

ARTICLE

From Singapore to Amaravati: Developing a Liveable City Together

Supporting efforts to build a new capital city in Andhra Pradesh, India.



Source: The Centre for Liveable Cities

WRITTEN BY
**Lim Swee Keng and
Thinesh Kumar**

When Andhra Pradesh needed a new capital with the bifurcation of the Indian state, its leaders looked to Singapore for lessons in preparing a master plan for its future city. The state's chief minister, N. Chandrababu Naidu, recognised the significance and impact a successful capital would have on its population of 50 million, and set out to develop Amaravati as a liveable and sustainable city that his government has termed "the people's capital".

While there have been planned state capitals in India since its independence, the reviews have been mixed. Chief Minister Naidu, who has long admired the Singapore government for its integrity, efficiency and consistent development, recognised that "other cities may be more beautiful, but Singapore is sustainable and liveable". This is how the man who successfully transformed Hyderabad into an Information Technology (IT) hub in India wanted to "build one of the best cities in Andhra Pradesh."¹ In December 2014, the governments of Singapore and Andhra Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop the new capital city. The Singapore government would assist with the drawing up of plans for the capital region, capital city and a detailed seed development area. One or more Singapore entities would also act as the master developer of the seed development area,

1
CLC Urban Solutions Issue 8,
Building with Nature, February
2016, Interview with N.
Chandrababu Naidu



Executive Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities, Khoo Teng Chye, explaining Singapore's urban progression to Chief Minister Naidu during his visit to Singapore in 2015.
Source: The Centre for Liveable Cities

alongside other opportunities to collaborate and export the country's urban development expertise.

Sharing urban planning expertise

The Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) is currently one of the partner agencies working with Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry to advise the Andhra Pradesh leadership. The CLC works closely with the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA), which is formed to overlook matters of planning, coordination, execution and financing of the capital region and the capital city. It also worked with Singapore's international urban planning firm Surbana-Jurong Pte Ltd on the three master plans that were delivered within the first seven months. Through the CLC's panel of experts², alongside executive director, Khoo Teng Chye, who is Singapore's designated representative and member of the Capital City Advisory Committee, the organisation has been offering technical assistance in capability building development, urban governance and institution building as well as advises on urban issues such as water supply management, electricity systems, land use,

2

CLC's panel of experts consist of domain experts and field practitioners with technical expertise in fields related to CLC's work assembled for the purpose of guiding the researchers, contributing towards capability development programmes and catering to request for advisory help: <http://www.clc.gov.sg/AboutUs/panelofexperts.htm>



Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister of Municipal Administration & Urban Development, P. Narayana (in white) with Singapore's Minister of Trade and Industry, S. Iswaran and CLC Expert, Loh Ah Tuan on a Singapore River cruise. Source: The Centre for Liveable Cities

transport and urban design amongst others. They have also shared their rich experiences of structuring urban systems, policies and processes and solving urban issues in Singapore through a series of workshops and study visits, enabling the Andhra Pradesh government to advance faster in its work.

By advocating a long term and integrated approach to master planning, development and institutionalising good governance, the CLC is sharing the sustainable urbanisation principles which have girded Singapore's successful urban development. Prior to the development of a master plan, the CLC espoused the importance of holistic urban planning and development to the APCRDA and proposed a four-pronged approach to the process of building the new capital, including Planning, Governance, Development Strategy and Capability Development.

The development of Amaravati is expected to give rise to a projected population of 2.49 million in the capital city by 2050, and create nearly 900,000 new jobs. This capital city will serve as a catalyst for the development of the entire capital region, primarily by acting as a central node connecting and coordinating the economic activities of neighbouring cities. Just as Chief Minister Naidu declared that "to build a capital is a rare, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity", Singapore also recognises this invitation to work on the project as an honour and an affirmation of its expertise in integrated master planning and development. The development of Amaravati offers plenty of opportunities for Singapore companies to set up business in India, demonstrate technical assistance and contribute to international sustainable urbanisation in the most concrete and lasting of ways.



Illustrations of current plans for Amaravati depict a liveable and sustainable capital city with strong blue and green elements as well as an orderly planning system.
Source: Surbana-Jurong Pte Ltd

3

Speech by Minister of Trade and Industry (Industry) S Iswaran At The Letter of Award For Master-Developer Of Start-Up Area & Signing Of G-To-G MOU At Taj Gateway Hotel, Vijayawada Amaravati, 15 May 2017, 2.30 Pm (Singapore Time).

“While a clear vision is essential to inspire and unite otherwise disparate efforts, working together is what will ultimately yield results on the ground in a timely manner,” said Singapore’s Minister of Trade and Industry S. Iswaran during the signing of the MOU.³ “As each group of investors and developers works with government agencies and other institutions in Andhra Pradesh to build Amaravati, close collaboration and integration of efforts is the key to collective success...Singapore and our companies are fully committed to this partnership with you, your team and the people of Andhra Pradesh.”

About the Writers



Lim Swee Keng

Deputy Director (Advisory)
Centre for Liveable Cities
Ministry of National Development

Swee Keng started her career with the Urban Redevelopment Authority overseeing master planning for the northeast region of Singapore and strategic projects such as reclamation and defence installations. She also worked on the country's first Parks & Water bodies and Identity Plans and implemented development control guidelines for the East region. During a stint with Sentosa Development Corporation, she was involved in the infrastructure development and investment promotion of Southern Islands of Singapore in preparation for tourism development.

Prior to joining CLC, she was with Surbana-Jurong Consultants Pte Ltd for six years and was involved in strategic studies and master planning projects for both the public and private sectors in cities in Brazil, Ecuador, India, Russia and China.



Thinesh Kumar

Researcher
Centre for Liveable Cities
Ministry of National Development

Thinesh Kumar manages CLC's advisory work alongside his research portfolio. His current research work focuses on green infrastructure, the ABC Waters Programme and urban food security. Trained as a geographer, Thinesh has had prior experience in academia and has a BSc in Geography from the National University of Singapore.

About the CLC

The Centre for Liveable Cities was set up in 2008 by the Ministry of National Development and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, based on a strategic blueprint developed by Singapore's Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development. Guided by its mission to distil, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities, the Centre's work spans four main areas - Research, Capability Development, Knowledge Platforms and Advisory. For more information, please visit us at <http://www.clc.gov.sg>