

Transport Nagars: The Missing Link

For quite some time now trucks have been criticised for causing traffic jams and disrupting the movement of other vehicles. Unfortunately in India there is no concept of driving in the correct lane. All vehicles are free to move wherever they want to. The same goes when trucks are piled up at toll posts. For example on the Faridabad – Gurgaon toll road, the toll post has 6 lanes on each side. At the same time there is heavy movement of trucks on that route, many of them being overloaded dumpers. Sadly trucks are spread all over the 6 lanes to pay toll. While everyone is in a rush to get past the toll, it would make sense to regulate the traffic so that trucks can stick to the last 2 lanes.

Trucks are critical for every city and just like we need water and electricity, we need trucks to bring in supplies into the city. But while we care about the supplies, we do not even bother to think about the carriers of these supplies. If trucks are going to enter the city, they are naturally going to need place to park. However no one has ever bothered to have dedicated parking places for trucks in the city. The hub and spoke model can be used effectively, especially for FMCG and other similar consignments. This would eliminate the need for large trucks in the city and the last mile delivery can be done in smaller trucks. However that would mean having dedicated transport nagars all across the country. Unfortunately not many cities have transport nagars and the ones that have one are in a terrible state – the Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar in Delhi being one of the dilapidated ones. The road conditions within the transport nagar are terrible and the amount of dust is simply unbearable. I have seen policemen and even regulars roaming around the transport nagar with handkerchiefs around their face. This is certainly not the kind of transport nagar we wish to have. Why can't we have a transport nagar that has a good infrastructure and

amenities for the drivers? The transport nagar in Delhi lacks all this.

Transporters in various cities have been demanding a transport nagar from the authorities. However for some reason the authorities just don't seem to be interested in cleaning up the cities. They are happy to see large trucks being scattered all over the city. Another typical case of a transport nagar case going the wrong way is the Wadala Truck Terminal in Mumbai. For more than 2 decades now the transporters, after getting the land from the Government, were trying to build their offices and godowns. However they failed miserably – mainly because they forgot that they were transporters and not builders. Ideally they should have outsourced the job to someone who knew about construction and dealing with the various departments related to the project. Now the project is merely office space and the project has lost its essence. Having merely offices cannot be related to a truck terminal or a transport nagar.

It is very important that governments should start having transport nagars and parking lots as part of the town planning. The Government is developing many new townships and unless these things are part of the planning process it will never be implemented. As far as the current cities are concerned, the governments must start thinking on developing transport nagars at the outskirts an earmark land for the same. Associations must be made part of the planning process, but the construction and other technicalities must be handled by the Government. We definitely do not want another case like the Wadala Truck Terminal Project. Hope the trucks, transporters and drivers will have a decent place to work out of with amenities.



↓ Girish @ IIM Ahmedabad: Jury Member - War Room II

