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Editor's Page:

# Performance Appraisal Time



## True Facts

As the financial year ends, the time is right for that small uncomfortable discussion with the boss.

Whatever is the result, usually both parties remain unsatisfied. The subordinate never gets what is desired and the boss always feels that too much has been done. Importantly the case gets worst when the employee has performed outstandingly well. Most of you who are reading this may not agree with the last line.

## Great Expectations

Yes, with increasing performance, expectations skyrocket. This is where things go wrong. Patients is very less. They want it immediately but the boss thinks that it is too early for promotion. The relationship breaks down.

Now see an example of an appraisal which did not go well.

**Don:** Sir, I have done very well & my performance is simply great. I definitely deserve the 3<sup>rd</sup> term.

**Boss:** Did you make our company great again? tell me what you have done?

**Don:** Sir, I disrupted the trade of the entire market?

**Boss:** So, did it gain us lots of great advantages in trade?

**Don:** No. I withdrew our company from all environmental friendly groups and saved time.

**Boss:** So is the earth a better place now?

**Don:** Eh., I removed 3<sup>rd</sup> gender in our company & created DOGE (Dept of general Efficiency)

**Boss:** And, what happened?, large layoffs, large hate messages on social media.

**Don:** Yes. But I also stopped the entire CSR funding that we were doing across the globe.

**Boss:** So, you saved a lot of money but I do not see any of it in the final numbers

**Don:** Because we are now spending much more in doing war with our competitors

**Boss:** Do, did we win the battle against them?

**Don:** No, it is still going on, I am not sure how to end it & the entire market is now suffering?

**Boss:** So, you don't deserve the 3<sup>rd</sup> term.

**Don:** If I get the 3<sup>rd</sup> term, I will also reinstate you as my boss.

No rewards for guessing who I am talking about in the above conversation.

Coming back to performance appraisal, I am completely against the annual appraisal system because it is a late reaction method. The boss can only recollect the latest performance of the last few months and his brain gets diverted on the short term incidences.

Secondly, only the sales team gets tangible targets & other get the non-tangible ones. This also is a wrong system.

Everybody in the company must get tangible targets, it can easily be done. I have done it. Let me know if you want me to do it for your company. I will be happy to oblige.

**Dr. Mandar Chitre**

Founder & Editor – Drycotec Diaries & Drycotec Drymortar Association.

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# Six dredging plans rejected for alleged sand mining link

Vijay.Singh @timesofindia.com

**Mumbai:** In a firm regulatory pushback, the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) has rejected six dredging proposals submitted by the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB), flagging concerns that the plans appeared to be driven by sand mining and risked violating coastal regulations.

At its 194th meeting, the authority reviewed proposals to clear and widen navigational channels across key creeks and rivers in the state, according to minutes recently uploaded.

The projects spanned Vasai Creek in Palghar and Thane districts, Dabhol Creek in Ratnagiri, Ulhas River in Thane, Patalganga Creek in Raigad, and the Bankot and Jaigad creeks in Ratnagiri – indicating a broader push to expand navigational access along Maharashtra's coastline.

Expert members of the MCZMA emphasised that sand mining is prohibited under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2019 and cautioned that the proposals must not be driven by sand extraction.

Concerns intensified after the MMB indicated that dredged sand would be auctioned in line with the state's sand policy. Members clarified that while dredging for navigational purposes is permissible, any extracted material should be used for sustainable coastal management, not commercial exploitation, the minutes state.

The authority reiterated that dredged material, if generated, must be utilised for ecological and coastal management purposes rather than for profit.

Environmental group NatConnect Foundation also raised objections. "We are dismayed that a govt-owned organisation like the MMB had planned projects that

could amount to prohibited sand mining. We appreciate the timely intervention by MCZMA's expert members – otherwise, this could have slipped through the coastal regulatory process," said di-

rector BN Kumar.

Following these objections, the MMB agreed to withdraw all six proposals and submit revised versions aligned with regulatory requirements. The projects

were subsequently withdrawn and delisted, the minutes show. The board is expected to present revised proposals at the MCZMA's next meeting scheduled for Wednesday.

## 'SAND DREDGING IMPACTS ECOSYSTEMS'



### REGULATORY STANCE

- > The Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) does not permit dredging driven by sand mining. Under CRZ 2019, sand mining is prohibited
- > A major concern was the proposal by the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB) to auction dredged sand as per state policy. The MCZMA rejected this, recommending its sustainable use within coastal plans instead
- > Dredging is allowed only for maintaining water channels, not for mining. Also, sand auctioning raises risks of commercial misuse

Vasai Creek (Palghar & Thane)

• Ulhas River (Thane)

• Patalganga Creek (Raigad)

Bankot Creek (Ratnagiri)

• Dabhol Creek (Ratnagiri)

Jaigad Creek (Ratnagiri)

RELEVANT WATER CHANNELS

### EFFECTS OF SILT DEPOSITION

- > Silt deposition can cause severe damage to the marine ecosystem, as it settles over fish breeding grounds and marine vegetation, which forms the primary food source for many marine species
- > Continuous accumulation of silt can also increase the risk of flooding, as low-lying areas get filled, while further disrupting fishing activities and impacting coastal biodiversity

Source: Sagar Shakti director Nandakumar Pawar

### EFFECTS OF RIVER SAND DREDGING



- > River sand dredging severely impacts ecosystems by increasing turbidity, disturbing soil layers and reducing groundwater recharge, while also causing flooding and erosion along riverbanks
- > It also leads to drowning incidents due to hidden cavities and unstable sand

“Any dredging for navigation must be strictly supervised and backed by scientific studies, though the integrity of such processes remains doubtful in the current environment of corruption

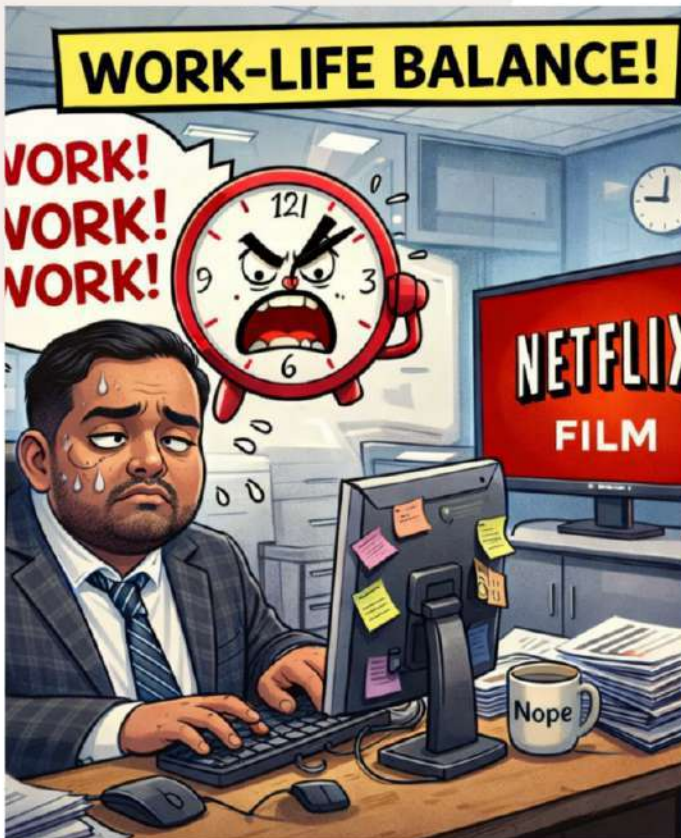
— JYOTI NADKARNI, CONVENOR, KHARGHAR WETLANDS AND HILLS FORUM

# MY LEADERSHIP DIARIES

## IS WORK-LIFE BALANCE A MYTH ?

BY PARTH PATEL

Parth Patel is a young business owner of the Amardeep Group. He is dynamic & thinks out of the box. Passionate about catalysing growth & fostering innovation, Thrives in dynamic environments where change is an opportunity for improvement. He is dedicated to elevating the performance & efficiency of teams.



**“When you genuinely love what you do, something strange happens, Time Disappears.”**

Most people will jump in and say, “Parth, be practical. Work-life balance is essential today” But what if I told you I don’t fully agree. Let me explain. I’ve seen 2 types of people.

**Type One** : The first type watches the clock. 9 AM to 5 PM. Their Weekend countdown starts on Wednesday. Work is something to “finish.” Their life begins after office hours.

**Type Two** : The second type? They don’t track time. They track progress. For them, work is not a duty. It’s not a burden. It’s not something to “manage.” It’s an obsession. A craft. A mission. When you genuinely love what you do, something strange happens : Time disappears.

Look at entrepreneurs. Look at top CXOs. Do you really think they switch off at 6 PM and stop thinking?, Even at dinner..., Even while watching TV..., Even during travel...

Their mind is connecting dots. Building the ideas. Solving the problems. Not because they have to. But because they want to.

Work stops feeling like “work.” It feels like a hobby that pays. A game you love playing. Now – I’m not saying ignore family. I’m not saying burn out. I’m not saying personal life doesn’t matter.

It absolutely does. But maybe the real truth is this: For highly driven people, there is no strict “balance.” There is integration.

Work and life are not two opposite sides. They blend into one meaningful journey. And maybe... just maybe..., When work doesn’t feel like work anymore – That’s when you’ve truly succeeded.

What do you think? Is work-life balance essential? Or is loving what you do the real secret?

**You don’t say, “I worked 12 hours.”**

**You say, “I built something meaningful today.”**



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# RMX SAND SOLUTIONS

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Our innovative RMX Sand Plant & Sand Dry Washing System addresses these challenges by providing a consistent supply of high-quality sand to support construction projects and Dry Mix Mortar plants. RMX Ties up with NPO center Belarus to bring a new dawn in the Sand Plant Industry.

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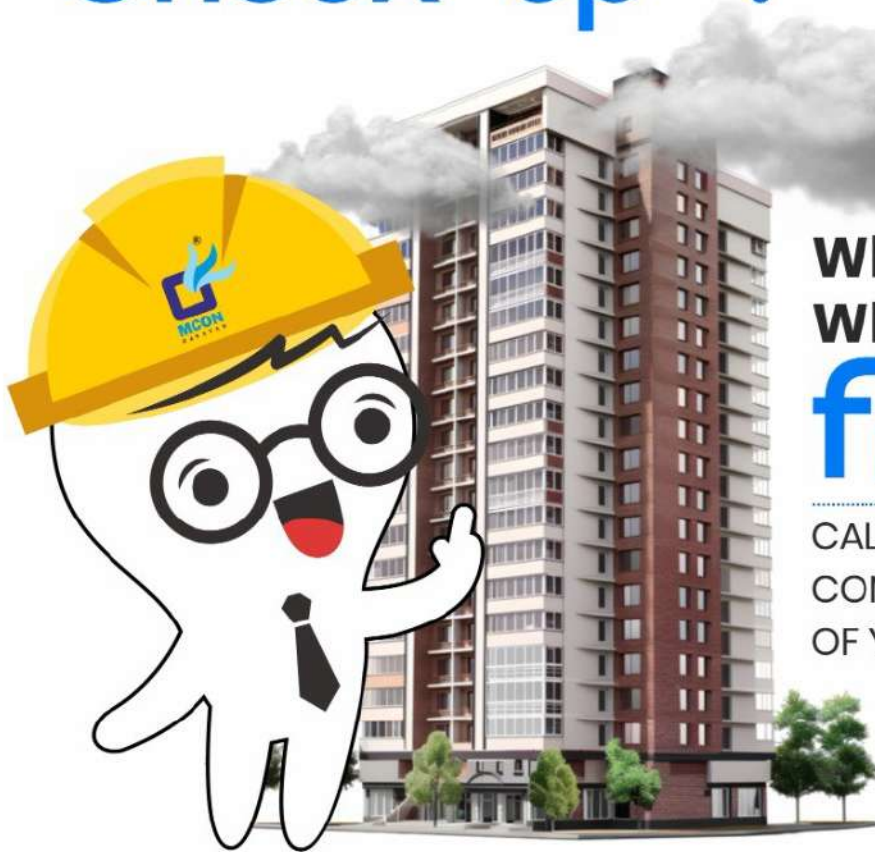
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*Abinash Mishra is a seasoned CEO and transformation leader with over 28 years of experience across cement, steel, paints, concrete, and allied building materials. An alumnus of IIT Bombay and Olin Business School, Washington University in St. Louis, he has led large-scale growth, turnarounds, and capital productivity initiatives across industrial and infrastructure ecosystems. He serves as an International Ambassador of the Management Strategy Institute, USA, and a Subject Matter Expert to NCRTC and other National Navaratna infrastructure agencies.*

For decades, volume was the safest metric in building materials. More tonnes meant scale. Higher utilization meant efficiency. Growing market share meant success. Boards felt reassured. Plants stayed busy. Leadership felt in control.

Today, that equation is breaking down. Across cement, concrete, boards, steel, and allied materials, companies are producing more than ever, yet earning less from every incremental tonne. This is not a temporary cycle. It is a structural reset.

### **When Volume Stops Creating Value**

Over the last decade, capacity expansion (building materials) has consistently outpaced demand growth. In India, the demand growth has averaged 5-6 % annually, capacity additions have ranged between 7 and 9 % & utilization appears stable at 60 to 70 percent on paper. Yet look at outcomes:

- Price realization growth has lagged input inflation by 150 to 300 basis points in years
- EBITDA margins have compressed despite higher volumes
- ROCE has declined as asset bases expanded faster than cash generation

In practical terms, companies added capacity, but diluted returns. Volume delivered scale. It did not deliver value.

### **Real Industry Patterns CEOs Recognize, consider three common industry scenarios.**

**Scenario 1: The High-Utilization Trap** A cement or board plant operates at 85 percent utilization. Volumes are strong. Yet net realization drops by ₹150 to ₹250 per tonne due to regional oversupply. The plant looks efficient. The business earns below its cost of capital.

**Scenario 2: The Market Share Illusion** A company gains 3 percent market share through aggressive pricing. Volumes rise 12 percent year-on-year. EBITDA grows only 2 percent. Working capital stretches. Management celebrates growth. Finance quietly worries.

**Scenario 3: The Expansion That Looked Strategic** A ₹800 to ₹1,200 crore expansion adds 1 to 1.5 million tonnes. Demand softens two years later. Utilization drops to 65 percent. Returns fall below hurdle rates. Capital gets locked for a decade.

None of these are operational failures. They are leadership allocation failures.

#### Why CEOs Fall Into the Volume Comfort Zone

- Volume feels controllable.
- Production can be pushed. Dealers can be incentivized. Plants can be sweated harder.
- Value is harder.

Pricing discipline requires walking away from business. Customer profitability requires saying no. Capital discipline requires resisting visible growth.

Volume also hides problems well.

- Weak portfolio choices
- Poor demand quality
- Misaligned incentives

For a time, volume buys comfort. Eventually, it buys constraint.

#### What Building Materials 4.0 Actually Demands

Building Materials 4.0 is not about automation alone. It is about shifting the center of gravity from production optimization to value orchestration. This means:

- Designing capacity around margin pools, not average demand
- Identifying the 20 to 30 percent of volumes that generate most economic value
- Using analytics to exit unprofitable segments faster
- Aligning incentives to contribution, not tonnage

Leading companies are already doing this quietly. They are producing less in some markets. They are earning more overall. That is not contraction. That is discipline.



# THE PROFIT LEVER IN INDIA'S GROWING DRY MIX INDUSTRY

The dry mix industry is scaling. Competition is rising.  
But here's the reality - **more production doesn't always mean more profit.**

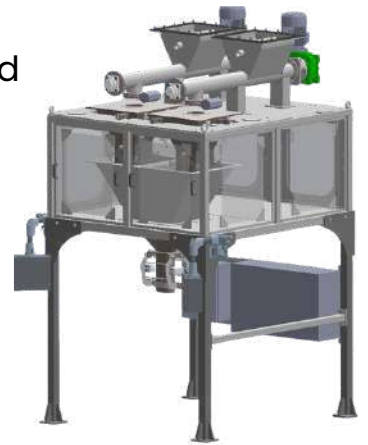
## The Hidden Loss Nobody Talks About

Bagging and packaging remain one of the most underrated profit leak points in dry mix plants.

- ! Extra grams = **lost revenue**
- ! Inconsistency = **lost trust**
- ! Inefficiency = **lost productivity**

What feels like a "safe margin" is often a **silent profit drain.**

With the **PMT 2.2 DUAL SCREW BAGGING SYSTEM**, bagging is no longer just an operational step it becomes a precision-driven profit lever.



VT Corp's PMT 2.2

**Output** : Up to 650-700 bags/hr depending on the product packed

**Accuracy**:  $\pm 50g$ , depending on the product

## VT Corp's PMT 2.2 Advantage

Built for **dry mix materials, powders, and granules**, handling **5-50 kg open-mouth bags**, the system delivers:

- ✓ **Up to 650-700 bags/hour**  
*High speed, without losing control*
- ✓ **Controlled accuracy**  
*Every gram measured. Every loss minimized*
- ✓ **Low dust, clean operation**  
*Less waste. Better environment*
- ✓ **Consistent output quality**  
*Same standard. Every bag*



With VT Corp's precision bagging:

- Every bag is accurate
- Every cycle is efficient
- Every gram is monetized

**MORE THAN MACHINES. A PACKAGING PARTNER.**



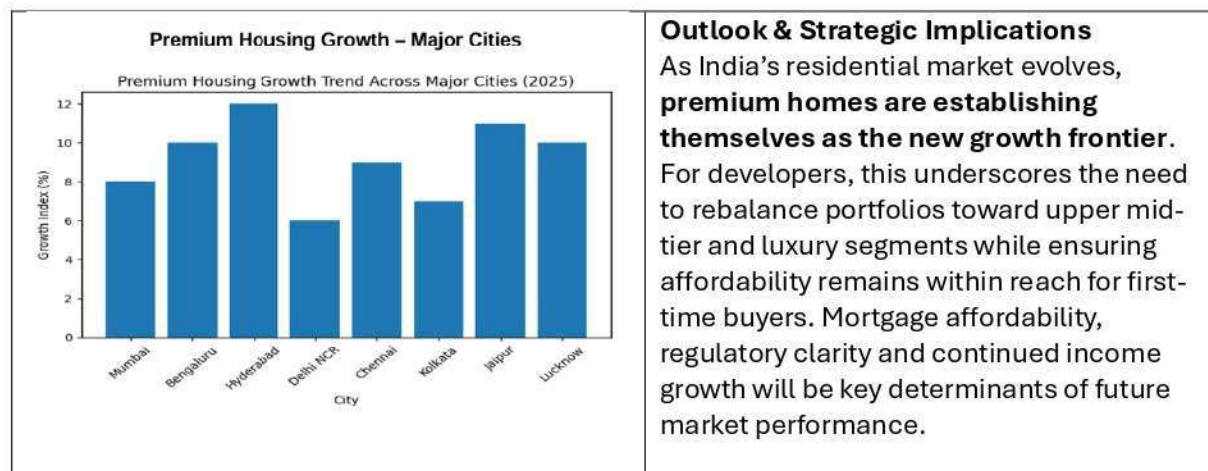
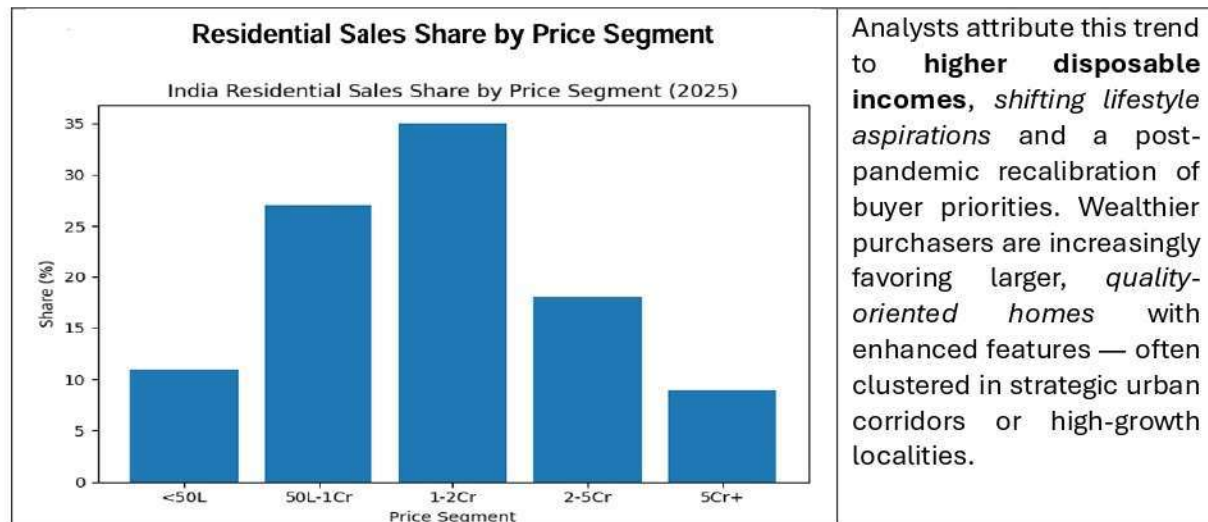
# My Real Estate Diaries : A Report by Baton Consultants

## Premium Homes Drive the Indian Residential Market: 2025–26 : An Outlook

In **2025**, India's residential real estate landscape witnessed a *distinct structural shift*, with **premium homes taking centre stage** as demand for affordable housing softness persists. Across the top eight cities — from **Mumbai** and **Delhi NCR** to **Bengaluru**, **Hyderabad**, **Chennai** and **Kolkata** — high-value homes now account for a growing share of sales, reflecting changing buyer preferences and broader socio-economic dynamics.

### The Premiumization Trend

According to recent reports, homes priced **above ₹1 crore now represent about 50% of total residential sales across India's major cities**, a significant rise from prior years and a strong indicator of market premiumization. In contrast, sales of units priced **below ₹50 lakh declined sharply**, as first-time and entry-level buyers become more cautious, weighed down by affordability constraints.



## City-Wise Snapshot: Micromarkets and Momentum

**Mumbai:** India's costliest real estate hub remains resilient. Latest data show **97,000+ units sold in 2025**, with steady sales even at premium ticket sizes. Demand is notably strong in the **₹1.5–3 crore bracket**, where ~32% of buyer activity is concentrated, while developers focus inventory on upper mid-tier segments.

**Bengaluru:** The tech-driven engine of southern India continues to attract homebuyers, with steady prices and robust premium absorption. PropTiger reports suggest **price growth in Bengaluru outpaces many metros**, underpinned by IT-sector employment and healthy end-user demand.

**Hyderabad:** Emerging as a standout market, the city's residential sales remain upbeat with buyers embracing higher ticket homes. Premium units in Hyderabad have witnessed **a noticeable uptick in interest**, outpacing affordable segments as growth momentum broadens.

**Delhi NCR:** The capital region continues to be pivotal but shows **softening in the entry-level price bands**, with volume contraction sharper in lower ticket categories while premium homes moderate the overall impact.

**Chennai & Kolkata:** Both markets display **measured growth**, with Chennai recording double-digit sales gains and Kolkata showing *a strong premium share*, particularly in South Kolkata — where upscale developments account for over half of new supply.

**Tier-II Cities (Jaipur, Lucknow, etc.):** Alongside metros, emerging urban centers like **Jaipur, Lucknow and others** are attracting developer interest and investors seeking value opportunities. Government infrastructure drives and lifestyle improvements have boosted real estate prospects in several Tier-II cities even as overall unit sales face headwinds.



In a landscape where **premium demand is unmistakably driving sales value**, understanding localized city dynamics — whether in Mumbai's high-end corridors or Bengaluru's tech suburbs — is paramount for stakeholders aiming to align with the next phase of housing growth in India.

# Rising Crude Prices Spark Cost Concerns for Real Estate Sector

Developers flag indirect impact via higher fuel, logistics, input costs; effects to be seen in 1-2 qtrs

**Kallash Babar**

**Mumbai:** A sharp rise in global crude oil prices over the past two months is raising concerns in India's real estate sector, not for immediate input shocks but for its indirect impact on construction costs through fuel, logistics and related inputs. Brent crude has climbed from \$70-75 per barrel in early February to over \$105 in recent weeks, driven by escalating tensions in West Asia.

While core construction materials such as steel and cement have remained stable, developers said indirect cost pressures linked to fuel and logistics could build up if elevated crude prices persist.

"The recent geopolitical developments and volatility in global energy markets are creating some near-term supply-side adjustments for the real estate and construction sector in India," said Niranjan Hirandani, chairman of developers' body NAREDCO. "We are seeing selective pressures around logistics costs and certain raw materials such as steel, cement, aluminium and PVC products, along with intermittent supply constraints in segments like tiles manufacturing."

He said the industry has navigated similar cycles earlier and remains well positioned to adapt through efficient sourcing and cost management. If current conditions persist, input and logistics costs may edge up, though developers expect timelines and deliveries to remain on track.

Aluminium prices have risen 6-10% in recent weeks due to reduced imports from the Gulf and higher global prices amid the West Asia conflict. Steel prices have also increased on the back of higher energy, gas and logistics costs, pushing up façade and finishing expenses for developers.

"If crude remains elevated, the ripple effect through logistics and fuel-linked inputs will become visible, particularly across transportation, material handling and petrochemical-linked products," said Samyag M Shah, director, Marathon Nextgen Realty. "While there is no immediate disruption right now, sustained levels could gradually


## Ripple Effect

- Brent crude price up \$70-75 (early Feb) to \$105 driven by West Asia tensions 
- Fuel & logistics are 8-12% of total construction cost

## MATERIAL COST TRENDS

- Aluminium: Up by 6-10%
- Steel: Rising due to energy & logistics costs
- Cement: Prices stable for now 

## INDUSTRY VIEW

- Developers in wait-and-watch mode 
- No immediate pricing changes

push up project costs, prompting most players to revisit cost assumptions and pricing strategies."

Fuel and logistics account for an estimated 8-12% of construction costs, with diesel prices influencing raw material transportation and on-site machinery operations. Higher crude prices typically lead to increased freight rates, affecting delivery costs for cement, aggregates and finishing materials.

Industry executives said the impact is usually lagged, becoming visible over one to two quarters.

"It's not the first-order impact of crude, but the cascading effect through logistics and petrochemical-linked inputs like pipes, cables and fittings that developers are watching closely," said an industry analyst.

Developers may have to choose between absorbing higher costs to sustain sales momentum or passing them on to buyers, particularly in price-sensitive segments.

Most large developers are currently in a wait-and-watch mode, with no immediate changes to pricing.

"Unless crude sustains at these levels or moves higher, it's unlikely to trigger a sharp reaction. But if it does, cost assumptions for new launches may need recalibration," said another industry executive.



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## Polycarboxylate Ether (PCE) – India Market Overview (Drymortar Applications)

### 1. Product Overview

Polycarboxylate Ether (PCE) powder is a high-performance superplasticizer used in cement-based systems. It is a free-flowing, water-soluble polymer designed for dry-mix formulations such as non-shrink grouts, repair mortars, micro concrete, tile adhesives, and self-levelling compounds.

PCE powder enables high dispersion of cement particles and provides significant water reduction (up to ~30%), improving flowability, strength, and durability.

---

### 2. India Market Size & Growth

- India PCE market size (2024): ~USD 305–405 million
- Projected market size (2030+): ~USD 545 million+
- Expected CAGR: ~5–6%

#### Powder Segment Insight:

- Liquid PCE dominates (~75% share globally)
- Powder PCE is growing in dry mortar applications
- Estimated India PCE powder market: ~USD 30–80 million

---

### 3. Key Applications in Dry Mortar

- **Non-shrink grouts:** High flowability, reduced bleeding
  - **Repair mortars:** Improved adhesion and strength
  - **Micro concrete:** Self-compacting properties
  - **Tile adhesives:** Better open time and slip resistance
  - **Self-levelling flooring:** Smooth finish and high flow
-

## 4. Application Advantages

### Technical Benefits:

- High water reduction (20–30%) → higher strength
- Excellent flowability and self-compaction
- Improved cement dispersion
- Reduced shrinkage and cracking
- Lower dosage compared to conventional admixtures

### Commercial Benefits:

- Reduced cement consumption → cost savings
  - Consistent performance in dry-mix systems
  - Longer shelf life than liquid admixtures
  - Ideal for ready-to-use bagged products
- 

## 5. Market Trends

- Growth of ready-to-use dry mortars in India
  - Increasing demand for high-performance construction materials
  - Expansion in tile adhesives, repair systems, and grouts
  - Infrastructure development and urban housing driving demand
- 

## 6. Key Challenges

- Compatibility with different cement types
  - Raw material price volatility
  - Requirement of formulation expertise
- 

## Conclusion

PCE powder is a critical additive for modern dry mortar systems in India, enabling high-performance, durable, and cost-efficient construction materials. While smaller than the liquid segment, it is a fast-growing niche driven by the expansion of pre-packed construction chemicals and dry-mix mortar markets.

# ONE OF THE LARGEST PROFESSIONAL OEM (TOLL) MANUFACTURERS IN INDIA.



## END-TO-END BUILDING MATERIAL SOLUTIONS

18

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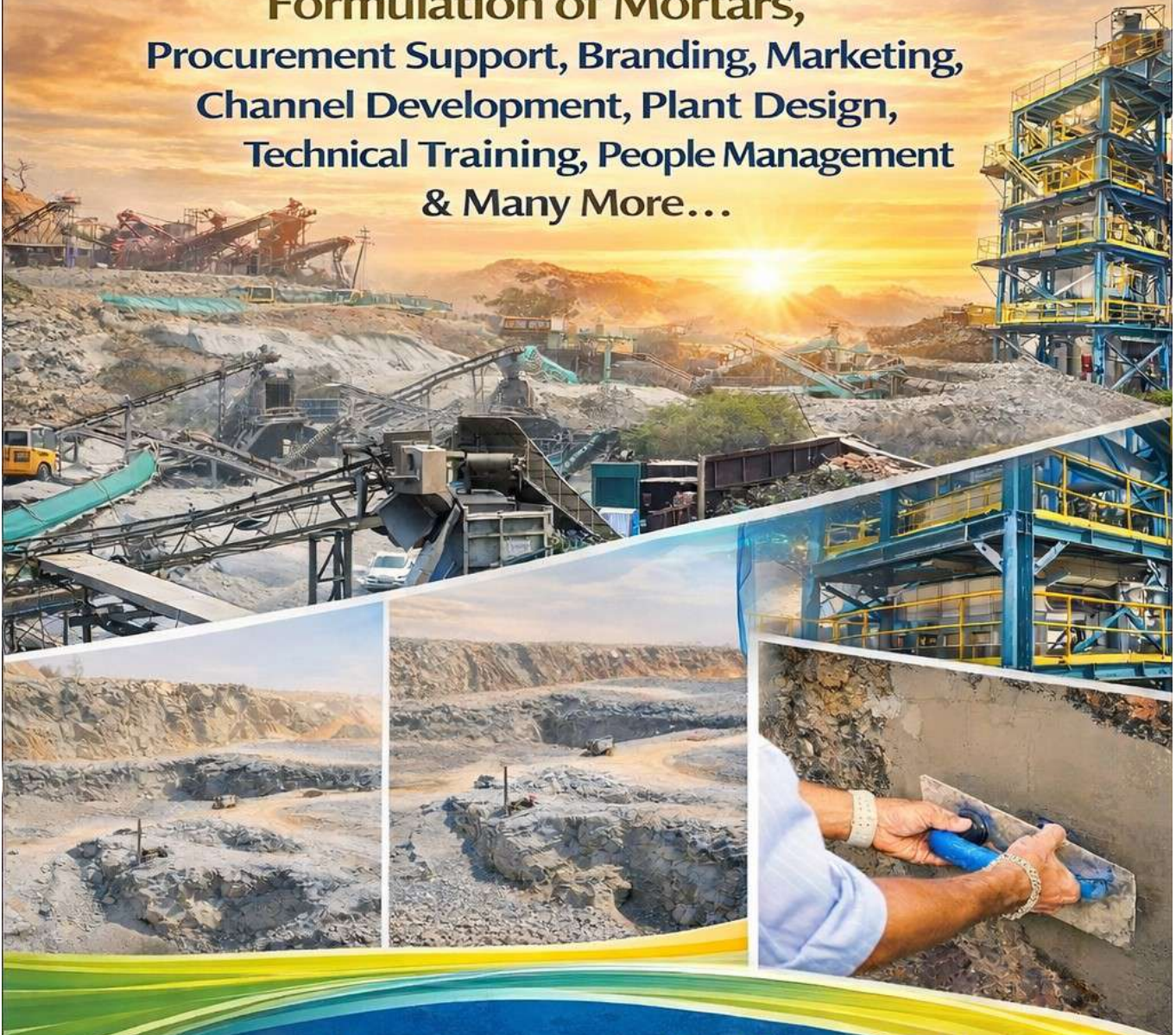
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