

NRI ties up with London firm for Bengal mini-townships

Foreign investment in the booming real estate sector of West Bengal gets a boost with a London-based company joining hands with an NRI entrepreneur to invest \$20 million in two mini-townships here.

London-based REIT Asset Management, which plans to create \$1 billion assets in India in the next three years, has tied up with Eden Realty Ventures Private Limited, led by US-based Indrajit De, to set up the projects at Bonhooghly in north and Maheshtala in south in greater [Kolkata](#) area.

'The cash investment in the two project is 20 million USD besides collaterals for bank finances,' Eden Realty managing director Sachchidanand Rai told IANS.

'REIT India chairman David Cohen finalised three projects in India out of 140 proposals and of the three two are developed by us here,' said Rai, an alumnus of IIT Kharagpur.

REIT, the London-based real estate management trust, owns 6.8 billion USD worth assets in Europe. The twin project in Kolkata in collaboration with Eden is their maiden venture with an Indian partner since their other project at Pune is a 100 percent FDI.

According to David Cohen, the chairman of REIT property Management India, the projects are the beginning of 'a long-standing relationship with the state and the city'.

'We are proud to be associated with REIT,' said Indrajit De, the NRI entrepreneur, from USA.

Rai said of the two projects in Kolkata might be the state's highest cash investment in the form of FDI by any foreign company on real estate.

In the northern project at Bonhooghly, to be known as Bonhooghly Tenement Scheme, 18 acres of area would be developed after the same was obtained from the West Bengal government's Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation Department.

'We will be giving about 800 flats free to the equal number of refugee families living there now in a deplorable state. The flats would be much bigger than they are living now and they would also be provided open parking space for 200 cars besides community facilities like club, gym, treated water, good sewerage.

'While 6 acres would be for rehabilitation with not even stamp duty fee, the remaining 12 acres would be commercially developed with 25 tall buildings offering 1476 flats. We will also beautify the lake inside,' said Rai.

In the southern project at Mahestala, which is a joint venture with Mahestala Municipality, 21.22 acres of land has been acquired near Nungi station on the Kolkata outskirts to build 2240 MIG flats in 44 buildings, said Rai.

'We are also offering a full fledged football ground, a centre for sports, science and culture to be donated to the municipality. We have also proposed to build a 2.5 km road in the area besides widening a 5 km stretch of road,' he said.

'Our aim is to develop through innovations. We want to come forward with deep projects,' said Rai.

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