
The Effect of Transportation System on the Development of Naya Raipur

Chhattisgarh came into being as the 26th state of India when the pre-existent state of Madhya Pradesh was bifurcated in 2002. The then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had made this decision after having witnessed the stagnant development of the region due to negligence by the authorities. Some of the crucial issues that required attention were the multiple reserves of the state that were yet to be explored, the suppressed local rural population and insurgent groups that hindered progress. The creation of Chhattisgarh meant that one of the numerous backward and underdeveloped regions was to now be put on the country's map as an industrialized smart city. Accordingly, since then, the state government has invested and implemented many effective policies and development projects.

Among these is the establishment of Naya Raipur as the state's new administrative capital. In January 2017, Naya Raipur gained recognition as the world's first ever integrated township.

Currently still under development, Naya Raipur was initially planned to house 560,000 inhabitants and provide them with facilities and infrastructure that expedites their lifestyle in an environment that is sustainable and inclusive. In 2012, the state Government shifted to the city to commence the founding of a novel, urban population centre. Amenities such as water, drainage, transport and other setups have been planned keeping in mind the best international practices to draw in strategic industries, institutions and capable workers. This counts as a critical moment for the city as well as the state since the manner in which it progresses and is inhabited in its earliest stages right after its inception shapes its success (or the lack thereof) in the future.

From an economical perspective, India has always suffered from a stark dichotomy. On one hand, there is rural India which is predominantly sustained by a primitive and traditional mode of agriculture, and where almost one fourth of the population subsists below the poverty line. On the other hand, there is urban India which is one of the most heavily industrialized areas globally with a rapidly rising economy and a population that is increasingly middle-class. Consequently, there has also been an upward surge in rural-urban migration in recent years. This context justifies the need for the creation and development of new urban centres such as Naya Raipur to ease off the burden on the existing ones.

Naya Raipur Development Authority (NRDA) was established in 2000 for the planning and development of the city. It has the authority to acquire the land in accordance with mandatory purchase laws and to implement a Masterplan for the city's development. This Masterplan was fashioned followed by the completion of some major roads and initial phases of constructions including the state capital complex.

The four important features of the approach for development are also worth noting. For as far as possible, land was procured by negotiating with farmers and land owners at a mutually agreed price. Development was to be inclusive and existing villages were not to be interfered with except one, for which a total rehabilitation plan was devised. Modern infrastructures and urban facilities were also to be provided in these settlements so that they merge seamlessly into the

city development plan. Rehabilitation plan is framed so that training is imparted and additional income opportunities are available.

In terms of city planning, the Masterplan also reflects some Modernist principles of zoning. There are a few significant functional quarters in the city which act as anchors and a strong emphasis is placed on public and vehicle transport movement that transpires between them. The anchor to the east is the Capital complex while to the west is a high-tech industrial area. To the north, one can find a hub for transport and logistics and to the south a zone for recreational purposes. There is a Central Business District jam-packed in the middle.

However, I feel that there should be a mixing of functions between the various functional zones so that the city has a mixed character as a whole. Such zones with mixed functions encourage activities throughout the day. This is more sustainable when it comes to use of energy and buildings than zones with singular functions, which have 'dead' periods of usage. This mixing of functions should also be a part of the phasing. At nascent stages of the city, there will be little provision for commercial activities, but as the city grows, so will the demand. If zoning remains rigid during these phases, the city's capacity to cater for this mounting demand will be inadequate and the standard development of the city will suffer.

The NRDA fulfilled the need for roads, transport and infrastructure for modern utilities by drawing on funding from the central government and World Bank.

At present, despite being situated in central India and having good transport connections and great economic potential, Naya Raipur is still fairly unknown. It does not possess a well-known economic individual identity like its metropolitan counterparts Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad. While the aforementioned cities have had a long and intricate historical past, Naya Raipur came into existence less than two decades ago. So while it is somewhat obscure in its current state, being a new city, it still has many opportunities to build a new identity for itself. However this might also create a certain rigidity and inflexibility which does not allow the city to adapt to the inevitable complexities and changes over time. Moreover, Naya Raipur is undergoing a planned development and the growth of even the smallest sections of the city is predetermined. So if a sudden unforeseen event such as a natural calamity were to take place within the city and the plan for development were to be altered at a short notice, it would be more difficult for Naya Raipur to adjust than for the cities listed above due to the constraints of time and space. It is clear from observing these cities, that their character and identities arise from a amalgamation of planning and the unplanned inhabitation of daily life.

Furthermore, the economic base of Chhattisgarh comprises of natural resources of coal and minerals, agriculture and wildlife tourism. These activities compete with each other and with the traditional lifestyle of the region's indigenous tribes. This polarisation is echoed in the urban-rural development. Cities are centres of processing, trade and administration while most of the rural hinterland is small-scale agriculture. People continuously move between these lifestyles, and hence, the rural ways of life is clearly evident within the urban centres. The transference of these manners of living is only partial and the aspects that conflict are not resolved.