

Hyderabad Outer Region Authority Will Help Develop the City Better

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Hyderabad has been systematically destroyed in the last 30 years. It is no longer the royal capital of the Nizams. It is now a massive slum with high_rise buildings in between. Water supply is scare, drainage woefully inadequate, power erratic, traffic impossible and law and order poor. It is time to take a hard look at Hyderabad's future.

Hyderabad city is a critical engine of growth for Telangana. It can be the place of choice for many businesses and people from all over the country and abroad, if it is handled with sense, grace and efficiency. Managing a great city does not come easy nor does it come cheap. It requires foresight, long_term planning, permanent institutions and massive infusion of funds. It is imperative that there is firm political commitment at the highest level, administrative responsibility at senior level and public accountability for initiating progress and managing change. All public funds invested in Hyderabad should also have reasonable economic spillover-benefits to the rest of Telangana.

The governance structures of Hyderabad are complicated. At the core is the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) covering 626 [sq.km](#). with an elected governing body. In 2008, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) was created covering 7,073 [sq.km](#) with over 7 million population. HMDA invests in infrastructure and is run entirely by IAS officers. HMDA is 5 times the size of the National Capital Territory of Delhi!

Telangana has to execute the Information Technology Investment Region (ITIR) project proposed by the Government of India. ITIR involves the development of self_contained integrated knowledge clusters for IT and electronic hardware manufacturing in and around Hyderabad. ITIR aims at attracting investments of Rs 2,19,000 crore!

Under ITIR, special economic zones, industrial parks, free trade zones, warehousing zones and export_oriented units would come up in three corridors. It would occupy 202 sq km (50,000 acres). Post_ITIR, IT exports are expected to grow five times, from Rs 50,000 crores to Rs 2,35,000 crores annually and electronic hardware manufacturing is expected to grow from Rs 6,000 crore to Rs 80,000 crore annually. Direct employment of 9 lakhs and indirect employment of 50 lakhs is anticipated. The built_up space in the city will expand from the current 40 million sq ft to 130 million sq ft!! All this will cost an enormous amount of which Government of India is to grant Rs 3,275 crore. Chicken feed for such a large project!

How is this to be done and which body will do it? The Outer Ring Road (ORR) is a 162-km, 8_lane expressway encircling the city. The ORR is being built by HMDA at a cost of Rs 6,696 crore. It is funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). ORR gives easy

connectivity between NH 9, NH 7, NH 163 and state highways leading to Vikarabad, Srisailem, Nagarjunasagar, Karimnagar and Mancherial. The ORR is fenced and 33 radial roads connect it with the Inner Ring Road and the upcoming Regional Ring Road. The TSRTC is planning 22 bus terminals_cum_depots along the Outer Ring Road. Hyderabad Metro may be extended to link it across the city. The ORR objectives are to: (1) decongest metropolitan area, (2) provide linkage to radial arterial roads, (3) develop satellite townships, (4) provide access for the proposed MRT S and TSRTC Bus system, (5) improve access to the Shamshabad International Airport and (6) help connect Telangana district headquarters to the Capital.

There is, therefore, a clear, logical and obvious need to integrate ORR and ITIR. This will allow for a radical and innovative plan to realize the potential of Hyderabad without damaging the core city. A 20_km strip along ORR should be placed under the Hyderabad Outer Region Authority (HORA). HORA will cover 3,240 sq km (8 lakh acres) half the size of the present HMDA. It will replace HMDA and the other redundant Authorities. What is left of HMDA (towards the core city) should be folded back into GHMC.

HORA will take care of Hyderabad's future expansion. The decongestion of the city should be directed outwards to HORA. The incoming population and businesses must be held at HORA. Here services should be of international standard water, power, traffic, drainage and law and order. There should be green zones at various parts including water bodies already available there. Other parts should be zoned for use of sports, entertainment, commercial, residential and agricultural (vegetables, dairy, horticulture etc). No industry though!

HORA could also accommodate the Telangana Secretariat and other Government offices, thus making a start at decongesting Hyderabad and building a brand new Capital Area. It could be th new posh area!

The first step would be to notify HORA and develop a master plan. A tax on land owners (mainly now speculators) would help fund this major initiative. At even Rs 2 lakhs per acre (or Rs 41 per square yard), this will amount to Rs 16,000 crore. This will help fund public investment of the estimated cost of Rs 10,000 crores or more.

The governance and management of HORA should be broad_based involving Government of India, JICA, World Bank, German Government and others. The project should be managed by a team of professionally_qualified personnel on long_term basis. This is the greatest opportunity to save Hyderabad and also ensure its orderly growth. It is an opportunity that will not come again - and if mishandled, will ruin the city completely. Telangana cannot afford to fail in this matter.

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