

(1) THE NEW METROPOLIS

NEHRU AND THE AFTERMATH

IIC. 13th December 2014

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1. Summary

I shall talk to day about the new metropolis and how important it is as symbols of change. The announcement of a new metropolis is carefully timed and reflects the future aspirations of the rulers of the day.

The announcement of New Delhi was made in 1911 at the third tented durbar as part of the Royal Imperial intention to move the Centre of rule from Calcutta to Delhi. Their Majesties came all the way to Delhi to make their subjects aware of George V's coronation and also lay the foundation stone for New Delhi.

The announcement for Chandigarh was made exactly 40 years later. Looking for Architects, the Government appointed Le Corbusier as the architect for the design of Chandigarh; Nehru declared *"Let this be a new town, symbolical of the freedom of India, unfettered by the traditions of the past – an expression of the nation's faith in the future... Chandigarh is important for not being tied down to what had been done by our forefathers and the like, but thinking out in new terms – not in terms of rules and regulations laid down by our ancestors..."* Rs. 50/- crores was set aside by the Punjab Government for the Chandigarh project. Just to compare that is the price of an apartment in New Delhi. 'To-day'.

The announcement for Smart Cities was made in 2014, six decades after the beginning of Chandigarh and almost a hundred years after the British announced New Delhi was announced. This announcement was made in the BJP Election Manifesto where Modi made an appeal for *Time to make a Difference*. The Manifesto promised ~ and I quote the Manifesto ~ *high growth urban centers where our cities would no longer remain a reflection of poverty and bottlenecks- rather that they should become symbols of efficiency, speed and scale and this would happen through a 100 new cities enabled with the latest technologies and infrastructure that would be built for them.*

On coming to power, our new government chose to quote the price in American currency and allocated \$ 1.2 billion to fulfill the election promise. Since the Planning Commission has been abrogated there will be less evidence of transparency in this expenditure. Less transparency because the work has already begun and teams of consultants are coming in from abroad to plan these cities and the work is well underway though its outputs have not been widely shared yet even within the professional community. From my own evaluation of the Urbanisation Report of McInsey, to which I shall return later, most of this expenditure will be incurred by the exchequer for providing the infrastructure so that the corporations who will own these smart cities as special economic zones and will be able to confine their investments within the four city walls of the gated domain of the Smart City. As Special Economic Zones their investments will be secured within designated and protected domains.

I shall not be discussing whether these newly announced modern cities historically worked or succeeded in their ambitious goals and aspirations. For now I shall limit myself to their importance as symbols for the rulers ~ our pre-independence cities and the two post independence ones ruled in turns by – the English Company, the British Monarch and the Indian bourgeoisie. I will today, touch very briefly on the urban aspirations of each of these rulers because each of them announced urban settlements for this country as generous gifts for the future of our people.

Nothing unusual about that. Historically rulers have tended to found cities as gestures Fateh-pur Sikri is an example. However to-day I will be limiting myself to a small period of our recent history.

So within that recent historical context, I will talk about the creation of Chandigarh and how it was imagined as a symbol of Nehru's aspirations for a new India, a symbol that was shared with the leaders of a divided Punjab, for a new Punjab. The fact that today, the governments of Punjab, Haryana and the Centre are fighting over its control is not important for this paper. I shall then move onto Smart Cities and illustrate how they must become the symbols of the new Government's aspirations for a new India where inequality is stable as an inevitable factor of a Hindu civilization.

Crossing a hundred years across our modern urban history to compare the Company cities, Chandigarh and Smart Cities is placed in a larger idea that 2014 forms the crest of the second watershed in our modern history. The first watershed, crested by the Partition divides the colonial period from the period of post- independence when utopian thinkers conceptualized and wrote our very own constitution, which was baptised in socialism. This was our own version of the Freedom Project, its egalitarianism, justice and liberty that had been initiated into the modern era by the American Declaration of Independence in 1776 and 13 years later incorporated into the French Declaration of the Rights of Man written by the French Revolutionaries led by Lafayette. A century and a half later, it had eventually come to us. We then tried to cope with the lavish socialist aspirations of Nehru and our constitution as well as the poverty of thought of the Congress party that stuffed those ideals into their pockets. Academically that was the time when so many of our leading intellectuals became concerned with freedom and equality and invented for us futures that were thoroughly Anglo-Saxon but accented with European embellishments. Thus have ended the six decades that stretched from the partition of the Sub-continent in 1947 till now.

We are now, in 2014, at the crest of the second watershed at a period in history where the Anglo-European Freedom Project enshrined in our constitution as a socialist project, has begun to be replaced by the American Prosperity Project. Our future, as of now, is being bathed by market forces and being conceptualized by the windfall donors to political parties, pressure groups, NGOs, think tanks and other corporate councils and councils of councils that see far into our destiny, and as we move towards it, the directions for ideas within academic thinking are being guided and funded by the same institutions and donors who are gently easing us into our new future. Indeed the prospects for our future are now being described in narrower and more complaint ways than ever before.

I would like to describe two different urban products - On one side there was Chandigarh, the product of an Anglo-European imagination in which the freedom of the human being was idealized and about how life was going to be about the fulfillment of the promises of the state and how it was going to succeed in the pursuit of egalitarianism and how the

citizens were to be protected by the three independent umbrellas of the Judiciary, the Legislature and the Executive.

On the other side are the new Smart Cities, primarily the product of a global financial imagination where mobile capital can describe its own deals and then descend to feed off them before moving on. Nothing and everything is idealized in these urban hubs dedicated to gating consumer prosperity. A smart city is a giant corporation within which there are smaller corporations and within which there are still smaller sub-corporations all of whom have invested in the city and whose investments are at stake. The institutions of democracy are taken for granted, having survived six decades, but it has become apparent that no longer can the state promise to continue to invest in pursuits of egalitarianism or prosperity for the entire nation alike. Smart cities are the answers to the future as described by the Corporate world and the councils that promote Global Governance.

Smart Cities are special purpose vehicles for granular prosperity. Granular in the sense that prosperity is in discrete lumps of fortified prosperity which could have golden days forever and ever with growing friendships for the enthusiastic families arriving from the old towns to share in the promised happiness.

If Chandigarh represented the idea that elected citizens could be left to guide our current and future affairs, Smart cities belong to the age of managing our futures and our prosperity and engaging head on with the financial failure of our civic governance. I will clarify what management means when I come to the first smart city that is under construction in Abu Dhabi.

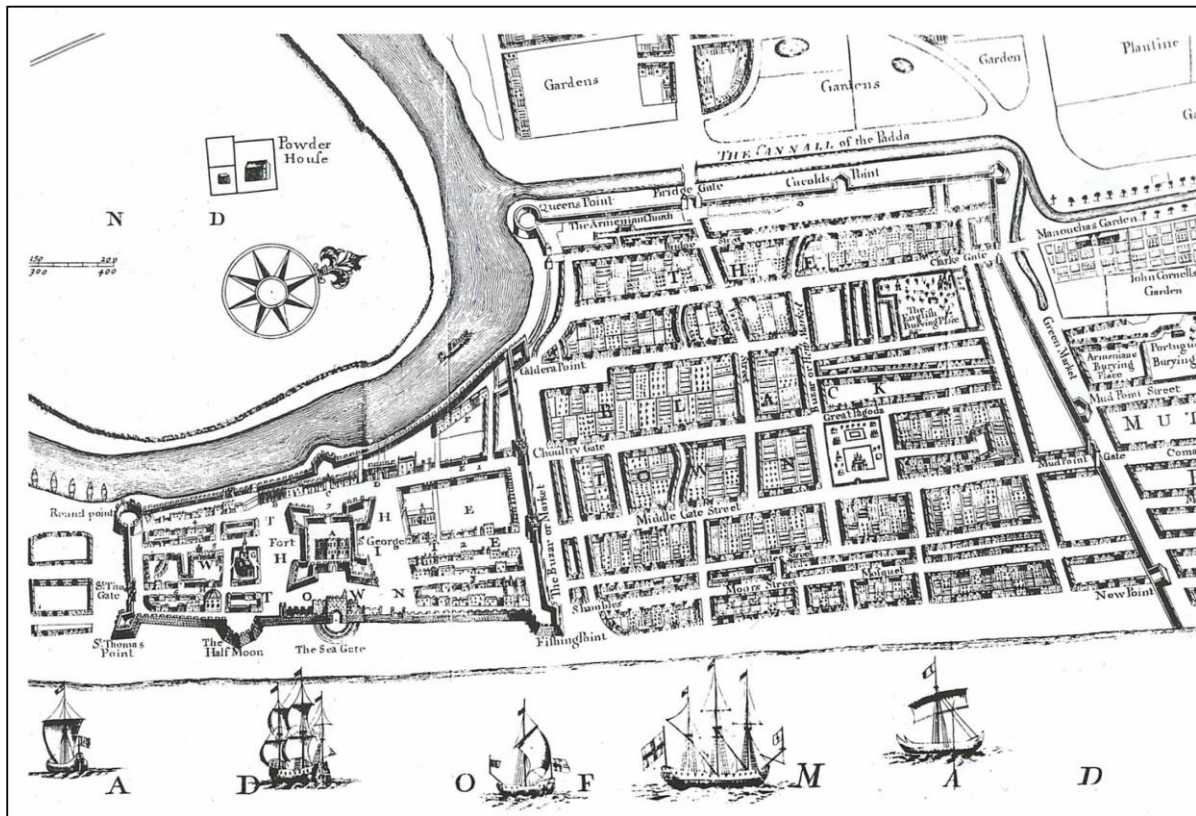
2. The Commercial Metropolis in India – Company towns Bombay, Calcutta, Madras.

Let me return to our recent past with which most of you will, be very familiar. Our contemporary metropolitan cities originated as Company urban settlements intended for their officers protected by the adjacent garrison towns that protected them in the 17th century. Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were the pivotal hubs for the Company's regional protection and international connections. As trading entrepots, they were centers for both commerce and control – Money and Military.

These were cities founded by the Company as domains within which they would provide and protect their patronage for a new generation of traders who were financed and encouraged to move away from their historical linkages with the established patronage of local rulers and the Moghuls. The Marwari community is an example. They were re-located from their trading centers in Jhun Jhunu to Calcutta to become the commission agents for the heroin trade to China, the tea plantation auctions and the emerging real estate opportunities. In these Company towns the tiny population of British adventurers lived in protected enclaves amongst other trading communities such as the Armenians, and the Indian settlements that were also planned and built by the Company as the “Black towns” inhabited by candidates who re-located to comply and receive the new patronage and the education of the superior culture of the Empire.

(2) Map of Madras.

Source: Norman Evenson

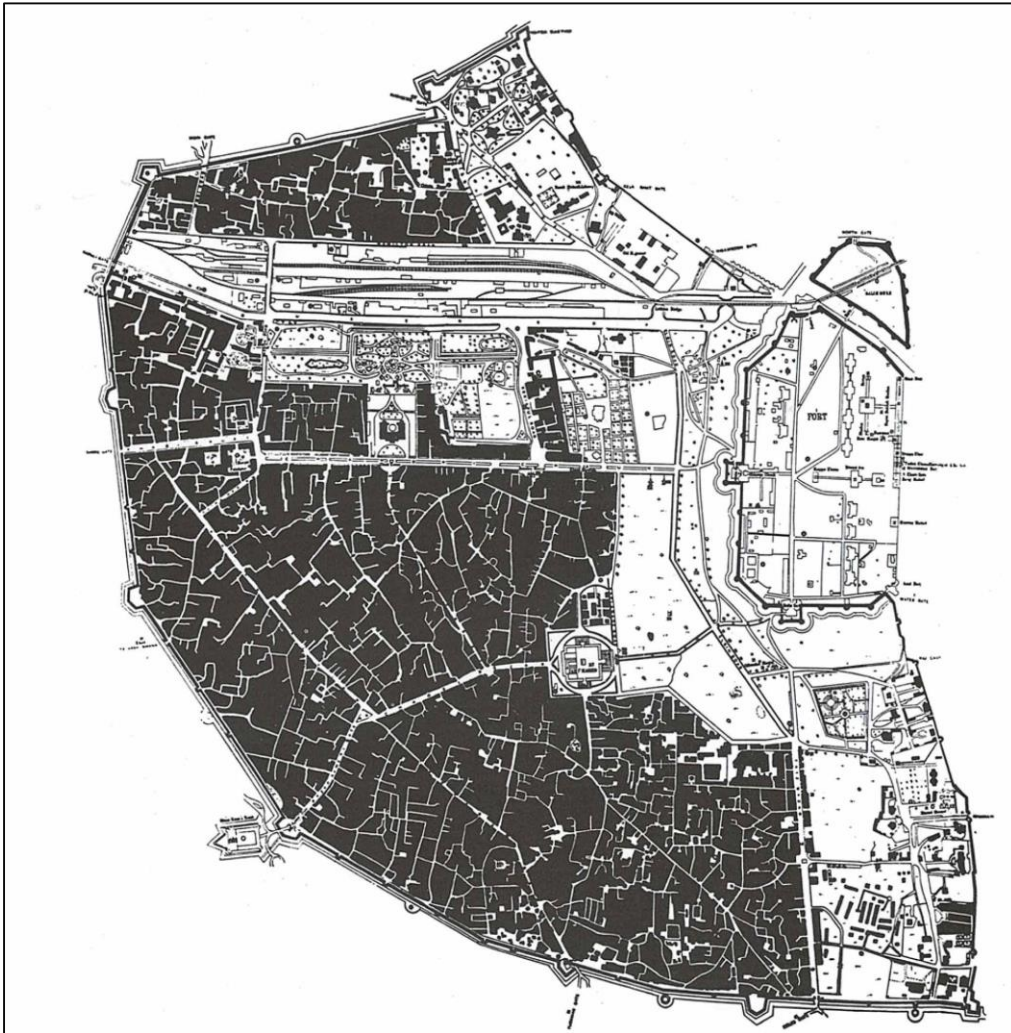


**(3) Calcutta Burra bazaar and Old Court House. Calcutta
Black Town and White Town**



*26. Old Court House Street looking north toward Dalbousie Square, c. 1863.
The building on the right is the Great Eastern Hotel.*

(4) Post 1857 map of Delhi



In all three company towns, it was taken for granted by their inhabitants, both British and Indian, that Britain set the standards for training and trading because the best education and training was obtainable in Britain. Company towns and garrisons protected their inmates from the hostility of those who lived in the *Kasbahs* and whose livelihoods had been uprooted by invasive trade practices of the Company. Although British Government officials had overseen the Company's conduct in India since 1784, the Anglo-Saxons could not comprehend or trust Indians. The only way to overcome the hostility was to maintain loyal troops in the garrisons and to introduce education to teach their own standards to "natives" who agreed to be reformed.

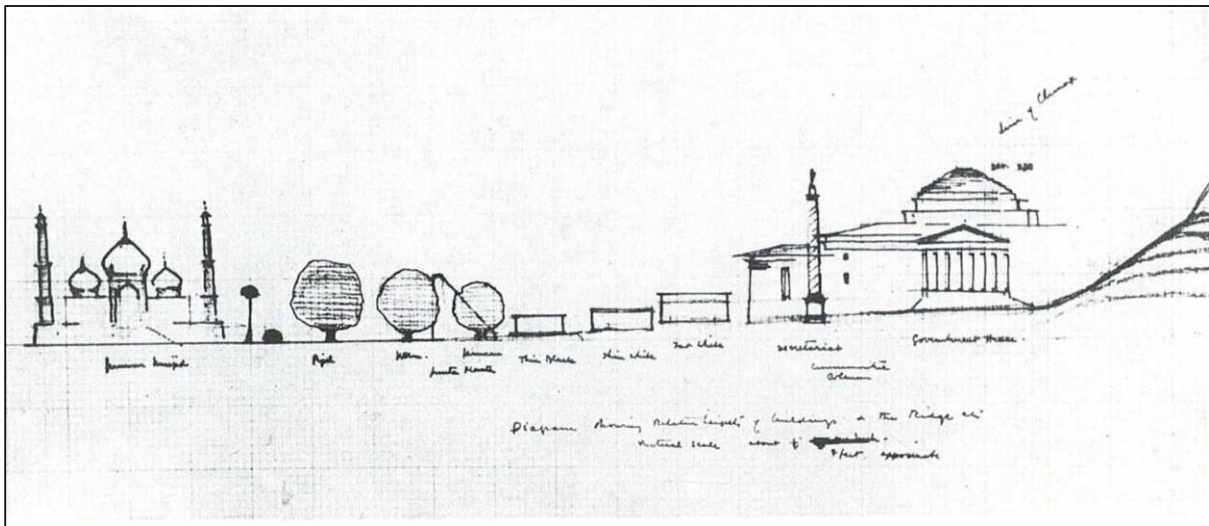
Smart cities, incidentally, are to be the company towns of the 21st century – I shall return to this later.

3. The Utopian Metropolis in India. - New Delhi. Chandigarh.

All three cities, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay thrived for almost two hundred years as commercial centers that were ruled jointly by Sovereign officials and the Company Directors and were intended primarily as places to harvest profits. The 1857 Rebellion, however, changed the relative political importance of these cities. The British Government took over the direct rule of India and focused on Delhi where Bahadur Shah was identified as the instigator of the rebels and the center of native hostility. They wanted to punish these “mutinous natives” in some way by destroying their loyalty to the Mogul Emperor. There were a number of vengeance proposals suggested by the British officers~ one was to demolish the Red Fort, and Jama Masjid, another advocated converting the Jama Masjid into a cathedral as was done to the mosques in Cordoba, after all, they argued, Santa Sophia had been converted into a mosque by the Ottomans. In the end a compromise was reached with the pro- demolition group by limiting destruction to the entire area around the Red Fort that had some of the largest houses and institutions. Today our school children sit in rows on that cleared site on the grass listening to the Independence Day speech of the Prime Minister.

To seal the absolute victory of the British it was decided to tax the inhabitants of Delhi to pay for the building of a new city so that Shahjehanabad would be difficult to maintain and be reduced to insignificance. A survey was done to determine the level of the minarets of Jama masjid to ensure that the dome of what is now Rashtrapati Bhavan would be higher.

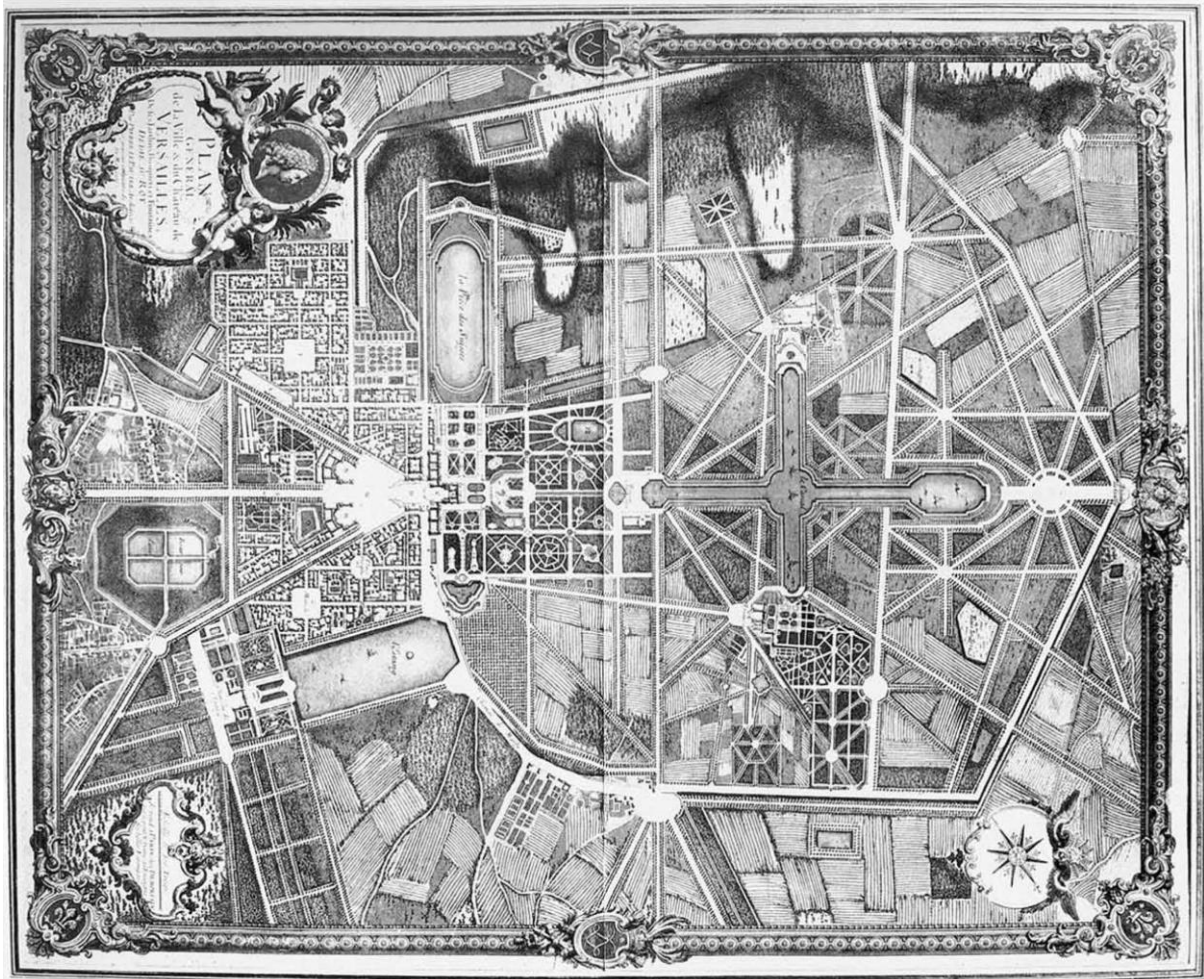
Lutyens sketch of the proposed height of the vice roy's dome over the Jama Masjid minarets



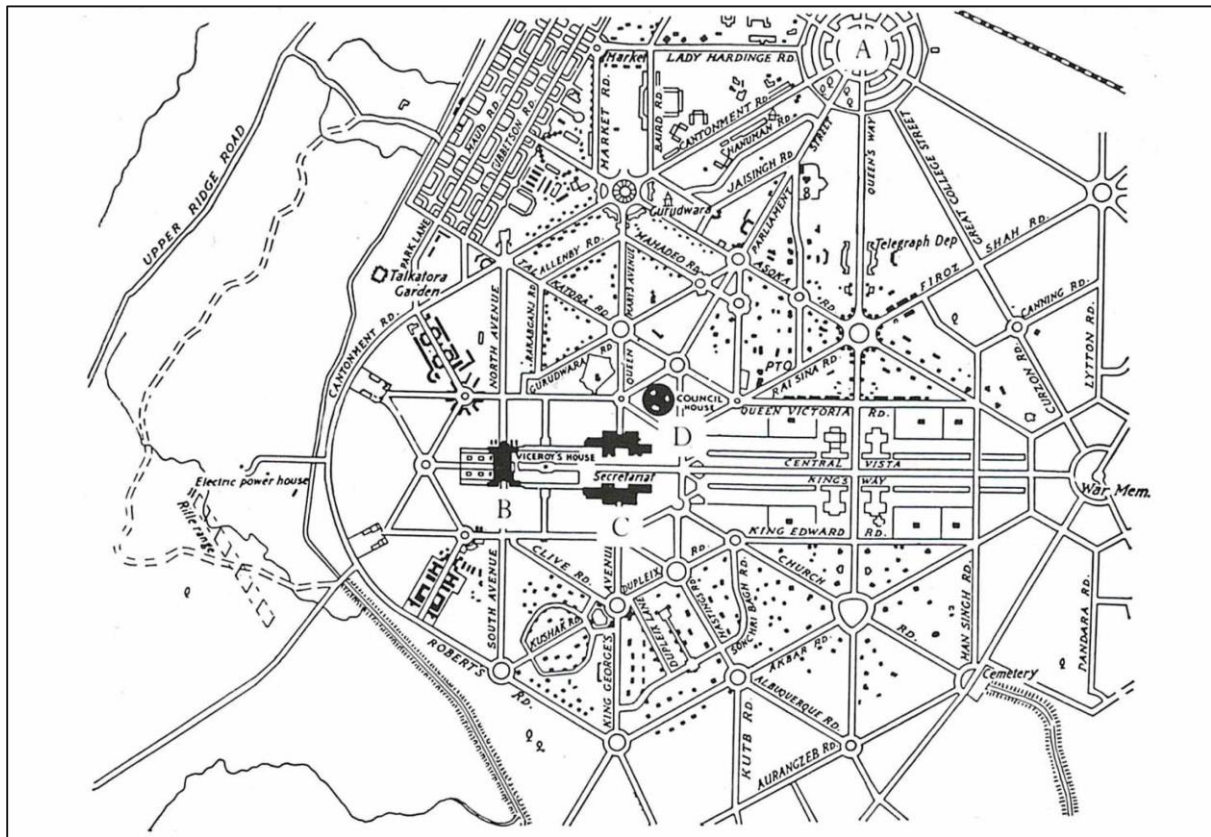
The new city of Delhi was to be the new capital of the Empire in the East and needed to aspire towards greater sentiments than profit alone. For the puritans wanting to reform the Indians, Calcutta was rejected as a chattel of the Company and tainted with its reputation of being a place where all the sensuous pleasures imaginable could be engaged in freely by the sahib hidden away from the prying eyes of the guardians of Protestantism. Calcutta was indeed the Havana of India before 1857. For the reformers who began coming to India after the Sovereign take over, all the three cities where the Company had thrived seemed places of corruption where the officers of the Company had shed every inhibition for the sake of the here and now. The idea of reforming the “seething Indian” was much debated in England and eventually these higher reformist sentiments were sought to be delivered by a combination of missionaries and the Indian friendly Theosophists who were active in Britain and seemed, at the time, to offer a bridge between the incomprehensible India of the Company and the morally upright world of Victoria’s Sovereign Empire. The selection of Edwin Lutyens to design New Delhi was primarily influenced by his father-in-law Lord Lytton who was the Viceroy of India when the big-tented Durbar was held in Delhi in 1877. Incidentally Lutyen’s wife, Lady Emily had joined the Theosophist Society and was a close friend of both Annie Besant and Krishnamurthy.

The new city of Delhi was to be a paradise; a symbol of reformed rule cleansed from the profanities of the Company officers some of who were tried in courts of law. This idealized garden of New Delhi emulated the Palace grounds of Versailles.

Versailles master plan



New Delhi master plan

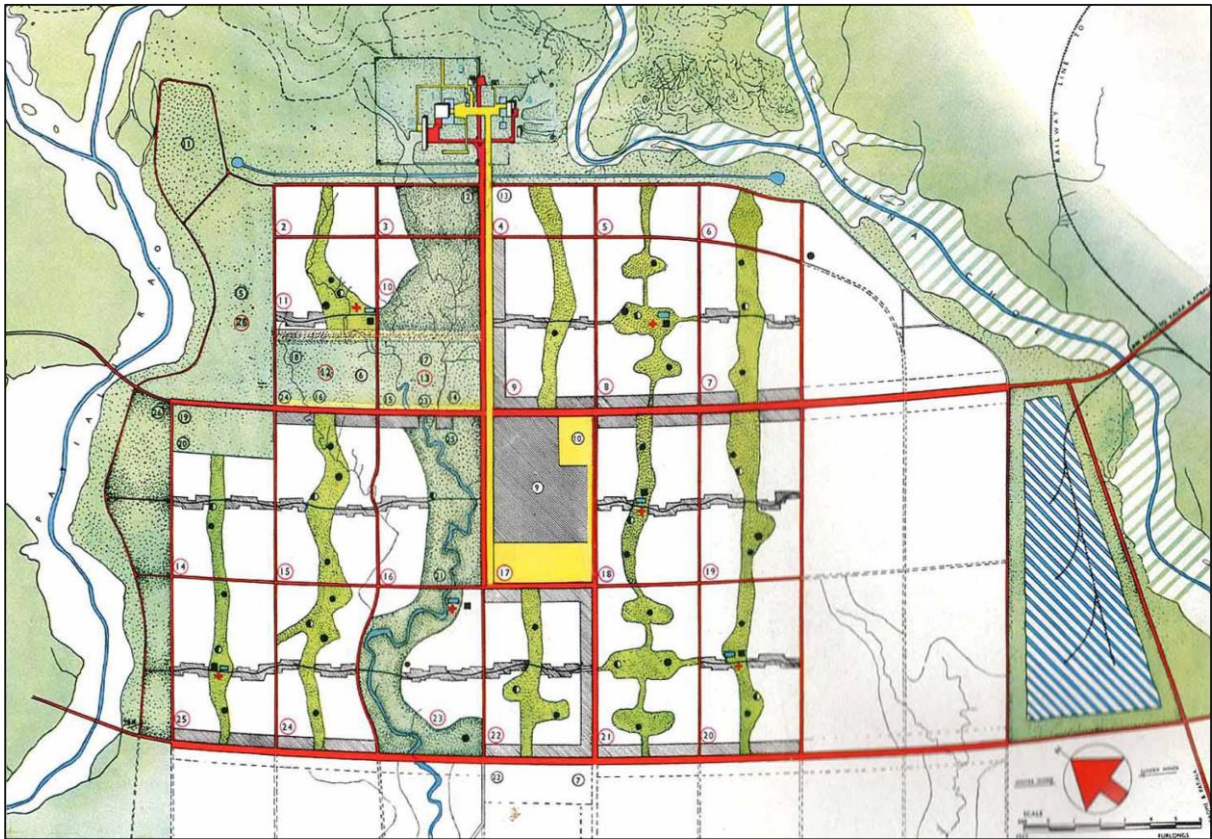


This was to be the springing point from which reform would spread into the hearts of the tainted and misguided natives. Britain did not possess, in its architectural heritage, a grand enough architecture to reduce Mughal splendors into insignificance so the planners borrowed the inspiration from Louis XIV convinced that they would thereby reduce all the grandeur of Shahjahanabad to insignificance. Some 30 square kilometers of land was acquired and hundreds of bungalows or garden houses were established as the instruments of power, which of course they continue to continue to be. For H. B. Havell an architectural historian at the time, the idea of a new city was a wonderful idea for there and in the surrounding territories, he felt the Indians “*must sit at the feet of Europe to learn civilization*”.

Chandigarh and Nehru’s vision.

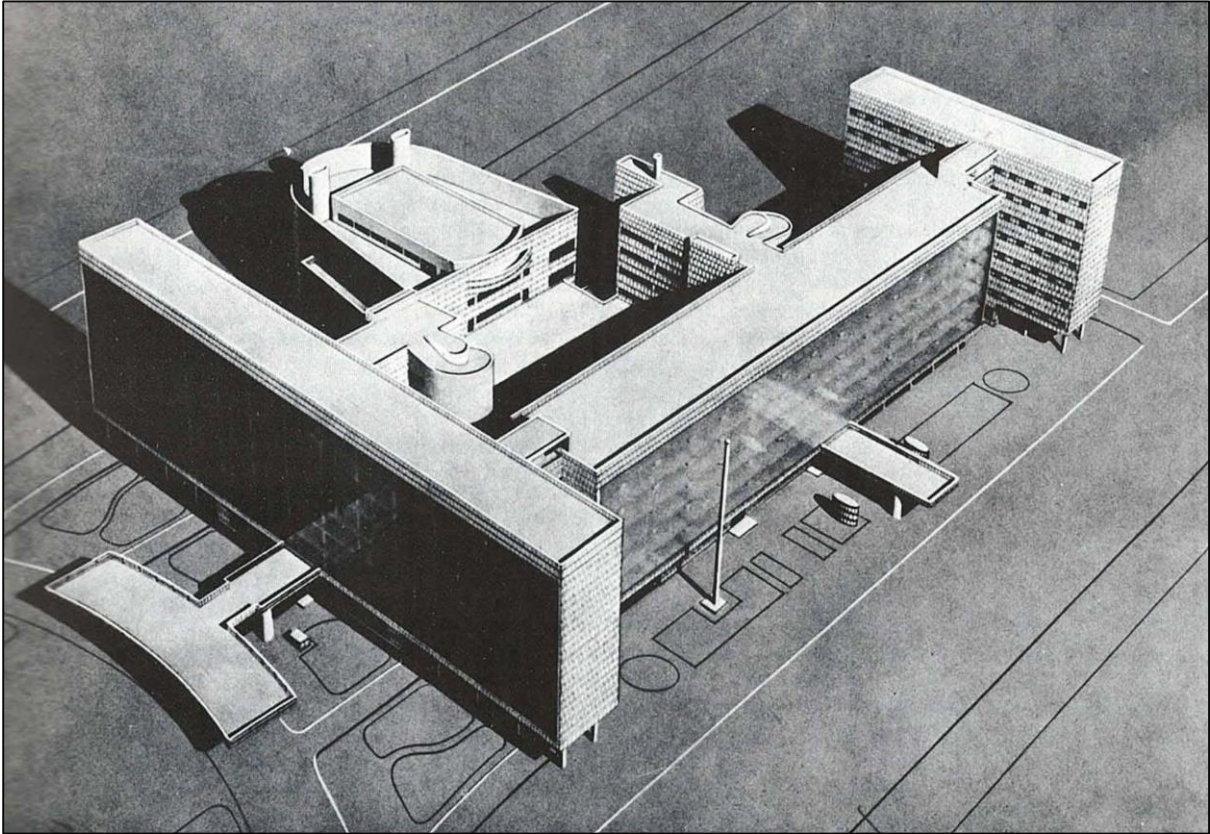
Two decades later, having felt the impact of the feet of European civilization, the Government of a bitterly divided Punjab acquired 36 square kilometers of land near Chandimandir and Nehru invited Le Corbusier to design a new city that would symbolize the aspirations of the new urban population of post independent India.

(7) Chandigarh master Plan



If the layout of New Delhi owed its grandeur to Versailles, the layout of Chandigarh sought inspiration from the human being as understood by one individual – le Corbusier. The ancient Egyptians for their outsized temples had used the human body as the basis for a master plan but for Corbusier it was a symbol of the triumph of man and reason. Corbusier was, arguably, the most important thinker of the early modern movement of architecture in the West. As happened in the early modern movements in Western art, the new visions of Corbusier's architecture were strongly influenced by the events and creative outburst of the art that came out of the early Soviet period. Corbusier had visited the Soviet Union, worked in collaboration with Soviet architects and had, at the time, proposed some of the largest buildings he had ever designed intended for Soviet workers.

(8) People's Palace in Central Moscow 1928 designed by Le Corbusier



Corbusier's credentials were as progressive as those of Picasso and the Constructivists.

Indeed his entire notions of town planning and utopian cities were clearly linked to his admiration for the ideals of the Russian Revolution, its search for a new man and the new urban visions of the ideal cities of the Constructivists where ideal communities would live having received the benefits of re-distribution. Corbusier was already well known amongst European intellectuals and it was Andrei Malraux, at that time the French Minister of Culture, who confirmed his suitability for the commission to Nehru as the ideal choice for the planning of Chandigarh.

(10) Corbusier with Nehru



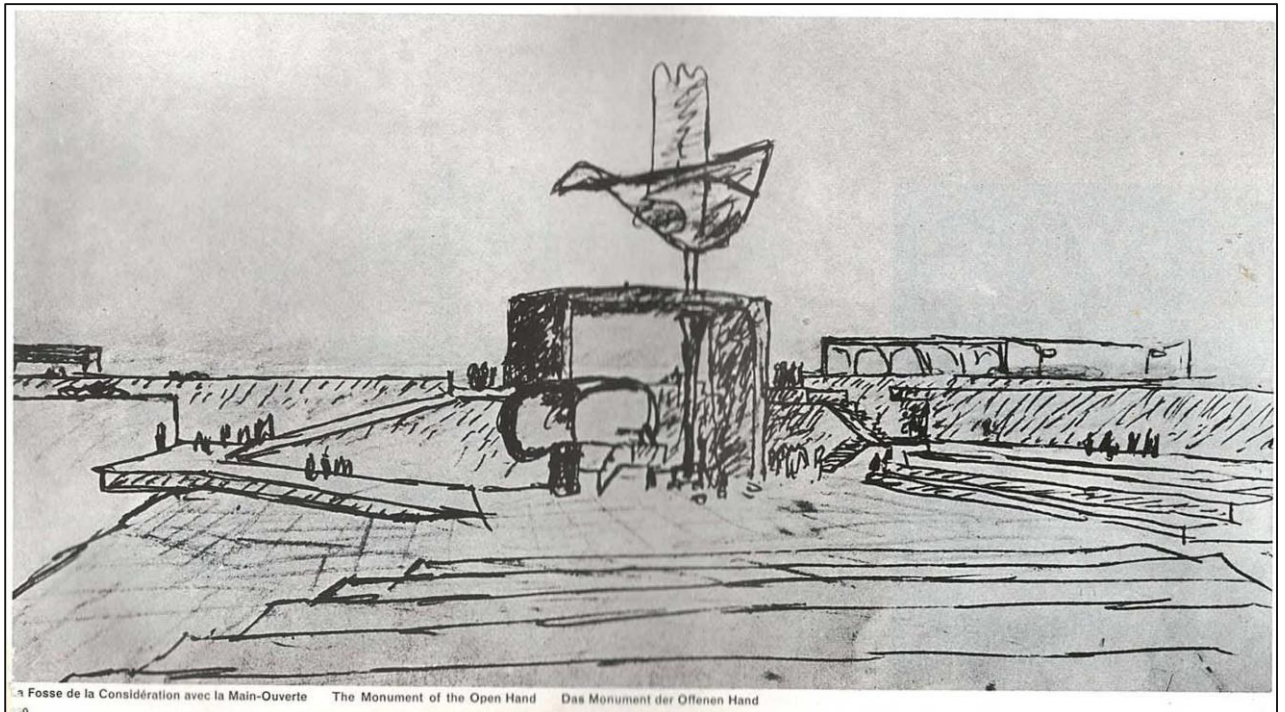
(11) Chandigarh master plan

An Anglo-French team of architects took charge of the design of the new city. Corbusier, like Lutyens used to commute and his cousin Pierre Jeanneret and the English couple Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry stayed for longer periods in Shimla and then Chandigarh doing the drawings of the rest of the city. Corbusier reserved for himself the master plan and the capitol buildings. The Legislative Assembly building, the High Court and the Secretariat were located in the north as the head and brains of the city. The park in the center was seen as the lungs and the commercial center in sector 17 as the stomach.

The culminating symbol of Chandigarh for Corbusier was the Open Hand Monument set in a sunken space 15 feet deep with two sets of tiered seating at right angles to each other to signify, in his words *"there are always two sides to any question"* The enormous hand rotates on ball bearings and is located within the precincts of the Capitol complex *"giving and receiving"* as he put it, a place for citizens to discuss and address each other in the heart

of terrain where the three institutions of democracy are located. The fact that if you wander in there now you get shoed away by armed guards is another matter.

Open Hand Monument



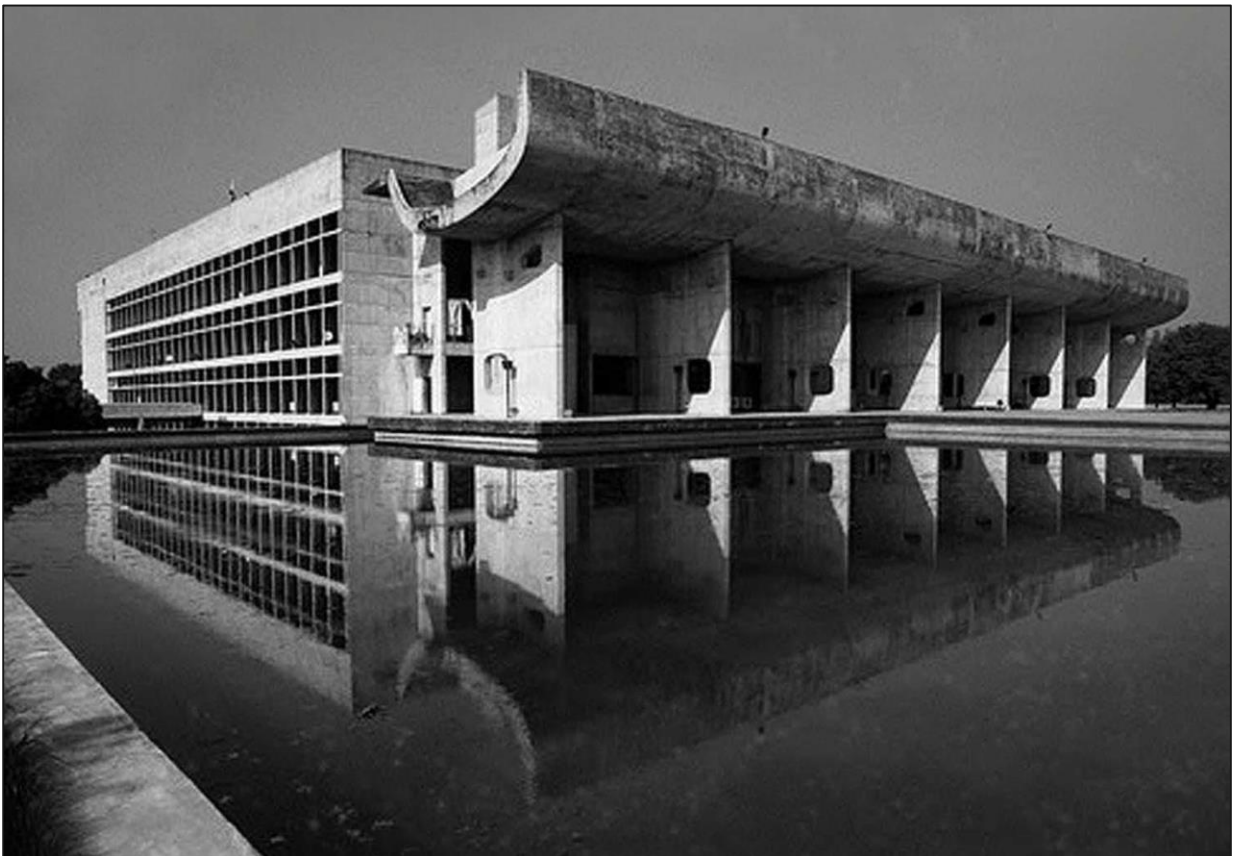
Speaker's lectern in open hand monument



Lenin speaking at Sverdlov Sq. – the inspiration for the Lectern in Chandigarh



The Legislative Assembly Building in Chandigarh



The Secretariat Building



The High Court.



Smart Cities and Modi's vision.

I come now to Smart Cities. I am not sure why the word smart has been taken over to describe a city. I have always associated it with bespoke tailoring! Anyway it is a catchy new name to describe cities— or rather – shall we say it is a new brand name that defines the superior properties that corporate thinking has over common sense. In the corporate world “smart” describes objectives – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related.

However the term Smart city is anything but clear. Having moved away from its conventional meaning, smart has become a somewhat diffused term. One does not, therefore, hesitate to guess at its meaning. From its association with tailoring, it moved onto corporate objectives and now.

Smart is that which responds to your finger tips – all personal interaction with ones surroundings through technology is considered smart, for instance, a kitchen is smart because, as you near your home in your car, you finger a device and the chicken gets roasted and awaits your arrival. At a more ambitious level, the word smart applies to transport, energy, health care, water, waste etc.

These are of course the usual sectors in any dowdy city, so what's new? The motivations are new. If you are smart you no longer need to put social up-liftment on the priority list of your electoral manifestos.

The priorities of Smart Cities are defined by:

The growing bonds between global governors and national governments

Climate Change

Economic Re-structuring

. On line retailing

Imperative need for higher returns to go into the hands of large investors hit by the global recession.

And Smart Cities have not time for *Municipal bankruptcy and*

Aging populations.

The smart city has been devised to implement these priorities on a platform for Technology, Government and Society to come together in ways that old-fashioned democracy seems to have messed up.

The seed for the Smart city idea in India has been defined in two reports put out by Mckinsey Global Institute and Mckinsey India in 2010 and 2014. Both these reports describe the policy imperatives that India’s urban civilization must follow if it wants to survive this century.

Mckinsey & Company	
<p>India’s urban awakening: Building inclusive cities, sustaining economic growth</p>	<p>India’s economic geography in 2025: states, clusters and cities</p>

Both these reports seem to have consulted a large amount of research matter and have described the imperatives for future policies although I am surprised how little attention has been paid to them in public discussions. They are set to guide the directions for our new urban civilization that has been enthusiastically supported by the new government. Indeed any government that would have come to power would have loved them – so clear, so unambiguous and so visionary - they are the substance of dreams for global investors.

I shall present to you, directly from these reports, just a glimpse of what is relevant for this talk to understand better from where this smart idea for cities has come along. When Chandigarh happened there were no reports – life was simple then –Pratap Singh Kairon told Nehru that Punjab had lost Lahore and needed a city, Nehru asked his civil servants Verma and Thapar to find anyone who could give the restless Punjabis a new city and they called Corbusier and he made Chandigarh.

It’s different now. There is no use to call anyone. It’s not just the restless Punjab which is still without its own capital, but also the whole country that has become restless. Luckily Mckinsey Global Institute called and came to the rescue and has done all the work and plugged that black hole in our minds about what sort of India we should get to put an end to

all this restlessness and seething. McKinsey simply defined our opportunities and our rulers were all ears.

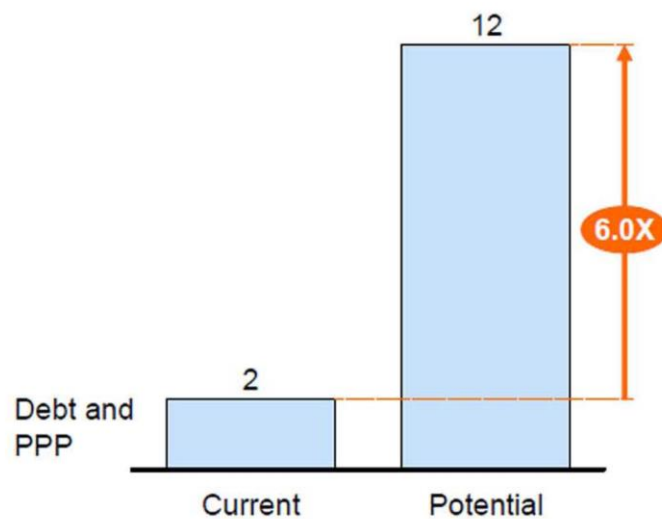


McInsey asked India to

- Nurture top 100 Specialist cities focused on sectors such as tourism and manufacturing through a capital investment program of \$ 96 per capita a year.
- Seed future Urbanization by building 19 transportation corridors linking Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities.

India can also raise up to \$12 billion annually by leveraging the private sector and tapping the debt markets

Total debt and PPP potential
\$ billion per annum, 2008 prices



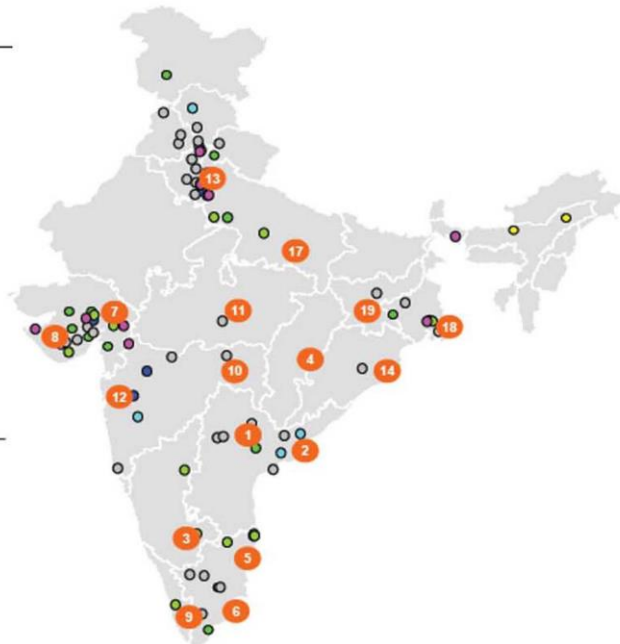
SOURCE: India Urbanization Funding Model; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

They reassured us that

India should develop its top 19 clusters at the cost of \$50 per capita to seed the next wave of urbanization

Illustrative list of clusters

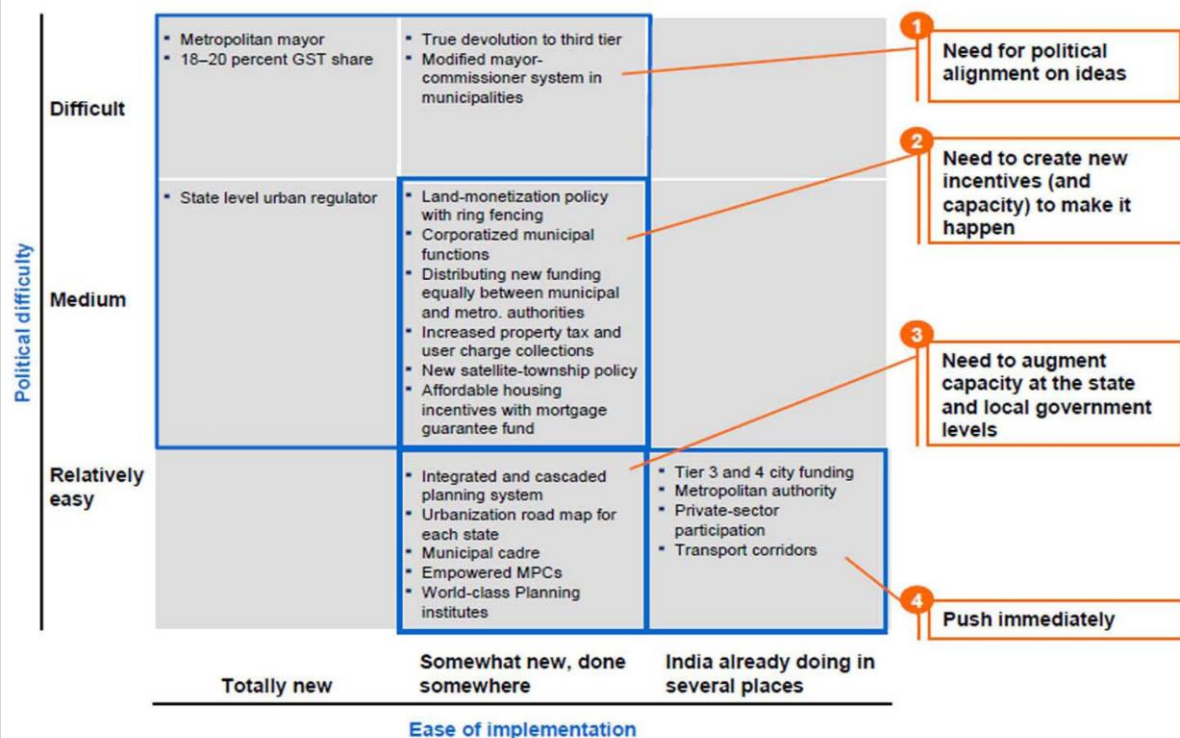
- 1 Hyderabad – Warangal
- 2 Vijayawada – Vishakhapatnam
- 3 Bangalore – Mangalore – Mysore
- 4 Durg-Bhilai Nagar – Raipur
- 5 Chennai – Pondicherry
- 6 Coimbatore – Madurai – Salem – Thanjavur – Tiruchirapalli
- 7 Ahmedabad – Surat – Vadodara
- 8 Bhavnagar – Jamnagar – Rajkot
- 9 Kochi – Kozhikode – Thiruvananthapuram
- 10 Aurangabad – Nagpur
- 11 Bhopal – Indore
- 12 Mumbai – Nashik – Pune
- 13 Gurgaon – New Delhi – Faridabad – Ghaziabad – Meerut – Agra
- 14 Bhubaneswar – Cuttack
- 15 Amritsar – Chandigarh – Jalandhar – Ludhiana
- 16 Jaipur – Kota
- 17 Allahabad – Kanpur – Lucknow – Varanasi
- 18 Kolkata – Asansole
- 19 Dhanbad – Jamshedpur – Ranchi



SOURCE: 2001 National Council for Applied Economic Research survey; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

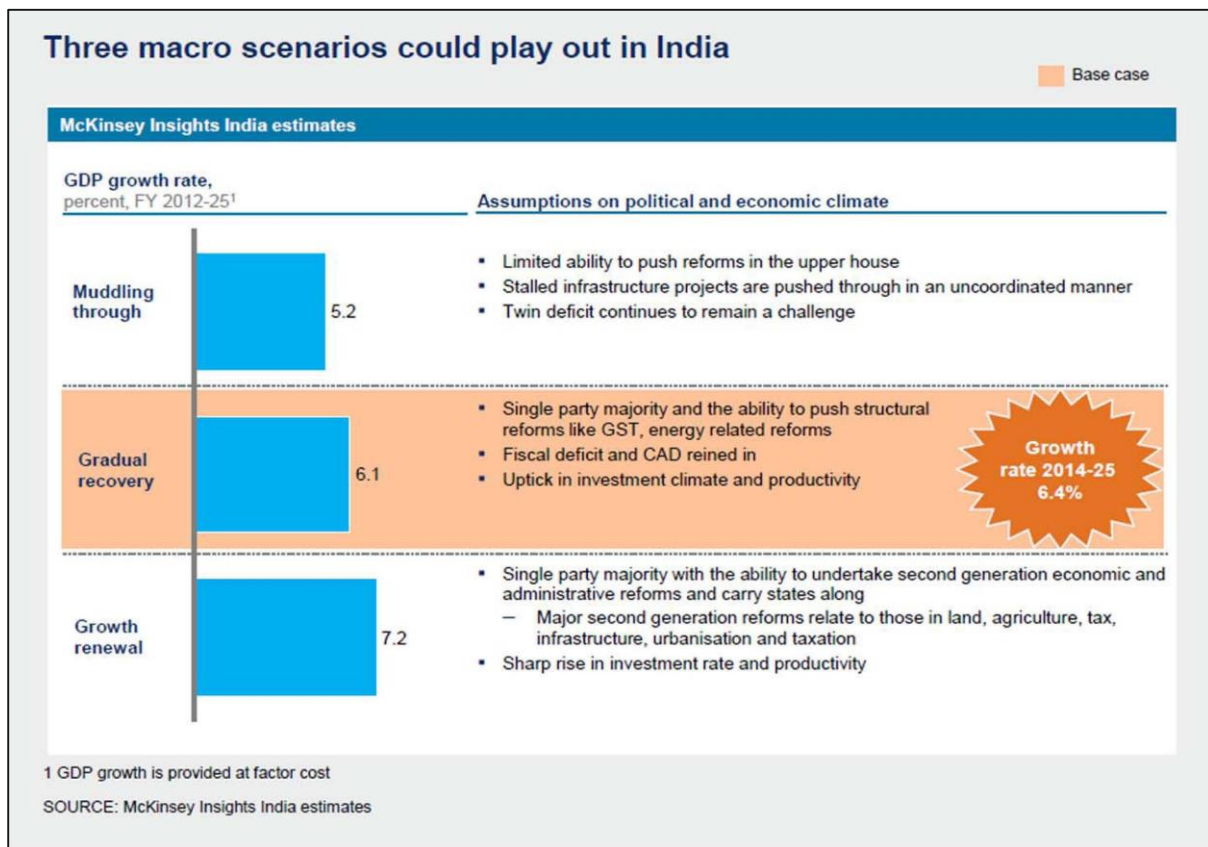
The future course of action was clearly mapped out.

Mechanisms to make change happen vary



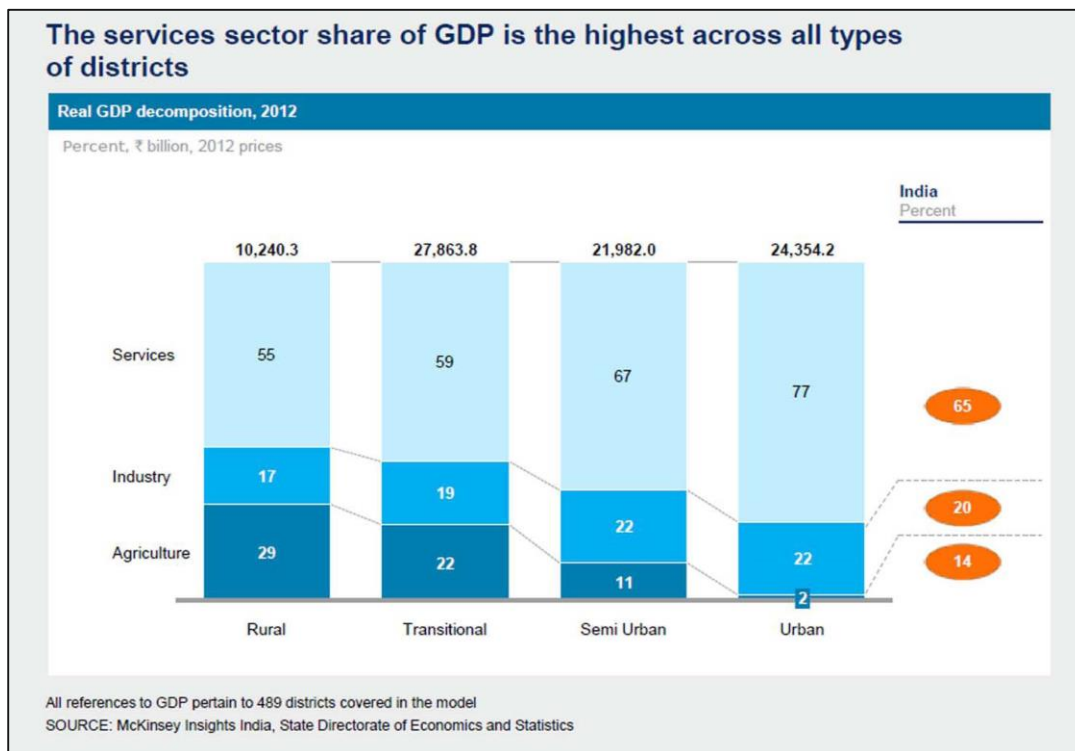
SOURCE: McKinsey Global Institute analysis

The choices before us were clearly explained.



In these reports, the geography of India has been understood in terms of states, clusters and cities and, in these places, the high potential markets of tomorrow have been identified. The reports explain to potential investors that *“over the last few years, a deceleration in growth due to a higher emphasis on non-productivity expenditure ...etc. etc. has led to a catastrophic neglect of our cities.* The second McKinsey Report proposes a model for granular growth for India and the smart cities are to be the engines of this granular model. *“Companies have long been shrugging off the tyranny of averages”* the report explains, they seek, now *“deeper and more granular insights into where to play.”*

The argument to urbanise rapidly, Mckinsey claims, is inevitable



These smart cities are to be the elite urban hubs in this century. What could such a smart place seem like?

Fortunately we can get some idea about this new product from the laboratory trials that are underway.

I shall quickly take you through the product catalogue by referring to the images of

the Abu Dhabi City of Mazda that is under construction and then consider briefly Dongton in China, which is still to take off because of the political scams that have dogged its progress.

Currently these two laboratory models of smart city models are available. For the rest, there is a lot of research and literature about. A Global Smart City Council has taken on the responsibility for defining the new urban age and has prepared “The Readiness Guide” which would lead to the Operating Manual soon, *with inputs from best-in-class companies across many industries. In addition, more than 50 of the world’s foremost independent experts on smart city development—from academia, research and advocacy—have reviewed and contributed to the Guide. The Readiness Guide serves to focus and structure a city’s path to the 21st Century.*

India will provide the first large-scale field trial for this new urban age. The Smart City Council Branch in Bangalore is a collaborative initiative of the Global Smart Cities Council and its *mission is to accelerate growth in the smart cities sector by lowering barriers to adoption through thought leadership, outreach, tools and advocacy. The Council's partners include some of the world's leading technology companies with expertise in smart cities and infrastructure.*

It seems a vast complex subject but I do believe that you have got some idea about how very simple it really is going to be. There isn't time to discuss the details of the functioning of the two cities here. Both Masdar and Dongton share common aspirations. I shall list these and simply show ten images from each smart city so as you may get an idea of the shape of things to come:

Smart Cities are planned so that each area within it is carefully designed to the guidelines for sustainability in:

Energy supplies from different sources such as biomass and waste, converted to biogas from municipal sewage; wind farms, photovoltaic cells and micro wind turbines.

Water self sufficiency is critical through re-cycling, rainwater harvesting and controlling consumption through price mechanisms.

Buildings materials that reduce the energy consumption to make them by 70%.

Waste Management by recycling into re-use or conversion into biomass for energy production for 90% of all waste in the city.

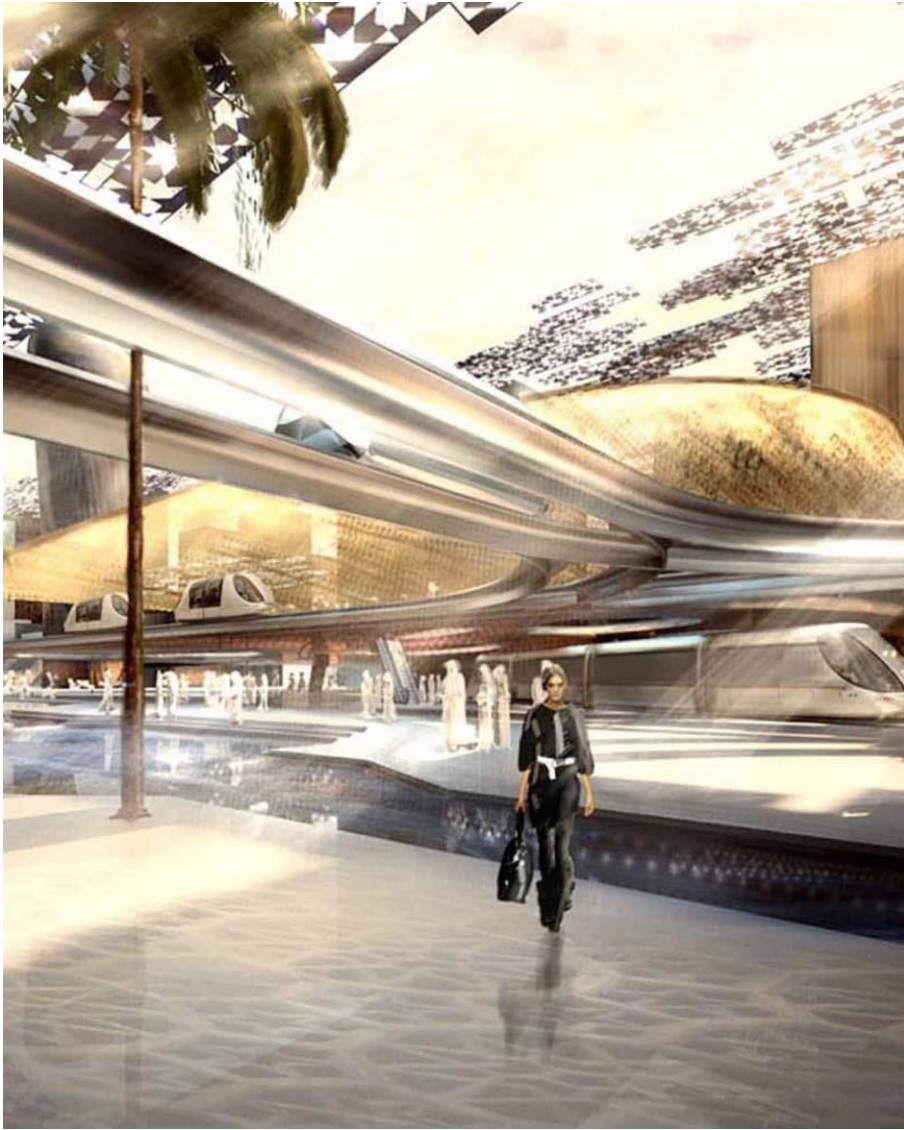
Transport reduction in the use of vehicles and a system of electric vehicles to reduce air and noise pollution that will enable buildings to be naturally ventilated, There will be cycle paths, pedestrian routes and various types of solar powered public transportation and, in the case of Dongton - water taxis. Visitors would use public transportation within the city and leave their vehicles parked outside of it.

Masdar in Abu Dhabi the first smart city









Dongtan Select 10 images

6. Conclusions

Both Chandigarh and Smart Cities are two different faces of modernism. The same genie of modernism that had escaped after the French Revolution and then got nurtured by the Enlightenment. By the time the Smart Cities come up almost a century will have gone by since the advent of Chandigarh and we could by then have forgotten how Chandigarh was once the face of Fabians, Socialism, and Egalitarian modernism, planted in Indian soil to procure the freedom of the individual and then guarantee it through the three democratic institutions of the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Executive.

Smart Cities are the elite face of modernism. The modernism in which the freedom of complying individuals is defined in terms of each person choices and prosperity levels and the ease of personal access to technology, credit rating and the legitimate pursuits of desires and comfort. And most important of all – smart cities, by being gated, provide the protection for our emerging middle –class that can earn substantial salaries, and live safely to save some wealth without the need to supplement it from an inheritance they never got.

For the advocates of smart cities, the urban dilemma is no longer considered as a social or political one that has to be solved by elected representatives. A smart city would have technological dilemmas and these need to be dealt with by managers. Social and political compliance seems a pre-condition for residence.

These two modernisms also describe the difference between what Nehru understood by modern India and what our present Government wants India to be. For Nehru, Chandigarh was to be the symbol of the unfettered freedom for not only an Independent India but also for each individual – poor or rich aspiring to live in a society searching for a common freedom ~ an ideal that was part of the way in which Fabians and Socialists saw the modern world. For the Government of the day, Smart Cities are a symbol of a new future for India in which the freedom of fulfilled aspirations will be guaranteed to those who migrate and get employed and integrated into the prosperity and values of a new industrialised future of India where corporations provide finance, policy guidance and political options. This is a global venture. The box of hundred smarties is carried to every

country that is visited by our leaders. It has been offered to Japan, the US, the UK, Germany, IBM, Siemens, and Cisco – Microsoft. The US, for instance, has agreed to take 3 smarties and offers are awaited from Germany and France.

Enormous migrations are being planned in this new India; enormous opportunities for prospering are going to be offered to communities who comply. It is proposed by the Population figures of DMIC that a third of India’s population will live in Industrial corridors of DMIC.

Projected population for DMIC Region (2039)		
Year	Population DMIC (Millions)	DMIC population as % of Indian
2009	231	20%
2019	314	24%
2029	402	28%
2039	518	33%

If you comply, you will be able to access cities that will respond to you through your personal technologies. The Smart City is a sophisticated technology hub. It defines these anitized world of the consumer made safe by corporate security and governance. These are not cities where you wander in and go from door to door looking for a job any more than you can do in Dubai or the Emirates. The employer needs to sponsor you. The three institutions of democracy would remain intact and continue to serve as they do now, those who prosper or those who need to prosper.

If Chandigarh was an attempt to demonstrate that India too can have Fabian Utopias and be part of the global dream to liberate mankind, the Smart Cities project aspires to join the emerging global connected network of urban centers to be ruled by a Global Governance that intends to enable the multiplication of private wealth on the backs of those who need to be content with levels of prosperity where the bar is lower and this applies globally as part of the neo-liberal package offered to individuals, countries and entire regions. The global warming umpires have indicated that the whole world cannot live like the Americans ~ they have clarified that citizens of the rest of the world must simply search for that

threshold where there is **stable inequality** and where you can sit in the past and devour our future.

Let me conclude with a quotation from Nehru from a letter written in 1947 –where he recalled the prevalence of a growing ideology in pre-war Germany.

It attracted by its superficial trappings and strict discipline, considerable numbers of lower middle class young men and women who are normally not too intelligent and for whom life appeared to offer little to attract them. And so they drifted towards the party because its policy and programme, such as they were, were simple, negative and did not require an active effort of the mind. It brought Germany to ruin and I have little doubt that if these tendencies are allowed to spread and increase in India, they would do enormous injury to India.”

As an architect and as a planner, I have no doubt that the idea of Smart Cities is simple, does not require an active effort of the mind and is inherently negative because it is divergent and could give us the new gated, exclusive zones where the very notion of a divided prosperity makes sense to inhabitants who comply. When you take a shared or integrated notion of prosperity and well-being and partition it into separate levels, each with its own standards and norms, you begin the search for that mythical social harmony that is said to have existed once when the caste system prevailed. This is a search for the Golden age of stable unequal prosperity where the privileged segments of our community will be gated, while those others who are not gated will live in our neglected existing cities, commute to work in the Smart Cities, and return each day to live a stable life of inequality in harmony with their own fellow minorities at their own levels of prosperity, at the feet of a global civilization.

Who knows what’s going on? Rest assured something is and as friends we all need to spend much more of our time understanding the only choice being offered to us for our future lives. I haven’t heard of any alternatives lately, but I am sure you may have ~ last I looked the left parties were still busy at their game of chess!