



Urban Renewal Or Chaos Via Liberal City Master Plans

Dipayan Mazumdar & Associates, February 28, 2007

URL: <http://www.pr9.net/ent/education/5190february.html>

The cry of the visionaries of beautiful cities who profess by environment and concerns for living organisms of health, but not necessarily wealth, may well be understandable when they preach in all honesty and insist on being do gooders in the name of historic truths

PR9.NET February 28, 2007 - New Delhi - The cry of the visionaries of beautiful cities who profess by environment and concerns for living organisms of health, but not necessarily wealth, may well be understandable when they preach in all honesty and insist on being do gooders in the name of historic truths and tell us: Save the cities from the ravishers, land grabbers, builder mafias, vote bank politicians who are creating clusters of slums and occasionally settling them in new far away lands. The visionaries cannot be faulted on moral grounds or grounds of good governance, but if their lofty thoughts were carried out, what will happen: half of all the thousands towns and cities in 605 districts of 28 States and seven Union territories would be razed, regardless of the hue and cry, uproars, demonstrations and protests, leave alone fasts unto death, sit ins and law and order problems. Millions upon millions will be left out in the open in the upcoming summer, later monsoons and heavy rains and subsequent winter to fend for them or live or die as their fate proclaims.

The Master Plan of 2001-2027 for Delhi has been welcomed silently or criticized for ushering in urban chaos in the name of renewal of what is mistakenly believed to be a city with living organisms. New Delhi no doubt has a lot of good lungs. Even though it has been over the decades described as an overgrown village without a soul or culture, large parts of it remain what is a garden city, unlike perhaps any other in India.

Such harbingers of demolition squads were active during the Emergency from 1975 to early 1977. They were about to level the Yusuf Serai in New Delhi, but the shopkeepers of this South Delhi area next to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in what is known as Ansari Nagar outwitted them by putting up Congress flags by the hundred on their ramshackle buildings and pledged loyalty to Crown Prince Sanjay Gandhi. Nothing happened after that and traffic chaos continued for some decades until a few years ago when all encroachments were removed and more parking space created. There is still heavy traffic and jammed roads there in the absence of underpasses for motor vehicles turning right at three points at Green Park Extension, Green Park proper and from Hauz Khas to Aurobindo Marg.

This is just one little example of what is happening in all the megapolises as well as metropolises, big and small cities, big towns and small towns in the 605 districts of 28 States and seven Union territories of India. Will this ever stop? Time will not tell. Why? Because the writing on the wall is clear: the rural migration and migration from small towns to big ones and metropolises is unstoppable. The economic miracle that India is going through right now proclaims loudly that in a few years the urban population will overtake the rural. That is the price of progress a billion plus Indians have to pay.

It is accepted on all hands that the contribution of agriculture and related village activities, including poultry, dairying, crafts and handloom weaving already accounts for less than 27 per cent of the gross national product. This will go down further as the inevitable industrial revolution of India continues at breakneck speed, with manufacturing accounting for 12 per cent or more of annual growth even as the services sector has already overtaken industry in the national economic scene.

As big industries can be set up only on farm land, and not necessarily on wasteland, new townships are emerging even as there is a storm of protest over the special economic zones, which deprive cultivators of their hearths, homes and farmlands without adequate compensation, it is alleged by the supporters of the poor or the poorest of the poor. Some industrialists realizing that they must not overlook the interests of the sons of soil have promised, and in fact, started paying the land owners more than the prevailing market price, apart from ensuring their rehabilitation and provision of jobs in their planned projects. They do not face the excessive ire of politicians and kisan union lobbies. They include the main group of Reliance Industries and a few others even as industrialization over the decades gone by have devoured villages and farm lands. Kolkata, Patna, Chennai, Bangaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Jaipur and a host of other cities are witness to the overcrowding.

###

About Dipayan Mazumdar & Associates

DMA is an independent Public Relations consultancy set up in 1998 to provide contemporary Corporate Communications support. We are a team of professionals from different communications disciplines. Ours is a people oriented approach – people are our greatest assets.

Phone: 011-26270629
Website: <http://www.askdma.com>
E-Mail: dmanews@gmail.com
Address: J-1824,LGF, CR Park,
New Delhi-110019

