

11. Decentralising Bengaluru Urban -The Regional Planning way

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Abstract:

The concept of region as a method of classification has evolved through two distinct phases reflecting the economic advance from a simple agrarian economy to a complex industrial system. Regions have been classified in different ways. The first phase was dominated by the concept of formal region defined according to homogeneity, while the second phase saw the development of functional region defined on the basis of functional coherence. We the planners have contradicted our ideologies of maintaining a spread effect of growing cities/poles that would 'pull up' the rural extremities; and at the same time try our best to retain the rural ways of life and activities in order to retreat back to our early styles of living. Bengaluru has been inhabited beyond its carrying capacity and planning its decentralization activities to peripheries is no doubt ambitious but raises questions like evacuation issues of the already settled communities.

Keywords: Regional Planning, Metropolis, Social wellbeing, Settlement

Full Text:

1.0 Introduction

Planning is now a widely accepted way to handle complex problems of resource allocation and decision-making .It involves the use of collective intelligence and foresight to chart direction, order, harmony and progress in public activity relating to human environment and general welfare.[4] The major features of planning include a sequence of actions which are designed to solve problems in future. Planning of resource allocation vary but they are mainly economic and social .The time horizontal of future also varies according to the type and level of population. But every planning involves a sequential and conceptually ordered process of action that can be sorted in the following way:

Identification of the problem

Formulation of general goals and more specific and measurable objectives relating to the problem

Identification of possible constraints

Projection of future situations

Generation and evaluation of alternate forces of action

Producing a preferred plan which in its generic form may include any policy statement or strategy as well as definite plan.

These processes become relevant to a whole spectra of planning problems and in the words of Friedmann it can be referred as “Planning is primarily a way of thinking about social and economic problems, it is oriented predominantly towards the future, and is deeply concerned with relationship of goals to collective decisions and strives for comprehensive in policy and programme. Within this general planning frameworks, there remain wide variety of planning typologies. From the temporal point of view, planning can be short term and long term: previous one is designed to solve certain pressing problems which do not require large scale changes in socio-economic backdrop. It becomes difficult to decide when the matter ends up with polarization of specialized activities and diffusion of balanced

development to the neighborhood. It on the other hand aims to realize institutional and structural changes necessary for achieving the long term social and economic goals of the society. [2]The concept of Metropolis as postulated by Lewis Mumford, can be equated to an idea of highest grade of city, which may be regional or national capital city) serves as an outstanding centre of human affairs. According to American Historian N.S.B. Gras, a city becomes metropolitan when most kind of products of districts concentrate in it for trade and transit when these products are paid for by wares or manufactures that radiates from it and when necessary financial transactions involved in this exchange are provided by it. Such a city will have the population considerably larger than that of surrounding towns, it will be an interdependent centre of trade, with large varieties of industries, whole sale business and financial centers and finally a cultural and administrative centre. Region according to H.H. Gopal, is economically the most gainful, administratively the most convenient, sectoral and spatial unit where planning is a mere process, economic growth is a mere outcome and general welfare is the ultimate goal. The view of Herbertson is that the region has got a real and physical entity and affected by factors like land, vegetation, and climate and population density. The study of urban and rural settlement is integral part of human geography that also includes social and economic stratifications. So any given goal we consider for planning, looks forward to social justice.

2.0 Area of Study

Karnataka is the eighth largest State in the Union of India, with an area of 19,791 sq.kms and a population of 52.73 million as per 2001 census. It is the 4th most urbanised among major States of India with 18million (34.61%) urban residents. The urban population is expected to go unto 42% by 2025. Bangalore or Bengaluru, the State Capital, is the fifth largest metropolitan city in the country, with a population of 6.17 million as per 2001 census. It comprises the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP) area of 226 square.kilometres. with a population of 4.3 million, seven City Municipal Councils (CMCs) covering an area of 291 square kms

and population of 1.21 million and peripheral villages of 0.66 million population. The population of Bangalore is expected to go up to 9.98 million by 2021 and 11.97 million by 2031. The City had recorded a decadal growth of 38% during the period 1991-2001. With a view to de-congest Bangalore Metropolitan Area (comprising BMP area plus seven City Municipal Councils plus Periphery area) and direct further growth into the BMR Region by way of comprehensive development of new human settlements in an integrated manner, BMRDA proposes to develop five New Integrated Townships with modern amenities and facilities at Bidadi, Ramanagaram, Sathanur, Solur and Nandagudi. Bidadi is here the area of study which promises to be a centre to develop indigenous knowledge base for India, where technological knowhows can be framed.

2.0 Urban Growth-An Empirical Account

Studies on urbanisation and urban development in Western Europe and North America have led to the formulation of a number of theories of urban growth. Scholars in Western Europe have discussed the more formal regions within a city in relation to broad morphological characteristics. For instance Dickinson, in his study of west European Cities observed their common tendency to grow in concentric zones of distinctive build and character.[8] But what remains the challenge is to understand the functional coherences between city and its periphery.

Regional Planning attempts to analyse the territorial systems which are based on the functionally homogeneous characteristics or are organised around settlement nodes which command exchange regions of heterogeneous characters. These two basic types of territorial systems are not mutually exclusive but Indian scholars have tended to treat them separately and consequently there are few studies which have analysed a territorial system in terms of both its functional specialisation and nodal exchange characters. Of the two territorial systems Indian scholars have paid greater attention to the functionally homogeneous regions without discussing the integrated role of urban centres. Initially the regional approach to planning was not accepted by the planning commission and consequently we find scarce reference to it in the first two five year plans. The concept of regional planning and balanced

regional development as understood by the commission the merely implied a judicious location of new industrial units with due emphasis on balanced regional development as a vital step in the direction of wider diffusion of employment opportunities . It is in the third five year plan period 1961-66 , that the planning commission approved the regional approach to planning and commended this approach to the planning of large industries which will serve as focal points of development for areas far beyond their immediate environs.It also stresses upon the need of strengthening economic interdependence between towns and surrounding rural areas too.[1] As the couple of figures show (Fig.1 & 2) that the new area that comprises of eight villages,comprise of Byramangala that ranks first both in population and its density as compared to the other villages.Hosur is second in population,but population density wise the Kempayyanapalya,K.G. Gollarapalya and kanchugaranahalli Kaval follow next to Byramangala.

3.0 Bidadi in making-Findings and Observations

The project is aimed at creating self-contained new integrated townships with work-live-play concept by integrating select economic activities in manufacturing/ service/business categories. They are expected to offer the same or more comforts / facilities as available in Bangalore City minus the congestion, traffic bottlenecks in a serene and environmentally rejuvenating atmosphere.In the first stage, it is proposed to take up implementation of Bidadi Integrated Township. BMRDA has identified a strategic area spread over an area of around 9000 acres for the project, located in the limits of Byramangala, Bannigeri, Hosur, K.G. Gollarapalya, Kanchugaranahalli, Aralassandra, Kempayyanapalya, Kanchugaranahalli Kaval villages of Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagaram Taluka, Bengaluru (Rural) District. The Town and Country Planning Board plans to develop the project on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) basis and wishes to select a Developer who would be responsible for infrastructure development, construction, marketing and operations and maintenance of the proposed township project.

Outsourcing to innovation remains to be the major thrust for Bengaluru's growing industries, where knowledge building outweighs mere execution. Bidadi has been

viewed as to be entirely Knowledge based City: where it is tipped to be emerging as a critical pocket for knowledge driven activities. On the other hand, the town has been expected to be as a self contained habitat on work-live-play concept, the township will feature residential and commercial amenities like schools, shopping malls, parks, bus stops and community centers. The indicative segmentation of land use has been proposed as follows, that may be useful for planning purpose in a sustainable way.

Table 1 Distribution of proposed Land Use Components in Bidadi Township

Types of Use of Land	Percentage Coverage
Industrial	25
Residential	25
Parks and Open Spaces	15
Civic Amenities related Spaces	10
Others like Spaces for Communication lines	25

Source: Bidadi Township Project, BMRDA project (2006-2012)

3.1 Advantage: Bidadi

The township is located about 39 km from Bangalore city and 4 km from the Bidadi industrial area, off the Bangalore-Mysore State Highway. It would be accessible from the Bangalore Mysore Infrastructure Corridor. The township is close to Bidadi Industrial area and the textile and multi-product industrial complex being developed by the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) at Harohalli. It has been equipped well to practice rainwater harvesting, water recycling and sewage treatment facilities. Also, an efficient solid waste management

has been put in place.[1] Proper spatial spread of industries has been accepted as one of the important means of promoting balanced regional development.[3] This pre-supposes the needs of identification and delineation of regions of actual economic malaise, as argues Boudeville.[5] For the urban centres the trickling down effect towards peripheries is surely given by unplanned mushroom growth of some branded showrooms, mobile phones, resorts co-existing typically with inadequacies of proper employment opportunities, schools, health centres. What 'moves' away from a city as its direct influence is consumerism and not social well-being.

Bidadi Knowledge City is one of five new townships proposed on the outskirts of Bengaluru, India's high-tech industry hub, to accommodate future growth. Presently a collection of several villages, one of the key challenges for the Bidadi Master Plan is to preserve the essence of their rural identity while creating a thriving new town that would catalyse community development, generate employment and attract investment for the entire region. The Master Plan integrates modern city living with preservation of the existing open space and riparian network. Connected through a robust transit system, a hierarchy of place-types including Urban Centres, Town Centres, Village Centres and Hamlets have been used to allocate employment, housing and other land uses with varying density and proportion. By creating a community that offers a high quality of life and attractive employment opportunities, the Bidadi Master Plan sets an important precedent for mitigating huge rural-urban migration and balanced future development for the entire region.

4.0 Dilemma of Planning

But the dilemma cropped up, and as the planners know it well, is inherent to any planning. Bidadi to develop as a knowledge hub was and of course welcome to each and every sector of economy, but posed challenges in issues of rehabilitation. Planning faces challenges as far as urban activities are concerned, in respect to the land allocation methods. Situation turned chaotic in case of Bidadi township when the building authority who were assigned with the responsibilities of making it happen withdrew from the project especially at the rise of world economic

recession where they found hardly any hope of investments getting positive results. The project was conceived by the government in 2006 at Bidadi, around 50kilometres away from Bengaluru, as a hub for educational institutions and information technology and biotechnology firms, along with housing projects. The most important problem in all activities is how to integrate the various projects of different sectors. Hence, the concept of integrated area development pre-supposes the recognition of a rural-urban continuum implying that the rural areas would not be considered in isolation ,but in relation to the urban counterpart ,so that the issues like rural to urban migration,rural exodus and agricultural and industrial decors can be tackled.[4]

4.1 Rehabilitation and Compensation

Families that lost agricultural land for the project have been given two options of compensation that included cash compensation or compensation by way of developed land for the land already surrendered to the government. The cash compensation ranged between Rs. 20 lakh an acre and Rs. 25 lakh an acre depending upon the type of land, proximity to regional highways, Gram Thana or Police Stations and village road besides additional compensation for trees and structures. iT was decided that if the farmer chooses compensation by way of developed land, he would be given an area measuring 8,000 square feet for every acre. However, the location of developed land to be given to land loser would be decided by the developer in consultation with the BMRDA. Building owners would be provided compensation in terms of increased site area as well as a house in accordance to the size of the existing dwelling. For example, a person who is residing in a dwelling on a site measuring 600 square feet or less would get a house of 680 square feet on a 900 square feet site as compensation.[6] The standard of housing units would be at par with the houses built by the Karnataka Housing Board. Besides, transportation and relocation grants of certain amount would be given to each project displaced family. Houses on rent had been promised to be provided by the developer for displaced houseless families of the villages in the project area , and the rents would be fixed by the rehabilitation committee based on

the income status of the affected families .In broader terms,urbanisation encompasses a demographic meaning,a behavioural meaning,structural or economic interpretation and ecological meaning.this is better summarised as human migration,occupational change from agriculture to non-agriculture,value systems' alteration from traditional to modern,consumption patterns;from natural to manufactured products and finally lifestyle alteration; from a community living to a nuclear family.[7]

5.0 Conclusion

The modern developmental measures like big industries,road connectivity and urbanisation takes its toll on the lives of people who are forced to give up their habitats and settled livelihood.Displacement and uncertain future leads to constant struggle for survival which accentuates with the loss of social support system.[3]Regional Planning attempts to analyse the territorial systems which are based on the functionally homogeneous characteristics or are organised around settlement nodes which command exchange regions of heterogeneous characters. These two basic types of territorial systems are not mutually exclusive but Indian scholars have tended to treat them separately and consequently there are few studies which have analysed a territorial system in terms of both its functional specialisation and nodal exchange characters .Of the two territorial systems Indian scholars have paid greater attention to the functionally homogeneous regions without discussing the integrated role of urban centres.Initially the regional approach to planning was not accepted by the planning commission and consequently we find scarce reference to it in the first two five year plans.The concept of regional planning and balanced regional development as understood by the commission the merely implied a judicious location of new industrial units with due emphasis on balanced regional development as a vital step in the direction of wider diffusion of employment opportunities . It is in the third five year plan period 1961-66 , that the planning commission approved the regional approach to planning and commended this approach to the planning of large industries which will serve as focal points of development for areas far beyond their immediate environs. It also

stresses upon the need of strengthening economic interdependence between towns and surrounding rural areas too.

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