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CoreNet Global Reveals the Top Ten Issues Facing Corporate Real Estate Professionals in India

*Increased building security and workplace safety cited
as the main challenge facing the industry today*

MUMBAI - 10 October 2011 — Identifying the top priorities and challenges facing India's corporate real estate (CRE) leaders was the main focus of discussions at CoreNet Global's latest Discovery Forum held in Mumbai earlier this week.

Attended by some of the country's leading CRE professionals, participants were asked to identify the most significant issues that they face over the next 12 months. Overwhelmingly, the majority of corporate real estate heads noted that calls for increased building security and improved workplace vigilance continue to prove one of the most pressing concerns confronting their organizations in the year ahead.

"Unquestionably, the Mumbai attacks of 2008 and the events of 9/11 have facilitated corporate real estate change in India," says Rajesh (R.K.) Mutreja, General Manager CRE of Hindustan Unilever Ltd., an attendee at the Discovery Forum. "There is now heightened concern over workplace security and safety. In fact, it is not uncommon for employees and visitors to be subjected to security checks when they enter landmark buildings in India. However, people generally understand the need for improved workplace safety so it is not perceived negatively."

From a CRE perspective, Discovery Forum attendee Captain K. Srinivas, MCR, VP-Global Real Estate and Facilities Management of Aditya Birla Minacs, comments that such attacks have without a doubt made Indian property managers and developers more aware of the need for better ways to protect their occupants, assets and buildings. “Previously, responsibility for building security fell under the facilities management organizational model for many companies. However, today it falls under risk management and there are Information security teams who engage closely with CRE/Facilities Managers in managing this from an organizational risk aspect,” he adds.

“A further consequence is that investment in building security has also increased in India and is now part of a process of integrated security solutions that are designed at the outset. We are also seeing a few companies partnering with the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) on issues concerning building design and security,” says Srinivas. “There is also greater level of integrated planning and knowledge sharing between the Government security forces and the corporate on matters relating to Security”.

Aside from the issue of workplace safety and security, participants were also asked to rate other key challenges that they face in order of importance. The CRE professionals revealed their top 10 concerns as follows:

- 1) Safety and security at the workplace;
- 2) Optimization of their real estate portfolio;
- 3) Trepidations arising from lack of vision due to unpredictable market conditions;
- 4) Requirements for greater flexibility in business transactions with landlords;
- 5) Shortage of CRE talent in the market and staff retention;
- 6) The rise of new technology and its incorporation into the workplace;
- 7) Challenges resulting from the inadequacies of existing building infrastructures;
- 8) The need to redesign office work zones to support trends towards more mobile workforces;
- 9) Embracing sustainable practices versus managing the costs associated with going green;
- 10) The need for more effective strategies to manage change.

When asked if the marketplace in Mumbai is landlord or tenant driven, the answers were mixed, however, all participants were in agreement that ultimately it depends on individual circumstances and the companies concerned.

“For example, it was cited that there are four or five companies in India who do plan ahead and have the power to dictate the negotiation process with landlords,” notes David Heaton, Senior Research/Editorial Associate with CoreNet Global, who facilitated the Discovery Forum.



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CoreNet Global's Mumbai Discovery Forum is part of a series of events that the professional association holds in key regions around the world to track the top challenges facing the corporate real estate sector and how CRE executives successfully address them.

For more information on the issues facing the CRE sector in India in the coming year and potential response strategies, interested parties are invited to contact CoreNet Global's David Heaton at +1 (404) 589-3239, or at dheaton@corenetglobal.org for further details.

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Editor's Notes

CoreNet Global is the world's leading association for corporate real estate (CRE) and workplace professionals, service providers, and economic developers. Today, we operate in five global regions, namely Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America and North America.

Our 7,000 members, who represent nearly half of the Forbes Global 2000 and 70% of Fortune 100 companies, meet locally, globally and virtually to develop networks, share knowledge, learn and advance professionally.

Throughout the Asia-Pacific, we have active chapters operating across the region including Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore and the Philippines. For more information, please visit www.corenetglobal.org.