

Urban Development

Every infrastructure planning has a shelf life

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PRADEEP MISRA CMD – REPL

(Rudrabhishek Enterprises Pvt. Ltd.)



What led to the genesis of REPL?

At the inception of REPL (Rudrabhishek Enterprises Pvt. Ltd) in 1992, I sensed the impending burst of infrastructure development in the country. On the hindsight, I feel happy that the company's journey synchronized with the dawn of 'liberalization era' in Indian economic scenario. At that time, there was increasing gap in supply of expertise and specialized organizations vis-à-vis growing demand for infrastructure development consultancy services. It was in this context that the REPL was founded.

In the beginning, REPL had an immediate objective of providing quality consultancy services in the areas of urban planning, architecture and civic services planning. However, we soon realized that the age of fragmented services would not last long and REPL needed to have holistic expertise set that would cater to integrated infrastructure development needs of its clients. Subsequently, separate divisions in the areas of Engineering, PMC, Real Estate & Infrastructure Consulting were established. At later stage, specialized subsidiary firms for GIS and PE fund in Real



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Estate and Infrastructure also followed.

Now the REPL Group is 'Integrated Real Estate & Infrastructure Consultants' providing solutions to clients both from the corporate sector and government bodies.

Unlike other companies REPL is a 360° organisation offering end to end solutions in infrastructure and real estate. What are some of the landmark projects you have executed so far?

If I let myself be guided by the recency effect, consultancy for 'Plan of Bhopal Smart City' would certainly be a proud mention for us. It has been selected by central government, among top 20 smart city plans. The plan developed by REPL consortium is an excellent example of integrated infrastructure consultancy, which has elements of urban planning, architectural designs, environmental engineering, water management, city sanitation, city transportation, ICT, financial projections etc.

In Infrastructure, few other projects worth mentioning could be – Sub-Regional Plan for NCR, UP (10.8 lakh hectares), Redevelopment Plan/Scheme for Spatial Area as Notified in Master Plan of Delhi –

2021 (2500 hectare), Master Plan for 5 towns in Orissa, City Development Plans for 10 towns in MP, Housing for All projects in 12 towns of MP & Rajasthan, Slum-free City Plan of Action for 6 towns in Bihar and similar other projects across country.

Within Real Estate domain, I could mention consultancy for 'Wave Hi-Tech City, Ghaziabad' (2440 hectares) and Sushant Golf City, Hi-Tech Township in Lucknow (1416 hectare), on which we have provided integrated solutions on large scale.

terms of scale and nature, both. It requires to be periodically relooked, reworked and redesigned.

In Indian cities, most of the laid down infrastructure is very old and unintegrated. Due to intense development in the dense and core area very little space available for their expansion. At present their carrying capacity is almost half of the demand supply, so its upgradation is also a challenge. Major problem lies in operation & maintenance and monitoring of the infrastructure

projects be made more bankable to enhance ease of funding?

Infrastructure development can be done through the cross subsidisation and developing certain land-parcel whose potential can be commercially harnessed to generate revenue and then infuse funds back on the project. For the projects like Smart Cities, the government is already working on PPP model.

What should be the essential parameters in the 'Master Plan' of the city to ensure it has linkages to the financial and operating strategy thereby making it sustainable for a longer time period?

Linking of master planning with property mapping plan and city mobility plan will make it financially *and operationally sustainable*. With land use regulation, financial strategy for revenue generation should be made as per bye laws to make it binding on concern authorities.

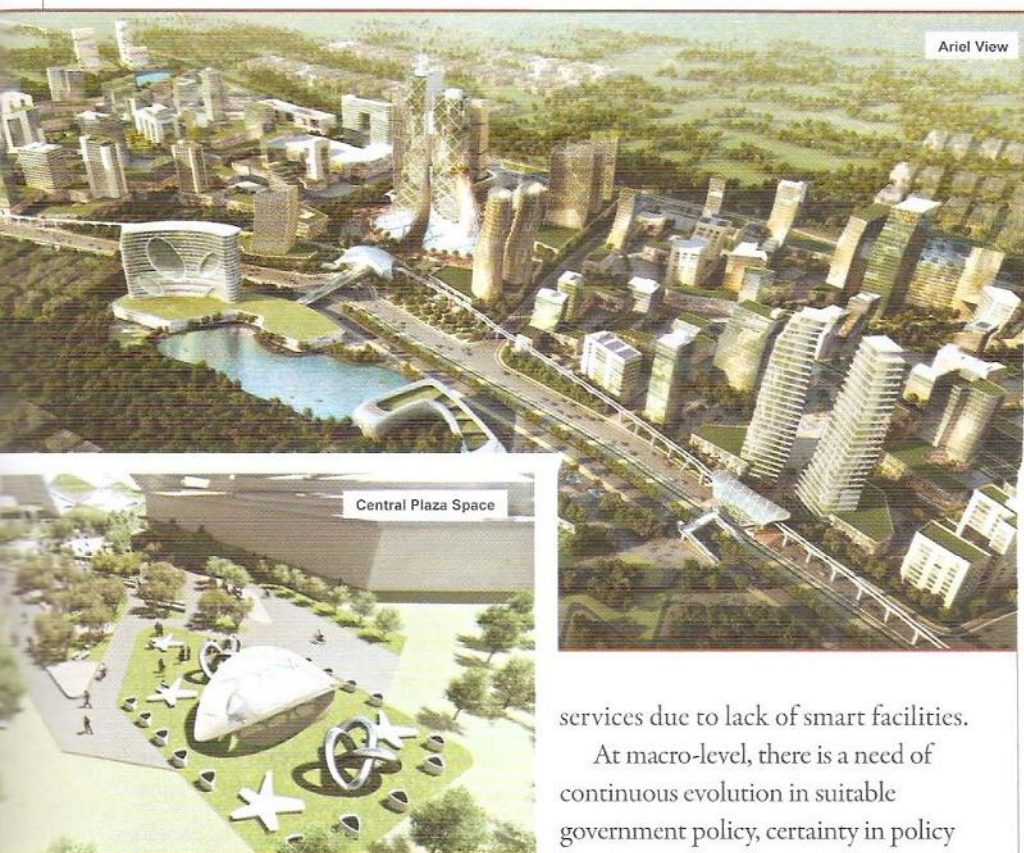
The concept of smart cities has been widely appreciated, considering that we have a good deal of existing infrastructure how can we make them, smart, sustainable and safe?

Lowering the dependencies on intense energy consuming, non-renewable source of energy and producing less waste as end product will make city more sustainable. Similarly, proper technology interventions for operation & maintenance and monitoring of services; vigilance through central command system and making each services and redressal online; and solution on one touch will make city smart, sustainable and safe.

What are the salient features of the smart city plans devised by REPL for Dehradun and Bhopal?

The approach of REPL consortium for both these smart city plans are location specific, as per the specific needs.

Bhopal Smart City has been



Having worked across numerous projects, what according to you are the key challenges for growth of urban infrastructure in India?

Key challenge is to keep pace with the increasing population burden, futuristic planning, development of new centres for economic activity leading to emergence of new cities. Every infrastructure planning has a shelf life in terms of accommodating the needs of its resident upto a certain period. After that, the needs change in

services due to lack of smart facilities.

At macro-level, there is a need of continuous evolution in suitable government policy, certainty in policy environment, fast clearance and close coordination between the government bodies and private players. At operational level, we need latest technology and advance skills. Most of all, we need citizen's participation and involvement in the context of urban infrastructure. Ultimately, it is people who will decide what is needed and how the maintenance of new urban amenities are sustained.

Majority of the infrastructure projects are very capital intensive and have long gestation period, how can these

envisioned as 24X7 activity based integrated live-work-play-learn-shop concept. The planning approach was based on Transit Oriented Development (TOD) with social inclusiveness. The Proposed Site for Redevelopment is spread over approx. 350 acres. The city has been planned to ensure that there is least commutation involved for all the residents, in terms of going to work or accessing the amenities. This has been ensured through land use coordination of carefully balanced areas of residences, office, education, medical and entertainment areas. The modern Commercial Zone would provide better economic & employment opportunities.

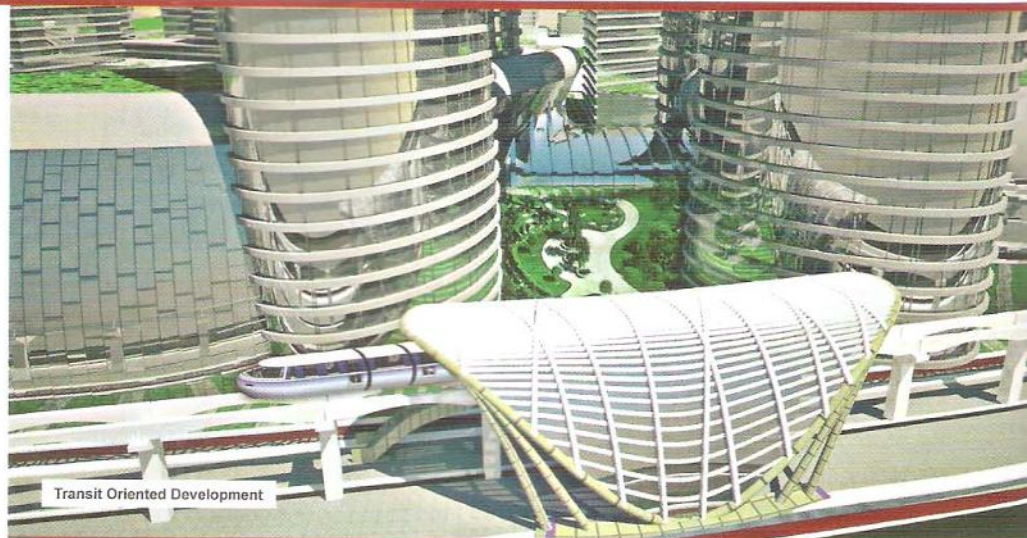
Plan for both the cities incorporates smart components like mixed use development with activity based hubs, efficient road network, round the clock water supply & electricity provisions, solid waste management, treated waste water recycling, usage of renewable energy, green buildings etc.

The growth of infrastructure and real estate has been very sluggish how has it impacted your balance sheets in recent times?

Consultancy in Real Estate has been a significant part in REPL's overall portfolio. However, since we are not restricted to only one sector, and we taking up lot of government projects in infrastructure, we have been able to manage the growth on company's balance sheet. With the expectation of new policies boosting the RE industry, and our own initiatives in newer territories and sectors, we are confident of continuous growth.

What kind of steps and reforms you expect from the government to ensure these sectors can function effectively?

As I mentioned earlier, the favourable policies and consistency in policy environment is must for growth



of sector. Private players, both domestic and international, want assurance that their investment on projects should not get stuck up due to sudden change in rules and guidelines. That way, we will also start seeing the significant impact of FDI inflows.

REPL has efficiently utilised Geo Information Systems (GIS) for backward integration of urban and town planning projects, can you throw some light on this?

REPL has a specialized subsidiary RIPL (Rudrabhishek Infosystem Pvt Ltd.) that provides GIS solutions to all its projects across planning and real estate. GIS is particularly helpful in planning of very large areas due to its inherent capability to accurately

geo-position land and handle large volume of data attached to that, which cannot be done through general software. GIS does coordinate matching as per satellite imagery and ground conditions, subsequently it generates various thematic maps like land-use maps and demographic maps, highlighting area-wise socio-economic status.

Some of the work accomplished by RIPL is usage of GIS in creation of Sub-regional plans, master plans, zonal plans, slum development plans etc. in the government sector and within real estate sector, we are among the first ones to use GIS in Hi-Tech & Integrated township projects. We have developed GIS-enabled cloud based land management app to carry out these activities in much advanced manner.

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