

VENTURE

Growing Old with Friends

The retirement homes sector is in its nascent stage in India. But the pandemic is changing that, and at the forefront is Max India's Antara Senior Living. **BY ARNIKA THAKUR**

TARA SINGH VACHANI wants her company to become an all-round platform for products and services for seniors in the long term. But for the next two-three years, Max India's Antara Senior Living will focus on the National Capital Region (NCR), says Vachani, Antara's executive chairman.

Established in 2013, Antara runs a residential community for seniors in Dehradun; it launched a similar project in Noida last year, which will eventually have about 500 apartments. Designed for older people, these residential properties provide healthcare facilities, wellness plans, and emergency response teams for senior residents. The company aims to have two more residential properties in the next five years, one of which will be in NCR. "The potential within India [and] the potential within NCR is huge," Vachani tells *Fortune India*.

The idea behind Antara, she says, is to allow seniors to age in a place where they can find like-minded people, activities, and support as they get older. "There were very few offerings for the ageing population and whatever existed was fragmented and disorganised; the huge gap in itself was validation that something needed to be done."

According to a report by the Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) released earlier this year, the number of people above the age of 60 in India will reach 319 million in 2050. According to the 2011 census, this population accounted for 8.6% of the total, or 103 million elderly people. The report also says that 75% of the elderly suffer from one or the other chronic disease, 40% have at least one disability, while 20% suffer from mental health-related issues.

Vachani, who is Max Group founder Anajit



CHANGING TIMES: Tara Singh Vachani wants her firm to be the main platform for seniors.

Singh's daughter, says that the Covid-19 pandemic pushed the demand for their residential vertical. "People realised during the lockdown that they were under-invested in their living ecosystems," she says.

The assisted living and retirement homes sector is still in its nascent stage in India, where traditional family structures mean that

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