
- Health camps, yoga, and fitness sessions
- First-aid workshops

These practices increase market value, as buyers associate health-conscious communities with safety and convenience. Effective communication is key. Messaging groups, resident skills directories, and volunteer networks create micro-resilient units. Residents with specialized skills—doctors, electricians, IT professionals—become local heroes.

Cohesive communities are safer, more desirable, and often command higher resale or rental premiums. Prepared apartments are not just safer—they are smarter investments. Every apartment that invests in safety, sustainability, and community becomes a premium, future-proof property.

The writer is a Mumbai-based architect with over 30 years of experience and a mentor at leading architecture institutes