

'Kolaveri' is good for Delhi Master plan 2021

Special points of interest:

- SIX YEARS & STILL MULLING
- REGULARIZATION OF UNAUTHORIZED COLONIES
- SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE
- COURTS ARE NOT EXPERTS ON MASTER PLANNING
- MULTIPLICITY OF AUTHORITY

Strange as it may sound, to invoke a Tamil slang word while referring to the serious business of Delhi master plans MPD 2021. It is relevant. Read on.

'Kolaveri' means Rage, Anger etc. and that is precisely the emotion, which should see the MPD 2021 through.

Aren't we angry that something notified in Feb' 2007 hasn't still seen the light of the day, 6 years thereafter? Aren't we happy about the crumbs thrown at us by the policy makers, both nominated & anointed?

Here are seven reasons we must be angry, practice 'Kolaveri' and aim it sharply at those who matter.

of colonies, and then regularize them for a pitance. However, with the pragmatic knowledge that there are more than 5 lakh people migrating into Delhi every year, can the policy makers afford to ignore unlocking of the new zones? Or are we angling for the creation of many more unauthorized colonies in Delhi. The jury is you !!!



SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE – This seems to have NOT kept pace with the requirements, and that the planners have just about relied on retaining it as a statistic in the master plan. For e.g. the Master plans provisions for one Hospital bed per 1000 people of population. Has the number of beds in hospitals kept pace with the demographic growth? Likewise for schools, playgrounds, recreational spaces, etc. It is one thing to create provisions for social infra, and another to incentivize development, use & monetization of the assets & resources. So far, the MPD 2021 planners are silent about the same.

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SIX YEARS & STILL MULLING – Not that Rome was built in a day, NOR can the frequent rant of converting Delhi into a Shanghai be ignored. One thing's for sure, Rome & Shanghai weren't built through procrastination. Political will was the forbearing factor in the cities developing. Having notified the MPD 2021 in Feb' 2007, the decision makers waited for 3 years (till Jun' 2010) to notify the zonal plans. Both being notified, the next level of Local plans & development norms for licensing are awaited. Although the last 6 months have seen hectic progress on this front, it should be a hastily drawn paper exercise.

REGULARIZATION OF UNAUTHORIZED COLONIES – This seems to have become an accepted pattern of development, OR, mis-development. First ignore the illegal land grab, allow construction

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“MPD 2021 is the ‘Investment opportunity of this decade’”

COURTS ARE NOT EXPERTS ON MASTER PLANNING – For some reason, many in the powers that be, whom I end up meeting for work, have an overt reliance on the courts to ratify / stamp their planning process. This is for two distinct reasons. (a) They are sure that the vested interests would move the courts to stall some of the professional decisions taken (2) The general perception that the court approval would ensure smooth sailing. However, what is discounted is the time wasted in procedures.

MULTIPLICITY OF AUTHORITY – Delhi is not just the capital of the country, but also the nerve center of all politics. And it is but natural, that the same influence permeates all the decision-making bodies. There is DDA, MCD, Min. of UD, LGs office, Delhi government, DJB, UTTIPEC, Delhi metro, private Power companies, Investors, vested & well-meaning organizations & individuals etc. This multiplicity of decision-making, instead of being the catalyst for better planning becomes the procrastinator. The fact that they are not reporting to the same political or administrative boss doesn't help. Like Singapore & Shanghai, which thrived on the notional premise of “Limited Democracy”, Delhi too needs a unifying agency / Overbearing authority to align all interest towards the development of the city, with a long-term perspective.

DON'T QUOTE THE WORLD FOR YOUR IGNORANCE – I have personally made an effort to attend most meeting / Public consultations wherein I could contribute my exposure of urbanization (without any vested interest), I must

admit that those whom I have been trying to crack my head against, haven't always proven to be inspirational. Some are there just for the designation and the age of service, not for the expertise vested with them. Many just quote from the rulebook to cover up for their ignorance. Istanbul, Tokyo, Chicago & such cities are quoted for the heck-sake, but their virtues neither imbibed, not practiced into MPD 2021.

THE GUILTY ARE THE MASTERS – The famous lines from the ghazal मेरा कतिल ही मेरा मुंसिफ है, क्या मेरे हक में फैसला देगा “ are reminded to me, as I write this piece. In many instances, it is observed that those associated with the powers that be, have had a hand in the mushrooming unauthorized & haphazard development of Delhi. Even now, many of them, for vested interests, stall the development process. I don't blame their lack of exposure, but surely am a critique of their intent.

Having expressed myself, I am most optimistic that MPD 2021 is the ‘Investment opportunity of this decade’, Pan India, and this should see billions of dollars being profitably invested into the development of Delhi into a ‘Truly Global Megapolis’.

Time beckons, and actions need follow.

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Delhi expected to grow vertically in the near future!



Kajol singh

Delhi's central planning body, the Delhi Development Authority is seriously considering a proposal to triple the floor area ratio (FAR) from 200 to 600 in order to cope up with the burgeoning demand for affordable housing in the city. This decision is likely to be taken in view of the housing shortfall that is looming large over the city.

For reasons of simplicity, let us first understand what FAR or Floor Area Ratio actually is. It is the ratio of the total floor area of a building to its plot area. Higher the floor area ratio, higher is the utilization of the land. So, if DDA decides to relax the current FAR from 200 to 600, then most buildings in the capital can increase up to three times in height. This means that an existing building with six floors can rise up vertically up to twenty floors. This will add excess capacity in the housing sector leading to significantly lower prices for prospective home buyers.

As per the current data available, Delhi has a shortfall of nearly 0.49 million homes which might escalate to 2.4 million homes by the end of this decade. A significant chunk of this shortfall, nearly 90% is in the lower income group category. If sources in the Urban Development Ministry are to be believed, nearly 100,000 houses are expected to be built in the Lower Income Group category.

The Ministry is also expected to complete a review of the Delhi Master Plan 2021 by May 2013 in order to keep it in sync with the ever-increasing requirements of the city. Even the Minister for Urban Development, Mr. Kamal Nath has strongly endorsed the vertical growth of the city. But in doing so, he has come under criticism from town planners, architects and other civil society groups who have raised strong objections about the additional strain that this expansion will create on the roads, water, power and sewerage systems of the city.

With the population of Delhi reaching nearly 17 million, property prices have sky-rocketed in the past few years because of which property buyers have to look towards the satellite cities of Noida, Gurgaon, Faridabad and Ghaziabad in search for affordable property options. This upward trend in property prices is expected to come down, once the floor area ratio norms are relaxed.

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Regularization gathers steam. Lal Dora biggest gainer

Kajol Singh

The Urban development minister of Delhi, Mr. Arvinder Singh Lovely seems to be a man in a hurry. Whether it is the impending election in Delhi towards the end of this year, or this being a genuine effort to develop Delhi, the efforts surely are in the right direction. Following a high level meeting held at the Delhi secretariat, the minister mentioned the improvement in quality of life in Delhi, by providing better infrastructure & amenities.

Of the many colonies identified for regularization, as well as to extend the urban services to them, the biggest gainers would be the Lal Dora land parcels and the Village Abadi land, including extended Lal



Dora parcels.

This step is necessitated to facilitate the Mapping of the land per the revenue department, as well as allow & approve the construction of residential dwelling units on them. Mr. Lovely mentioned that the 'Lal Dora' of the Delhi villages would be extended and the revenue department and UD department would present the necessary proposals to the Delhi cabinet, for perusal & necessary approvals.

Ajay Dabas of Certes Realty Ltd avers "section 81 and section 33 of the Delhi land act are big impediments to the regularization as well as the amalgamation of land parcels in Delhi, esp. the one which have already been fragmented amongst the family members. The govt. would have to peruse this challenge, and amendments brought about accordingly"

The Delhi govt. also plans to open up the registration for the plots under the "Unauthorized colonies" shortly, post the proposed amendments. Mr. Dabas also concurred with the view that "there is a need to accept that these colonies are a reality, and that it's necessary to bring uniformity of service" in all urbanized & urbanizable areas.

To jog the memory, the Delhi govt. had initiated proceedings to regularize about 895 colonies in Delhi. However, the formal notifications along with the other regulations are yet not in place, although the LGs approval has already been sought, and in place. The govt. did propose, "in public interest" to allow sale-

purchase of these plots, albeit, with the levy of some token penalties, in about 312 of the 895 colonies, within a month. Simultaneously, about 91 colonies which had come up on forest & ridge land were also proposed to be regularized.

A senior revenue department official we spoke to, declined to comment officially, but did share with us that the "revenue department is trying to use scientific tools to demarcate the boundaries of village land, as well as unauthorized colonies, so that the development work can be extended in conjunction with the other agencies". When quizzed, Ajay Dabas mentioned that the "infrastructure being laid for the colonies & Lal Dora abadi land would benefit the R zone pockets already being acquired by developers, and that it would motivate international developers & institutional capital to infuse funds into projects"

For e.g. DSIDC has already started planning for infrastructure for their projects in Ranikhera- Madanpur-Kanjhawla etc., whereas departments like irrigation, flood control & Delhi Jal Board (DJB) are already working on their blue print.

Ajay Dabas of Certes however cautions that "the govt. would have to be stern about the further growth of unauthorized settlements, and the only way would be to allow market competitiveness through opening up the supply"

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Delhi's surrounding villages to get merged with the main city



Nancy Singh

If the current proposals doing the rounds in the corridors of power see the light of the day, then, **Delhiites are going to see better connectivity in the times to come.** Three major highways are being planned in order to improve the connectivity between one end of the city to another.

- 1) Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar to Auchandi Border
- 2) Ghevra to Sindhu Border
- 3) Mangolpuri Stone Market to Auchandi Border

“Delhi is going to see better connectivity in times to come”

Here's a brief preview of all three Projects:

Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar to Auchandi Border: This four lane twenty kilometre highway is expected to cost INR 76.15 crores and will pass through the Delhi Technical University and touch the Auchandi Border. It will help people living in Badli Railway Station, Putha Khera, Bawana, Shahbad Dairy to criss-cross the city easily.

Ghevra to Sindhu Border: This 26.1 km highway is expected to cost nearly 124.15 crores and will join Bavana to NH1 helping people living in Ghevra, Kanjhawala, Bawana, Sindhu Border and Narela.

Mangolpuri Stone Market to Auchandi Border: This 4 lane 24.5km is expected to cost INR 113.83 crores and will connect Outer Ring Road to Auchandi Border helping people living in Mangolpuri, Budh Vihar, Kanjhawala, Tatesar, Punjab Khor, Qutab Garh and Mangolpuri immensely.

As per Delhi's PWD Minister, Mr. Raj Kumar Chauhan, work orders for all three highways have been issued and the work is expected to be completed by December 2013 at an estimated cost of INR 300 crores.

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