

PROFWRITER
Kausar Firdausi



ON THE TRACK **FAST**

Opening of the KMP Expressway will decongest a major chunk of vehicular traffic in Delhi and Gurugram and become the enhanced real estate destination for investments with a bright future for high returns

If improved connectivity is the thumb rule for the development of any state, too much traffic density creates not just traffic jams but it also impacts the living standards of any urban conglomeration. For the National Capital Region (NCR), traffic going through Delhi has always faced a speed slow-down while passing through Delhi, it also created a nuisance for the capital city. The recent inauguration of the much-awaited 135-km-long Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) Expressway will not just enhance the connectivity of Gurugram with other parts of the NCR, but also decongest the heavy traffic of Delhi.

Given this situation, Niranjan Hiranandani, president, NAREDCO, is of the view that the last leg of the KMP Expressway will play a major role in two different aspects: on one hand, it will speed up traffic passing through the NCR which now, will not have to pass through Delhi; and on the other hand, will help decongest the capital city's traffic. This will have a positive impact on real estate development in Delhi as also the peripheral areas of the NCR, while helping reduce automobile-cased pol-

lution in the capital.

Also known as the Western Peripheral Expressway, this 135 km-long Expressway originates from Kundli (near Sonapat) and connects Palwal (near Faridabad) through Manesar (near Gurugram). It connects four highways - NH-1, NH-2, NH-8, and NH-10 in Haryana.

The inauguration of the Expressway comes at a time when NCR residential real estate needs some serious booster shots to up its flagging game. "Any infrastructure initiative of such a scale always gets touted to be a game-changer for the real estate market of the concerned areas and regions," says Santhosh Kumar, vice chairman, Anarock Property Consultants.

Positive aspects

The peripheral realty markets of Gurugram and Delhi will benefit immensely from the opening up of this Expressway. "It will not only ease traffic but also create more demand for housing and most other real estate assets, including warehousing and logistics. Other than these, cities like Sonapat, Kundli, Manesar, Bahadurgarh, Palwal and Faridabad are also likely to see a boost in demand," adds Kumar. These areas are already witnessing a bump in property prices since the opening of the expressway.

"Connecting four major highways and three states, KMP being one of the major expressways, will lead to a substantial growth in the adjoining areas,"

says Anupam Varshney, head sales & marketing, Vatika Limited. Elaborating on the same, Ashish Sarin, director and CEO, AlphaCorp says, "Both residential and commercial set-ups around the stretch are likely to witness the high rate of appreciation because of seamless connectivity among the regions. The stretch will not only cheer the developers and the homebuyers but also the real estate market in NCR as a whole."

According to Kumar, one of the immediate impacts of this mega infra project will be enhanced economic activity in areas along the expressway. For instance, areas north of Delhi that had already become hubs for logistics and ware-

housing are likely to see spiked industrial investments in various sectors. These will include biotechnology, automobile, IT, petrochemicals, BPOs, food processing and healthcare projects. "This will help in create more than two lakh job opportunities in the region over the next two to three years," further informs Kumar.

Already, the Haryana government plans to build five new cities along both sides of the expressway comprising industrial, economic, commercial and residential developments. Kamal Taneja, MD, TDI Infra-corp, a major realty player in Kundli region, believes that apart from industrial and economic development in the region along the expressway



there would be surplus investment opportunities. "With the enhanced connectivity in Northern Haryana & NCR and increasing infrastructure in the state, people will tend to invest in the properties in both the regions making a positive impact on the real estate sector," avers Taneja.

Besides economic development, affordable housing in markets like Kundli, Sonapat, Manesar will gain more traction as inadequate connectivity with key areas in the national capital, Gurugram, etc. will no longer be a deterrent.

Potential price appreciation

Anarock data suggests that post the opening of the stretch between Manesar to Palwal in 2016, property prices in Palwal appreciated by between 12 and 17 per cent from 2016 till date. "Given the present scenario wherein real estate in NCR is seeing some pick-up, one can expect 10-15 per cent growth over the next two years in the benefitting areas along the Expressway," adds Kumar.

Manesar, being an industrial town has transformed from a sleepy village to one of the fastest-growing townships in India, has great potential. In its vicinity, New Gurgaon is the most upcoming destination in the NCR. "The average residential rate in New Gurgaon is around ₹4,900 per sq.ft., with little variation in the past one year. It is expected that the property rates will propel with many upcoming projects.



Other areas such as Palwal, Sonapat, Kundli, and Manesar have residential rates between ₹2,000 and ₹3,500 per sq.ft. will also experience a rise in market rate," adds Sarin.

As per Pankaj Bajaj, president, CREDAI-NCR, not only Kundli is well connected to Manesar and Gurugram industrial belt, even the airport is an easy drive away. "We expect an immediate fillip to the real estate market in Kundli. A lot of people will find it easy to live here and commute to Gurugram," affirms Bajaj.

As planned, Kundli is also set to get a metro link with the extension of Delhi Metro. These investments will create nearly 1.5-2 lakh direct and indirect jobs in this region in the coming time. "With a fast-paced infrastructure development and modern lifestyle projects comprising residential, commercial, industrial and educational

set-ups coming up along the KMP Expressway, the area will soon become the major real estate hub of NCR, particularly sectors 82 - 83 of the region," asserts Rahul Singla, director Mapsko Group.

What's upside down?

With reference to real estate we may not see an immediate impact on the economy. This project will have a long-term impact only if the government takes further initiatives. "The Haryana government has been in talks to create industrial townships along the KMP. So, if that happens then we may see a positive impact on the economy and real estate. This initiative might further improve employment and economic conditions with more businesses coming up and people buying houses. emphasises Mudassir Zaidi, executive director, North, Knight Frank India.

