

# **WHOSE CAPITAL, AMARAVATHI?**

**A Case Study in Capital City Location**

**I. Y. R. KRISHNA RAO**

**FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL AWARENESS**

**Hyderabad**

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**I. Y. R. Krishna Rao**

March, 2018

Price: Rs. **60**/-

Printers

Ritunestham Press, Hyderabad

Publisher

**FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL AWARENESS**

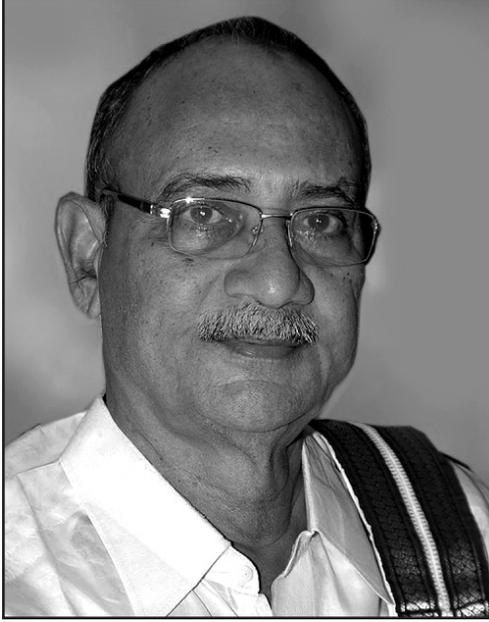
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who always stood for the welfare of farmers  
**Sri Vadde Sobhanadreeswara Rao**



## Foreword -1

*Amaravathi, Whose Capital* presents detailed Information on capital cities in various countries across the World. It has narrated various aspects behind the selection of sites to locate capital cities. It has given detailed account of several capital cities, the reasons behind their location, taking into consideration economic, cultural, ethnic, and regional aspects. It has explained the reasons for locating Calcutta, Delhi as capitals in India during British era. It provides information on new capital cities such as Chandigarh, Gandhi Nagar, Bhubaneswar and Naya Rayapur, about the Architects and special features of designs, etc. Coming to the new capital city for A.P. after partition, Sri Krishna Rao as CCLA as well as Chief Secretary to Govt. has taken lot of pains in collecting information on availability of Govt. lands to locate capital city for Navyandra Pradesh. Some people have found fault with Sri I.Y.R. Krishna Rao on his view regarding suitability of Donakonda in Prakasam District for locating capital there or near Nuzvidu in Krishna District.

In the background of apprehensions of people of Rayalaseema expressed right from the days of separation of Andhra from Madras province as well as the views expressed in some quarters belonging to Rayalaseema at the time of division of united A.P. suggesting formation of “Rayala Telangana”, Donakonda as capital has been suggested taking into consideration the regional sentiments and aspirations of people of Rayalaseema as it will also help

promote rapid development of Back ward areas of Prakasam and Rayalaseema districts.

Similarly his view about locating the capital city near Nuzvidu has strength because a few thousands of acres of government land and degraded forest lands are available in that area. In the A.P. Reorganization Act, Central Govt. has assured that it will make available forest lands for construction of capital city if needed. Proximity of National Highways, Polavaram Canal, N.S.P. Canal and Vijayawada Airport might have been also considered.

It is not fair on the part of A.P. Govt. for not giving proper attention to the report submitted by the expert committee appointed by Central Government to suggest suitable site to locate new capital for Navyandhra Pradesh headed by Sri Siva Rama Krishnan. The Committee has made recommendations keeping in view the “Terms of Reference” entrusted to it. Apart from the terms of reference, it might have also taken into consideration the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act as passed by Parliament of India in 2013. Precisely for these reasons it has not advocated for a large size green field capital city in and around Vijayawada which is endowed with rich agricultural lands where large number of crops are grown.

Even while the expert Committee was touring A.P., receiving suggestions from various quarters, it was not fair on the part of State Government to constitute a committee headed by Sri P. Narayana, Minister for Municipal Administration and a few peoples’ representatives and industrialists. It is shocking to note this committee has never presented any report. It is merely a ploy to give some credibility to the Chief Minister’s pre-determined idea to locate river front capital city in the present location.

For new capital cities Chandigarh or Naya Raipur, around 20,000 acres only were acquired. In the case of Naya Raipur most of the land was acquired with farmers' consent, because better compensation was paid in excess of compensation payable under 1894 L.A. Act. In Chandigarh much of the land was govt. land. But in the case of Amaravathi nearly 15,000 acres of land are Zareebu lands, most fertile, nearly 100 varieties of crops namely food crops, plantations, flowers etc., are grown. A number of Lift Irrigation schemes have helped to raise one or two crops in thousands of acres of dry lands. Thousands of farmers, tenant farmers, and agricultural labourers make a living on these lands. It is a grave mistake on the part of the State Govt. to acquire nearly 54,000 acres for the capital.

It is very sad to note that the landless poor families are being paid only Rs.2,500 per month by C.R.D.A. as against their earlier average monthly income of Rs.15,000 P.M. per family. Hundreds of families are forced to migrate in search of employment and livelihood.

The Zareebu lands, also called flood plains, contain approximately 60 million cubic meters of drinking water reserves beneath the ground which can cater to the drinking water requirements of one million population. There is no need to construct a barrage across Krishna River or drinking water reservoirs at two or three places in the capital city area at a cost of several hundreds of crores of rupees.

Due to several factors, such as hope of higher price realization, political as well as social considerations, a good number of farmers have made available nearly 32,000 acres under land pooling scheme. It is most unfortunate to note that the State Govt. is carrying on real estate business with these lands. While the government has fixed basic price of Rs.4 crore per acre, allotting

lands to Central Govt. institutions such as R.B.I. and others at this price, it is generously allotting hundreds of acres of lands to private educational institutions and business houses at Rs.50 lakh for acre.

It is most surprising to find the State Govt. has to spend nearly Rs.5,500 crores on levelling of land, formation of roads, drainage, electricity, etc., infrastructural facilities for development of 1,691 acres “start-up area” which has been entrusted to Singapore consortium and an investment of Rs.221 crores to get 42% share only while conceding 58% share to Singapore consortium which invests only Rs.306 crore. The State Govt. has amended A.P.I.D.E.A. Act 2001 diluting the provisions to facilitate award of Start-up area development to the consortium. It has also accepted a shameful proposition that if any dispute arises, to settle the same at London Court of Arbitration.

The State Govt. is contemplating a world class mega city whose population will be around 25 lakhs by the year 2050 is quite far from reality because in Chandigarh city which is capital for three states, its population was only 10 lakhs after 35 years. The Union Govt. has made available around Rs.600 crore only for construction of Naya Rayapur, capital of Chhattisgarh during the last eight years. In the case of Andhra Pradesh even though construction of permanent buildings for Governor Bungalow, Secretariat, Assembly, High Court have not yet started, Central Govt. has made available Rs.2,500 crore and promised to give Rs.1,000 crore more. In January 2016, Mr. K. Narayana, Minister for M.A. announced that a temporary Secretariat building with 6 lakhs feet built-up area on 26 acres of land will be constructed at a cost of Rs.180 crores. Very recently the Financial Advisor to G.O. A.P. has said “Transit Secretariat with infrastructural facilities” has cost Rs. 1542 crore. With this type of financial indiscipline on the

part of the State Govt. one cannot imagine how many thousands of crores of rupees will be required for completion of Amaravathi as a world class capital city as per the wish of Honourable C.M. Sri Chandrababu Naidu.

As per the scheme of the State Govt. agriculture, horticulture and allied activities such as animal husbandry, poultry and fishery have no place in the capital city. It will be entirely urban concrete jungle. Since construction of permanent Govt. buildings has not yet commenced, it will be appropriate for the State Govt. to declare the Zareebu lands along Krishna Right Flood Bank as “Special Organic Agricultural Export Zone”, and extend support to the farmers including tenant farmers to produce best quality organic agriculture products which will also help in providing self employment and higher incomes to them. Then only the new Amaravathi can be named as “Amaravathi – Peoples Capital”.

This book will be of great help not only to the students of history but also to the general public. I wish the Telugu version of this book will come soon which will provide much information on Amaravathi the capital to the common man in A.P. The efforts of Sri I.Y.R. Krishna Rao in bringing out this book are highly commendable.

**Vadde Sobhanadreeswara Rao**  
Former Minister, Governemnt of AP

## Foreword -2

When the composite State of Andhra Pradesh was divided in 2014 into two smaller entities, namely, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, it caused a great deal of trauma and it imposed heavy costs, more so in the case of the smaller State of Andhra Pradesh (AP). The people of AP had to relocate their capital city and move lock, stock and barrel to the new premises.

The Union Government, in pursuance of Section 6 of AP Reorganisation Act, constituted Sivaramakrishnan Committee to study the alternatives for locating the capital city in AP, subject to minimum displacement of the people, minimum disruption to agriculture and environment and minimum cost to the public exchequer. The Committee did exactly that. Its recommendations, if adopted, would have benefitted the people of AP for a long time to come.

The political leadership of the State thought otherwise. Without considering Sivaramakrishnan Committee's suggestions, it chose to take decisions unilaterally, causing avoidable people's displacement, leading to debilitating disruptions to both agriculture and the local environment and imposing enormous costs, both social and monetary, on the present and the future generations of the people of the State.

Location of a capital city concerns all regions of the State and all sections of the people, the present and the future generations. In a democracy like ours, decisions in such matters ought to be

taken inclusively, not exclusively. What transpired in AP was that decisions were taken according to the whims and fancies of a few influential persons ruling the State. There was no consultation with the other political parties. The people of the other regions were kept in the dark. The voices of those who opposed the capital city being located in Guntur-Krishna region were gagged or ignored. The progressive provisions of the Central Act, namely, Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 were abridged and a “land pooling” approach was introduced, that resulted in the farmers being literally forced to barter away their rights under duress and in a hurry, in exchange for whatever pittance of monetary compensation that was offered to them. Real estate business flourished at the cost of the genuine tillers of the soil and the farm workers and artisans who depended on them.

While the relocation of the capital city posed formidable challenges, it also provided a golden opportunity to the decision makers to be innovative and path-breaking. While capital cities that evolved in the past tended to be concentrated clusters of urban agglomerations, in these days of digital connectivity and rapid transportation, they could be more dispersed, bringing the nerve centre of governance nearer the people. Today’s technologies permit digital storage of official information and online transactions, making redundant concrete shells of office buildings which are not only expensive but also destructive of fertile agricultural land. Had the political leadership of AP chosen to think innovatively, it would have set a model for the rest of the country in the matter of people-oriented governance. Unfortunately, the political executive of the State remained far too myopic in its vision to be patient enough to think coolly and be analytical in taking such a far reaching decision. The social costs of such a decision will unfortunately have to be

borne, not by these politicians, but by the present and the future generations of the people of the State.

IYR Krishna Rao, the author of this work, held important and senior positions in the composite State of AP as well as in the AP State after division. He headed the civil services in the State at the time of his retirement. Therefore, he had a ring side view of the dynamics of decision making within the government. It is rare that such a perspective becomes available to the public. What he has revealed in this work is of great value and it should therefore be read and appreciated with the seriousness it deserves.

The incisive analysis that Krishna Rao has attempted in this work is truly impressive. He has discussed the research findings of scholars in India and elsewhere on the evolution of urban agglomerations in general and of capital cities in particular, to throw light on the shortcomings in decision making on Amaravathi capital city planning and the possible implications. Apparently, had the State's political leadership drawn lessons from such excellent inputs based on the past experiences and listened to the sane advice of Sivaramakrishnan , it would have taken decisions that would lessen the social costs of the project on the present and the future generations of the State and come up with a highly innovative model of a "distributed" capital project that would enhance the tenor of governance.

Amaravathi city, as is being planned now, with the lion's share of land compensation going to affluent absentee landlords and intermediary real estate developers, will benefit the rich at the cost of the poor. Any urban expansion model based on such biased planning will promote a fractured society, as it has happened in most urban agglomerations in the country. Amaravathi planners, as it develops in the coming years, will have to reckon with this.

I hope that the successive governments in AP will carefully bear in mind the prophetic words of the well known Greek philosopher, Plato of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.,

***“Any city however small, is in fact divided into two, one the city of the poor, the other of the rich. These are at war with one another”.***

Urban planning, devoid of adequate emphasis on the human resources, can be highly counter-productive.

I commend IYR Krishna Rao’s analytical work, *Whose Capital, Amaravathi* to be read by as many people as possible, both within AP and outside, as it provides an in-depth view of how Amaravathi has been planned and its future implications for the people.

**E A S Sarma**

Former Secretary, Governemnt of India

## Acknowledgements

I started collecting information for writing this book six months ago. I sincerely thank Prof. V. Srinivasa Chary, Director, Centre for Urban Governance and Infrastructure Development, at ASCI for his guidance. I also thank Sri B.P. Acharya, Director General of MCRHRD and Dr Deepa Nair, Head, Centre for Urban Development Studies, for their valuable inputs during the course of interaction. I also thank Professor C.Ramachandraiah of the CESS for his valuable inputs. My interaction with Sri Undavalli Arun Kumar and Sri K. Ramachandra Murthy, Editorial Director, Sakshi gave me clarity on the subject and I wholeheartedly thank each one of them.

My special thanks are to my guru, well-wisher and a long-time guide, Sri Rapaka Ekambaracharyulu garu, who also gave me a write-up on capital cities of Andhra in the course of history which was the base for one of the chapters.

I thank my college mate and long-time friend Sri Y.S. Murty for editing the book.

I thank Sri Vadde Sobhanadreeswara Rao, who readily consented when I wanted to dedicate the book to him and wrote a foreword. I thank my senior colleague and my well-wisher Sri E.A.S. Sarma, who also wrote a foreword for this book.

My association with Sri Pawan Kalyan is very recent. I am impressed by his sincerity and an urge to serve the society. I deem his consenting to release this book a great honour.

Finally, I thank my personal secretary Seshagiri, who even after his retirement continued to work with me and helped me in completing this book.

**I. Y. R. Krishna Rao**

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“The challenge is not simply building a ‘successful’ new capital city (and there are dozens of ways in which we might measure success); the task is to develop and maintain a successful State in the first place.”

-- **BLAIR A. RUBLE**

Director, Program on Global Sustainability  
and Resilience, Washington D.C.

## Introduction

In the Colonial times, the location of a capital city was mostly near sea ports, to facilitate export of raw material from the hinterland of the Colony and trade with the Colonial Power which controls the Colony. During British rule in India the capital for the country was Calcutta till 1911 and the capitals of the other thriving Presidencies of “Bombay” and “Madras” were also located on the sea-front at Bombay and Madras. Madras Presidency as it was known was fairly big, covering a number of multi-lingual areas. In this Presidency governed from Madras city (also known as the Chennapatnam) Telugus were the biggest linguistic group after Tamils. There were Kannada and Malayalam-speaking people also but fewer in numbers. The earliest to take advantage of the English language, and with it Government jobs, were the Tamils, who were occupying most of the positions of power, leading to resentment among the other linguistic groups, more particularly Andhras, who were the second largest linguistic group. The search for a separate State based on language was spearheaded by the Andhras. This was a strong movement during the freedom struggle and was an important component of the National Movement. At that time, a large number of Telugu speaking people were living in Hyderabad principality ruled by the Nizam, which included areas covering Marathwada and North Karnataka. They were also fighting for independence from the Princely State and thus slowly emerged the Telugu sentiment for a province based on linguistic unity covering Telugu speaking areas of princely state of Hyderabad and Madras presidency. The urge for a separate State based on language was very strong among the Andhra population in Madras presidency

but there were also under-currents of apprehension of conflict between two important areas coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema, the latter consisting of the Ceded Districts which were ceded to the British in 1802 by the Nizam under the Subsidiary Alliance Treaty. The region which has a distinct identity of its own was renamed as Rayalaseema in 1928 at the Nandyala Andhra Mahasabha to maintain that identity. This was an area which was central to the rule by Sri Krishna Devaraya under Vijayanagar empire. The Rayalaseema people's apprehension was that in a separate Andhra where the coastal population was going to be larger and predominant, their identity and interests might not get proper protection.

As the urge for a separate State was growing and a struggle was needed to be fought, leaders from both Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra area sat together and entered into a formal agreement which is known as Sri Bagh Pact. This Pact was signed on 16.11.1937 in the house of "Desodharaka" Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao, owner of Andhra Patrika, at Madras (Chennai). It was signed by Sri K. Koti Reddy, Sri Kalluri Subba Rao, Sri Pappuri Rama Charyulu and others on behalf of Rayalaseema whereas Sri Bhogaraju Pattabhi Seetaramaiah, Sri Konda Venkatappaiah and others signed on behalf of Coastal Andhra. The essence of the Pact is that the capital city would be located in Rayalaseema and the High Court in Coastal Andhra as and when the State was separated. More importantly it was agreed that the University, the headquarters of the Government and the High Court should be advantageously located in different places so as not to concentrate all important offices at the same place, a principle reiterated 80 years later by the Sivaramakrishnan committee. Based on this agreement, there was a united struggle by Andhras for a separate State. Though Nehru was not particularly keen to establish linguistic States, the fast-unto-death undertaken by Sri Potti Sreeramulu and the subsequent violent protests across the two regions left him with no alternative than to announce a separate State for the Andhras. Thus the Andhra State was born

on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1953 and a Government headed by Sri Prakasam Pantulu started functioning. As agreed to in the Sri Bagh Pact the capital was located at Kurnool and the High Court at Guntur. In 1948 after police action Hyderabad became a separate state with in the Indian Union.

After 01.10.1953 fresh moves began to form a Visalandhra, a single united state for Telugus, which was the long-cherished dream of Telugu-speaking people in princely state of Hyderabad and in Madras Presidency. Since the people who were part of Madras Presidency had an exposure to English language and modern education compared to Telugus in the Telangana region under Nizam, there were apprehensions among the people in Telangana that the union would be disadvantageous to them. To allay these fears, a Gentlemen's Agreement was entered into in the year 1956, and based on the principles of this agreement the Telugu-speaking area of Hyderabad State and the Andhra State were merged forming Visalandhra with the capital at Hyderabad, while merging the Kannada-speaking areas with Mysore State and the Marathi-speaking areas with the State of Bombay. Thus on 1.11.1956, Andhra Pradesh was formed on linguistic basis with a population of three crores Andhras.

The union was not a smooth and happy affair. With the location of the Secretariat and High Court at Hyderabad, a large number of people from non-Telangana areas started coming to Hyderabad in search of employment. Since the levels of modern education and exposure to English was not adequate within the Telangana region, people from the Andhra region started occupying positions in the professions of teachers, doctors, lawyers etc., in addition to jobs in the Secretariat. The safeguards given under the Gentlemen's Agreement were given a go-by in practice. This caused a lot of resentment among the local population which slowly grew and led to a strong agitation in 1969 for a separate Telangana State. This was followed by another agitation for a separate Andhra in 1972-

73 when the Supreme Court gave a ruling upholding the Mulki Rules. Both these agitations did not succeed mainly because of the firm attitude of Smt. Indira Gandhi, which prevented the State's bifurcation though it looked imminent at both times given the intensity of the agitations and the people's urge to get divided. Subsequently, though there was a superficial unity that was built around the slogan of Teluguvaari Atma Gouravam by Sri N.T. Rama Rao, who led his party to power defeating the Congress in 1983, the under-currents of division and differences remained in Telangana area waiting for a strong leader to take up the movement. Sri K. Chandrasekhar Rao took up this task and was successful in making it an important issue by leading an agitation for almost a decade. The Congress party for its own electoral reasons took a decision in principle that it would form a separate Telangana, via a CWC resolution dated 30.07.2013. Accordingly the necessary Bill was prepared and was passed in Parliament on 01.03.2014 with 02.06.2014 as the "Appointed Date" for the division of the State with Hyderabad as common capital for a period not exceeding 10 years after which Hyderabad shall be the capital of Telangana.

Section 6 of the AP State Re-organization Act provides for constituting an Expert Committee to study various alternatives regarding new capital for the residual State of Andhra Pradesh and offer proper recommendations within six months from the date of enactment of the Act. There would not have been a reason to search for a new capital for Andhra Pradesh if Hyderabad was constituted as a Union Territory and declared as Common capital for both the States. The Re-organization Act provided for the administration of the capital city of Hyderabad by the Telangana Government with certain exceptional powers to the Governor. The search for a new capital for Andhra Pradesh started even before the actual Appointed Day of 02.06.2014 as it was very clear that the residual State will have to look for a separate capital and move out of Hyderabad.

# 1. Amaravathi Location

Elections were held for the undivided AP Legislative Assembly as well as to the Lok Sabha in this background in April and May 2014. The BJP came to power at the Centre and the Telugu Desam Party led by Sri Chandrababu Naidu emerged victorious in the State. Bifurcation of the State into Telangana and residual Andhra Pradesh took place on the appointed day 2nd June 2014 but a 19-member cabinet led by Sri Chandrababu Naidu as Chief Minister took oath of office on 8th June 2014, a day considered to be auspicious. The oath-taking ceremony took place as a public function in the grounds opposite Nagarjuna University campus in Guntur district. At that time the talk was that the capital city might be located somewhere there in the Nagarjuna University or in the Mangalagiri Reserve police Battalion headquarters compound. The Cabinet included Dr. P. Narayana who was allotted the portfolio of municipal administration and urban development and who was to play a key role along with the Chief Minister in the selection of the site for the capital city. He was not a member of the Assembly or of the Legislative Council but was subsequently elected to the Council in August 2014. He was part of the core group which worked with Sri Chandrababu Naidu for the Telugu Desam party during the elections.

The Government of India, as per Section 6 of the AP Re-organization Act, constituted a committee under the leadership

of Sri Sivaramakrishnan with another four members to suggest a suitable place for the location of the capital city with a direction to submit its report by the 31st of August. The State Government also focussed on the location of the new capital city from the moment it took office. The decision on the place was apparently already taken by an unseen think-tank of the Telugu Desam party and they were only looking for a procedure to formalise it, as is the case with most of the decisions and actions of this government. Realising that a professional body like the Sivaramakrishnan committee looking into the site selection for the capital city may not go with their choice, the Chief Minister thought it fit to constitute a separate committee to suggest a place for location of the capital city. Though the Sivaramakrishnan committee was to give its report by 31st of August, the State Government constituted a separate committee on July 21 headed by Dr. P. Narayana, the Municipal Administration Minister, and comprising TDP MPs Sri Sujana Choudary, Sri Galla Jayadev, Telugu Desam party functionary Sri Beda Mastana Rao and local industrialists Sri Sanjay Reddy, Sri Srinivas (Srini) Raju and Sri Prabhakara Rao. This committee was given the terms of reference: efficient use of land, water, energy, transportation facilities, green technologies, green spaces and water front for smart and sustainable development. Compare with this the terms of reference of the Sivaramakrishnan committee: focus on least possible dislocation of existing agriculture systems, preserving local ecology, minimising the cost of construction, and vulnerability assessment for natural disasters. As can be clearly seen, the terms of reference of the Sivaramakrishnan committee specifically focused on site selection for the capital city whereas the terms of reference given to the committee headed by Dr Narayana presume a site selection already done, and focus on the construction aspects. The mention of water front suggests that the

decision was already taken about the location of the capital on the banks of a river. Anyone can imagine that it is the Krishna river banks that the government had in mind.

It did not take long for the Sivaramakrishnan committee to realize that their recommendations were not welcome by the State Government which apparently decided about the location of the capital city, and that theirs would be an exercise in futility. Further, there was also non-cooperation from the State government in terms of furnishing information to the committee. The committee itself made this observation in its report. In spite of these unfavourable circumstances, the committee prepared a report to the best of its ability. They stuck to the time schedule given to them and submitted the report before 31st August 2014. A detailed discussion about the recommendations of the committee is done in another chapter of this book.

As if waiting just for this formality to be completed, the AP Cabinet met on 1<sup>st</sup> September and decided to locate the capital city in and around Vijayawada city. The Honourable Chief Minister took advantage of the Assembly session which was then going on. On 4th September 2014 he made a statement in the Assembly that the Cabinet had decided to locate the capital city in and around Vijayawada. As a matter of formality he listed out various projects which he would like to take up in different parts of the State which in any case never materialised and also a commitment to set up three mega cities and 16 smart cities. In a strategic manipulation, the opposition was made to fall in line and a purported unanimous resolution was passed in favour of the Chief Minister's statement. While making the statement in the Assembly, the Chief Minister made a reference to the Sivaramakrishnan committee to the extent it suited him... saying that most of the people who answered the

questionnaire sent by the committee preferred Vijayawada-Guntur region for setting up of the capital city. Ignoring the total report and the main recommendations of the expert committee, the State Government just took that portion which suited them to strengthen the case for location of the capital as per their predetermined plan. Armed with this Assembly resolution, the Chief Minister proceeded to locate the capital city in an area which was already determined even before the elections and where substantial real estate and commercial interest were built up by a privileged few who are privy to the news -- on the southern bank of Krishna river consisting of three mandals covering 21 villages, claiming that the required land would be procured through the process of land pooling from the land holders. Thus Amaravathi will go down in history as a capital city located without any prior feasibility study or survey. The Sivaramakrishnan committee appointed by the Government of India suggested a decentralised approach and recommended four geographic regions for the new capital, but not the area where the new Amaravathi was being planned. The committee headed by the urban development minister had in its terms of reference planning a city once the location was decided, but not selecting a site for the capital. In any case, the Narayana committee does not seem to have made any recommendation; no such report is in the public domain.

In contrast to this, when Naya Raipur location was determined as the location for Chattisgarh's capital city, the decision was made after 11 international companies were given the task of site selection with 33 parameters and were requested to examine the area around Raipur and come up with the most ideally suited place. Nine out of the 11 companies agreed on the present location and accordingly the decision was taken. This was informed to me by Sri Baijendra Kumar, who was Naya Raipur Development Authority's chairman

during that period. Similarly, when Japan contemplated relocating the capital from Tokyo, there were intense deliberations. Thirty conferences were held on the subject, and three sites were selected based on sixteen parameters, whereas the location of Amaravathi was decided without any such survey or study or preparation of a feasibility report. This resulted in the location of Amaravathi in a place least suited both in terms of the land cost as well as suitability of the place for construction of the capital city: this is a flood prone and multi-cropped irrigated area.

After forming the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) through an act and procuring the necessary land by land pooling organized through consent, cooption, deceit and coercion, the State Government was ready for the foundation stone laying for the new capital city by the middle of 2015. Sri Chandrababu Naidu wanted this to be a major event to be remembered in history and accordingly planned the same on Vijaya Dasami day, 22nd October 2015, with the Honourable Prime Minister as the chief guest. The ceremony itself was preceded by collection of water from different rivers of the country and soil from different parts of the state. The mega function to lay the foundation stone for Amaravathi was attended by Mr Easwaran, Singapore's Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr Yosuke Takagi Suki, Minister for Economy. Trade and Industry, Japan, the Chief Minister of Telangana, a host of Central ministers and others. The State Government expected from the Prime Minister a major announcement of financial grant for the new state capital, but he did not make any such commitment; he just brought water from Yamuna river and soil from the Parliament building premises as a token of his contribution.

Thus started the journey of Amaravathi, the capital of Andhra. For the Chief Minister it is the people's capital, but for some others

it is “Bhramaravathi”, just an imaginary city that does not exist. The following chapters analyze the broad theoretical framework for location of capital cities, the international and our national experience in locating capital cities, issues which are peculiar to the Amaravathi, capital cities of Andhras in the course of history and draw conclusions as to where exactly Amaravathi lies in terms of the people’s expectations and how sustainable is Amaravathi in the long run as the capital city of Andhras.

## 2. Theoretical Background

In his book *Capital Cities: Varieties and Patterns of Development and Relocation*, Vadim Rossman discusses at length the theoretical background to the location of capital cities. In his view, fundamental themes and normative concepts for location of any capital city are the theme of state security, the theme of economic and administrative effectiveness, the theme of fairness and the theme of identity. For the location of a state capital the theme of security may not be relevant but the other three themes of fairness, identity and administrative effectiveness are very much relevant. There can be a trade-off between these normative concepts depending upon the priorities set by the nation or the province. Out of the above normative themes, fairness and identity are directly more relevant to the question of how legitimate the authority of the state or province is. Whether all regions and groups in the state are well represented in the capital and can feel their presence in the capital and benefit from the capital will decide how inclusive the capital city is. It is this principle of fairness and inclusion that gives the government its legitimacy and in its absence the legitimacy of the government is lost or weakened. In his opinion, there are no natural centres for locating the capital city but one has to choose from different alternatives. The development of a capital city is a process of nation building itself. The main task of a capital city in his view is to help the nation or province to visualize itself and present the

nation or the province to the rest of the world and should become a melting pot of the nation or region.

In his opinion an over-sized capital city is an indication that the country's or state's political regime is particularly corrupt and such capital cities monopolize the resources of the country or state, hampering overall development of the country or the state. The capital city can perform an integrative function. It becomes temporarily the equilibrium point between different forces and interests within the country or province, especially when the capital city's location itself is a result of a compromise between competing interests. It also performs a symbolic function best reflected in its architecture. It in essence functions as the heart and soul of the state.

In terms of origin, capital cities can be divided into evolved capitals and designed capitals. Paris, London and Tokyo come under the category of evolved capitals and contain many historical layers. On the contrary, designed capitals are built to a plan and are intended for a specific purpose. Washington DC, New Delhi, and Canberra come under this category. In terms of spatial spread, capital cities can be distinguished between concentrated capitals and distributed capitals. In the distributed capitals the presidential (executive-administrative), legislative and judicial branches of power are distributed in different cities. This distributed capital system exists in a number of countries, notable examples being South Africa, Russia and Germany. There can also be time-distributed capital cities, an example being Jammu and Kashmir where the capital shifts between Srinagar and Jammu depending on the season.

It is also not uncommon to have a number of transitional capitals before finally a stable capital emerges. In olden Japan,

there were 20 intermediate capitals before the capital was shifted to Kyoto and in USA a number of cities served as tentative capitals of USA before it was finally moved from Philadelphia to Washington.

Rossmann goes on to distinguish between hard capitals and soft capitals depending upon the degree of control exercised. Hard capitals are characterized by large centralized state (power) and soft capitals by compactness. Hard capitals tend to obstruct the development of other cities within the country or the province, since they have the honey pot characteristics attracting all investments and all facilities. On the other hand, soft capitals tend to be less demanding and are not detrimental to the development of other cities within the country or the province. This is one of the reasons why when a debate took place in Italy the Italian politicians rejected the hard model of capital city stating that they don't want a preponderant capital like Paris or London.

In the ancient world, Rossmann distinguished between two types of capitals: holy capital cities which are religiously significant like Machu Picchu in Peru, Persepolis in Persia and Jerusalem. The second category is of the royal capitals which are inseparable from the body of the king or the emperor. Examples are Toledo in Spain, Fontainebleau in France, and Krakow in Poland.

According to Rousseau, the French philosopher, the very existence of capital cities imposes a burden on the rest of the population and the state. He disliked overgrown capital cities like Paris and felt it is a great source of degradation and decay.

Stein Rokkan, a Norwegian sociologist, distinguished between the monocephalic urban structure where the capital city dominates the urban structure and the polycephalic urban structure where the capital city yields to other cities. In his view where there is a denser network of cities, the capital city will have a

lesser role and higher the chances of forming a polycephalic urban structure. Similarly, thinner the network of cities, greater the role of the capital city.

Vadim Rossman goes on to discuss various strategies for location and relocation of capital cities and suggests six strategies for capital city location: strategy of spatial compromise, historical integration, geopolitical repositioning, economic integration, strategy of territorial integration, and decentralization.

### **Strategy of Spatial Compromise:**

This strategy is employed when two distinct equally powerful regions are seeking integration. In such a case the ideal place for the capital city would be a neutral point in between these two sites which can be the border point. Locating capital cities based on such consideration is a very old phenomenon and in fact in ancient Egypt the capital city of Memphis was a compromise between the lower and upper Egypt; hence this city was labelled as “balance of lands”. Washington DC is situated on the border between historical north and south and represents a compromise capital city. Ottawa was a compromise between the English speaking and the French speaking areas in Canada. The location of Abuja in Nigeria is also an attempt to find politically neutral ground between the Muslim north and the Christian south.

The model of distributed capital city also represents a compromise building process between two or more powerful centres within the State and as a process of such trade-off the functions of the state are located in different cities. South Africa is a perfect example of this distributed capital with executive power located in Pretoria, legislative in Cape Town and judicial in Bloemfontein. While mentioning that the concept of distributed

capital and spatial compromise are two ways of reaching a compromise for location of a capital city Rossman feels that spatial compromise is preferable to distributed capital city.

### **Strategy of Historical Integration:**

Nations that have recently gained independence from colonial dominance locate their capital city in their historical centres, especially those nations that have been divided from their native soil for a long period of time. The cities of Athens, Rome and Jerusalem represent capital cities linked to historical integration. Such capital cities facilitate consolidation of national memory and help these communities to reconnect to their past.

### **Geopolitical Repositioning Strategy:**

Here the capital city location is decided by taking advantage of being nearer to emerging centres of economic and political power. The design here is outward looking. British geographer Oskar Spate calls this “head link capital” which is outward oriented and like the sunflower, its head is attracted to the most strategic place. For example in imperial Russia, Saint Petersburg was chosen as a window to Europe and the shifting of the capital city in Japan from Kyoto to Tokyo facilitated modernization of the country. There are also examples in Latin America, especially in Argentina and Peru, where the capital city location was based on outward looking focus and to take advantage of externalities.

### **Strategy of Economic Integration and Rebalancing:**

This strategy is also known as strategy of forward thrust capitals. When different regions within a province or a country have different levels of development and the disparities of development are causing mistrust between the regions leading to

problems of demand for separation, in such a situation, the capital city is located in the least developed area consciously to help in the development of that particular region. In such cases the capital city location itself becomes an engine of growth for the development of that region. There are a number of examples for capital city location based on this principle, the Brazilian capital Brasilia being one such example. Relocation of the capital city in Kazakhstan was also based on the same strategy. Establishment of the capital for the new state of Andhra at Kurnool in 1953 was also based on this principle.

### **Decentralization Strategy:**

In this case the capital is presently located in a major metropolis resulting in congestion and inadequacy of infrastructural facilities. In such a situation the capital is relocated near to the metropolis but away from the metropolis. Since issues of regional disparities are not a major concern, the new capital city may not be located far away from the existing capital. An administrative capital is built very near to the existing capital city. Putra Jaya in Malaysia and Gandhinagar in Gujarat represent such capitals based on the theory of decongesting the existing capital city which also happens to be a major metropolis.

The above discussion represents positive strategies for location or relocation of a capital city. There are also cases where location of the capital city is based not on a positive strategy but on certain negative criteria. These are known as the principles of exclusivity. This exclusivity could be the result of a desire to marginalize protest movements by locating the capital city in areas of loyalty, or away from existing metropolis. Capital cities generally tend to be breeding grounds for protest movements. To move away from such protest movements and turmoil of the metropolis the

capital is moved out and relocated. The reason for relocation of the capital city in Burma (Myanmar) could be due to this reason. Similarly in Pakistan, as long as the capital was at Karachi it was subject to periodic protests. This could be one reason for relocation of its capital to Rawalpindi in 1958.

Another major reason for establishment of an exclusive capital city is tribal solidarity and ethnic favouritism. The ruling elite in these cases locates the capital city in the territory of their ethnic clan or group to consolidate loyalty from their own clan or tribe. In such cases the capital city location is not based on inclusion or integration of different ethnic groups and diverse interests but based on catering to the interests of one particular group. Such capital cities in the opinion of Vadim Rossman tend to be fragile and their growth and existence will be linked to the person or the dynasty which promotes the capital city.

Disembedded capital cities have a lot in common with exclusive capital cities. Coined by an American archaeologist Alexander H. Joffe, the main purpose of a disembedded capital is to acquire competitive advantage in the internal factional struggle, incubate new elites and consolidate their power. The disembedded capital cities are based on policies of disintegration and alienation and the legitimacy and efficacy of capitals are so closely linked to a particular individual or dynasty that the successors find it necessary to break away from the same. The royal founders of such capital cities pursued strategies of disintegration and alienation rather than of strategies of integration. According to Jeff, these capitals are extremely short-lived, highly unstable, and expensive to build and operate. They are short-term solutions and long-term burdens. According to him whereas disembedded capitals are designed as tools of factional competition, modern design capitals are designed

to balance different factions and political forces. There are a number of examples of such disembedded capitals from ancient times, from places like Egypt and other countries. One such example is moving the capital city in Japan from Kyoto to Fukuhara by Kiomori. This was aimed at putting an end to the dominance of Buddhist clergy at Kyoto. But it also contained a hidden agenda. Fukuhara area is dominated by Taira clan to which Kiomori belongs. It was not only meant to provide strong loyalty to Kiomori but also generate lucrative profits for the lands owned by the Tiara clan in that area.

In the location of capital cities there is often a hidden agenda as well as open agenda. The hidden agenda could be self-aggrandisement or using the capital city building as a source of patronage to favour certain interests and sections of the community. The capital city location itself can be an exercise in getting the loyalty of a section of the community and may accordingly be structured. The rulers find it difficult to openly express the hidden agendas and hence come out with a more acceptable open agenda whereas the real agenda is hidden. One has to keep the hidden agenda in mind while evaluating locations for a capital city. There are also megalomaniac rulers, most of the time autocratic rulers, who want to leave their footprints in terms of building of the capital city. Such rulers go for building grandiose buildings and would like to be remembered for long, leaving footprints on the sands of history. They would like to make a statement and promote themselves as leaders on the broader international scene. Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, Ataturk of Turkey and Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan belong to this genre of rulers.

More successful capital city location was done in Anglo-Saxon countries by liberal federalist regimes. Here the very location of a capital city is the outcome of reconciliation and compromise

between different groups trying to integrate themselves as a nation and invariably such capital cities have been smaller than the major economic hubs of those countries. In all these countries capital cities are a great success. We will be discussing in detail some of these capital cities in the next chapter.

Another important factor influencing the location of a capital city is astrology and geomancy. Astrology and geomancy played a major part in the location of the capital city in the ancient and mediaeval times and continue to play an important role in some countries even today. It can be open or a hidden agenda depending upon the acceptability of this approach in the respective countries at that point of time. Astrology views capital cities in terms of influence of cosmic bodies, where as geomancy looks into the features of earth/soil influencing the capital cities. Astrology dominated the location of capital cities in the Byzantine empire, Persia and Arabia whereas geomancy as Feng Shui is an important guiding factor in countries under Sino (Chinese) sphere. A recent example of strict astrological rules being followed in the location of the capital city is of Naypyidaw in Myanmar. The Indian variation of geomancy known as Vastu is an important factor guiding the location of the capital city Amaravathi. This could have been one guiding principle in the State leadership selecting the place for the new Amaravathi.

### 3. International Experience with Capital City Building

Keeping in view the above theoretical background it is worthwhile to examine the actual experience of capital city location in different countries in the world. A broad analysis shows that the actual location of capital cities is covered by one or the other or a combination of the theories as explained above.

#### **Washington DC, Capital of USA:**

The evolution of Washington DC as the capital city of United States of America is a unique phenomenon and it has inspired a number of federal capital cities in different countries. Washington DC is designed to represent the interests of all the states equally and accordingly administered by the federal government, the local municipal administration having a very minimal say. The city itself emerged as a compromise between the two regions of America -- north and the south. After the civil war, the northern states wanted the federal government to take up the liability for the debts which the southern states objected to. As a compromise it was agreed to locate the capital city nearer to the southern states while the federal government was allowed to pay off the debts of the war. Accordingly land was taken from the states of Maryland and Virginia on the banks of Potomac river and Washington city was built. It was described as “the village on the Capitol Hill”, signifying the purely administrative nature, leaving the cities like New York

and Philadelphia to be the commercial hubs of the country. It took almost a century for Washington DC to emerge as a major metropolis.

In a similar manner most of the capital cities of the federal units (states) in United USA follow the same location logic. Sacramento is the capital of California, Austin for Texas and Albany for New York. All of them are much smaller than the larger cities of the respective states and may have been chosen for their neutrality within the state.

### **Canberra, the Capital of Australia:**

Australia emerged as a country consequent on federation of six provinces. While deciding the location of the capital city, a conscious effort was made to find a place that would not give special privilege to any one province at the expense of the others. It was also decided that the new capital city would be situated equidistant from the two largest cities of the country, Sydney and Melbourne. Accordingly the present area where the capital city Canberra was located was chosen which was the meeting place for the aboriginal tribes. The name itself is derived from the word kambara meaning the meeting place in the local dialect. This city is built on three hills which formed the key part of its architectural plan and borrows from the structural design of Washington DC.

### **South Africa, a Distributed Capital:**

As part of the spatial compromise, a capital city may be located in a neutral place or the government functions are distributed to different areas to maintain the balance between the regions with their own unique identity. In the case of South Africa the second option was followed and the seat of power is distributed between three different regions. South Africa emerged as a nation after the Anglo-Boer war, consisting of four different territories of

Transvaal, Cape Province, Orange Republic and Natal. To arrive at a regional balance between all these regions it was decided to locate the presidential (executive) power at Pretoria, legislature at Cape Town and judicial at Bloemfontein. After the fall of apartheid, the constitutional court was moved to Johannesburg and accordingly the functions of the government are discharged from three different regions in South Africa.

### **Abuja, Capital of Nigeria:**

When Nigeria got liberated from Britain, the capital city was Lagos. The first President came up with the idea of shifting the capital from Lagos to a more central place Abuja, and his successors also owned it up. One of the reasons for this decision to shift the capital is the overcrowding of Lagos. It was proposed to improve living conditions in Lagos by moving a section of the population to a different place by relocating the capital city. There is also a strong underlying reason for shifting the capital to the middle of the country; as a compromise between the two religious ethnic groups of Muslims and Christians. The north is inhabited by Muslims and the south by Christians, and locating the capital city at Abuja, a neutral place in between, was considered to be a compromise formula, theoretically falling under the category of spatial compromise. The financing of the project was done with the petroleum revenues of Nigeria. During the construction of the capital, corruption was rampant and the contracts were called Abuja contracts. It is estimated that 25% of the cost of the projects in the capital construction work was extra expense in form of corruption. It is doubtful whether the new capital has achieved the two objectives which it was set to achieve. Even after the relocation of the capital to Abuja Lagos remained an overpopulated city and ethnic tensions further got exacerbated. Instead of becoming

a neutral capital, it came under Muslim domination leading to resentment by Christians. Of late it is gaining in importance.

### **Capital City of Malawi:**

Malawi is a land-locked country in Africa and in 1975 its capital was moved from Zomba in the south to an existing town Lilongwe in the north. The ostensible reason for moving the capital was establishing an independent growth centre in the core area of the country to balance development in the country. But there was also a hidden agenda, as Lilongwe is located close to the Chewa ethnic group to which the then President belonged. This is one of the examples of location of the capital city where the hidden agenda differs from the declared agenda.

### **The Relocation of Botswana's Capital to Gaborone:**

Botswana's capital city was at Mafeking which was the traditional base for one of the influential tribes of the country, Barolong. This led to resentment from other tribes necessitating relocating the capital city to a place agreeable to all the tribes in the country. Accordingly it was moved in 1969 to Gaborone or Gaborone which is the meeting point of different tribal groups and is acceptable to most of the tribes. Accordingly the government went for a political compromise by relocation of the capital city.

In other African countries like Somalia and Senegal, debates are going on for relocation of the capital city to a more central place.

Thus the capital city discussions in Africa focus on ethnic, regional balancing, and decongesting urban centres. There are also hidden agendas in terms of location of the capital city near to the place favoured by the leader or to consolidate tribal loyalties.

## **Putrajaya, Capital City of Malaysia:**

Kuala Lumpur was founded as the capital of Malaysia by the British in 1857 and continued as its capital till Mahathir Mohamad decided to relocate the capital in 1993. Putrajaya is located 25 km from Kuala Lumpur and the primary reason given for relocation is the flooding and over-congestion of Kuala Lumpur. There is also an underlying reason for this. The urban space in Malaysia, as in most of Southeast Asian countries, is occupied by the Chinese. Chinese population make up 80% of population of Kuala Lumpur and control the business right from the colonial times. Ethnic Malay population wanted to diminish the role of the Chinese business and build up local ethnic business and administrative leadership. Moving the capital city away from Kuala Lumpur to Putrajaya is based on this thinking. The new location of the capital city laid the foundation for the concept of an ethnically Malay city which was intended to Serve as the incubator for the creation of a Malay urban class. This is a counter colonization and counter urbanization directed against the Chinese domination in historical cities. The city is substantially funded by the oil profits of Petronas oil monopoly of the state. Putrajaya city is located in the middle of oil palm fields and intended to serve as the administrative capital of Malaysia. Theoretically this type of capital is described based on strategy of decentralization since the ostensible reason given is to decongest the existing city of Kuala Lumpur. The underlying reason for the shift is to create a new class of urban middle class of Malay ethnic origin. The architecture used is distinctly Islamic, focusing on the Malay identity and their religion. To that extent this cannot be characterized as an inclusive city; it has elements of exclusion.

Critics point out that it was a massive waste of money and its architecture is grandiose and culturally inappropriate. The

overwhelming Islamic style buildings are out of place in a country where large ethnic minorities, both Chinese and Indian, live. They also point out that all these buildings are maintenance intensive. Palatial buildings are inappropriate in a democracy and overall about 6 billion USD were supposed to have been spent on this venture. Critics feel that this is a symptom of megalomania of Mahathir Mohamad era and this amount could have been spent on better things.

In Indonesia, the capital city location is a very old topic. Decongestion of Jakarta city with vulnerability to earthquakes makes rulers in Indonesia search for an alternative. A natural location would be Kalimantan island which is central to the Indonesian archipelago. In spite of continuing debate on the issue, no specific decision has been taken.

### **Capital City Location in Pakistan:**

When Pakistan became independent Karachi, the largest city, became the capital. Around 1959, a decision was taken to move it away from Karachi to an interior place which is more central. The capital city location at Islamabad was driven by a number of factors, one of them being its nearness to Kashmir, an area Pakistan would like to claim from India. Islamabad is also located nearer to Pashtun-dominated area where separatist tendencies were gaining ground and it was felt that location of the capital city near to that place would give a better control over the area. Karachi by then became a place where there were regular skirmishes between the migrant Muhajirs and the local Sindhis, and since it is a major metropolis protest movements were staged at regular intervals. The fact that the then President of Pakistan, Ayub Khan, happened to be a Pashtun also played a role in the selection of the location for the new capital. In fact he wanted it to be located at his native place of Abbottabad, but that idea was abandoned since it was found that

that town was within seismic zone. But Ayub Khan was successful in locating the capital near his place of birth. Rawalpindi, a city located very near Islamabad, was already an important military garrison and this also played an important role in the location of the capital city since the country was ruled by the military establishment. One more important consideration seems to be an isolated capital city like Islamabad with substantial military presence would be ideal for a friendly military takeover of the government as compared to more populous cities like Lahore or Karachi. The city as such was very well planned by a Greek architect, divided into sectors and the climate is pleasant. For a long time the military outnumbered civilians and residents of Islamabad enjoy a much better standard of living and quality of life compared to the rest of the country.

### **The Capital of India:**

The Indian capital was moved from Calcutta to New Delhi in the year 1911. The main reason for the movement from Calcutta to Delhi was the intensity of nationalist movement in the Bengal province. The British made an attempt to weaken the movement by dividing Bengal and creating the Muslim majority East Bengal in 1905, but the nationalist movement got further intensified. The British were forced to reunite Bengal but decided to relocate the capital city to Delhi. There were other reasons also for the decision to shift the capital. Calcutta (now Kolkata), when it was chosen as the capital, was an important entry point for the British and also an important port town to extend their influence over countries like Burma. By the turn of the 20th century the British were more worried about guarding the western frontiers from the Afghans and the Russians. Though the Indian nationalist movement was also present in other parts of the country, it was not as intense as it was in Bengal. The British felt that the movement of the capital city to Delhi was a concession given to Indian nationalism. Delhi has a lot of historical significance, being the epic capital of India

during the Mahabharata period and continued to be the capital under the early Muslim and then Mughal dynasties. All this gave Delhi a historical significance and was one of the important reasons for relocating the capital. The design of the city (Lutyen's Delhi) was imperial and the buildings built during that period are still being used in independent India. As Herbert Baker, one of the key designers of the city's government buildings remarked, "this city was constructed not to be Indian, or English, nor Roman but to be imperial".

### **Capital of Myanmar:**

In 2005, the military rulers of Myanmar decided to shift the capital of Myanmar from the existing Rangoon (now Yangon) to Naypyidaw which is located about 300 km from Rangoon in the remote region. Relocation took place on an astrologically significant date and time with reference to local belief and since then it has grown as an important town with one million population. There were astrological and strategic reasons for the movement of the capital. A possible attack by USA and NATO as apprehended by the military rulers in addition to the astrological reasons were responsible for the new location of the capital. The military authorities thought they would be far more safer in the new capital compared to Rangoon. The location of the capital city is justified on other grounds as well. Till the colonial rulers shifted the capital to the port city of Rangoon, the capital for Myanmar always used to be in the centre of the country. The central location of the capital city can take care of balancing of interest between different regions. Viewed from this angle the capital city location makes a sensible decision with reference to geography and history of Myanmar. The new city was very large in expanse and hence was not occupied substantially for a long time, giving one the feel of a ghost town.

## **Brasilia, Capital City of Brazil:**

In 1956 a decision was taken to move the capital city of Brazil from Rio-de-Janeiro to an interior area of Brazil known as Cerrado, forming part of the tropical savanna. There are a number of reasons for moving the capital city into the interior. The colonial capital was located on the Atlantic sea coast at Rio and it was decided to move the capital interior in a strategy of forward thrust to facilitate the opening up of undeveloped interior areas. Historically Brazil was more a geographical concept rather than a national concept and it was felt that a more centrally located capital would provide the necessary identity for the nation. Further, Rio was an overcrowded city with high levels of inequality and it was felt the new city should also serve as a social equalizer bringing along with it a new social environment. By 2010, Brasilia was a metropolis with a population of 2.5 million and was able to attract significant migration from different parts of the country and played an important role in rebalancing of the country's development, opening up the interior areas of a huge country like Brazil. Architecturally also the new capital city was able to declare the cultural independence of Brazil with a great emphasis on curves and free open spaces.

On the other hand, Brasilia was planned as a city free of slums but slums started developing during the period of construction itself. The construction of the capital city committing huge resources of the country led to an economic turmoil finally resulting in takeover of power by the military.

In other Latin American nations also relocation of capital cities is a frequently debated subject based on considerations of vulnerability to national calamities like earthquakes and typhoon for the existing capital cities like in Belize, Haiti and Nicaragua In other countries, issues of regional balancing and downsizing the existing capital cities are important issues figuring in these debates.

## **German Capital Berlin:**

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991, Germany went through an intense debate about where to locate the capital city for the unified state of Germany. In the end it was decided to move it to Berlin to facilitate the development of a federalist capital city. It was felt that location of the capital city on the borders of the two Germanys would facilitate more effective political and economic integration of the eastern Germany. Availability of land and buildings was also a main consideration. The location of the capital city in Berlin which is to the east would also transform Germany to be a leader of central and eastern Europe and provide the country with a unique role in pan European integration.

## **Oversized Capital Cities and the Debate for their Relocation:**

The two historical cities of London and Paris have become global centres of trade and are forward looking as cities globally, rather than functioning as the capital cities of the respective nations. Hence this has started a debate in both these countries about relocation of their capital city which can be more responsive to the needs of the country as such. In England it is felt that it is the interests of London that define the policies of the government rather than the interest of the nation. Similarly, right from Rousseau a number of French thinkers are unhappy with the way Paris is growing. While in 1881 the French population residing in Paris was 5% by 1975 it became 19%. This type of growth of both these cities of London and Paris and the global interests they represent is resulting in a debate in both these countries about relocation of the capital city to a more central place in tune with the needs of the rest of the country.

## 4. Early Designed Capital Cities of India

### 1. Chandigarh, the Capital of Punjab and Haryana

When British India was divided, the Punjab province got divided between Pakistan and India. Lahore which was the capital of Punjab province went to Pakistan and hence there was a need to build a separate state capital for eastern Punjab which became part of Indian union. Further, there was also a need for building a city which can house refugees who were coming from western Pakistan. Chandigarh was conceived as a well planned modern city to serve both the purposes. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru took personal interest in the development of Chandigarh as a greenfield city and expressed the view that it should be a city symbolic of the freedom of India, built unfettered by traditions of the past... and an expression of the nation's faith in the future... thus giving a shape to the vision of the capital city Chandigarh. A suitable site was selected at the foot of Shivalik range of mountains and the city derived its name from a local temple devoted to goddess Chandi. The original master plan was done by American architect Albert Mayer but it was Le Corbusier, a French architect and his team who built the city. Both Nehru and Le Corbusier believed in a modern functional city and the result was Chandigarh. Chandigarh is as much a celebration of the architectural genius of Le Corbusier as the vision and commitment of the then Prime Minister Nehru.

Le Corbusier conceived the master plan of Chandigarh as analogous to human body. The concept of the city is based on four major functions: living, working, care of the body, mind and spirit, and circulation. He designed the general layout of the city, dividing it into sectors. Chandigarh hosts the largest of Le Corbusier's *Open Hand* sculptures, standing 26 metres high. Open hand is a recurring motif in Le Corbusier's architecture. Chandigarh was one of the early planned cities in post-independent India and is internationally known for its architecture and urban design.

Chandigarh is a union territory and presently also the capital for the states of Punjab and Haryana with a population of a million. Chandigarh capital complex was in 2016 declared by UNESCO as a World heritage city representing "The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an outstanding contribution to the Modern Movement."

## **2. Bhubaneswar, the Capital City of Orissa**

The first province to be carved out on linguistic basis in India is Orissa, during the British period itself. Oriya-speaking people were divided between three British presidencies of Calcutta, Central Province and Madras. The feeling that they were being exploited was very strong among the Oriyas, more so under the Calcutta province where Bengalis were occupying most of the government posts in their area.

In the latter half of the 19 century, associations for protection of Oriya language and culture like Utkal Sabha and later Utkal Union Conference played an important role in the fight for a separate province. The government move to teach Bengali as a compulsory language to children in Oriya areas also led to further consolidation of this regional sentiment. In 1911, Bihar and Orissa together were created as a separate province with the capital first at Ranchi, and

later at Patna. But this did not satisfy the local linguistic aspirations of Oriyas. In 1920, the Nagpur Congress resolution for dividing the country into provinces on linguistic basis was welcomed by Oriyas. Finally Orissa was created as a separate province from 1st of April 1936, combining Oriya-speaking areas from the three provinces - Central Province, Madras as well as Bihar-Orissa province. Though Andhras got a separate linguistic state 17 years later in Independent India in 1953, the first linguistic state happens to be Orissa.

After the formation of the state it took them almost 10 years to decide on the place for location of the capital. The choice was between Cuttack, Puri, Berhampur and Angul. In the end, the choice got narrowed down between Cuttack and Puri and the inability of the political regime at that time to take a final call on this delayed the capital city location by almost a decade.

Finally the capital was established temporarily in Cuttack, but it was not considered as the right choice in view of the small city being congested and Puri was not favoured since it was considered a purely religious centre that may not be fit for political and administrative activities. That is when Bhubaneswar came up as a possible alternative since it was also an important pilgrimage centre and a symbol of Orissa's pride and had a lot of vacant land that can accommodate new buildings. Sri Gokhale, a Maharashtrian who was serving as special advisor to the Orissa Governor at that time played an important role in clinching the decision in favour of Bhubaneswar. In his view, Cuttack remains the principal commercial centre and Bhubaneswar becomes the administrative capital. He was able to convince the then towering leader Harekrushna Mahatab, who in 1946 became the Premier of Orissa (redesignated as Chief Minister after independence), and got the Assembly approval in favour of Bhubaneswar as the

location for capital city. In the bargain Cuttack retained the Utkal University and the High Court.

Even after it was decided that Bhubaneswar would be the capital city of Orissa and the shifting was announced for 1948-49, the actual construction work took a long time to commence due to paucity of funds. In between a change of government brought a new political leadership whose commitment to Bhubaneswar as the capital city was not as enthusiastic as that of Harekrushna Mahatab. It was only when Mahatab came back as Chief Minister in 1956 that full support for the construction of capital at Bhubaneswar was assured and Bhubaneswar work started on construction.

Chandigarh as the capital city of Punjab, which started much later with the full support of Jawaharlal Nehru went ahead with the construction work under the French architect Le Corbusier in right earnest and with speed. With reference to Bhubaneswar this task fell on the shoulders of architect Otto Koenigsberger, a German who was already working in the princely state of Mysore and was credited with planning of Tata township/city in Jamshedpur. The other one was Julius Lazarus Vaz from Bombay who was working as the chief architect of Orissa government then. Koenigsberger got an appointment with the Government of India and accordingly started supervising the work from a distance and was confined to preparation of the master plan while Vaz, the chief architect, also was not fully stationed in Bhubaneswar. Further there was poor inter-personal relationship between them, which substantially affected the shape and speed of Bhubaneswar.

Koenigsberger came up with the concept of small manageable neighbourhoods while conceiving and building Bhubaneswar as a capital city. Since Koenigsberger as well as the chief architect Vaz were mostly non-resident the supervision of construction of the

new capital city fell on the shoulders of the PWD department which was not prepared to take up such an onerous responsibility. An attempt to synthesise the temple architecture of Orissa with the modern architecture resulted in a hybrid construction of no great architectural value and as remarked by m. N. Buch senior civil servant that no city can claim greatness whose focal point is an office building housing government clerks. And this is the real tragedy of Bhubaneswar which finally turned out to be a typical PWD township and in the words invented by Kipling “Bungaloathsome” for which the PWD is famous for. The great Oriya leader Biju Patnaik summed up the stature of the new capital when he commented: Bhubaneswar is a poor man’s town. Keeping the poverty of Orissa in mind it was not to be a grandiose town like Chandigarh. Its potential was limited by the poverty of the people and imagination of the planners.

### **3. Gandhinagar, Capital City of Gujarat**

The desire of Gujaratis to have a separate state of their own drew inspiration from the Nagpur Congress session of 1920 where a decision was taken to reorganise the states on linguistic lines. The concept of “Maha Gujarat” always appealed to the Gujaratis. After independence, the Gujarati-speaking area was divided into three separate units: mainland Gujarat forming part of Bombay State, Saurashtra became a separate state consisting of a number of principalities that became part of Indian union at that point of time, and Kutch, as it was bordering Pakistan, was placed under the control of the Central Government. The States Reorganisation Commission while recommending reorganisation of states based on language, recommended that the state of Bombay be made bilingual but this experiment did not work out well, leading to widespread protests in Gujarat. Finally in 1960 Bombay State

Reorganisation Act was passed bifurcating Maharashtra and Gujarat as two separate states.

Once Gujarat state was formed, the question of locating the capital city for the new state came up. Two competing cities made the claim: the princely town of Baroda and the industrial city Ahmedabad.

Baroda under Sayajirao and later under Pratapsingh Rao developed as a forward-looking city even before independence, as both these rulers concentrated on education within their kingdom. But in the end Baroda lost out on the capital city status due to the rulers of Baroda being perceived as pro-Maharashtra and other reasons like high-density of population, lack of adequate electrical power, etc.

That left Ahmedabad as the only choice for locating the capital city. Though the industrial lobby of the city was interested in getting the capital located in Ahmedabad and in anticipation purchased lands in the periphery of Ahmedabad, overcrowding in the city did not lend itself to remain the capital.

As an alternative, Gandhinagar, 15 miles (25 km) north of Ahmedabad, was identified as the new capital city area and was announced by the then Chief Minister-designate two months before the formation of the new state.

The main reasons for selection of the Gandhinagar site were availability of land at affordable cost, close proximity to Sabarmati river for supply of water, the existence of soils suitable for construction and its location with reference to the national highway.

As against Le Corbusier who built Chandigarh, the local interests in Gujarat wanted Louis Kahn, an American architect,

to plan and build the new capital. He was by then building IIM Ahmedabad and industry lobby of Ahmedabad was keen that he should take up the work of building the new capital city. But due to issues of paying him in foreign exchange, the Central Government rejected the proposal and he could not take up this work. An Indian architect by name Mewada, who worked under Le Corbusier at Chandigarh, became the architect who designed and constructed the capital city Gandhinagar. Hence it is a truly Indian city designed and built by Indian architects. Though Gujarat State was formed in 1960, by the time the capital city became functional it was 1970 when the secretariat staff shifted to Gandhinagar. But the High Court continues to function from Ahmedabad.

Thus the three major cities that were constructed as capitals of three different states were conceived and implemented differently with different results. By far the best example was Chandigarh, where the Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, took personal interest and gave a free hand to the architect Le Corbusier to build it unfettered by tradition and in a modern way. Accordingly a well-planned city Chandigarh came up in a short time and was able to cushion the impact of refugees coming from Pakistan and also serve as the capital of undivided Punjab and subsequently Punjab and Haryana separately. Gandhinagar came a distant second and Bhubaneswar a poor third. Emphasis on assimilating the Gandhian philosophy in building Gandhinagar and temple architecture in Bhubaneswar produced hybrids not up to the mark. The fact that Nehru took a lot of interest in Chandigarh made all the difference for the city. Both Gandhinagar and Bhubaneswar had to deal with issues of paucity of funds and lack of proper architects to plan and guide in the execution of these capital cities.

## 5. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Capital Cities: Indian Experience

At the turn of 21<sup>st</sup> Century under the NDA Government long pending demands of three states for bifurcation were conceded. Accordingly, the State of Uttarakhand was formed separating the hill areas from Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh created by segregating the tribal areas of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh respectively. The location of the capital city in each of these States is discussed in this Chapter.

### **Uttarakhand: Reluctant to Move**

Uttarakhand became a separate State consisting mostly of the Kumaon and Garhwal areas in November, 2000. Its interim capital is located in Dehradun, a large city of the State which is also nearer to New Delhi, the capital of the country. Its High Court was however located at Nainital. A one-man committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Sri Virendra Dikshit in 2001 to identify the site for a permanent capital. The committee gave its report in 2008 after a gap of seven years, citing lack of support. A public interest litigation (PIL) case was filed in the High Court about the delay, after which the committee finally gave its report, citing reasons of non- provision of Secretarial Assistance, etc. The committee supported the candidature of the temporary capital Dehradun as suitable for the permanent capital of Uttarakhand, in view of its nearness to the national capital, centralized population

and being away from areas which can be prone to natural disasters like earthquakes.

But the public choice is for Gairsain, a place in Chamoli district which is equidistant from Kumaon and Garhwal, two prominent regions of the state with their own cultural identity and political rivalry. Choosing Gairsain is a compromise effort to bury the hatchet between these two regions. But till date, except for construction of some buildings including the Assembly, not much of an activity is there to move the capital from Dehradun to Gairsain, though there are occasional agitations for shifting the capital. Whether the real estate interests and the unwillingness of the officials and others to forego the convenience of a metropolis to live in wins, or the urge of people in hills to get the capital relocated in Gairsain wins needs to be seen. The interim capital continues to be at Dehradun since 18 years after the formation of the state.

### **Ranchi, the Jharkhand Capital**

When Jharkhand was separated from Bihar in the year 2000, Ranchi was an obvious choice as its capital. Ranchi was originally the capital of the Bihar-Orissa province. Even after the capital was shifted to Patna, Ranchi continued to function as the summer capital for the Bihar province during the British time and certain infrastructure for government offices is already built up at Ranchi. Though there were other big towns like Jamshedpur and Dhanbad, there was not much of a discussion and Ranchi was selected because of its climate and built-up infrastructure and the new State started functioning with Ranchi as its capital.

### **Chattisgarh and its Capital**

As in the case of Jharkhand, when Chattisgarh was divided from Madhya Pradesh in 2000, there was not much of a discussion about

the place for location of the capital city. Raipur, which is centrally located and by then was an important Town, became the obvious choice. Though there were other cities like Bilaspur and Korba, Raipur was preferred as the others were nowhere near Raipur in terms of population and size. Soon the government realized that the infrastructure in Raipur was inadequate to support a capital city and thus came about the decision to build a well-planned new city which can grow both as a capital for the state as well as a modern financial and business centre attracting investments. This was conceived in 2008 and the city of Naya Raipur was planned at a distance of 30 Km from Raipur, and executed as a world class city in 8000 hectares of land by the Naya Raipur Development Authority. It is estimated that the population of Naya Raipur would be 5 or 6 Lakhs by the year 2031.

I had a personal interaction with Sri N Baijendra Kumar who was the chairman of Naya Raipur Development Authority for a period of seven years when the new city project was conceived. The decision to shift the capital from Raipur was taken due to lack of adequate infrastructure in Raipur. The existence of a large number of sponge iron factories made the city highly polluted, and hence there was a need for building a new town away from Raipur. There was no grant coming from the Government of India, so the development authority took a Rs 500-crore loan from the State Government with which the project was started. The site selection was done after 11 international companies were engaged for a study based on 33 parameters and nine of the 11 companies, after examining all the alternative sites, zeroed in on the present location.

The entire land required for the capital city was procured through conventional methods mostly by consent awards. They

paid adequate compensation to the villagers for the land. One land pooling experiment done in this area was a big failure. When Sri Chandrababu Naidu and his team visited Chattisgarh in 2014 it was specifically informed to him that location of a capital city should not be in cultivable land, He was also cautioned against the problems associated with land pooling and how the land pooling experiment in Chattisgarh was a failure.

## 6. Capital Cities of Andhras Through the Centuries

Andhras are a tribe who fought along with Kauravas in the Kurukshetra war in the epic Mahabharata. *Aitareya Brahmana* in the Rig Veda mentions them as a tribe living in an area south of the Vindhya. Legend has it that they are the sons of sage Viswamithra, who were cursed by him and so settled south of the Vindhya.

The earliest known historical dynasty that can be associated with Andhras is the Satavahana dynasty which ruled major parts of India between 2nd century B.C. and 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. The capital city of the Satavahanas was located at Dhanyakatakam which is near the present-day Amaravati town in Andhra Pradesh, where archaeologists recovered ruins of Buddhist monuments of that era. Satavahanas set up their second capital at Pratisthanapura near Paithan in the present-day Maharashtra to deal with invasions by intruders, particularly the Huns. The Satavahanas established a strong empire spread across the length and breadth of the country and gave a good administration and encouraged both Hinduism and Buddhism.

After the fall of Satavahana empire there were a number of principalities ruling over different parts of the Telugu regions, till the emergence of the Eastern Chalukyas as an important dynasty ruling substantial portion of the present state of Andhra Pradesh.

Ikshwaku rulers ruled the region including the present-day Guntur, Prakasam, Kadapa and Kurnool areas for about 100 years, with Vijayapuri as the capital. Bruhatpalayana rulers ruled over parts of present day Krishna district with the capital at Kuduru which is located near Avanigadda or Machilipatnam. Salankayanas ruled from Peda Vegi near Eluru. Ananda Gotrikulu ruled the Karma kingdom south of Krishna river. Their capital was Kandarapuram, identified with Kanteru in Guntur district.

Vishnukundinas are important rulers who ruled most of the area south of the Vindhyas extending to the present day states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, and their capital city was located at Vijayawada for some time and then at Denduluru near today's Eluru.

All these small principalities ruled different parts of the state after the demise of the Satavahana empire and before the establishment of the Eastern Chalukyas or Vengi Chalukyas in the 7th century. Eastern Chalukyas ruled most of the coastal Andhra area between 7th and 11th centuries, first from Peda Vegi near Eluru as their capital and latter from Rajamahendravaram. It is during the region of Vengi Chalukyas in the 9th century that a military general of Eastern Chalukyas by name Pandurangadu demolished *Boya kottams*, the hutments or habitations of the local tribe Boyas between Bezwada and Kandukur which is described in the *Addanki inscription*. This was the first inscription in Telugu language. After Eastern Chalukyas made Rajamahendravaram their headquarters during the reign of Raja Raja Narendra, the poet laureate of his court Nannaya started translating Mahabharata into Telugu which is the first major Telugu literary work.

The next important dynasty to rule the Telugu speaking areas was the Kakatiya dynasty with Orugallu as their capital (present

day Warangal). Saivism was their religious faith and they built a number of temples as well as tanks for irrigation. They were for a long time successful in pushing back the Muslim invaders from Delhi but were finally defeated by them.

After the fall of the Kakatiya dynasty the reign of the Reddy dynasty started. They ruled the whole of the coastal Andhra from Simhachalam to Nellore for about 100 years. The first capital of the Reddy kingdom was at Addanki in Prakasam district but was subsequently shifted to Kondaveedu in Guntur district.

The greatest empire of the Andhras was the Vijayanagar empire, which was established in the year 1336 and flourished till 1565 and was ruled by three different clans of Sangama, Saluva and Tuluva. Their capital Hampi is located on the banks of Tungabhadra river. Hampi was not only the capital city but was also an important trading centre in those days. After the fall of the Vijayanagar, Tirumalaraya started ruling from Penugonda, which is presently in Anantapur district, and subsequently his successors ruled from Chandragiri. The grant of land to the East India Company for establishing a trading centre at Chennapattanam was in fact given by these kings ruling from Chandragiri.

The last two major dynasties that ruled the Andhra area before it came under the control of East India Company were Qutub Shahi and Asaf Jahi dynasties. Qutub Shahis ruled this area for about 200 years with Golconda as their capital. Asaf Jahis first started their rule from Aurangabad but later shifted to Hyderabad. The Asaf Jahis continued to rule Telangana area till the merger of Nizam's Hyderabad principality in the Indian union after independence.

## 7. Sivaramakrishnan Committee and Amaravathi

Having examined the theoretical background and the international and national experience in capital city building in the previous chapters, we now analyze the background to Amaravathi location, and issues specific to Amaravathi.

The AP State Re-organization Act, in its Section 6 provides for setting up of an expert committee to study various alternatives regarding new capital for the successor state of Andhra Pradesh. Accordingly the Government of India constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Sri Sivaramakrishnan, who is the former Secretary, Urban Development, at the Centre. Members of this committee included eminent personalities in this field, Dr Rathin Roy, Director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, Aromar Revi, Director, Indian Institute of Human Settlements, Prof. Jagan Shah, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs and Prof. Raveendran, former Dean, School of Planning and Architecture.

The Central government in their terms of reference asked the committee to consider issues like the least possible dislocation of existing agricultural systems, preservation of local ecology, promoting environmentally-sustainable growth, vulnerability assessment from natural disasters, and minimizing the cost of construction and acquisition of land. The committee, though was

constituted in March 2014, could start its work only from June, after the new State came into existence and effectively had three months of time to prepare and submit its report. The committee having been aware that the State Government had already made up its mind about the location of the capital city even before the submission of its report did its best in the given circumstances and submitted a report examining all the possibilities in detail with reference to the terms of reference that were given to it by government. Since a decision was already made about the location of the capital city by the elected leaders at the highest level, the State Government was not eager about the Sivaramakrishnan committee and its recommendations. There was least possible assistance given by the government to the committee and at times important information was not shared, which the committee did record in its report. On the other hand, the State Government in its wisdom went ahead and constituted a separate committee of its own with the local political leadership and local crony capitalists. This was strategically planned to dilute the significance of the committee appointed by the Government of India under the Act.

The committee kept in its mind the dominant objective of the overall development of Andhra Pradesh State and how the location of various capital functions can help in achieving it. The committee became sensitive to the apprehensions that were well articulated before them that one or two specific areas may end up as favourite locations for governmental activities, an apprehension expressed by people from Rayalaseema.

The committee looked into three possible approaches: first, creating a greenfield mega city which also functions as the capital city, second, expanding the existing cities and third, even distribution of government activities across the length and breadth

of the State. They examined the option of creating a greenfield city and came to the conclusion that there is no particular merit in going for this option.

The committee referred to publicity going on in the media during that period that the capital city may come up between Guntur and Vijayawada, and warned that any attempt to concentrate all the government offices in and around Vijayawada and Guntur would have adverse consequences on the development prospects of other areas of Andhra by sucking private and speculative capital into that area. They also referred to the problem of irrigated agricultural lands in Guntur-Vijayawada area unlike Hyderabad which would further hamper the development of the area as a mega city. Finally they concluded that infusion of large volume of capital and population into this area was not desirable and could have a honey pot effect similar to that of Hyderabad. If at all some of the offices are to be located in the Vijayawada-Guntur area, their suggestion was to locate them in areas like Musunuru, Nuziveedu, Amaravathi or Pulichintala. The main criterion they applied was existence of dry lands within Vijayawada-Guntur region, which would be better suited for location of the new offices. As the State Government did not really cooperate with them and give all the information that was required, certain mistakes have crept into the report in terms of suggesting a place like Pulichintala thinking that it was part of the Guntur- Vijayawada region for setting up some of the capital city activities. The Amaravati which was suggested by the committee is not the present area where the capital city is being built but the historical religious town, another 20 kilometres away, and which fell within the dry track. Thus the committee was totally against any attempt to go in for a greenfield mega city as a capital for Andhra Pradesh. If it was decided to locate offices within the Guntur-Vijayawada region since it was accessible and central to the

State, they suggested locating them in towns which had not many irrigated agriculture lands but were located on dry tracks.

The Sivaramakrishnan committee examined the other alternative of distributed development that is the best approach for location of the capital city functions of the new state. It identified three distinct regions of Uttarandhra consisting of Vizag region, Rayalaseema arc and Kalahasti-Nadikudi spine in addition to the Vijayawada-Guntur region. They indicated a preference for setting up of the High Court at Vizag and distributed setting up of the capital city functions in different areas for reasons mentioned above.

While ruling out land acquisition for setting up of a greenfield city they also came to the conclusion that land pooling may not be a viable option based on the detailed study conducted by them.

The committee consisting of distinguished professionals in the field of urban development had to leave with a lot of disappointment at the attitude of the State Government and its unwillingness to cooperate with them or make use of their services. By the time they started making the rounds of the State the new government was in place and had already zeroed in on the place for location of the new capital city based on commercial, communal, and real estate interests. Hence the state leadership did not take the expert committee and its work seriously. Since they started their work late in the month of June, they had only three months of time to submit the report with reference to the timeline given at the time of setting up of the committee. They could have asked for and got an extension for submitting the report, but they realised that any such attempt would be futile since the State Government had by then decided on a course of action for the capital city construction. Knowing this and fully aware that their recommendations may not have any

bearing on the location of capital city, they clearly mentioned in the report in the first page itself that the decision regarding the location of capital city was the prerogative of the AP Government in consultation with the Central Government. The committee regarded its task essentially as compiling and analysing as much data available or could be obtained from the State government and gave their recommendations on that basis.

I had the privilege of meeting this great man and his team once in lake view guest house for a meeting of officials arranged with the committee. By then he was suffering from cancer and was taking treatment and informed me that he just underwent chemotherapy a few days back and was there to attend the meeting with reference to the committee work. He by then was aware of the concept note I have prepared with reference to Donakonda as an administrative capital for the new state of Andhra Pradesh and profusely complimented me on my view point and the factors that I have taken into consideration for suggesting this as a place for location of the administrative capital. An impression is now being given that Sivaramakrishnan committee did not suggest any particular location for the capital city. It is not that they did not want to suggest a particular location for the administrative capital city with limited functions they had in mind where capital city functions should be distributed. Within one month of starting their work they could realise that the State Government had already taken a decision regarding the area where they wanted to locate the capital city. As an insult to this committee, within a few days of assuming charge the new government appointed a parallel committee with the minister for Urban Development as the chairman consisting of a set of local capitalists and local politicians for suggesting an appropriate location for the new capital city. Hence Sivaramakrishnan committee recognising that it is the prerogative

of the state government to locate the capital city they thought there was no point in their suggesting anything to the contrary which would only complicate the situation. Further information as desired by them was not fully shared with them by the state administration who were also aware that a political decision to locate the capital city is already made. But the committee categorically stated that a centralised Greenfield city is not the right option for the new state of Andhra Pradesh and suggested distribution of capital city functions and left the matter at that without suggesting a specific location for locating the capital city.

This is what Sri Sivaramakrishnan wrote in an article titled “eye on capital loss in vision” in the Hindu dated 20 April 2015.

The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 gives ample time for N. Chandrababu Naidu to concentrate on the larger issues that confront Andhra Pradesh rather than be bogged down by the issue of land for the capital, which seems to be the case now.

I have been an unabashed admirer of Sri. N. Chandrababu Naidu especially with his accomplishments as Chief Minister of undivided Andhra Pradesh (AP) previously. Why? He succeeded in establishing AP as a progressive, information and technology-oriented, modern educational hub. He was motivated in his endeavours, perhaps prompted by the prominence Bengaluru was getting in this regard. In this connection, he had travelled far and wide to summits and meetings to attract powerful entrepreneurs and companies. The GDP which was Rs.1,700 billion at that time during his tenure in the undivided AP, around 1999 (data from the EPW Research Foundation) is about Rs.4,574 billion now, from 2014. It cannot be denied that much of this was due to Sri Naidu’s exertions. Above all, he had instilled in the people of AP a sense

of belonging and pride in the State; he made them believe that AP was and is destined to great heights. Unfortunately, his present preoccupation with the subject of capital development in present day Andhra Pradesh, >to be called Amaravathi, in the >region between Vijayawada and Guntur, appears to be dragging him down.

### **Farmer Dispossession**

The expert committee appointed by the Home Ministry under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, and which I had the honour to chair, stated in its terms of reference that fertile, agricultural lands should not be touched as far as possible. Let me explain this. The entire Vijayawada-Guntur-Tenali-Mangalagiri (VGTM) area is regarded as the rice bowl of AP; for that matter, it is, without doubt, one of India's important granaries. Now, to take away 30,000 acres of land from the Thullur, Tadepalli and Mangalagiri mandals which are double crop and triple crop yielding areas and which will result in the dispossession of farmers there for temporary financial gains is an example of short-sighted policy. Some farmers may of course see this as a windfall, spending the monetary compensation on material goods, fancy automobiles and houses. Separately, commercial outlets are dependent on consumer support. In such a situation, it is unlikely that this scale of consumer support will be available in the short run, of five to 10 years, to support the kind of development that one is seeking. The northern part of Thullur is reported to being earmarked to play a key role in the functioning of the capital city. Yet, the fact is that there is no master plan available for the so-called capital city. Nothing is available online — for example even on the AP website — making it impossible to have an idea of what is being planned where.

## Infrastructure development

Another point I wish to highlight is the subject of soil preparation work especially in an area which has a high water table. In a related way, consolidation, road infrastructure and various other items of infrastructure will take a long time to develop and build, even assuming that some land is made available. In the 100 or more new towns India built since Independence, and this includes Chandigarh, Bhubaneswar, Gandhi Nagar and the 'steel towns' of Bokaro, Durgapur and Rourkela, it took nearly seven to eight years to have the basic infrastructure in place and this was just for the setting up of one or two major industries and entrepreneurial needs! Therefore, the claim that in AP, all these can be done within a span of five years is a gross exaggeration.

The expert committee had pointed out repeatedly that the most serious challenge before AP is to create more than three lakh jobs a year and with significantly higher productivity. These jobs do not seem to be in sight. Towns which have been battered by the recent cyclone need to be rebuilt. Important facilities such as the High Court, and as suggested by the expert committee, have to be located there. These will give some boost to AP.

It is welcome that in Chittoor and Tirupati, medical and some educational facilities are beginning to be set up, mainly with the help of private sector enterprise. But we should not forget that Chittoor and Tirupati draw their strengths from being near the border with Tamil Nadu rather than Hyderabad. Also, in all the talk about Tirupati and Chittoor having the potential to be major educational and health centres, there has been no mention of the potential of Rayalaseema. This is unfortunate. Also, when talk around the subject of the capital appears to recognise a shift of financial capital as well to the VGTm area, one can be quite certain

that protests will erupt. The committee has repeatedly said that the most important challenge facing Sri. Naidu, and which he should resolve with his political acumen as soon as possible, is the need for him to look at balanced development as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and not just of the VGTM area.

The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 gave both AP and Telangana a time frame of 10 years to share Hyderabad as a common capital. The committee made a number of recommendations on how this time could be utilized. I am not holding an alibi for the committee; committees have been set up in the country before; some of their recommendations have been accepted while some have been rejected. So, it does not matter whether the recommendations of this committee are accepted or not; what matters is the future of Andhra. There is still time for Sri Naidu to retrace his steps.

### **Land Pooling**

The Act gives ample time for Sri. Naidu to concentrate on the larger issues that confront AP rather than be bogged down by the issue of land for the capital. The companies based in Singapore and which are working on the master plan for the new capital are reported to be seeking 3,000 acres outside the capital territory but inside the VGTM area.

Singapore-based entrepreneurs are said to be holding or trying to get hold of significant land parcels in several parts including China. That may well be their policy, but in this case, in AP, the point I wish to make is that whatever goes to Singapore's land quota comes from agricultural land parcels. Apart from those directly affected by the capital project, there are millions of households that have no direct and indirect independent agricultural land or

income in this area. Given the volatilities in the global economy, it is practically impossible to guarantee the security and the well-being of these families. Funding for the construction of the State capital and its maintenance will have to be mobilised through international financing; the Central government has already indicated the limitations of what it can extend to AP towards this.

It is reported that land holders who account for an area of about 32,000 acres have agreed to surrender their land and accept land pooling. At the same time, there are also reports of growing resistance to the plan in some areas alongside the right bank of the Krishna river. What AP is trying to do is very different to land pooling attempted elsewhere in the country and with varying success. It should be recognised that the success of the Gujarat land pooling plan, which is often mentioned in this context, took place in dense urban areas where the negotiations had a touch of realism. Plans were published repeatedly in a bid to seek consent and it was clear what the authorities intended and what the land holders would be getting.

### **Infrastructure Promotion**

AP will become a better-knit geographic and economic entity if Sri. Naidu spends the next few years concentrating on some of the very important projects including those in which the Central Government's support has been assured such as the coastal corridor, a gas pipeline and its transmission to Rayalaseema, the Nadikudi-Kalahasti railway line, and development of some of the railway lines east to west. This will also build up the political strength of Sri Naidu across the State.

Every political capital requires political support. But in this case, the fact is that that kind of political support is not available

for the capital city project in the State as a whole. AP has a history of being guided for years with the help of a number of able and experienced administrative officers. If only Sri. Naidu can utilise their talent to reorganise some of the priorities before the State at least for the next few years! The point is not about some landmark capital city which may come about later. What is important right now is the nearly suicidal move to mortgage AP's political energy and financial resources to this capital project.

(Sri K.C. Sivaramakrishnan, Chairman of the Centre for Policy Research, was chairman of the Government of India appointed 'Expert Committee on AP capital'.)

Shortly thereafter, on 28th May 2015, Sri Sivaramakrishnan passed away.

## 8. Donakonda, the Aborted Neutral Capital

In May 2013 I took over as the Chief Commissioner of land administration in the united state of Andhra Pradesh. On July 30, 2013 Congress working committee passed resolution for creation of a new state of Andhra Pradesh with Hyderabad as a common capital for 10 years. After the passing of resolution by the CWC it became known that the Congress party is serious about dividing the state and it's only a matter of time before this division takes place. Since I was in charge of the land administration then revenue minister requested me to examine the possibility of a suitable place for location of the capital city of the new state and explore the possibilities of availability of government land for the same purpose. Accordingly I started doing exercise and requested the collectors to send information about the availability of government land in large extents and collected information from all the districts. Analysis of this data has shown that there are certain districts where reasonable extents of government land were available which can be conveniently leveraged for setting up of a capital city. One such land parcel was available in Vizag District near about Achyutapuram and also in Nuziveedu area of Krishna district. Similarly uplands of Guntur and Prakasam district have large extent of land as well Rayalaseema districts and Nellore.

## **Donakonda as the Proposed Capital**

The maximum extent of land of about 50,000 acres of government land within a radius of about ten kilometres was available in the Donakonda region of Prakasam district. I have prepared a concept note suggesting Donakonda as a possible location for setting up of the capital city for the new state of Andhra Pradesh for the following reasons.

The most important reason that I had in mind was since I was aware of the history of the state of Andhra Pradesh and the very unique existence of regions with their own separate identity like Rayalaseema coastal Andhra and north coastal districts which form part of the state I was convinced that any capital city location should be a place considered neutral by people from all regions and no one should feel that any particular region or a set of people are gaining advantage in the process of setting up of the capital city. Viewed in this regard any location in Prakasam district would be ideally suited since the district itself is carved out by taking out parts from Guntur Nellore districts of the coastal Andhra and Markapuram division of Kurnool district of Rayalaseema and accordingly any location of the capital city within the district should satisfy people from the coastal Andhra as well as from Rayalaseema. Subsequently when I read literature on location of capital cities this particular thinking is captured in theory as the concept of neutrality where there are different regions with their own identity and are looking for locating capital city which is neutral to all of them so that all of them have equal access to the capital city and feel it as their own.

Though Donakonda was originally in the Nellore district and subsequently became part of Prakasam district which is in the coastal region it is nearer to taluks of Markapur and Giddalur which are part of the erstwhile Kurnool district which was part of

Rayalaseema and to that extent should be acceptable to both the regions.

What I had in mind was an administrative capital where from the government business of the new state could be handled. It was not meant to be an instant megapolis. It is conceived as a small Greenfield city initially to accommodate population of one lakh and over a period of time can expand to five lakhs. I also studied evolution of Naya Raipur as a capital of Chattisgarh and accordingly proposed that initially the development can be in an extent of about 5000 acres of land to take care of a population of one lakh expanding over a period of time slowly to accommodate a population of five lakhs in about twenty thousand acres. A back of the postcard calculation was done taking the then existing AP Secretariat staff of about 5500 approximating that about 4000 of them would move over to the new capital with the family size of about four members per family the secretarial staff strength with their families would be around sixteen thousand the staff and families of heads of departments can be another 10,000 and making a space for staff of the assembly and other ministers and other staff the population of the employees of the new capital city was arrived at 35,000. To this was added floating population of about 30 to 40,000 who may come to the city for their work and accordingly the initial capital city plan was for one lakh of people with a cushion for further expansion up to five lakhs leveraging huge extent of government land that is available in Donakonda area over a period of time.

Provision for water supply was also thought of while making the proposal of Donakonda as the capital of the new state of Andhra Pradesh. Essentially water is getting firm commitment of allocation and then building the canal network for its drawl. In the

case of Chennai water committed from Krishna basin is supplied through Telugu Ganga canals. Similarly if a firm quantity of water commitment can be got from government of India to the new city from Krishna river, drawal can be done through Darsi branch canal which flows near Donakonda or from Veligonda reservoir once it is completed. hence provision of water for the new city may not be a major problem. The area also lies on the Bangalore Calcutta railway line and has a Second World War built Aerodrome .The availability of huge extent of government land was also one of the reasons for suggesting this place for location of the capital city .That would make the cost of locating the capital city cheaper and since the lands are dry and Red lands construction will be relatively easy and cheaper. In terms of centrality from different parts of the state of Andhra Pradesh Donakonda would be far more central compared to the present Amaravathi that is being developed as the capital city of Andhra Pradesh. This is one of the most backward regions of the state and location of the capital city can trigger the necessary development process in this area and is mostly inhabited by backward classes and others and hence cannot become an area dominated by any one particular social group and can develop as a really secular Cosmopolitan administrative capital city of the state of Andhra Pradesh. The idea was keeping the city small and administrative in nature and not incurring huge costs in building a major Megapolis while concentrating on development of other already thriving cities of Andhra Pradesh like Vizag Tirupati Vijayawada, industrially and commercially.

I was informed that in those days the Congress government that was in power in the State looked at this proposal positively and sent it across to government of India. This concept was very widely discussed in the press as well as other fora during that period before the formation of the State on June 2, 2014. But once the new

government came into power and took oath of office on June 8 the whole idea of the capital city has undergone a total change.

The concept note I have prepared the capital city for the new state of Andhra Pradesh has come to haunt me for quite some time latter. When I became the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh in June 2014 the government came with an already fixed agenda of the location of the capital city for the new state of Andhra Pradesh. Knowing fully well that a professional committee like Sivaramakrishnan committee appointed by government of India will not toe their line government went ahead and constituted a separate committee under the chairmanship of the Minister for urban development with local capitalists and local politicians as its members. Initially it was proposed that the chief secretary will be the convenor for this committee. I was not very comfortable with the idea given the fact that I already had a strong opinion on location of the capital city at Donakonda for which I prepared the above concept note as Chief Commissioner of land Administration. I felt a little delicate to convey this to the honourable Chief Minister since I took charge a few days ago and he was also new and wavelenght is yet to be settled. But luckily for me somebody has carried it to him that I may not be the right person to handle the issue of locating the capital city as per their choice and accordingly the next day I was informed that the Convenor will be someone else. Knowing fully well that the government has a different view all together about setting up of the capital city I tried to distance myself as much as possible from the deliberations and the process of location of the capital city. I also thought it futile to share my viewpoint on the capital city since by then I could understand that the driving force behind the location of the capital are considerations other than merit in terms of the commercial real estate interests and the community interests. An important politician from Guntur

region who owns substantial extent of land within the newly proposed capital city area accused me of owning huge extent of lands in Donakonda area and was accordingly trying to lobby for its establishment in Donakonda. My concern in proposing the capital city at Donakonda was keeping the interests of the state in the long run and the need for a regional balancing. Neither the fact that I do not belong to that area nor any other reason was behind the proposal. In any case I do not belong to a landowning community nor made any money to go and invest in real estate at Donakonda or other place. It is the tragedy of this country that visionary leaders who have sacrificed their lives for the freedom of this country are replaced by such self-centred contractor class politicians whose only business is investing in politics to reap windfall gains and whenever such opportunity is threatened to throw mud without any basis. Since it was coming from a responsible political figure who is a member of the Parliament I have requested the government to get the facts from him and go in for an enquiry and government thought it fit to ignore my request.

## **9. Choice of Kurnool and Amaravathi as Capital Cities: Contrast Between a Visionary Statesmen and a Strategic Manipulator**

The manner in which Kurnool was chosen to be the capital of Andhra Pradesh in 1953 and Amaravathi as the capital city of Andhra Pradesh State in 2014 speaks volumes about the leadership attributes of Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu and Nara Chandrababu Naidu. To discuss this further, it would be worthwhile to know how the Andhra State was formed in 1953.

In 1920 Congress session at Nagpur passed a Resolution to create Linguistic States in an independent India and in-principle accepted prevalent concern of the Andhra population of the Madras Presidency for a separate State, a movement which is simultaneously getting an expression along with the National Movement. In 1937 Sri Bagh Pact was signed and an informal arrangement was arrived at by the leaders of Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra about the manner in which the capital city needs to be located and other Institutions distributed between different parts of the Region. In this pact it was agreed to locate capital in Rayalaseema and Highcourt in Coastal Andhra. It would be worth recalling the Rayalaseema did not agree to be part of the Andhra University after the location of the Andhra University at

Visakhapatnam and continued with Madras University. The process of choosing of Kurnool as a capital is dealt with in a detailed manner by Tenneti Viswanadham who wrote part of autobiography of Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu titled as “Naa Jeevana Yathra”. Till the last moment, Prakasam Pantulu was against losing the right of Andhras over Madras City and an attempt by Bhogaraju Pattabhi Seetharamaiah to get his signature on a paper surrendering the right over Madras did not yield any results. Only after 1952 when the members of the Socialist and Communist Parties also agreed to relinquish the claim over Madras, Prakasam Pantulu was finally made to agree for having a State of Andhras without Madras City. After Potti Sreeramulu died observing “Fast unto Death” for the formation of separate State of Andhra Pradesh, the pressure on the Central Government mounted for declaring a separate State of Andhra and the meeting between Jawaharlal Nehru and Prakasam Pantulu in 1953 at New Delhi paved the way for formation of a New State of Andhra. The issue of a separate capital for the Andhras came up as an important issue in a meeting between Nehru and Prakasam and Nehru indicated to Prakasam Pantulu that the division work can start once the Assembly indicates the temporary capital for the New State. Accordingly, a separate meeting was convened for deciding about the capital, under the Chairmanship of the Prakasam Pantulu, in which Gouthu Lachhanna participated on behalf of Krishikar Lok Party, Sri T. Nagi Reddy participated on behalf of Communist Party. Since the issue of the New Capital is going to be discussed already the MLAs were batting for the location of the capital in their town. Tenneti Viswanadham wrote in the book since Vizag is a place of scenic beauty and has all the facilities, all of them hailing from Visakhapatnam felt it would be the right place for the New Capital to be located. There was no representation from the Godavari Districts for locating the capital

in their districts. The Communists who had a strong hold in both Krishna and Guntur districts batted for that area and wanted the temporary capital between Guntur and Vijayawada. The members from Rayalaseema made a reference to 1937 Sri Bagh Pact and since Andhra University was established in the coastal area, the temporary capital should be located in Rayalaseema. They would be willing to be part of Madras State if their demand is not accepted. Accordingly, they signed a petition, kept in their pocket and were willing to open it up and stand by it, if required, in the Assembly. In those circumstances, Prakasam Pantulu convened the meeting of the officially formed committee for selecting the capital city at his residence. In the morning, there was long discussion and Tenneti Viswanadham did not press for Visakhapatnam since Prakasam Pantulu categorically informed him that the suggestion of Vizag is not acceptable. Gouthu Latchanna specifically batted for Tirupati stating as per the Sri Bagh Pact the capital should be in Rayalaseema and unless it is located in Tirupati, Chittoor may not come with us and may choose to stay with Madras State. Koti Reddy canvassed the location at Kadapa with number of pictures of buildings in Kadapa. The Communists argued that no particular purpose would be served by setting up the Temporary Capital at Kurnool and wanted it to be located between Guntur and Vijayawada. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy did not canvas for Anantapur since Prakasam Pantulu indicated he will not be canvassing for Anantapur as he played an important part in the formation of the State. There were discussions going on till 1.00 PM and no decision could be arrived at hence they unanimously authorized Prakasam Pantulu to take a decision. He requested all of them to come and re-assemble at 03.00 PM. When they re-assembled Prakasam Pantulu requested Gouthu Latchanna to take a piece of paper and write Kurnool as the capital. Since the decision was to locate

it in Rayalaseema, Neelam Sanjiva Reddy was requested not to move the Resolution in Assembly and Tenneti Viswanadham was requested to move the resolution and accordingly the Resolution was moved and after a thorough discussion in the Assembly Voting was done and decision taken in favour of Kurnool as temporary capital of the Andhra State and accordingly new State was formed with Kurnool as capital on 01.10.1953 in the presence of the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru and others. There was a strategic reason for Jawaharlal Nehru to suggest that the issue of capital city should be decided first before he could announce the formation of the new state of Andhra Pradesh. Nehru right from the beginning was against the concept of linguistic states. Nehru was aware that choosing the capital city is not an easy task and if they failed to choose Capital city then the formation of the linguistic state can be a non starter. Prakasam Pantulu was aware of Nehru's thinking on the issue. He was also aware that the Rayalaseema leadership may prefer to stay back with madras state if the capital city is not located in the Rayalaseema region. Keeping these facts in mind he took a statesman like visionary decision to locate the capital city at Kurnool facilitating the formation of the linguistic state of Andhra. When the issue of capital was once again raised in the AP Legislative Assembly, the remarks of Prakasam Pantulu are very interesting. He got up and told it is appropriate to develop the under-developed Kurnool Region and accordingly temporary capital is located at Kurnool and if Visalandhra is formed the capital will move to Hyderabad. Thus, Kurnool became the temporary capital of Andhra State till it was moved to Hyderabad after the formation of Andhra Pradesh.

Let us contrast this with how Amaravathi is now selected as capital city of Andhra Pradesh. Once a decision was taken to bifurcate a provision was made in the Act for setting up of an

expert committee for the location of the new capital of Andhra Pradesh. Under Section-6 of the Act, the Central Government shall constitute an expert committee to study various alternatives regarding new capital for the successor state of Andhra Pradesh and make appropriate recommendations in a period not exceeding six months from the date of enactment of AP State Reorganization Act of 2014. Accordingly, the Committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Sri K.C. Sivaramakrishnan on 28.03.2014 with certain Terms of Reference (ToR). The new Government under Nara Chandrababu Naidu took oath of office on 08.06.2014. Since the Committee is a statutory body the Committee's recommendations should have been given due weight-age by the State Government before taking a decision on the location of the capital city. The Committee's recommendations were sent on 27.08.2014 and were available by the time the decision on capital city was taken in the Cabinet on 01.09.2014. But except giving a passing reference to it, the same was neither studied nor taken seriously before the decision was taken. In fact, there was total non-cooperation from the State of Andhra Pradesh in giving the information to the expert committee for coming to conclusion about the location of the Capital City. The matter was taken to the Cabinet on 01.09.2014, not sure whether as a regular Agenda Item or as a Table Item and the resolution of the Cabinet was that the Capital City should be located in a Central place around Vijayawada and based on this the matter was taken to the Assembly on 04.09.2014 as an important announcement and a statement was made by the Chief Minister about the location of the capital city around Vijayawada and along with number of Projects for different regions were listed out and read. Of course, the Projects never took off. There was no prior consultation with Opposition nor Civic Society in taking an inclusive decision based on consensus and consultation. The manner in which it was

suddenly brought to Assembly and a statement made in Assembly that the setting up of New Capital in and around Vijayawada was a strategic move. The Opposition cannot raise any objection since that would be viewed as being against that particular region. The Communists in 1953 did not have this problem; perhaps they then did not have a substantial presence in Rayalaseema. He chose this route of Cabinet Resolution, quickly followed by a statement in the Assembly without even mentioning a specific place but mentioning around the city of Vijayawada and announced the same by the way of Assembly resolution and went ahead and located the capital city where he already decided to locate it, where substantial real estate interests were already put in place. The manner in which Amaravathi as capital city was decided and located shows the manipulative, strategic nature of the leader. In a strategic manner the opposition was cornered into submission and in a manipulative manner, an Assembly resolution to locate it around Vijayawada was made not indicating the exact place. Armed with the Assembly resolution he went ahead to establish the capital in an area where substantial real estate interest were built up. An attempt was made to replicate the successful real estate model of Cyber City in Madhapur. Thus the location of the capital city at Kurnool was the decision of a statesman with a vision, Sri Praksam Pantulu, whereas Amaravathi reflects the manipulative, strategic leadership qualities of Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu.

In terms of the theory we have already seen how the capital cities can give forward thrust to backward areas or end up as exclusive disembedded capital cities. Location of the capital at Kurnool falls into the theory of Forward Thrust Capitals. This theory as explained earlier talks of bigger and more developed regions taking along with it, the smaller, under-developed regions and to gain their confidence and as a concession to less developed

area capital city is located in the less developed area so that it can be an engine of development for the backward region. There are number of examples of this nature of capital city location in the world, notably the location of Brasilia in Brazil, Astana in Kazakhstan and Abuja in Nigeria. Leaders who took such decision are visionary in nature in allowing capital city location to happen through a process of consensus and consultation.

This can be contrasted with what are known as dis-embedded and exclusive capitals where the criteria is loyal centres of State power in a place where the leader gets a strong ethnic support. Such capitals are mostly located in despotic States. It is unfortunate in a democratic country like ours a path of consultation and consensus was not chosen for locating the capital city but a manipulative, strategic path was chosen to create a dis-embedded and exclusive capital. These are exclusive capitals and their legitimacy and efficacy is linked to an individual or a dynasty. They are extremely short lived, highly unstable, expensive to build and operate. They exhibit ethnic favouritism, transfer of power to their own tribe and limited participation of certain groups in power. Since Amaravathi is chosen through a manipulative, strategic method not based on consultation, consensus, it does not reflect the wishes of the people of different parts of the State of Andhra Pradesh and hence this by no means be called a “People’s Capital”.

## 10. Land Pooling and Amaravathi

Land pooling is an innovative experiment of win-win combination for implementing infrastructure projects. This was adopted successfully in Holland and Germany in 1890s and in India first started under the Bombay Town Planning Act in 1915. It is responsible for development of large parts of Mahim, Khar areas in Bombay but ownership disputes even on single land piece started stalling the projects. It became more successful in Gujarat after the enactment of Town Planning Act of 1976. Gujarat got over this problem of ownership disputes by transferring the problem to the newly constituted plots and through an amendment in 1999 once the Town Planning Scheme is approved, they started taking possession of land and laying of roads, resulting in value addition for the lands. This incentivized the people to come in for Land Pooling in Gujarat. By definition, Land Pooling is a policy where a number of holdings are pooled together and part of the pooled land is utilized for developing physical and social infrastructure and the remaining land is returned to the land owners with development rights. Part of the land pooled is also earmarked by the public agency for auctioning to raise resources for the project and development charges are also levied on the persons who pooled the land to raise resources for the completion of Infrastructure Projects. Land owners benefit from the increased value to their plots consequent on development of infrastructure. The Land Pooling by and large

is very successful where it is within the Urban area or in managing peripheral urban growth incrementally. Some examples are Bhopal – 3, a TPS (Town Planning Scheme) Scheme in Gujarat which is located within 12 Km from the centre of Ahmedabad where 300 hectares of land was pooled and developed. Bodakdev which is 6.5 Km from Ahmedabad centre where about 200 Ha., land was pooled and developed under land pooling schemes in Gujarat. 100 Ha., of land is found to be large enough in developing neighbourhood level infrastructure but small enough to manage as a TPS Scheme. (Source: Land Pooling and Re-construction and self-financing mechanism for Urban Development – *IDFC Policy Group Quarterly*, March, 2010).

New experiments are also being attempted both in Delhi and Haryana under the Land Pooling Scheme where the Developer as a Coloniser is permitted to do Land Pooling from farmers, developing the area as per laid out norms and the authority will only be a facilitator for the same and regulator. As Erwin Krabben and Barrie have put it “ Land Pooling gives an opportunity for value capturing. To get property owners to finance part of infrastructure cost since investments in New Projects increase property values.”

Gujarat Town Planning Schemes mostly confined to building urban infrastructure within the urban area or for Development of urban periphery incrementally under Land Pooling. Dholera Land Pooling Scheme is a large scale land pooling scheme covering 22 villages for setting up of Smart City as part of Mumbai - Delhi Industrial Corridor in Gujarat. This was the first time Land Pooling mechanism was attempted for a green field City. Land Pooling here was not a success due to local resistance in 20 villages. The claims regarding voluntary nature of Land Pooling under the Dholera Smart City are at best ambiguous and at worst outright dangerous.

The threat of eminent domain (land acquisition) disguised by the language of voluntarism is the stick that backs the carrot of so called urban development. (Preethi Sampath and Simi Sunny: *Dholera: the Myth of Voluntary Land Pooling.*)

Newspapers have covered the failure of land pooling in Dholera area and in one such Reports in Hindustan Times on January 21, 2016. the remarks of the farmers of Dholera are very relevant. Here one Rup Sang bhai of Sarasasla Village of Dholera remarked Land Pooling will only finally end up farmer becoming a slave to someone and those who sold away their land holdings are now doing manual labour work at other people's farms or working in factories. The ambitious Dholera Special Investment Region Project in 2007 is a non-starter as late as 2016.

Whereas this is the general experience of Land Pooling in India, Andhra Pradesh Government after formation of New State in 2014 decided to go in for a Green Field capital city and against the advice of Sivaramakrishnan Committee without taking any feasibility analysis, Environmental Impact Assessment went ahead and chosen the area in 22 villages of Guntur District in the Mandals of Tullur, Tadepalli and Mangalagiri on the right bank of Krishna River and came up with a Master Plan for development of the Green Field City of Amaravathi. The development of New City requires 37,578 Ac of land in the first phase of 10 years up to 2025 and by the time 3 phases are completed, the total extent of land required is about 1.00 lakh Ac of land. Initially the focus would be on building the Greenfield Amaravathi City in an extent of 37,578 Ac spread over 25 villages and Government decided to go in for land pooling in these village to procure the land required.

The Area in which the capital city is proposed to build and are valuable lands with intensive agriculture, especially all through

the year in the lands abutting the Krishna River. The other lands which are away from Krishna River are also suitable for cultivation of valuable commercial crops like cotton and mirchi (chillies). The land values in this region are quite high. The Government would never have found resources for acquisition of this extent of land especially under the New Land Acquisition Act which envisages a fair compensation for the land owners and also envisages a comprehensive Relief and Rehabilitation package for all those farmers who are dependent on those lands for their livelihood. Government thought of land pooling as an alternative for procuring lands for construction of this Greenfield mega capital city called “Amaravathi”.

As we have seen earlier the Land Pooling was successful when only it was done in small extents of land either for Re-designing the urban infrastructure within the existing urban area or development of small parcels of land in an incremental manner in the urban periphery. The only major land pooling scheme done on a large scale was in Gujarat for Dholera Smart City under the Bombay – Delhi Industrial Corridor which ended up in a big failure. In spite of this evidence available, the AP government decided to go ahead with a large scale land pooling system for building this Amaravathi.

Land Pooling as we have seen earlier is based on principle of voluntarism and appreciation by the owners of the land who pooled the land that after development of Social and Physical infrastructure structures, the value of their land would increase and are willing to pay for development of physical infrastructure in terms of development charges and be willing partners in the Project itself. Herein in Amaravathi Green Field City, Land Pooling was attempted, by the Government on large scale not fully on voluntary basis but through a Twin Strategies of speculation, intimidation

and coercion (Sri Ramachandraiah, 2016). The first tool of indirect coercion that was used in making the farmers to submit on large scale to land pooling was the threat of land acquisition. As was observed by Preethi Sampath & Sunny in their paper, the threat of land acquisition is the stick that backs the carrot of voluntarism under land pooling. It was only the Government which has the information that if they went in for land acquisition on this large scale, they do not have enough of resources to acquire land for building up of the Green Field City. Since farmers are not aware of this problem of the Government, the threat of land acquisition was shown as a hanging Damocles' sword in case they fail to pool their land under land pooling mechanism. In addition to this as observed by Sri Ramachandraiah in his Article "Making of Amaravathi: A landscape of speculation and intimidation". Government strategically planned and used thousands of police force for coercion along with legislative measures and indulged in a mind game to make the farmers in the region to agree for land pooling for this Project. In this mind game for land pooling along with regime of dispossession, there was also a regime of co-option facilitated by absentee land owners and large farmers who are the support base of the Ruling Party. To make the Scheme work, the State has created a hype about the proposed capital and the engagement of Singapore Government as partners in the development of the capital city is one of the strategies in the process of creating this hype and this hype can only be built in such an uncertain situation as observed by Sri Ramachandraiah by continuous raise of land values to convince the farmers about returns in future. Hence, the continuous hype that is being created through supportive methods like visits of foreign delegation, prospective investors and the amounts invested to keep alive speculative interests in the region so that the land price do not fall, consequently the farmers do not lose faith in the *El Dorado* of a future Amaravathi.

In addition to this the Government also has taken a number of coercive measures to put down any resistance to the land pooling system and got land pooling done as per their requirement. Some of the panchayats passed unanimous resolutions opposing land acquisition. One such panchayat secretary affixed his signature on the resolution. From then on the other panchayat secretaries were instructed not to give any official status to such panchayat resolutions. The Chief Minister held a series of meetings with farmers to the effect promising them to make industrialists like GMR, if they give their lands under land pooling. Methods like intimidation, coercion were used as tools to get lands required from farmers. On the night of December 2014, some banana plantations were set on fire in a village nearby Krishna river. The maximum resistance to land pooling was from the villages abutting Krishna River, where intensive agriculture all through the year is happening and the land values are very high here. Some youth were picked up by the police who were opposing land pooling whereas the owner of the burnt farm was unperturbed raising the suspicion that the incident to be the handy work of the Government and the Ruling Party (Sri Ramachandraiah, 2016) and the person who was arrested for this incident was a youth from that area who was actively opposing land pooling. This gave suspicion as the arrest was planned at a high level before the police were deployed in the village. This running terror was allowed to continue for quite some time and about eight battalions of police were descended in the villages during this period and threat of land acquisition under the Land Ordinance brought out during that period excluding some safety clauses in the Act was used to coerce the people to submit their lands to land pooling. A threat was also simultaneously spread stating that if they do not come into the land pooling system, the lands owned by them would be declared as “Green belt” and they

would not get any value for land owned by them. A small woman farmer who opposed the land pooling was subsequently coerced into the giving a statement that she is not against it and was ready to submit any land to land pooling following the threat. (Sri Ramachandraiah, 2016)

Two Ministers were on a full time duty in these villages camping there to get the farmers consent for land pooling and some of the farmers who do not give any consent for land pooling, electricity connections in their land holdings were cut so that they do not cultivate their lands. Subsequently also as late as October, 2015 some Sugarcane farms were burnt in the villages to intimidate them to join in the land pooling. Banana plantations were bulldozed in Lingayapalem village in the Capital Area on 08.12.2015 and the land owner who was not willing to join in land pooling suffered a loss of Rs. 24.00 lakhs. Thus, the land pooling in Amaravathi was not done in a voluntary manner. The lands were highly fertile, agriculture lands with an intensive cultivation system and the farmers like in Dholera, were not interested in surrendering their lands and finally work as workers in factories or somewhere else. Of course there are big land owners and the absentee land owners whose children are well educated settled elsewhere and are willing to part with their lands under land pooling especially where the next generation are not interested in cultivating the lands.

Hence, as observed by Sri Ramachandraiah, Amaravathi is a speculative City where the land required for the building of a Green Filed City is pooled together by a strategy of “Mind Game” strategically worked out by Government based on speculation, intimidation, coercion and co-option.

## 11. World Bank and Amaravathi

Government of Andhra Pradesh proposed a Sustainable Capital City Development Project for funding by the World Bank to take advantage more specifically of the Government of India Special Package Scheme in lieu of Special Category Status wherein certain promises were made for EAP Project to come as Grant instead of loan. The project component included Road Infrastructure, Flood Mitigation Measures and Technical Assistance. The project with an out lay of Rs. 5000 cr is proposed to be made with Rs. 2000 cr loan from World Bank, another Rs. 1000 Cr from Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the balance coming from Government of AP. Since there were a number of objections to the funding of this Project from World Bank by the local population and also compliance with the parameters and norms of World Bank are not followed by the State Government, going ahead with the Project Amaravathi, the World Bank decided to set up an inspection team. The team in their inspection report pointed out that the community members shared with them the experiences of Land Pooling Scheme and that they were pressurized to join in Land Pooling Scheme on the threat of Land Acquisition if they do not come under Land Pooling and since the land values in Amaravathi area did not raise , they were afraid the compensation amount under land acquisition may not be adequate. They also complained of pressures from Officials as well as unidentified persons. They were also threatened by the community members that the

benefits of Land Pooling will not reach them if they do not render cooperation to the State Government and the Health benefits as promised did not materialize as Health Insurance Cards issued are not accepted in the Hospitals and the lands are not demarcated and handed over and vulnerable groups are being discriminated against. Such of those farmers who did not join Land Pooling Scheme, their Electricity connections were cut and they were not able to irrigate their lands for about a year's time. The Report also noted the living standards of the low paid labour, deteriorating after the Land Pooling Scheme implementation and the land less have not received loans as promised for self-employment, educational reimbursement etc., and the Inspection Panel also observed the fears expressed by farmers and how pathetic are their livelihoods and the other apprehensions shared with the Inspection Panel That they are not able to take up any other employment if their lands are taken away. They also observed that the local wage rates are quite high giving them an income of Rs. 800 per day an average of Rs. 19000 per month whereas the present Pension that is coming is only Rs. 2500.

The Panel in its findings specifically mentioned that Land Pooling is a choice within overall involuntary situation. It represents one option in context of keeping land does not arise and hence is involuntary resettlement and then concluded that the requests raised important issues of potential harm and also non-compliance and hence more thorough investigation need to be done on all these issues of non-compliance with Bank Policies especially relating to involuntary resettlement, environmental concerns and issues related to consultation, participation and disclosure information.

## 12. Swiss Challenge and Singapore Connection

While planning the construction of the new capital city Amaravathi Andhra Pradesh government involved Singapore government for preparation of the overall master plan as well as the detailed master plan. The initial over all master plan was done free of cost by Singapore government but state government paid about 12 crores of rupees for the detailed master plan to surbana a Singapore government entity which prepared the more detailed master plan. state government went a step further and wanted to involve the Singapore government companies for building the seed capital city within start-up area. With reference to Amaravathi city this area is going to be Central and the main commercial hub. The manner in which the whole process has been gone through and the contract awarded to Singapore companies does make one feel that a decision was already taken to award the project to the Singapore companies and a formality of a process has been gone through to select companies as decided earlier. To achieve this objective state government has chosen the Swiss challenge methodology but the same was not followed in its letter and spirit but manipulated in a number of ways to give an unfair advantage to this consortium of Singapore companies and facilitate their getting the contract. There were a number of allegations that the process of Swiss Challenge has been compromised by first allowing Singapore

consortium to submit proposal contrary to the accepted norms of Swiss challenge and then very less time being given to others to submit their counter proposals .The contract itself is fully loaded in favour of the Singapore companies since the arbitration is allowed at London in place of conciliatory proceedings for which the AP infrastructure act makes a provision. There is no provision for any minimum guaranteed payments by the Singapore companies and the land is to be given to them at a concessional rate or free of cost and only a nominal revenue share is envisaged. The undue favour that is shown to the Singapore companies gives rise to suspicion whether there is something more than what meets the eye.

Singapore, whose state-run enterprises are part of the consortium, is run with an iron hand by family oligarchies with high levels of integrity in internal administration but the same is not the case in terms of international dealings of this island state. In 2006, Morgan Stanley's Chief Economist Andy Xie remarked: "actually Singapore's success came mostly from being a money laundering centre for corrupt Indonesian businessmen and government officials."US International Narcotic Control Report 2011 observed that stringent bank secrecy laws make Singapore a potentially attractive destination for foreign corrupt officials. In a report, Tax Justice Network, an international non-aligned network, observed that Singapore ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in 2013 in terms of financial secrecy index which suggests that this is an important centre for wealthy individuals to hide money. It respects domestic rule of law while turning a blind eye on foreign law-breaking. According to an article in *Fair Observer* by Media Asker, Singapore has become a highly strategic location for wealthy Indonesians to store their savings due to its guaranteed confidentiality. Why a country with such a dubious record is chosen as a partner and companies of Singapore are shown undue favour in terms of award

of contracts is something government of Andhra Pradesh may have to explain at some point of time. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu always sites examples of high-levels of integrity in Singapore to justify involving this country and its companies in the process of construction of Amaravathi. A narrative report on Singapore by a justice network explains Lee Kuan Yew model of fostering strong respect for domestic rule of law while tolerating foreign law-breaking, money laundering dealing with illicit money that flows from it and a business model that says ‘ we won’t steal your money, but we will turn a blind eye if you want to steal someone else’s money.’ This Island Nation has high levels of integrity in its internal administration, same cannot be said of its international dealings.

Further one of the Singapore companies SembCorp which is part of the consortium is named in Brazilian Petrobras scandal. No due diligence about the companies is done by the government before awarding the contract to the Singapore companies.

Thus, the Government claim that Singapore is free from corruption and with high levels of integrity and hence is made partners in the development of the new capital city is highly questionable.

With reference to the seed capital construction there is one important aspect about which the government is not truthful to the people. After the NGT judgement and conditions imposed by the state environmental impact assessment authority there is no way the seed capital can come up in the area earmarked for the seed capital in the master plan. The NGT judgement makes it very clear that all the land within the Krishna river bund is part of the flood plains and no construction can be taken up with in that area. state environmental impact assessment authority while giving the clearance for the capital city region has put the condition that the

land within 3 km from the Krishna river bund should only be used for urban forestry or blue green infrastructure which indicates water bodies parks and forest development. If one reads the NGT Judgement and order of the environmental authority together it becomes very clear that no construction activity can be taken in the area earmarked for seed capital in the master plan. The seed capital area shown in the master plan comes within the 3 km of the Krishna River bund and also covers the area into the river beyond the bund. When such is the legal position it is beyond one's comprehension how government is going ahead with finalising the agreement with the Singapore consortium to take up the seed capital construction. Finally it may land up in an international arbitration as provided in the agreement with the Singapore consortium with a drain on the tax payers money without any work being done.

### 13. Amaravathi and Other Cities of Andhra Pradesh

Over emphasis on Amaravathi and its development can impact the overall growth and development of the state as well as the other cities in the new state of Andhra Pradesh. Vadim Rossman in his book capital cities varieties and patterns of development and relocation made one interesting observation. In such of those regions or nations where there is a strong network of other cities of considerable size the capital cities by nature tend to be small and only in such of those countries where the network of cities is small both in size and number capital cities tend to be larger in size. The state of Andhra Pradesh is fortunate to have a network of medium-size cities and three major cities in terms of Vizag Vijayawada and Tirupati each located in the three important regions of the state. In such a state with such a strong network of cities over emphasis on development of a Greenfield capital city of a mega size as observed by Sivaramakrishnan committee can have a honey pot effect concentrating all the investments and funds at one particular place to the detriment of healthy development and expansion of existing cities. The same is already happening in the state of Andhra Pradesh and will continue to be so as long as the government does not come out of the fixation of concentrating only on the capital city Amaravathi which itself May not takeoff in spite of all the efforts put in for a variety of other reasons. I had

a firsthand experience of such a situation when I was working as the chief secretary of the state. One day the special representative of AP government at Delhi rang me up when I was in Vijayawada and informed that a representative of South Korean embassy wanted to meet me and explain to me a particular difficulty that they were facing. I gave them the appointment and when they met me they said in they wanted to hold an Indo-Korean industrial meet that year in Andhra Pradesh and have selected Vizag as the venue but the honourable Chief Minister insisted on it being held at Vijayawada. Considering the request of the Chief Minister, they came to Vijayawada but could not find an appropriate venue and accommodation for conducting such a major event at Vijayawada and sought my help to impress upon the Chief Minister to hold the same at Vizag. I passed on the request to Sri Naidu who agreed, and accordingly it was held in Vizag. Excessive focus and over-emphasis on Amaravathi as a destination of investment and fund flow can have disastrous consequences for the rest of the state and other major cities located within the state. Recently the State Government has approached the World Bank for a loan of about 2000 crores for the development of Amaravathi city as a grant. This particular amount is being sought by the State as part of a special package announced by the Government of India in place of special category status consequent on the bifurcation of the state. It is but fair that all parts of the state get these funds in the interest of the development of the state as a whole instead of such funds coming from the Centre or from multilateral agencies being diverted only to one particular place. Any state should keep in mind the issues that are unique to that state while preparing its development plans. In case of Andhra Pradesh the state is big in terms of its length and breadth. This has resulted in growth centres developing at different places and natural major cities have emerged in the three

major regions. For a balanced regional development of the state it is very essential that the State Government concentrates on all these places for proper development and ensures that whatever funds are received are equitably distributed based on an objective formula. Any attempt to concentrate all the funds in one particular region would further widen the disparities and lead to disaffection between regions.

## 14. Ghost Cities of China: Lessons to be Learnt

Andrew Tarantula, in his article “China’s Building Cities so fast people do not have Time to Move In”, observed that instead of slowly expanding the urban areas in direct response to the demand, China has chosen to build entire new cities, all in one go. Though it holds the advantage of Central Planning and comprehensive Urban Design but the entire Projects are in danger since the towns fail to take off and people are not willing to move in. New South China Mall built in the middle of Corn fields is 99% un-inhabited even after a decade of its opening. It was built in 2005 with a built up area of 8,92,000 Sq. Metres.

### **Tianducheng:**

Tianducheng is a city in Hangzhon newly built with no population. It also boasts of replica of Eiffel Tower. Kangbashi, a new area dubbed as Dubai of Northern China in Central Mongolia in 2003 has been a victim of real estate speculation. Real estate speculators descended on the town raising the rents far in excess of fair market valuations and this kept residents from coming in. The city originally designed for one million today has a population of 30,000.

## **Zhengdong New Area:**

Zhengdong new area built in wheat fields a Metropolis twice the size of San Francisco. Though the population in the region has grown but not within the new district area, rents have priced out, the very people for whom the city was built.

## **Chenggong :**

Chenggong new area built to house the over-flowing population of Kum Ming, is fully functional, except for people, just because you build it, does not mean anyone will actually come.

The Chinese experiment of building new Greenfield cities shows that cities built without a proper planning and realistic population projections are bound to fail as they fail to attract the required population. Over speculative activity sometimes can be counter-productive in terms of pricing out the very segments of the population for whom the city is built. Building of Amaravathi has lots of lessons to learn from the Chinese experience as the city is being built based on unrealistic projection of in migration .even before the city construction has begun Amaravathi has already become a victim of hyper speculative activity unsustainable with even the most optimistic growth projections.

## 15. The Conclusion

In this book so far we have seen location of capital city of Andhras over a period of time starting from ancient period to modern times more particularly after independence starting from Kurnool, via Hyderabad and the process leading to declaration of Amaravathi as the capital city for the state of Andhra Pradesh in 2014. We have also seen the contrast of leadership styles that led to location of capital city at Kurnool in 1953 and capital city at Amaravathi in 2014. We have also seen the theoretical background to location of capital cities and historical perspective and the International experience of location of capital cities across continents as well as experience of locating within the country after independence and the location of the capital cities consequent of bifurcation of the existing states in the 21st-century in response to popular demand. The issues which are specific and peculiar to Amaravathi in terms of land pooling financial aid from multi lateral agencies and the attempt of the government to rope in certain foreign countries and companies on preferential terms in the construction of the capital city Amaravathi also narrated in the previous chapters.

An appropriate strategy for location of capital city in the new state of Andhra Pradesh should have factored in certain features which are unique to the state of Andhra Pradesh. First and foremost is the unique identities of different regions that constitute

Andhra Pradesh in terms of Rayalaseema south central and north coastal area. The interest of all these regions should have been taken into consideration and a consensus built around a neutral point for location of the capital city. Then only it would have been a people's capital acceptable to all and durable in the long run. No such attempt was made to build such a consensus on the location of the capital city but a unilateral decision was taken for building the capital city. The second important feature of the state of Andhra Pradesh is already existing major cities in three different regions of the state Tirupati Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam. In addition to these three major cities there is also a strong net work of urban centres spread across the length and breadth of the state. Wherever such strong urban networks exist Valdim Rossman feels the capital city is going to be small in size and function more as an administrative capital. Given this uniqueness of the state and the background effort should have been made to build a consensus for location of the capital city at a neutral area which is acceptable to all the regions and all the people a Place nobody could feel is dominated by any particular community or region. Given the existence of three major cities within the state and a strong network urban centres the model that should have been adopted was to go in for a functional small administrative capital by concentrating on the development of the other major cities and network of urban centres commercially. Such a model would have served the state best in terms of growth of the state.

One important factor in planning any capital city is the budget required and the source of funds and the plan of the new capital city should be commensurate with the GDP of the nation or the province. As per an estimate building of a new city may consume anywhere between 3 to 12% of the GDP of the country or the province. Unless proper financial planning is done before taking

up the capital city construction the capital city itself can become a nonstarter or get bogged down in the middle for want of funds. Some of the countries which have gone for construction of new capital had the advantage of having some windfall resources. In Malaysia the capital city financing was done by the State petroleum monopoly. In Nigeria also capital city Abuja construction is financed by streams of income coming out of petrol products. In a country like Brazil where they embarked on the new capital city construction without committing the necessary resources the strain of capital construction itself has led to major economic crisis within the country leading to a military takeover. Amaravathi is being planned as a mega city with a huge outlay of one lakh crores not as an administrative capital but as a megapolis without actually tying up the necessary funds. Central government has come forward only to fund government buildings and minimum infrastructure. Confidence of the government that it can raise resources for such a mega project is not realistic since if it is not coming as a grant and has to come as a loan the project should be commercially viable. The manner in which the state government is going ahead with the project not as a functional administrative capital but as a megapolis without tying up necessary funds can make the city a nonstarter for want of funds or can get into serious financial issues in the course of construction. Another impact of embarking on such a mega project without specifically committing funds could result in the city construction itself becoming a big drag on the state finances adversely impacting the development of other Cities and parts of the state.

Sri C Ramchandraiah in his article in the *Economic and Political Weekly* termed Amaravathi a speculative city. population of Amaravathi city is expected to reach 45 lakhs by 2035. An extent of 30,000 acres is obtained through acts of cooption

coercion deceit and intimidation from the farmers through land pooling assuring them of substantial speculative returns in terms of the developed plots that are going to be allotted to them. Sri Ramchandraiah mentioned that in one of the meetings held by the Chief Minister with the farmers of the capital city area he has promised to turn them into GMRs if they parted with the land for the construction of the capital city. But the backward calculation in terms of the levels of investment that are required to be made to facilitate in migration of the size of 40 lakhs population into the city of Amaravathi is not worked out and funding tied up. A model built on such fragile foundations without proper detailing of the investments and sources of investments and the type of activities that are going to come up is likely to collapse under its own weight. As on date speculative Activity is going on with reference to the land prices in this area. But the day reality dawns and it becomes clear that the promises made are impossible to be kept the prices are going to come crashing down resulting in a major unrest from the local farming community.

According to Valdim Rossman to be a successful capital city process of location should take into account the interests of diverse regions and groups and should reflect interests of all communities and all stakeholders should take part in the decision making process. Viewed from this angle Amaravathi is not a city that has emerged out of a compromise or a consensus between different regions of Andhra Pradesh state. The foundations of the city are going to be to that extent weak and unstable. Only such capital cities which are established after discussion and deliberation taking all the regions with them through a process of consensus and consultation are going to have durability in the long run. We have such perfect examples of capital cities built based on consensus and consultation reconciling the differences of different groups

and utilising the capital city location as an integrating point. The earliest experiment in this direction which was very successful was the location of Washington D C Which continued to inspire a number of other Anglo Saxon countries like Australia New Zealand Canada in capital city location emerging out of a process of reconciliation compromise and consensus. In all these countries the capital city is located at a neutral point agreeable to different units within the country always smaller than the major economic hub of that particular country.

Recommendations of the Sivaramakrishnan committee appointed by Government of India were not taken into consideration by the government except for making passing reference to the extent it suited them .As if waiting for the formality of the submission of committee report the location of the capital city was announced in the first week of September soon after the submission of the committee report in the last week of August. In a strategically manipulative way the subject was introduced in the assembly and assembly resolution taken for location of the capital city in an area around Vijayawada city and then government went ahead to locate the capital city in a place which was already chosen by them.

Valdim Rossman has described in detail the positive strategies and negative reasons and hidden agenda for location of capital cities. Positive strategies are based on spatial compromise leading to location of the capital city in the neutral place. capital city is located in an underdeveloped area so that the capital city location itself can be an engine of growth for the development of the area which is known as the theory of forward thrust capital. capital city location can also be based on reasons of fairness identity and economic and administrative efficiency.

Right from ancient times Geomancy and astrology have played an important role in location of the capital cities and the latest to be located based on local astrological rules is the capital city of Myanmar Naypyidaw. The Indian version of geomancy known as Vastu along with astrology seems to have played an important role in location of the capital city Amaravathi on the banks of Krishna River though it was not stated as an express criteria for selection of the site for establishment of the capital city .To that extent it seems to be one of hidden agendas behind the location of the capital city at the present place.

On the negative side capital cities can be located based on principles of ensuring ethnic loyalty and as a means of dispensing patronage to a particular clan or tribe to which ruler belongs to. In such a situation the reliance is upon the principle of tribal Solidarity and favouritism .The ruling alliance of such countries transfer their seats of government to the territory of their own tribe and plan to recruit loyalists instead of promoting National building goals. In this situation the capital city is isolated from the other ethnic groups and the capital city is not getting established based on integration of all communities that compose the province .while in the positive strategies there is an attempt to reach a consensus and provide a form of inclusivity the second group of exclusive strategies aim to consolidate political power to the exclusion of the other political social groups. These are more common in countries with tribal conflicts and are ruled by autocrats. According to Rossman there can also be cases of self-aggrandizement and megalomaniac excesses of the rulers resulting in attempts to build megacities. These are attempts for self-aggrandizement self-glorification and immortalization through architectural monuments and are especially characteristic of autocratic rulers and need to be recognized as additional reasons for location of

the capital cities. Such rulers would like to make a statement and promote themselves on a broader international canvas by building capital cities as Megapolis. Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, Ataturk of Turkey Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan belong to this generation of autocrat rulers. Sri Chandrababu Naidu also seems to be putting himself in league with such autocrats by building a megapolis called Amaravathi to leave his footprints in the sands of time. But there is a major difference between them and him which he seems to be forgetting. Ataturk of Turkey belongs to a totally different period and comparison cannot really be drawn. Mahathir Mohamad was fortunate enough to have Petronas of Malaysia to financially support for the construction of the capital city as a megapolis. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan was head of the country which is rich in natural resources like oil and other minerals. For Sri Naidu there is no such resource-base to exploit for the construction of the capital city as a Megapolis. Hence his dream of building a megapolis and leaving his footprints on the sands of time may really not work out and the project itself may be a non starter for want of funds or get bogged down with financial issues.

Further the strength and vitality of capital city depends on the foundations on which it is built. If it is a city emerging out of consensus or compromise after a lot of deliberation involving all the stakeholders such capital cities are going to be long enduring and successful. Washington DC Canberra can be cited as examples of capital cities that have emerged out of a process of consensus and compromise.

Viewed in this context Amaravathi does not exhibit any of the characteristics of a positive strategy. It's not located on a neutral place acceptable to all regions of the state hence it is not a capital city emerging out of a compromise formula between different regions

of the state. It is also not located in an underdeveloped region of the state to consider it as a forward thrust capital where the capital city itself can be an engine of growth for an underdeveloped region. There was no effort to build a broad-based consensus on the issue of capital city before declaring Amaravathi As the location of the capital city. To that extent it cannot be described as an inclusive capital representing different stakeholders and accepted and owned by all stakeholders. On the other hand Amaravathi exhibits all the negative characters that have been listed out in the theory of capital city location. It has the characteristics of disembedded and exclusive capital. We have examples of such capital cities in ancient times and also more particularly with reference to the location of capital cities in Africa where tribal loyalties and tribal considerations are paramount. For examples in Malawi the capital city is located in an area predominantly populated by the tribe of the then ruling political personality. As observed by Valdim Rossman in his book in Africa number of dictators have a hidden agenda behind what is declared publicly .while the public declaration is independence and emancipation from the colonial legacy they are motivated by the need to preserve power in the hands of their own clan and power group and accordingly locate their capital cities in the most loyal parts of the country by granting special privileges to the existing power coalitions. Similar considerations seem to have played a major role in the location of the capital city Amaravathi by the present political regime. Traits which are found to be common with dictators in Africa have come to play a crucial role in a democratic country in terms of location of this capital city in an area populated by people loyal to the regime and where substantial commercial and real estate interests are established quite in advance. There was no effort to build a consensus on the location of the capital city across the state and suddenly the

location is announced advantageous to the ruling clan. And the choice of the location is most unsuitable in terms of fertile irrigated lands where generally capital cities don't get located due to higher costs of acquisition and construction. there also seem to be hidden agenda behind the selection of the capital city location in terms of real estate and commercial interests. Individual idiosyncrasies in terms of building mega capital city and leaving footprints of the leader on the sands of history also seem to have played an important role. It is observed that such disembedded exclusive capital cities in the long run are not going to be stable. They are short lived and expensive to build and maintain. The future of Amaravathi may not be any different from what has been predicted in the theory with reference to such capital cities.

Sri Sivaramakrishnan, chairman of the committee appointed by the government India for location of the capital city has this to say in an article "eye on capital loss in vision" published in the Hindu newspaper on 20 April 2014.

"The Re-organization Act has given ample time for Chandrababu Naidu to concentrate on larger issues that confront Andhra Pradesh rather than be bogged down by the issue of land for the capital which seems to be the case now. ....The most important challenge facing Sri Naidu is the need for him to look at balanced development as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and not just of the VGTM area. ....There is still time for Sri Naidu to retrace his steps. ....The point is not about some landmark capital city which may come later. What is important right now is the near suicidal move to mortgage AP's political energy and financial resources to this capital project".

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