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HD **China** demand to keep **property** booming
BY GREG BROWN
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THOUSANDS of **Chinese** investors piled into a **property** expo in Sydney's Town Hall at the weekend as analysts tipped overseas buyers would keep the city's inner-city **apartment** market booming for the next two years.

About 50 companies jockeyed for the attention of the cashed-up **Chinese** buyers, with **apartment** projects being spruiked by development giants Greenland Holding **Group**, MAB Corporation and Frasers **Property** Australia.

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The **property** frenzy came as Sydney and Melbourne kicked off the spring auction season with strong results, posting clearance rates of 83.4 per cent and 75.3 per cent respectively on total sales of \$545.7 million, according to preliminary figures released by Australian **Property** Monitors.

"The (auction) results were extraordinarily strong," said APM senior economist Andrew Wilson. "The Sydney market just keeps rising. Certainly there is no sign of a waning of activity." He said a lot of the buyer action was driven by investors rather than owner-occupiers.

At the Sydney **property** expo Maggie Wang bought a house in Bellevue Hill, in Sydney's east, for about \$6m.

Ms Wang, who migrated three years ago, ran an IT and **property** development **company** in **China** and had recently started a wedding planner business in Australia. She said **Chinese** interest in Australian **property** was about more than just making money.

"People like the lifestyle, the country and the environment, it's not just about investment," Ms Wang said.

Another buyer, 26-year-old Crystal, bought a home in one of Sydney's wealthiest suburbs, Vaucluse, for more than \$5m, with plans to **buy** more Australian investment properties.

The expo also featured agencies, such as ABC World, which give **Chinese** investors advice on migrating to Australia through avenues such as the Significant Investor Visa. The visa, implemented by the former federal Labor government, allows foreigners who invest more than \$5m in Australia the potential for permanent residency.

Black Diamondz director Monika Tu, who represents wealthy **Chinese** looking to **buy** Australian homes, said the visa's introduction had led to a surge in interest for local trophy homes worth more than \$5m.

Ms Tu said inquiries to her agency from **Chinese property** hunters had increased by about 50 per cent this year.

Also at the expo, one of **China**'s largest developers, Greenland Holding **Group**, held expressions of interest for its second local project, the \$200m Lucent **apartment** tower in North Sydney, while

Singaporean-backed Frasers **Property** Australia marketed apartments at its \$2 billion Central **Park** project at Sydney's inner-city Chippendale.

The high investor demand for off-the-plan apartments is expected to keep Sydney's inner-city market in boom mode for the next two years, according to forecaster BIS Shrapnel. BIS Shrapnel said about 5800 apartments were under construction in Sydney while about 11,500 new apartments would be completed over the next three years — the biggest number in the city's history. CBRE managing director of **residential** projects David Milton said the uplift in interest from **Chinese** investors allowed local **apartment** developments to stack up financially.

CO sgregc : Greenland Holding Group Company Limited

IN i5010022 : Residential Building Construction | i501 : Building Construction | iconst : Construction | icre : Real Estate/Construction | i5010021 : Land Development/Subdivision

NS ccat : Corporate/Industrial News

RE austr : Australia | china : China | sydney : Sydney | apacz : Asia Pacific | asiaz : Asia | ausnz : Australia/Oceania | bric : BRIC Countries | chinaz : Greater China | devgcoz : Emerging Market Countries | dvpcoz : Developing Economies | easiaz : Eastern Asia | nswals : New South Wales

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